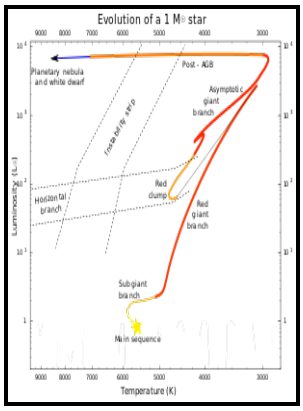
Stars - their structure and evolution

Wykeham Publications - Stellar Structure and Evolution



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Stellar Structure and Evolution

These giant stars pulsate and shed huge amounts of matter. We can only observe our Sun at this particular time of its life, but astronomers can see its past and future by looking at similar stars earlier or later in their cycle. For example, astronomers recently discovered that Proxima Centauri, the nearest star to the Sun, has starspots.

Stars: Their structure and evolution

Protostars are completely hidden in visible light, so all the information we have about them comes from infrared, submillimeter, and X-ray observations. These experience convection — the circulation of matter — throughout their interior.

Stellar Structure and Evolution

Stars begin their lives spinning fast, and slow down gradually over time. Stars are the source of almost all of the light our eyes see in the sky.

Stars: Their structure and evolution

The highest mass stars consume their available hydrogen even more quickly, passing through the main sequence and helium-fusion phase in a much shorter amount of time. A star is defined by nuclear fusion in its core. The lowest-mass stars are known as red dwarfs or M dwarfs.

Stellar Structure and Evolution

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