

Extreme sudoku 66: XYZ-wing, 26 clues

Hardest step: XYZ-wing · 26 clues · one solution

2								
	6		7		3	9		
						5	7	8
7	5		2					
		6	8					1
9			4	6				
	7				4		9	
			9			2		3
	4				2	1		

Extreme sudoku 66: the key move (XYZ-wing)

The board just before the hardest step

2	9	7	¹ 5	¹ 4 5	8	³ 6	¹ 3	4 6
8	6	5	7	¹ 4	3	9	¹ 2	2 4
1	3	4	6	2	9	5	7	8
7	5	8	2	3	1	4	6	9
4	2	6	8	9	⁵ 7	³ 7	³ ~~5~~	1
9	1	3	4	6	⁵ 7	⁷ 8	2 5 8	2 5
3	7	2	¹ 5	¹ 5 8	4	⁶ 8	9	5 6
5	8	1	9	7	6	2	4	3
6	4	9	3	⁵ 8	2	1	⁵ 8	7

XYZ-wing. The pivot R6C8 has three candidates; the wings R6C9 and R9C8 hold two of them each, and 5 is in all three cells. One of the three must be 5, so 5 comes off the cells that see all three: R5C8. R4C7 means row 4, column 7.

Violet digits are already solved. Tinted cells form the pattern; pink struck digits are the ones it removes.

Extreme sudoku 66: XYZ-wing (solution)

Hardest step: XYZ-wing · 26 clues · one solution

2	9	7	5	4	8	3	1	6
8	6	5	7	1	3	9	2	4
1	3	4	6	2	9	5	7	8
7	5	8	2	3	1	4	6	9
4	2	6	8	9	5	7	3	1
9	1	3	4	6	7	8	5	2
3	7	2	1	8	4	6	9	5
5	8	1	9	7	6	2	4	3
6	4	9	3	5	2	1	8	7

Hardest step. XYZ-wing: pivot R6C8, wings R6C9 and R9C8; removes 5.

Solve path: 9 singles first; 21 squares still open at the hardest step.