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The 55 Cancri System: Fundamental Stellar Parameters, Habitable Zone Planet, and Super- Earth Diameter

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The bright star 55 Cancri is known to host five planets, including a transiting super-Earth. We use the CHARA Array to directly determine the following of 55 Cnc's stellar astrophysical parameters: $R=0.943 \pm 0.010 R_{\odot}$, $T_{\rm eff} = 5196 \pm 24$ K. Planet 55 Cnc f ($M \sin i = 0.155 M_{\text{Jupiter}}$) spends the majority of the duration of its elliptical orbit in the circumstellar habitable zone (0.67--1.32 AU) where, with moderate greenhouse heating, it could harbor liquid water. Our determination of 55 Cancri's stellar radius allows for a model-independent calculation of the physical diameter of the transiting super-Earth 55 Cnc e ($\simeq 2.1 R_{\oplus}$), which, depending on the assumed literature value of planetary mass, implies a bulk density of 0.76 ρ_{\oplus} or 1.07 ρ_{\oplus} .

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