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URL `http://cfa-www.harvard.edu/iau/cbat.html` ISSN 0081-0304
Phone 617-495-7440/7244/7444 (for emergency use only)

COMET C/2006 CK_{10} (CATALINA)

C. W. Hergenrother, Lunar and Planetary Laboratory, reports that his CCD frames taken (with A. C. Smith) at the Catalina 1.54-m Kuiper telescope on Feb. 24 and 25 UT, and at the Vatican 1.8-m Lennon telescope on Feb. 28.5, show that 2006 CK_{10} — reported as asteroidal when discovered by the Catalina Sky Survey (cf. *MPEC* 2006-C44; discovery observation tabulated below) — has a cometary appearance; a co-added 1440-s *R*-band exposure on Feb. 24.48 shows a condensed coma 14″ in diameter and a broad tail 20″ long in p.a. 210°. E. J. Christensen reports that four Catalina Sky Survey co-added 90-s CCD images obtained by A. R. Gibbs and himself with the 0.68-m Schmidt telescope on Mar. 2.35–2.36 show a faint coma ≈ 20″ in diameter (mag 17.3), elongated toward p.a. 200°.

2006 UT	α_{2000}	δ_{2000}	Mag.
Feb. 4.43262	$14^h16^m00^s.15$	$+35^\circ00'10''.5$	19.0

Additional astrometry, the following parabolic orbital elements, and an ephemeris appear on *MPEC* 2006-E04.

$$
\begin{array}{lll}
T = 2006\ \text{July}\ 2.6713\ \text{TT} & \omega = 143^\circ.1050 & \\
 & \Omega = 243.7873 & \} 2000.0 \\
q = 1.757046\ \text{AU} & i = 144.2441 &
\end{array}
$$

RS OPHIUCHI

A. Evans, Keele University; T. Kerr, Joint Astronomy Centre; Y. Matsuoka and Y. Tsuzuki, University of Tokyo; T. R. Geballe, Gemini Observatory; R. D. Gehrz and C. E. Woodward, University of Minnesota; M. F. Bode, Liverpool John Moores University; T. J. O'Brien and R. J. Davis, University of Manchester; J. P. Osborne and K. L. Page, University of Leicester; G. Schwarz, West Chester University; S. Starrfield and J.-U. Ness, Arizona State University; J. Krautter, University of Heidelberg; J. Drake, Smithsonian Astrophysical Observatory; and S. P. S. Eyres, University of Central Lancashire, report that a spectrum (range 880 nm–2.5 μm) was obtained with the 3.8-m U.K. Infrared Telescope (+ UIST) on Feb. 24.64 UT. The spectra show strong Paschen lines from 4-3 to 12-3, Brackett lines from 7-4 to 20-4, Pfund lines from 17-5 to 23-5, He I at 1.083, 2.058, and 2.112 μm, O I 3P-3D^0 at 1.128 μm (cf. *IAUC* 8673), and other lines that are tentatively identified with O I, O II and C I. The FWHM of the resolved Paα line is 1130 ± 50 km/s, but with wings extending to 3000 km/s.

2006 March 2 *Daniel W. E. Green*