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## Life on Earth Appeared 300M Years Before Initially Thought

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New findings suggest that life appeared on Earth 300 million years earlier than previously believed, according to a team of researchers.

An ancient zircon crystal was unearthed in Western Australia and according to Scientists from Stanford University and the University of California it may hold evidence that life has existed on this planet for over 4 billion years.

The team of experts said, according to Reuters, they recently collected some 10,000 multibillion year-old zircons in Jack Hills, Australia, including one believed to contain a carbon deposit that is approximately 4.1 billion years old.

"Its complete encasement in crack-free, undisturbed zircon demonstrates that it is not contamination from more recent geologic processes ... and may be evidence for the origin of life on Earth by 4.1 billion years ago," according to a paper published by the team in the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences.

Previously, scientists used the fossil record to assert that the history of life on Earth began about 3.8 billion years ago, in the form of single-celled creatures, while humans are thought to have first appeared about 200,000 years ago.

The study was authored by Elizabeth Bell, Patrick Boehnke, and T. Mark Harrison of the University of California, Los Angeles along with Wendy Lao of Stanford, Reuters said.

