

**Central Bureau for Astronomical Telegrams
INTERNATIONAL ASTRONOMICAL UNION**

Mailstop 18, Smithsonian Astrophysical Observatory, Cambridge, MA 02138, U.S.A.

IAUSUBS@CFA.HARVARD.EDU or FAX 617-495-7231 (subscriptions)

CBAT@CFA.HARVARD.EDU (science)

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Phone 617-495-7440/7244/7444 (for emergency use only)

COMET C/2006 A1 (POJMANSKI)

Grzegorz Pojmanski, Warsaw University Astronomical Observatory, reports his discovery of a diffuse comet with a coma diameter of $1'$ (FWHM) on 3-min CCD frames (pixel size $14''.8$) taken on 2006 Jan. 1 and 4 with a 180-mm-focal-length $f/2.8$ telephoto lens (+ V filter) in the course of the All Sky Automated Survey at Las Campanas; Pojmanski subsequently identified ASAS images of the comet taken on 2005 Dec. 29. S. Roland (Montevideo, Uruguay) writes that 20-second CCD exposures taken with a 0.46-m prime-focus telescope confirm the cometary nature of the new object, with a coma diameter of $\sim 1'$. More than seven hours after Pojmanski reported his find to the Central Bureau, K. Cernis reported (apparently independently) that he has found an object on ultraviolet SWAN/SOHO website images taken on three nights (back to 2005 Dec. 25) showing a motion consistent with that of C/2006 A1.

2005/6	UT	α_{2000}	δ_{2000}	Mag.	Observer
Dec.	25	$22^{\text{h}}09^{\text{m}}.0$	$-71^{\circ}07'$		SWAN
	29	$21^{\text{h}}52.6$	$-69^{\circ}03'$		"
	29.03145	$21^{\text{h}}50^{\text{m}}29^{\text{s}}$	$-69^{\circ}40.6'$	13.2	ASAS
Jan.	1	$21^{\text{h}}42.4$	$-68^{\circ}23'$		SWAN
	1.04388	$21^{\text{h}}40^{\text{m}}28^{\text{s}}$	$-68^{\circ}36.5'$	12.5	ASAS
	4.03225	$21^{\text{h}}31^{\text{m}}33^{\text{s}}$	$-67^{\circ}31.2'$	12.0	"
	4.03734	$21^{\text{h}}31^{\text{m}}33^{\text{s}}$	$-67^{\circ}31.1'$	12.0	"
	4.99875	$21^{\text{h}}28^{\text{m}}51.64^{\text{s}}$	$-67^{\circ}09'39''.9$	14.6	Roland
	5.00339	$21^{\text{h}}28^{\text{m}}50.91^{\text{s}}$	$-67^{\circ}09'33.7''$	14.6	"
	5.01031	$21^{\text{h}}28^{\text{m}}49.73^{\text{s}}$	$-67^{\circ}09'23.9''$	14.7	"
	5.01681	$21^{\text{h}}28^{\text{m}}48.72^{\text{s}}$	$-67^{\circ}09'15.0''$	14.6	"
	5.02197	$21^{\text{h}}28^{\text{m}}47.83^{\text{s}}$	$-67^{\circ}09'07.9''$	14.8	"
	5.03106	$21^{\text{h}}28^{\text{m}}46.33^{\text{s}}$	$-67^{\circ}08'55.5''$	14.5	"
	5.03985	$21^{\text{h}}28^{\text{m}}44.88^{\text{s}}$	$-67^{\circ}08'43.5''$	14.7	"
	5.04632	$21^{\text{h}}28^{\text{m}}43.71^{\text{s}}$	$-67^{\circ}08'35.7''$	14.2	"
	5.05587	$21^{\text{h}}28^{\text{m}}42.25^{\text{s}}$	$-67^{\circ}08'21.4''$	14.7	"
	5.07266	$21^{\text{h}}28^{\text{m}}39.51^{\text{s}}$	$-67^{\circ}07'58.5''$	14.5	"

Preliminary parabolic orbital elements from the ASAS and Roland data:

$$\begin{array}{rcl}
 T = 2006 \text{ Feb. } 22.671 \text{ TT} & \omega = 350.499 & \\
 q = 0.56748 \text{ AU} & \Omega = 212.275 & \\
 & i = 93.230 & \left. \vphantom{\begin{array}{l} \omega \\ \Omega \\ i \end{array}} \right\} 2000.0
 \end{array}$$