

# Bolidul

no. 9

Aprilie 2001

## COMETA C/2001 A2 (LINEAR)

Data	Ascensia	Declinația
2001 04 01	06 03.18	-06 44.1
2001 04 02	06 02.62	-07 00.3
2001 04 03	06 02.09	-07 16.7
2001 04 04	06 01.60	-07 33.1
2001 04 05	06 01.13	-07 49.8
2001 04 06	06 00.69	-08 06.5
2001 04 07	06 00.28	-08 23.5
2001 04 08	05 59.89	-08 40.6
2001 04 09	05 59.52	-08 57.9
2001 04 10	05 59.17	-09 15.4
2001 04 11	05 58.84	-09 33.1
2001 04 12	05 58.53	-09 50.9
2001 04 13	05 58.24	-10 09.0
2001 04 14	05 57.96	-10 27.3
2001 04 15	05 57.69	-10 45.8
2001 04 16	05 57.43	-11 04.6
2001 04 17	05 57.19	-11 23.6
2001 04 18	05 56.94	-11 42.8
2001 04 19	05 56.71	-12 02.3
2001 04 20	05 56.47	-12 22.0
2001 04 21	05 56.23	-12 42.0
2001 04 22	05 55.99	-13 02.2
2001 04 23	05 55.75	-13 22.7
2001 04 24	05 55.50	-13 43.5
2001 04 25	05 55.23	-14 04.6
2001 04 26	05 54.95	-14 25.9
2001 04 27	05 54.65	-14 47.5
2001 04 28	05 54.34	-15 09.3
2001 04 29	05 53.99	-15 31.4
2001 04 30	05 53.62	-15 53.8

### COMET ASTROALERT: COMET LINEAR (C/2001 A2)

A faint in-bound comet, discovered in January and due to become a nice observing target in June, seems to have "turned on" much sooner than expected. Following a major outburst this past week, the comet is already within easy reach of small telescopes in the constellation Monoceros, low in the southwestern sky at nightfall.

Back in mid-January, the MIT Lincoln Laboratory team in Socorro, New Mexico, reported a 19th-magnitude object in Cancer that did not appear to be moving like a typical main-belt asteroid. Follow-up CCD observations at two observatories in the Czech Republic revealed a fuzzy rather than a point-source image, and Daniel W. E. Green of the Central Bureau for Astronomical Telegrams announced the discovery of Comet LINEAR (C/2001 A2) on IAU Circular 7564. This was the 54th comet discovered or co-discovered by the LINEAR team to date. (There have been a few more Comet LINEARs since.)

The orbital elements calculated by Brian G. Marsden, and the brightness observations available in January, suggested the comet would brighten slowly to perhaps 13th or 12th magnitude by the start of April, ultimately reaching about 9th magnitude in June.

But then, starting on March 26th, Michael Mattiazzo of Wallaroo, South Australia, noticed the comet was much brighter than expected. With a 20-centimeter reflector on the 26th and 28th, he found it to be magnitude 10.7. On March 30th, using a 25 x 100 binocular, he called it 8.0. Other observers around the world agree that something dramatic has happened to this comet. Their reports are summarized on IAU Circular 7564, issued March 30th (<http://cfa-www.harvard.edu/iau/cbat.html>).

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