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COMET C/2006 W1 (GIBBS)

A. R. Gibbs reports his discovery of a comet on Catalina Sky Survey CCD images obtained with the 0.68-m Schmidt telescope, the object showing a fairly distinct nuclear condensation (discovery observation tabulated below); four combined 60-s images on the same night in $2''.2$ seeing show a coma of diameter $8''$, a main tail $30''$ long in p.a. 280°, and a possible secondary $22''$ tail in p.a. 315°. S. Larson reports that images obtained on Nov. 17.5 UT at Mount Lemmon show the comet having a $20''$ coma and a broad, $100''$ tail in p.a. 285°. Following posting on the Minor Planet Center's 'NEOCP' webpage, other CCD observers have reported on the object's cometary appearance, including P. Birtwhistle (Great Shefford, Berkshire, England, 0.40-m *f*/6 Schmidt-Cassegrain telescope; images on Nov. 18.19–18.25 UT show an elongated coma or possible tail up to $15''$ long in p.a. 270°) and J. G. Ries (McDonald Observatory, 0.76-m reflector; *R*-band images on Nov. 18.5 show a diffuse area around the object, apparently elongated $10''$ slightly north of due west).

2006 UT	α_{2000}	δ_{2000}	Mag.
Nov. 16.40896	$8^h59^m27^s.60$	$+3°11'01''.0$	18.6

The available astrometry, the following very preliminary parabolic orbital elements, and an ephemeris appear on *MPEC* 2006-W22.

$$T = 2006\ \text{May}\ 11.583\ \text{TT} \qquad \left.\begin{array}{l}\omega = 236^\circ.258\\ \Omega = 157.133\\ i = 17.855\end{array}\right\}2000.0$$
$$q = 1.66452\ \text{AU}$$

COMET P/2006 U5 (CHRISTENSEN)

Additional astrometry has shown that this comet (cf. *IAUC* 8768) has a short orbital period, the improved elements below coming from *MPEC* 2006-W09:

$$\begin{array}{ll} T = 2007\ \text{Jan.}\ 23.878\ \text{TT} & \omega = 100^\circ.212\\ e = 0.33759 & \Omega = 4.887\\ q = 2.31757\ \text{AU} & i = 3.426\end{array}\left.\vphantom{\begin{array}{l}a\\b\\c\end{array}}\right\}2000.0$$
$$a = 3.49871\ \text{AU} \qquad n^\circ = 0.150606 \qquad P = 6.54\ \text{years}$$

2006 November 18 Daniel W. E. Green