

**XIX FRASCATI SPRING SCHOOL "BRUNO TOUSCHEK" in Nuclear,
Subnuclear and Astroparticle Physics**



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Colloquium - The Origin of Life: The Incredible Experiments of the Evolution in the Primordial Seas

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Life is still a mystery. We know about evolution of life, but we still have problems in defining it, and we do not know how it began at all. We are looking for life on other worlds, yet we still have to discover what happened in the primordial oceans of our own planet. Yet, thanks to fossils and palaeontology, we have some small windows on the past, and managed to reconstruct the first steps of our ancestors from the snowball earth to the evolution of agriculture. A long journey, full of surprises and strange turns. Today, we look at the fossil record and examine the scanty information from the deep sea exploration to understand life on earth, and these studies can actually be applied to exobiology, to find life on extra-terrestrial worlds. This is a journey in the oceans of 600 million years ago, to discover animals that are so weird they look like aliens from our sci-fi movies –and, incredibly, “aliens” that are still alive in our deep oceans. This is a quest for life, in the depths of time and oceans, to better understand what we are and how we got here, and what we can hope to find away from our own blue planet.

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