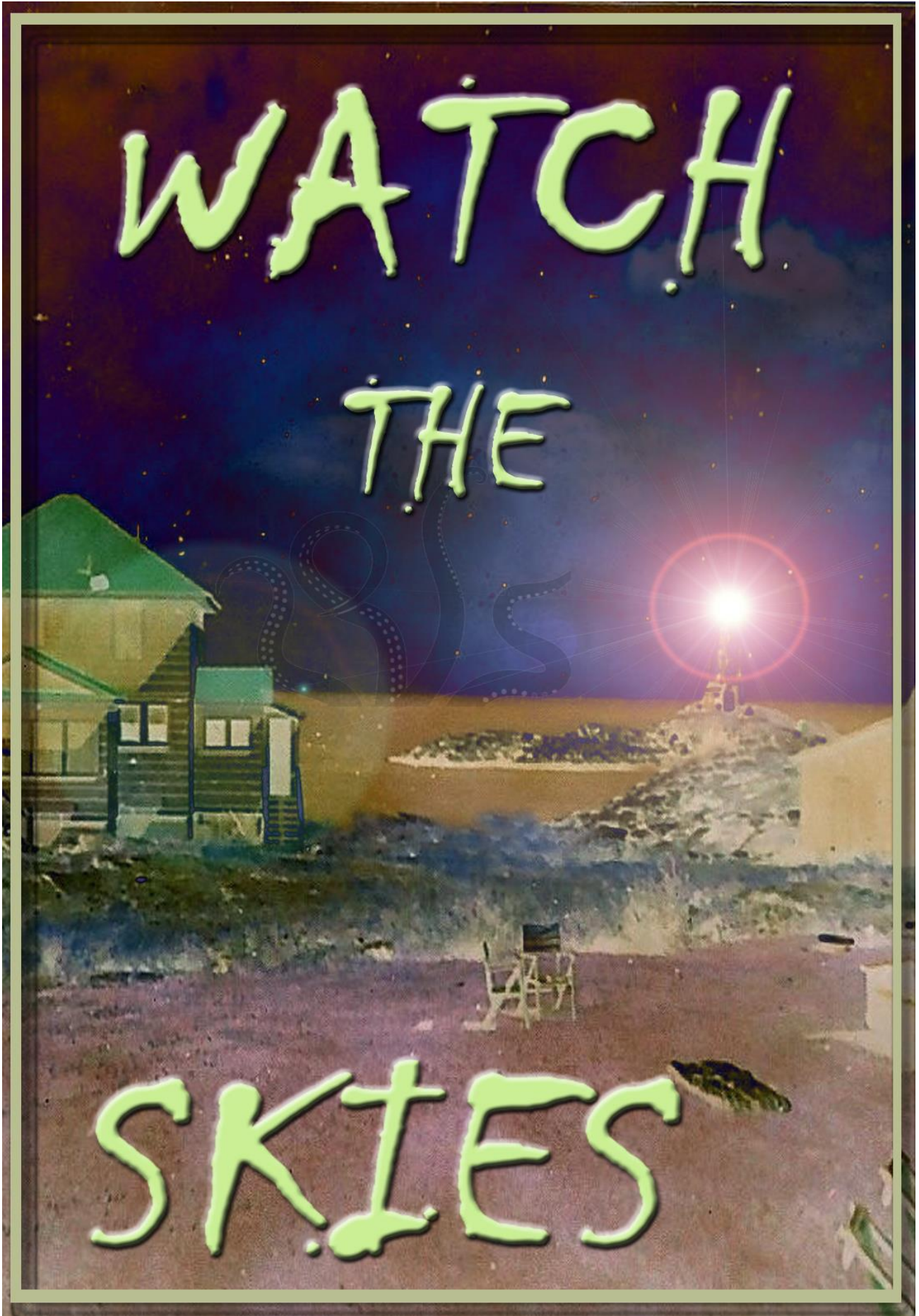


WATCH

THE

SKIES





Annihilation

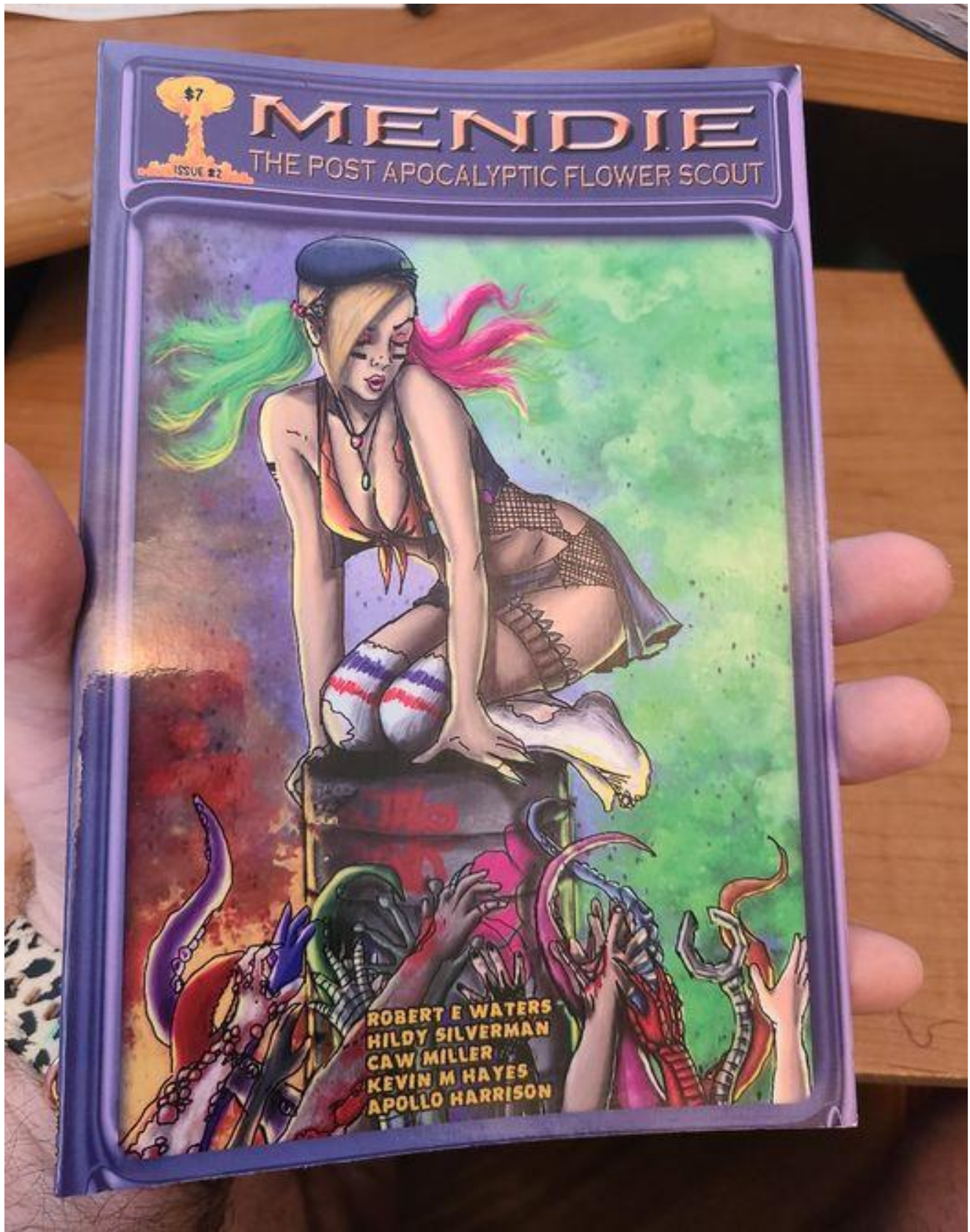
By Jeff Vandermeer

24.9

The twelfth expedition believes they are prepared for Area X. Each has their own reasons for the journey. The biologist is trying to unravel the mystery of her past, searching for the reason behind the changes in her husband. But Area X is a diffraction of reality. What seems obvious is seldom so. With its own mysterious geography of the Tower and the Lighthouse and the wreckage of human habitation in between, the Area affects the explorers and the expedition quickly falters, the members turning away or on each other. The biologist starts to question the preparations they were given and wonders about the secret agenda that looms over her as she begins to unravel the mysteries of the altered nature inside the Area. If she survives, will she be able to escape and more importantly, will it really be her who leaves the Area?

- October's meeting is on the 16th, in person, at the Simpson Library, Mechanicsburg (unless otherwise announced) and the book of the month is The Nameless Restaurant – Tao Wong
- Cover art by Eric V. Hardenbrook

Check out the website at: watchtheskies.org or
contact us at: wtsnewsletter@gmail.com



AVAILABLE NOW

NEW RELEASES

OCTOBER 2024

KEVIN J. ANDERSON - **Nether Station**
KELLEY ARMSTRONG - **Schemes & Scandals**
KELLEY ARMSTRONG - **I'll Be Waiting**
STEPHEN BAXTER - **Fortress Sol**
OLIVIE BLAKE • **Januaries**
ISABEL CAÑAS - **The Vampires of El Norte**
C.J. CHERRYH & JANE S. FANCHER - **Alliance Unbound**
RICHARD CHIZMAR - **Memorials**
SUSANNA CLARKE - **The Wood at Midwinter**
BLAKE CROUCH - **Run**
NICK CUTTER - **The Queen**
INDRAPRAMIT DAS, ED. - **Deep Dream: Science Fiction Exploring
the Future of Art**
ELLEN DATLOW, ED. - **The Best Horror of the Year • Volume Sixteen**
DELILAH S. DAWSON - **It Will Only Hurt for a**
HARLAN ELLISON & J. MICHAEL STRACZYNSKI, EDS. - **The Last**
MICHAEL KELLY, ED. - **Northern Nights**
BETHANY JACOBS - **On Vicious Worlds**
KENDARE BLAKE - **Warrior of Legend**
KATE ELLIOTT - **The History of the World Begins in Ice: Stories and
Essays from the World of Cold Magic**
ERIC FLINT & JODY LYNN NYE - **1635: The Weaver's Code**
PAULA GURAN, ED. - **The Year's Best Dark Fantasy and Horror: Volume 5**
KIM HARRISON - **Demon's Bluff**
KEVIN HEARNE - **Candle & Crow**
NALO HOPKINSON - **Jamaica Ginger and Other Concoctions**
HUGH HOWEY & JOHN JOSEPH ADAMS, EDS. - **The Best American
Science Fiction and Fantasy 2024**
GABINO IGLESIAS - **House of Bone and Rain**
ALLAN KASTER, ED. - **The Year's Top Robot and AI Stories: Fifth**
JOHN KESSEL - **The Presidential Papers
Annual Collection**
KATHE KOJA - **Catherine the Ghost**
JOE R. LANSDALE - **In the Mad Mountains: Stories Inspired by
H.P. Lovecraft**
FREYA MARSKE - **Swordcrossed**

JULIET E. MCKENNA - Polestars 10: Different Times and Other Places
ALAN MOORE - The Great When
KIM NEWMAN - A Christmas Ghost Story
EHIGBOR OKOSUN - Exiled by Iron
NUZO ONOH - Where the Dead Brides Gather **H.G. PARRY - The Scholar and the Last Faerie Door**
SARAH PINBOROUGH - Blood
RIVERS SOLOMON - Model Home
NEAL STEPHENSON - Polostan
HARRY TURTLEDOVE - Other People's Playgrounds
JEFF VANDERMEER - Absolution
CARRIE VAUGHN - The Naturalist Society
NGHI VO - The City in Glass
JANEEN WEBB - Scorpion Girl



HAPPY 10 YEAR ANNIVERSARY TO eSPEC BOOKS

NEWS OF THE REALM

Capclave 2024

September 27-29, Hilton Washington DC/Rockville, Rockville, MD

Guests of Honor Matt Dinnman, Sheree Renee Thomas

“Capclave is a small relaxed literary convention with a program that usually focuses on the short fiction form.”

Philcon 2024

87th convention, November 22-24, Double Tree by Hilton, Cherry Hill, NJ

Principle Speaker – Max Gladstone, Artist Guests Matthew Stewart and Gina Matarazzo, Special Guest Nghi Vo, and Musical Guest Cecilia Eng

“Started in 1936, Philcon features cutting-edge programming about literature, art, television, film, anime, comics, science, gaming, costuming and cosplay, music, and other topics of interest to fans of sci-fi, fantasy, and horror.”

2024 Ditmar Award

The preliminary ballot for the 2024 Ditmar Awards for Australian SF has been announced:

Best Novel

Polyphemus - Zachary Ashford

The Tangled Lands - Glenda Larke

The Sinister Booksellers of Bath - Garth Nix

Dream Weaver - Steven Paulsen

When Dark Roots Hunt - Zena Shapter

Traitor's Run - Keith Stevenson

2024 Sturgeon Award

Goes to R.S.A. Garcia for the short story “Tantie Merle and the Farmhand 4200”

2024 Dragon Awards

Best Science Fiction Novel

WINNER: **Starter Villain**, John Scalzi

Best Fantasy Novel (Including Paranormal)

WINNER: **Iron Flame**, Rebecca Yarros

Best Young Adult / Middle Grade Novel

WINNER: **Midnight at the Houdini**, Delilah S. Dawson

Best Alternate History Novel

WINNER: **All the Dead Shall Weep**, Charlaine Harris

Best Horror Novel

WINNER: **Black River Orchard**, Chuck Wendig

Best Illustrative Cover

WINNER: Kelly Chong for **Of Jade and Dragons**, Amber Chen

Best Comic Book or Graphic Novel

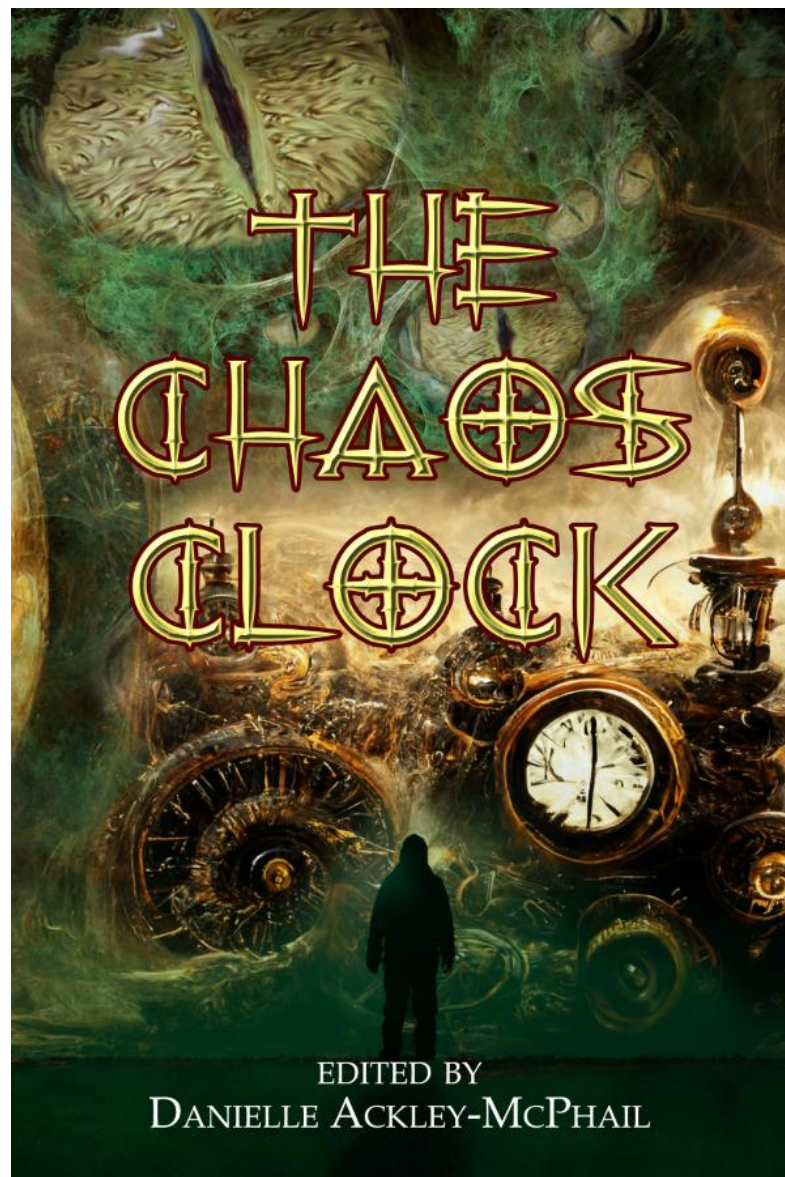
WINNER: Monstress, Marjorie Liu & Sana Takeda

Best Science Fiction or Fantasy TV Series, TV or Internet

WINNER: **Fallout**

Best Science Fiction or Fantasy Movie

WINNER: *Dune: Part Two*



AVAILABLE NOW

Tillyer's News of the High Frontier

SEPTEMBER 2024

Humanity is not particularly good at picking up after itself. Scientists exploring the ocean in the Mariana Trench, at the Challenger Deep, the deepest point of the Earth, found an intact green glass beer bottle. Here at the utmost extreme, we've still managed to litter. Now, there's also the fact that a glass bottle managed to survive in conditions that would easily crush a human being that has a few folks scratching their heads. Most believe that the open nature of the bottle allowed the pressure to balance. A plastic grocery store bag was also found. Beyond that plastic is showing on islands that haven't even been visited by humans. Possibly from the giant gyre of trash in the Pacific.

The Carlsbad Cavern system of caves recently experienced a similar incident that caused a brief change in the biosphere of the cave. Due to the lack of natural light, limited amounts of water, and a consistent temperature, adding a bag of Cheetos to the mixture can cause sudden changes delicate webs of life. The corn in the snack created a breeding ground for molds and fungi, which in turn provided food for insects, who in turn attracted spiders. In what is typically a sort of food desert, Cheetos created a brief oasis. Caves are delicately balanced environments (similar to the environment of a spaceship, balanced with limited resources). Never mind the fact that areas of the caves that receive visitors receive additional light, heat, and whatever is tracked in on the shoes of the public. The Cheetos are a good example of how one small change can have larger effects.

Then there's Mars, the Moon, Jupiter, and our Lower Earth Orbit. For every probe we've sent out, or satellite we've placed in orbit there seems to be little thought about their ultimate fate. Now, if things fall into the atmosphere there's a good chance that they will burn up on re-entry, but there's plenty of evidence that they won't in some cases too. All of our rover probes are not designed to be "biodegradable". They are all sitting right where they've failed. In fact, we've designed some of them so well that they've gone on way past their expiration dates and keep on going. Pretty sure that this is good evidence they have a lifetime in the hundreds of years before breaking down completely. Right now, dust, cosmic radiation, and solar heating are the only things working on breaking down the landers, rovers, and a flag we left on the Moon. Maybe one of the Artemis missions down the road will be to pick up after ourselves. That's unlikely, because bringing back our trash costs energy and fuel. Remember the closed environment of the cave? That's Artemis in a nutshell. Cheetos are not the answer here. Finally, there's all of the loose trash that's in orbit around the Earth. This creates a navigational hazard and creates the possibility of impacts on missions, satellites, and even the ISS. We've been living in a throw-away economy for a long time. The evidence is all around us, literally. It's not tremendously efficient and it's not sustainable. Maybe we can start at home and then do better about this when we go visiting.

