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INTERNATIONAL ASTRONOMICAL UNION**

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COMET C/2009 W2 (BOATTINI)

A. Boattini reports his discovery of a comet (discovery observation tabulated below) on CCD images taken with the 0.68-m Schmidt telescope in the course of the Catalina Sky Survey; he notes a moderately condensed coma $\sim 7''$ wide, with no tail visible. R. E. Hill reports that four co-added 60-s CCD images taken in $2''$ seeing with the Mt. Lemmon 1.5-m reflector on Nov. 23.5 UT show a bright nuclear condensation with a small ($1''$ – $2''$) coma and a short, broad tail $6''$ – $7''$ long in p.a. $\sim 80^\circ$; his similar exposures on Nov. 24.44–24.46 show a $4'' \times 5''$ nuclear condensation that is elongated east-west with a $1''$ coma surrounding, and a broad, diffuse $30''$ tail in p.a. 90° . After posting on the Minor Planet Center's 'NEOCP' webpage, W. H. Ryan writes that CCD images taken by E. V. Ryan and himself with the Magdalena Ridge Observatory 2.4-m $f/8.9$ reflector on Nov. 24.5 show a tail in p.a. $\sim 90^\circ$.

2009	UT	α_{2000}	δ_{2000}	Mag.	Observer
Nov.	23.47597	$6^{\text{h}}21^{\text{m}}30^{\text{s}}.50$	$+39^\circ58'41''.9$	19.5	Boattini

The available astrometry (including observations by Boattini on Nov. 21), the following preliminary parabolic orbital elements, and an ephemeris appear on *MPEC* 2009-W103.

$$\begin{array}{ll}
 T = 2010 \text{ Mar. } 23.937 \text{ TT} & \left. \begin{array}{l} \omega = 118.066 \\ \Omega = 199.323 \\ i = 164.512 \end{array} \right\} 2000.0 \\
 q = 6.95031 \text{ AU} &
 \end{array}$$

COMET 169P/NEAT

B. G. Marsden, Smithsonian Astrophysical Observatory, has identified a comet found in STEREO spacecraft images with comet 169P. K. Battams, Naval Research Laboratory, reports that the comet appears very clearly (marginally diffuse with no tail) at apparent mag ~ 9 – 10 on Nov. 12.9 UT in HI-1B images (limiting mag ~ 13.5), when it was only ~ 4.5 from the sun ($r = 0.69$ AU, $\Delta = 0.88$ AU, and 0.38 AU from STEREO), so that forward scattering is a likely explanation for 169P's being well above its observed brightness from ground-based observations (cf. *MPEC* 2009-W102). Over the next few days, 169P moved to increasing elongations, with its brightness falling gradually; by Nov. 21 (elongation 18°), STEREO images show the comet to be noticeably smaller and fainter (mag perhaps 11–12).