

COMET NOTES

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FORBES' COMET 1930 *e*. The fifth cometary discovery of this year came from the southern hemisphere; the four previous ones were by observers on this side of the equator. The new comet was found by A. F. I. Forbes of Rosebank (Cape-town), this being the third one picked up by this observer. He informed the Johannesburg Observatory of his finding and the first announcement thus came as an accurate observation by H. E. Wood:

1930 June 2 at 2^h 55^m 2 U.T. R.A. 23^h 33^m 56^s 1; Decl. —32° 48' 33"; Magnitude 9. Daily motion: —4^m 20^s and +24'.

At that time it was not in reach of northern observers but from the daily motion it was probable that the comet would become visible here too. This was confirmed when the first orbit, computed by H. E. Wood, was telegraphed on June 7:

$$\left. \begin{aligned} T &= 1930 \text{ May } 10.588 \text{ U.T.} \\ \omega &= 321^\circ 8' \\ \Omega &= 278 \text{ } 13 \\ i &= 97 \text{ } 15 \\ q &= 1.1530 \text{ astr. units} \end{aligned} \right\} 1930.0$$

Although these elements depend on a short interval of time, subsequent observations showed that they were close to the truth. The nearest distance from the sun was passed for nearly a month at discovery but the distance from the earth decreased until June 21 so that the object remained fairly well visible in the latter part of June. The brightness was estimated visually as 11^M by the writer on June 21 and on that date there was a broad tail about 3' long in position angle 210°. The nucleus, however, was not brighter than a star of 13th magnitude. The brightness soon faded with the increase of distance. The following ephemeris computed from Wood's elements shows that the comet is well situated in the constellation of Hercules, but that by August 1 it will be out of reach of all but the most powerful instruments.

1930 0 ^h U.T.	α h m	δ ° '	M
July 18	16 30.6	+24 36	14.5
22	20.6	25 15	14.8
26	13.2	25 39	15.1
30	7.8	25 51	15.4
Aug. 3	3.8	25 57	15.6
7	16 1.1	25 58	15.8
11	15 59.4	25 56	16.0
15	58.5	25 51	16.2
19	58.2	25 45	16.4
23	58.5	25 38	16.6
27	15 59.4	25 30	16.7
31	16 0.6	+25 22	16.9

On July 7 the correction of the ephemeris was +1^m 4 and —6'. The elements of the orbit do not suggest any identity with previously observed comets.

The other comets found in the first part of the year are now either faint or no longer visible: