Circular No. 8543

Central Bureau for Astronomical Telegrams
INTERNATIONAL ASTRONOMICAL UNION

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COMET P/2005 L4 (CHRISTENSEN)

Eric J. Christensen, Lunar and Planetary Laboratory, reports his discovery of a comet in the course of the Mt. Lemmon Survey on images taken with the 1.5-m reflector (discovery observation given below); the object displays a nearly stellar head with a faint tail $\approx 15''$ long in p.a. 250° (as seen on four co-added 90-s images). Following posting on the 'NEO Confirmation Page', J. E. McGaha (Tucson, AZ, 0.62-m *f*/5.1 reflector) reports that his CCD images taken on June 14.3 UT show a compact coma of diameter $\sim 3''$ with a faint split tail $11''$ long in p.a. 260° and 290°.

2005 UT	α_{2000}	δ_{2000}	Mag.
June 13.35110	$20^h11^m32^s.96$	$-19°11'20''.5$	19.1

The available astrometry (including Spacewatch prediscovery observations back to June 3), the following elliptical orbital elements, and an ephemeris appear on *MPEC* 2005-L65.

$$
\begin{array}{lll}
T = 2005\ \text{Aug. } 24.808\ \text{TT} & \omega = 24^\circ.789 & \\
e = 0.42406 & \Omega = 284.070 & \Big\}\ 2000.0 \\
q = 2.36550\ \text{AU} & i = 17.034 & \\
a = 4.10720\ \text{AU} \quad n^\circ = 0.118409 & P = 8.32\ \text{years} &
\end{array}
$$

COMET C/2005 K2 (LINEAR)

Following news of this comet's apparent outburst in brightness (cf. *IAUC* 8540), several observers have detected what appears to be a splitting of the comet's nucleus. M. Kidger, Instituto de Astrofisica de Canarias, writes that CCD images obtained by J. A. Reyes and S. Pastor (Murcia, Spain) show a secondary tailward condensation on June 12.88 (when it was $29''$ east and $25''$ north of the primary condensation, and 1.4 mag fainter) and 13.89 UT ($29''$ east, $26''$ north; main condensation appears elongated). M. Meyer, Kelkheim, Germany, reports that images taken by M. Jäger and G. Rhemann (near Vienna, Austria) on June 12 show an apparent secondary condensation in the direction of the short tail; they add that this condensation shows more clearly on CCD images taken by D. Strange (Dorset, U.K., 0.50-m *f*/4 telescope) on June 13.98. G. Sostero and E. Guido report that remote CCD imaging using a 0.25-m *f*/3.4 reflector (near Mayhill, NM) reveals the following offsets from the primary and approximate magnitudes for the secondary: June 13.156, $\Delta\alpha = +1^s.91$, $\Delta\delta = +22''.2$, $R \sim 17.1$; June 14.152, $\Delta\alpha = +2^s.74$, $\Delta\delta = +29''.8$, $R \sim 16.9$.

2005 June 14 *Daniel W. E. Green*