

Coscattering Dark Matter in Inverse Scotogenic Models

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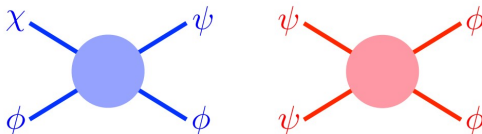
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July 22, 2026

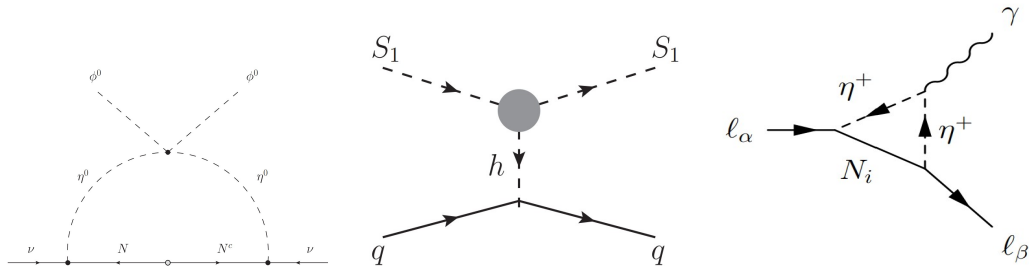
Based on JHEP **06**, 218 (2026)[arXiv:2510.13231]

Introduction

- ★ The WIMP dark matter typically requires a thermally averaged annihilation cross section $\langle\sigma v\rangle \sim 2 \times 10^{-26} \text{cm}^3 \text{s}^{-1}$.
- ★ Well known three exceptions [Phys. Rev. D 43, 3191 (1991)]
 - Coannihilation: mutual annihilation of multiple species
 - Forbidden: annihilation into heavier states
 - Resonance: annihilation near a pole in the cross section
- ★ The fourth exception [Phys.Rev.Lett. 119 (2017) 6, 061102]
 - Coscattering: inelastic conversions with its heavier partner
 - χ/ψ interchange : $\chi\phi \rightarrow \psi\phi$
 - ψ annihilation: $\psi\psi \rightarrow \phi\phi$



The Scotogenic Model



- ★ Neutrino masses are generated via loop diagrams mediated by the dark particles.
- ★ When dark matter pair annihilates via the **Yukawa portal** interactions, stringent constraints are from **lepton flavor violation**.
- ★ When dark matter annihilates via the **Higgs/Vector portal** interactions, stringent constraints are from **direct detection**.
- ★ New viable pathway for dark matter: **Coscaterring mechanism**

Theoretical Framework

- ★ Scotogenic inverse model: doublet fermion $\Psi \equiv (\psi^0, \psi^-)^T$, singlet fermion χ and three real singlet scalar $\phi_i (i = 1, 2, 3)$
- ★ Assuming the scalar mass spectrum $m_{\phi_1} \lesssim m_{\phi_2} \ll m_{\phi_3}$ for simplicity
- ★ The most general scalar potential:

$$\begin{aligned} -\mathcal{L}_V = & \left(\frac{\lambda_1}{2} \phi_1^2 + \frac{\lambda_2}{2} \phi_2^2 + \lambda_{12} \phi_1 \phi_2 \right) H^\dagger H + \frac{\lambda_{22}}{4} \phi_1^2 \phi_2^2 \\ & + \frac{\lambda_{13}}{6} \phi_1 \phi_2^3 + \frac{\lambda_{31}}{6} \phi_1^3 \phi_2 + \frac{\lambda_{14}}{12} \phi_1^4 + \frac{\lambda_{24}}{12} \phi_2^4, \end{aligned} \quad (1)$$

- ★ The Yukawa interaction of the dark scalars is

$$\mathcal{L}_Y = y_{i\alpha} \phi_i \bar{\Psi} \ell_\alpha + \text{H.C.}, \quad (2)$$

where $\ell_\alpha = (\nu_\alpha, \ell_\alpha^-)^T$ is the SM lepton doublets.

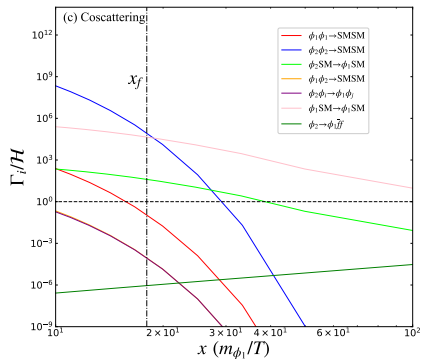
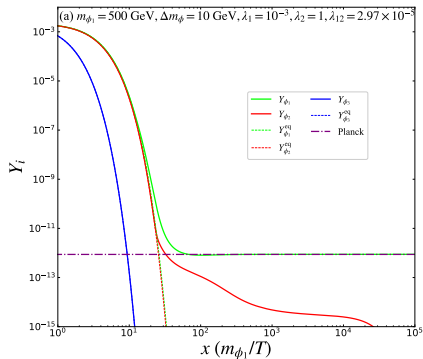
Higgs Portal: Relic Density

★The Boltzmann equation for dark matter ϕ_1 is

$$\begin{aligned}
 \frac{dY_{\phi_1}}{dx} = & -\frac{s}{\mathcal{H}x} \left[\langle \sigma v \rangle_{\phi_1 \phi_1 \rightarrow \text{SMSM}} \left(Y_{\phi_1}^2 - (Y_{\phi_1}^{\text{eq}})^2 \right) + \langle \sigma v \rangle_{\phi_1 \phi_2 \rightarrow \text{SMSM}} \left(Y_{\phi_1} Y_{\phi_2} - Y_{\phi_1}^{\text{eq}} Y_{\phi_2}^{\text{eq}} \right) \right. \\
 & - \langle \sigma v \rangle_{\phi_2 \text{SM} \rightarrow \phi_1 \text{SM}} \left(Y_{\phi_2} Y_{\text{SM}}^{\text{eq}} - \frac{Y_{\phi_2}^{\text{eq}}}{Y_{\phi_1}^{\text{eq}}} Y_{\phi_1} Y_{\text{SM}}^{\text{eq}} \right) - \langle \sigma v \rangle_{\phi_2 \phi_2 \rightarrow \phi_1 \phi_1} \left(Y_{\phi_2}^2 - \frac{(Y_{\phi_2}^{\text{eq}})^2}{(Y_{\phi_1}^{\text{eq}})^2} Y_{\phi_1}^2 \right) \\
 & - \langle \sigma v \rangle_{\phi_1 \phi_2 \rightarrow \phi_1 \phi_1} \left(Y_{\phi_1} Y_{\phi_2} - \frac{Y_{\phi_2}^{\text{eq}}}{Y_{\phi_1}^{\text{eq}}} Y_{\phi_1}^2 \right) - \langle \sigma v \rangle_{\phi_2 \phi_2 \rightarrow \phi_1 \phi_2} \left(Y_{\phi_2}^2 - \frac{Y_{\phi_2}^{\text{eq}}}{Y_{\phi_1}^{\text{eq}}} Y_{\phi_1} Y_{\phi_2} \right) \\
 & \left. - \frac{\Gamma_{\phi_2 \rightarrow \phi_1 \bar{f} f}}{s} \left(Y_{\phi_2} - \frac{Y_{\phi_2}^{\text{eq}}}{Y_{\phi_1}^{\text{eq}}} Y_{\phi_1} \right) \right], \tag{3}
 \end{aligned}$$

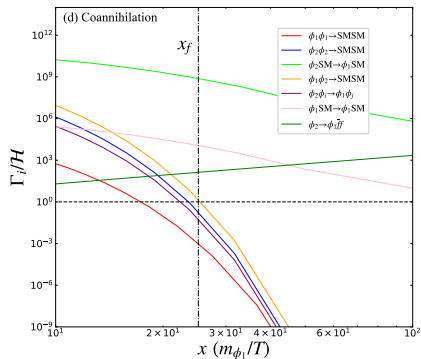
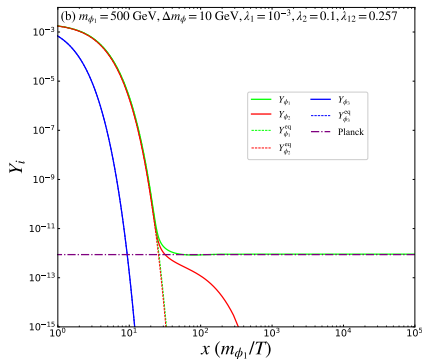
Pair annihilation : $\phi_1 \phi_1 \rightarrow \text{SMSM}$, Coannihilation : $\phi_1 \phi_2 \rightarrow \text{SMSM}$ Coscattering : $\phi_2 \text{SM} \rightarrow \phi_1 \text{SM}$,
 Conversion : $\phi_2 \phi_i \rightarrow \phi_1 \phi_j$, Decay : $\phi_2 \rightarrow \phi_1 \bar{f} f$

Coscattering Benchmark



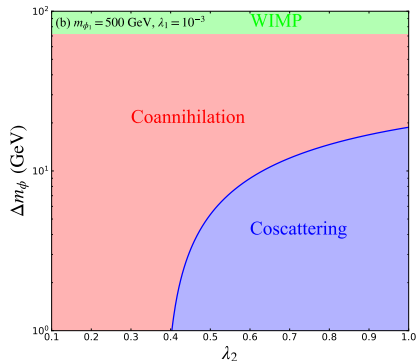
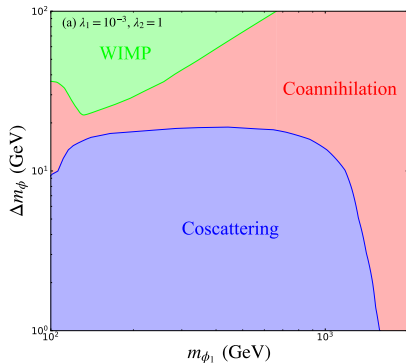
- ★ Large value of λ_2 , tiny value of λ_{12} , small value of λ_1 .
- ★ The last reaction to decouple which changes the number density of ϕ_1 is the coscattering process $\phi_2 \text{SM} \rightarrow \phi_1 \text{SM}$.

Coannihilation Benchmark



- ★ Relatively large value of λ_2 and λ_{12} , small value of λ_1 .
- ★ The last reaction to decouple which changes the number density of ϕ_1 is the coannihilation process $\phi_1 \phi_2 \rightarrow \text{SMSM}$.

Freeze-out phases



- ★ Coscattering favors $\Delta m_\phi \lesssim 20$ GeV, light dark matter $m_{\phi_1} \lesssim 1$ TeV, and large $\lambda_2 \gtrsim 0.4$.
- ★ Traditional WIMP favors large mass splitting.
- ★ Coannihilation is dominant in the transition region.

Phenomenology of Dark Matter ϕ_1

★ Four benchmark scenario:

[a] $\lambda_2 = 1, \Delta m_\phi = 1 \text{ GeV}$ [b] $\lambda_2 = 1, \Delta m_\phi = 10 \text{ GeV}$

[c] $\lambda_2 = 0.1, \Delta m_\phi = 1 \text{ GeV}$ [d] $\lambda_2 = 0.1, \Delta m_\phi = 10 \text{ GeV}$

★ Perform a scan in the following parameter ranges:

$$m_{\phi_1} \in [10, 2000] \text{ GeV}, \lambda_1 \in [10^{-4}, 1], \lambda_{12} \in [10^{-5}, 1]. \quad (4)$$

The DM relic density is required within the 3σ range of the Planck result

★ The spin-independent scattering cross section is calculated as

$$\sigma_{\text{SI}} = \frac{\lambda_1^2 C^2 m_n^4}{4\pi(m_{\phi_1} + m_n)^2 m_h^4}, \quad (5)$$

where $C \simeq 0.3$ is a nucleon matrix element dependent constant, and m_n is the nucleon mass.

Higgs Decay

Light scalars induce new decay modes of the SM Higgs as $h \rightarrow \phi_i \phi_j$. The decay widths are calculated as

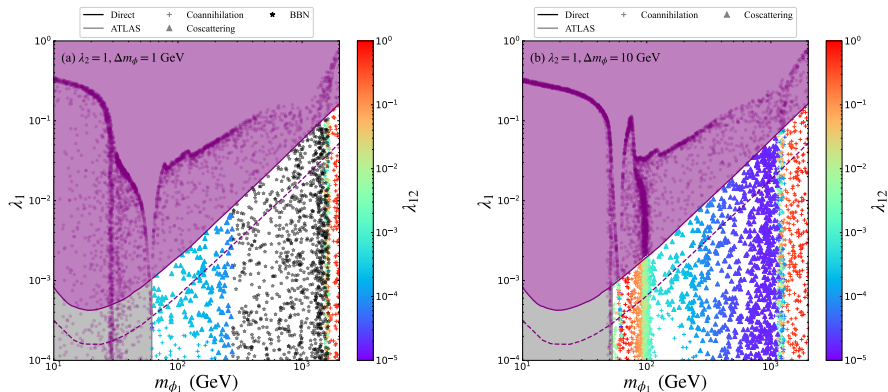
$$\Gamma_{h \rightarrow \phi_1 \phi_1} = \frac{\lambda_1^2 v_H^2}{32\pi m_h} \sqrt{1 - \frac{4m_{\phi_1}^2}{m_h^2}}, \quad (6)$$

$$\Gamma_{h \rightarrow \phi_1 \phi_2} = \frac{\lambda_{12}^2 v_H^2}{16\pi m_h^3} \sqrt{(m_h^2 - \Delta m_\phi^2)(m_h^2 - (\Delta m_\phi + 2m_{\phi_1})^2)}, \quad (7)$$

$$\Gamma_{h \rightarrow \phi_2 \phi_2} = \frac{\lambda_2^2 v_H^2}{32\pi m_h} \sqrt{1 - \frac{4(m_{\phi_1} + \Delta m_\phi)^2}{m_h^2}}, \quad (8)$$

- ★ The ATLAS upper limits of invisible and undetected non-SM Higgs boson decays are $\text{BR}_{\text{inv.}} < 0.11$ and $\text{BR}_{\text{u.}} < 0.12$.
- ★ For $\lambda_2 \geq 0.1$, the region with $m_{\phi_2} < m_h/2$ is totally excluded.

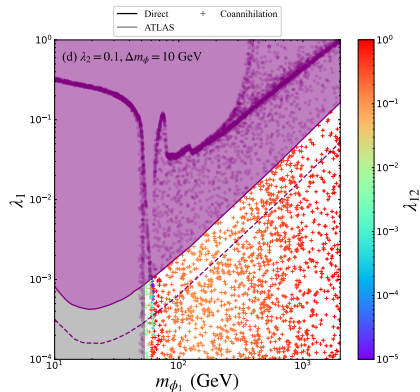
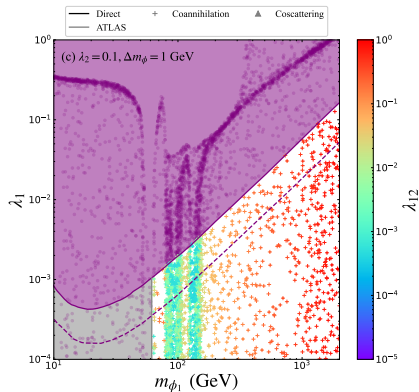
Direct Detection and Higgs Decay



Scenario [a] Samples distributed within $m_{\phi_1} \lesssim 270 \text{ GeV}$ and $3 \times 10^{-4} \lesssim \lambda_1 \lesssim 7.6 \times 10^{-3}$ are dominated by coscattering.

Scenario [b] Increasing Δm_ϕ to 10 GeV can satisfy the BBN constraint for coscattering within $100 \text{ GeV} < m_{\phi_1} < 1150 \text{ GeV}$

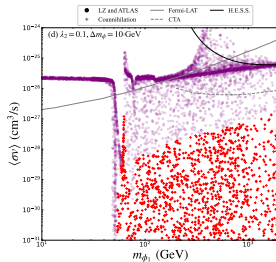
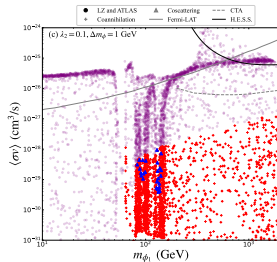
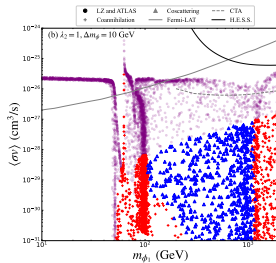
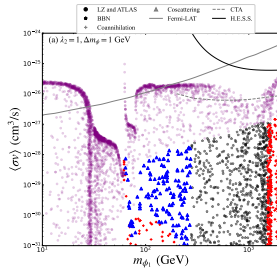
Direct Detection and Higgs Decay



Scenario [c] Coscattering appears around $m_{\phi_1} \sim 100$ GeV.

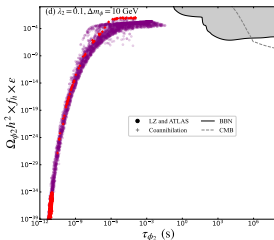
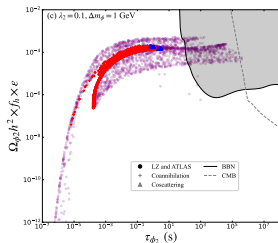
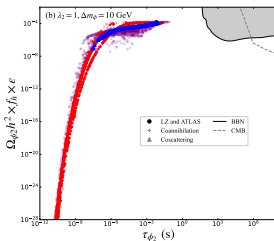
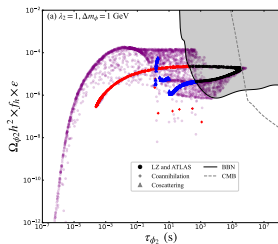
Scenario [d] No coscattering samples.

Indirect Detection



Under the tight constraints from direct detection, indirect detection is not promising even for the future experiments.

Cosmological constraints on long-lived ϕ_2



The decay width
 $\Gamma_{\phi_2} \propto \lambda_{12}^2 (\Delta m_\phi)^5$.
 BBN imposes limits on
 $\tau_{\phi_2} \gtrsim 50 \text{ s}$, which exclude
 certain samples with
 $\Delta m_\phi = 1 \text{ GeV}$.

Displaced vertex signature of ϕ_2

- ★ Higgs portal channels at LHC

$$pp \rightarrow h^{(\star)} \rightarrow \phi_1 \phi_2 \rightarrow \phi_1 \phi_1 \bar{f} f, \quad (9)$$

$$pp \rightarrow h^{(\star)} \rightarrow \phi_2 \phi_2 \rightarrow \phi_1 \phi_1 \bar{f} f \bar{f} f, \quad (10)$$

- ★ The number of events for the one displaced vertex N_{DV} is

$$\begin{aligned} N_{\text{DV}} = & L_{\text{int}} \times \sigma(pp \rightarrow \phi_1 \phi_2) \times P_{\text{dec}} \times \text{BR}_{\text{vis}} \times \kappa_1 \\ & + 2L_{\text{int}} \times \sigma(pp \rightarrow \phi_2 \phi_2) \times P_{\text{dec}} \times \text{BR}_{\text{vis}} \times \kappa_2, \end{aligned} \quad (11)$$

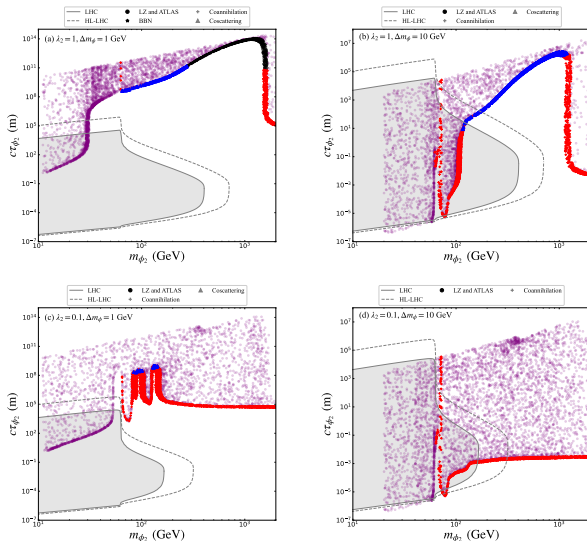
$L_{\text{int}} = 139 \text{ fb}^{-1}$ for LHC and $L_{\text{int}} = 3000 \text{ fb}^{-1}$ for HL-LHC

P_{dec} is the decay probability within detector, $\text{BR}_{\text{vis}} \simeq 1$,

optimistic estimation with the detection efficiency $\kappa_{1,2} = 1$

vanishing background, the sensitive region is derived with $N_{\text{DV}} = 3$

Sensitive region of the one DV



$\Delta m_\phi = 1$ GeV is beyond the reach of LHC.
 $\Delta m_\phi = 10$ GeV, LHC covers coannihilation or coscattering samples with $m_{\phi_2} \lesssim 200$ GeV.

Yukawa Portal: Relic Density

★ The Boltzmann equation for dark matter ϕ_1 is

$$\begin{aligned} \frac{dY_{\phi_1}}{dx} = & -\frac{s}{\mathcal{H}x} \left[\langle \sigma v \rangle_{\phi_1 \phi_1 \rightarrow \bar{\ell} \ell} \left(Y_{\phi_1}^2 - (Y_{\phi_1}^{\text{eq}})^2 \right) + \langle \sigma v \rangle_{\phi_1 \phi_2 \rightarrow \bar{\ell} \ell} \left(Y_{\phi_1} Y_{\phi_2} - Y_{\phi_1}^{\text{eq}} Y_{\phi_2}^{\text{eq}} \right) \right. \\ & - \langle \sigma v \rangle_{\phi_2 \ell \rightarrow \phi_1 \ell} \left(Y_{\phi_2} Y_{\ell}^{\text{eq}} - \frac{Y_{\phi_2}^{\text{eq}}}{Y_{\phi_1}^{\text{eq}}} Y_{\phi_1} Y_{\ell}^{\text{eq}} \right) - \frac{\Gamma_{\phi_2 \rightarrow \phi_1 \bar{\ell} \ell}}{s} \left(Y_{\phi_2} - \frac{Y_{\phi_2}^{\text{eq}}}{Y_{\phi_1}^{\text{eq}}} Y_{\phi_1} \right) \left. \right], \end{aligned} \quad (12)$$

Pair annihilation : $\phi_1 \phi_1 \rightarrow \bar{\ell} \ell$, Coannihilation : $\phi_1 \phi_2 \rightarrow \bar{\ell} \ell$

Coscattering : $\phi_2 \text{SM} \rightarrow \phi_1 \text{SM}$, Decay : $\phi_2 \rightarrow \phi_1 \bar{\ell} \ell$

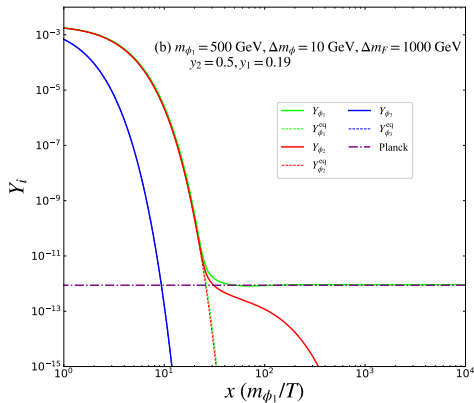
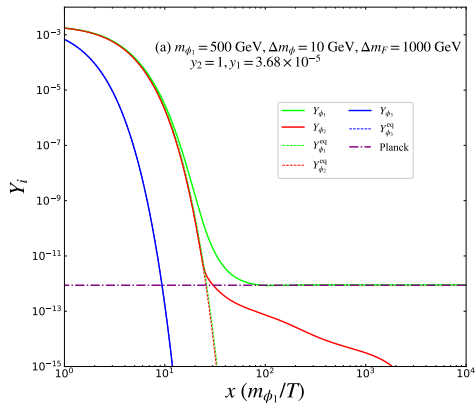
★ Differences from the Higgs portal:

1 No conversion terms $\phi_2 \phi_i \rightarrow \phi_1 \phi_j$ between the scalars

2 Only involve SM leptons via Yukawa interaction $y_{i\alpha} \phi_i \bar{\Psi} \ell_{\alpha}$

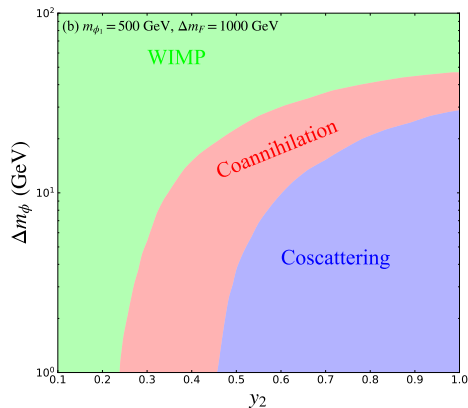
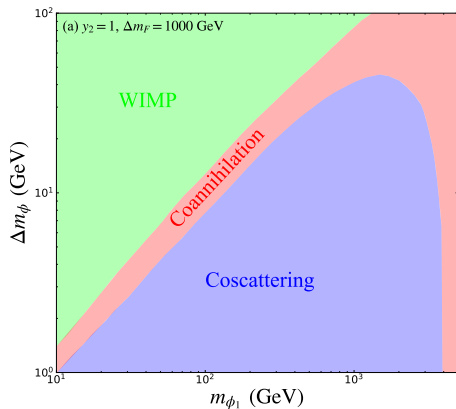
★ The effective Yukawa coupling $y_i = \sqrt{|y_{ie}|^2 + |y_{i\mu}|^2 + |y_{i\tau}|^2}$

Coscattering and Coannihilation Benchmark



- (a): Large value of y_2 , tiny value of y_1 , Coscattering $\phi_2 \ell \rightarrow \phi_1 \ell$
 (b): Relatively large value of y_2, y_1 , Coannihilation $\phi_1 \phi_2 \rightarrow \bar{\ell} \ell$

Freeze-out phase



- ★ Coscattering favors $\Delta m_\phi/m_{\phi_1} \lesssim 0.1$, $m_{\phi_1} \lesssim 2$ TeV and $y_2 \gtrsim 0.5$.
- ★ Coannihilation favors $\Delta m_\phi/m_{\phi_1} \sim 0.1$, $y_2 \gtrsim 0.25$.

Constraints from LFV

- ★ The branching ratio of $\mu \rightarrow e\gamma$ can be expressed as

$$\text{BR}_{\mu \rightarrow e\gamma} = \frac{3\alpha_{\text{em}}}{64\pi G_f^2 m_F^4} \left| \sum_i y_{ie}^* y_{i\mu} G(m_{\phi_i}^2/m_F^2) \right|^2, \quad (13)$$

where Fermi constant $G_f = 1.17 \times 10^{-5} \text{ GeV}^{-2}$ and fine structure constant $\alpha_{\text{em}} = 1/137$.
And

$$G(a) = \frac{2 - 3a - 6a^2 + a^3 + 6a \log a}{6(1 - a)^4}. \quad (14)$$

- ★ MEG experiment is $\text{BR}_{\mu \rightarrow e\gamma} < 1.5 \times 10^{-13}$, which roughly requires the condition $|\sum y_{ie} y_{i\mu}| \lesssim 10^{-3}$ for TeV scale m_F .
- ★ Hierarchical Yukawa couplings as $|y_{ie}| \ll |y_{i\mu}| \lesssim |y_{i\tau}| \sim \mathcal{O}(1)$

Scan Result

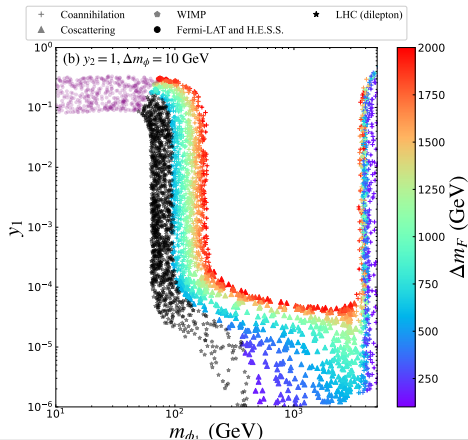
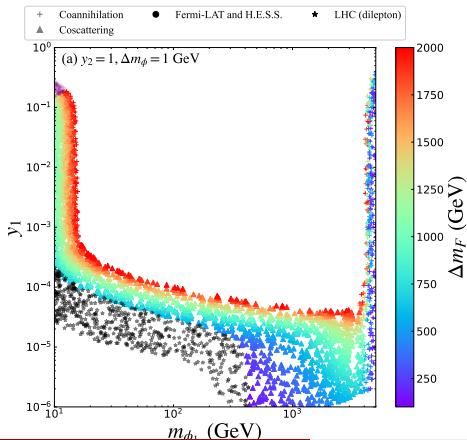
★ Four benchmark scenario:

[a] $y_2 = 1, \Delta m_\phi = 1 \text{ GeV}$

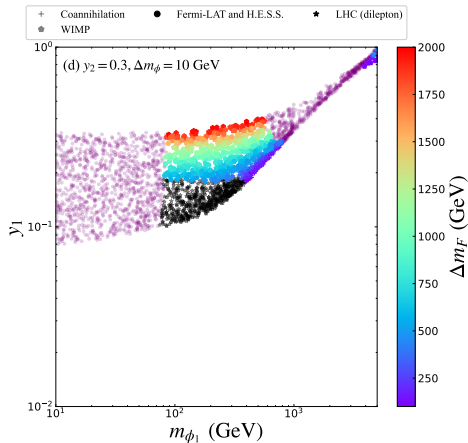
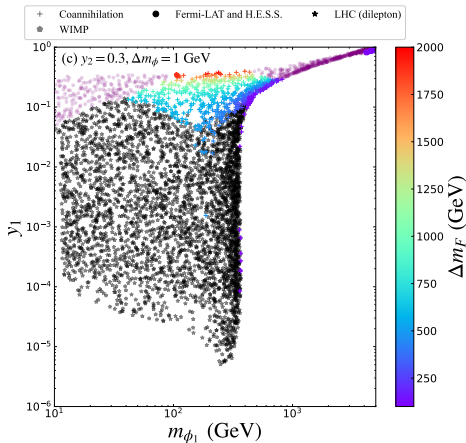
[b] $y_2 = 1, \Delta m_\phi = 10 \text{ GeV}$

[c] $y_2 = 0.1, \Delta m_\phi = 1 \text{ GeV}$

[d] $y_2 = 0.1, \Delta m_\phi = 10 \text{ GeV}$

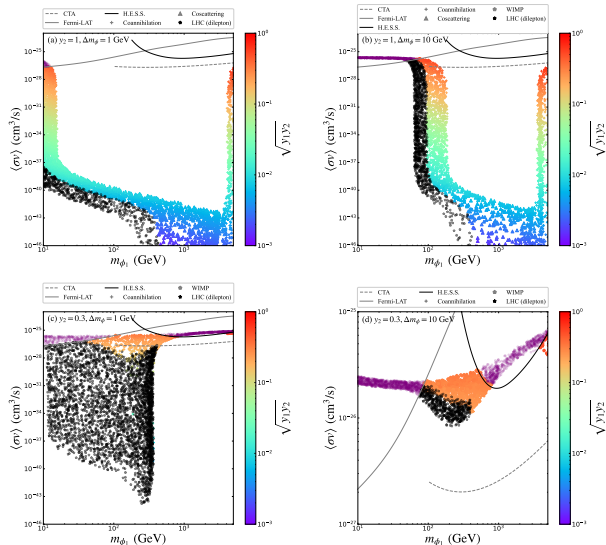


Scan Result



- ★ The upper/lower bounds of the samples correspond to the maximum/minimum of Δm_F
- ★ Dilepton signature $pp \rightarrow \psi^+ \psi^- \rightarrow \ell^+ \ell^- + \cancel{E}_T$ exclude certain parameter region.

Indirect Detection



- ★ WIMP is typically disfavored by indirect detection.
- ★ Coannihilation might be tested in the future.
- ★ Coscattering is beyond the scope.

Collider Signature through Yukawa Portal

★ The dominant processes as

$$pp \rightarrow \psi^+\psi^- \rightarrow \ell^+\phi_2 + \ell^-\phi_2 \rightarrow \ell^+\phi_1\ell^+\ell^- + \ell^-\phi_1\ell^+\ell^-, \quad (15)$$

$$pp \rightarrow \bar{\psi}^0\psi^0 \rightarrow \bar{\nu}\phi_2 + \nu\phi_2 \rightarrow \bar{\nu}\phi_1\ell^+\ell^- + \nu\phi_1\ell^+\ell^-, \quad (16)$$

$$pp \rightarrow \psi^\pm\psi^0 \rightarrow \ell^\pm\phi_2 + \nu\phi_2 \rightarrow \ell^\pm\phi_1\ell^+\ell^- + \nu\phi_1\ell^+\ell^-. \quad (17)$$

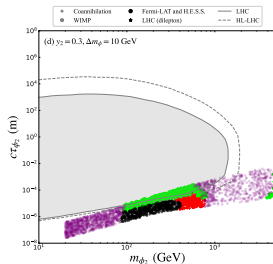
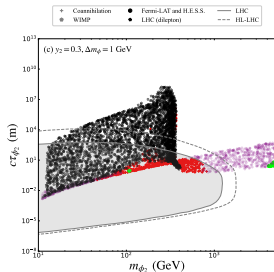
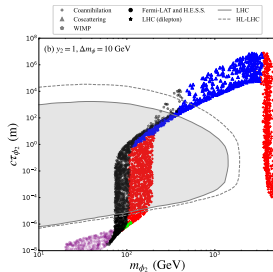
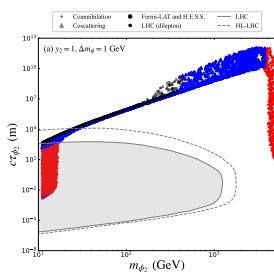
★ The number of events for the one displaced vertex N_{DV} is

$$\begin{aligned} N_{\text{DV}} &= 2L_{\text{int}} \times \sigma(pp \rightarrow \psi^+\psi^-, \bar{\psi}^0\psi^0) \times \text{BR}_{\Psi \rightarrow \phi_2\ell}^2 \times P_{\text{dec}} \times \text{BR}_{\text{vis}} \times \kappa'_1 \\ &+ 2L_{\text{int}} \times \sigma(pp \rightarrow \psi^\pm\psi^0) \times \text{BR}_{\Psi \rightarrow \phi_2\ell}^2 \times P_{\text{dec}} \times \text{BR}_{\text{vis}} \times \kappa'_2. \end{aligned}$$

★ The decay mode $\phi_2 \rightarrow \phi_1\bar{\nu}\nu$, which is invisible at colliders.

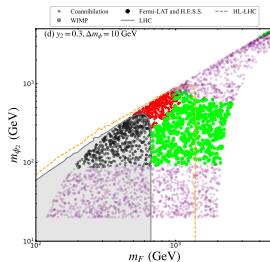
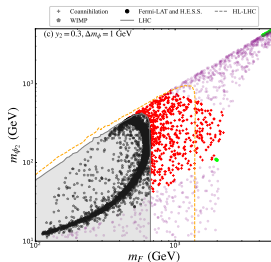
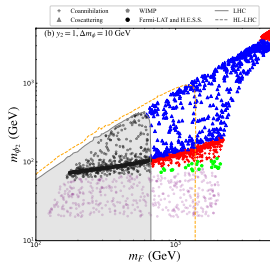
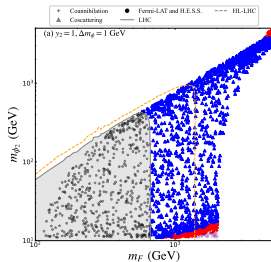
The dilepton signature $pp \rightarrow \psi^+\psi^- \rightarrow \ell^+\ell^- + \cancel{E}_T$

Displaced Vertex Signature of ϕ_2



LHC could probe coannihilation and cosecting samples with $y_2 = 1$ and m_ϕ below TeV.

Dilepton Signature



- ★ LHC has excluded $m_F \lesssim 660$ GeV and $m_{\phi_2} \lesssim 400$ GeV.
- ★ HL-LHC probe $m_F \lesssim 1400$ GeV and $m_{\phi_2} \lesssim 900$ GeV.

Conclusion

- ★ Coscattering Dark Matter via the process $\chi_2^{\text{SM}} \rightarrow \chi_1^{\text{SM}}$ is viable in the Scotogenic model.
- ★ Higgs portal scenario
 - 1 Coscattering favors small mass splitting Δm_ϕ and large λ_2 .
 - 2 Positive direct detection signal, negative indirect detection one.
 - 3 Coannihilation leads to observable displaced vertex signature.
- ★ Yukawa portal scenario
 - 1 Coscattering favors small mass splitting Δm_ϕ and large y_2 .
 - 2 Negative direct detection signal, positive indirect detection one.
 - 3 Coannihilation and coscattering both leads to observable displaced vertex and dilepton signature.