"Turning Satellite Data into Global Precipitation Maps"

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It's really obvious how to measure rain and snowfall – just put a container out in the yard. But, it turns out the physical processes that create precipitation, and the practicalities of taking measurements everywhere, make satellites key tools in mapping rain and snowfall around the globe. Employing satellites in this meteorological detective story involves some science, some technology, a lot of computing, and, yes, rocket science. The payoff is that we know more about how much rain and snow fell in, say, 2010, than we knew at the time that it fell, and we're ready to make the same kind of estimate for tomorrow's storms. There is still a lot of work to be done to make these estimates more reliable and accurate.