

GARY W. KRONK'S COMETOGRAPHY

# 71P/Clark

[Past, Present, and Future Orbits by Kazuo Kinoshita](#)

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The CCD image was taken on 2006 May 30, using a 0.30-m f/7 Meade LX-200 and an SBIG ST-6 CCD camera. It is a 300-second exposure.

## *Discovery*

Michael Clark (Mount John University Observatory, New Zealand) discovered this comet on June 9, 1973, near the edge of a photographic plate exposed for the southern variable star patrol. The comet was confirmed the next morning. The comet was described as diffuse, with a total magnitude of 13, and exhibited a tail one arc minute long.

A prediscovery image was found by Clark on a photographic plate he had exposed on June 1.

## ***Historical Highlights***

- The comet's orbital period has remained at 5.5 years since it was discovered. Subsequently it is favorably placed for observation at every second return (i.e. 1973, 1984, and 1995).
- The 1995 return was the 5th time the comet was seen to return to perihelion. The comet passed perihelion on May 31 (1.5525 AU) and passed closest to Earth on July 2 (0.6145 AU). The maximum brightness came in June when observers generally reported the magnitude as a little brighter than 11 during the latter half of that month. At about the same time, the coma reached its largest reported diameter of about 3.5 arc minutes. The tail attained a maximum length of about 8 arc minutes during early June.

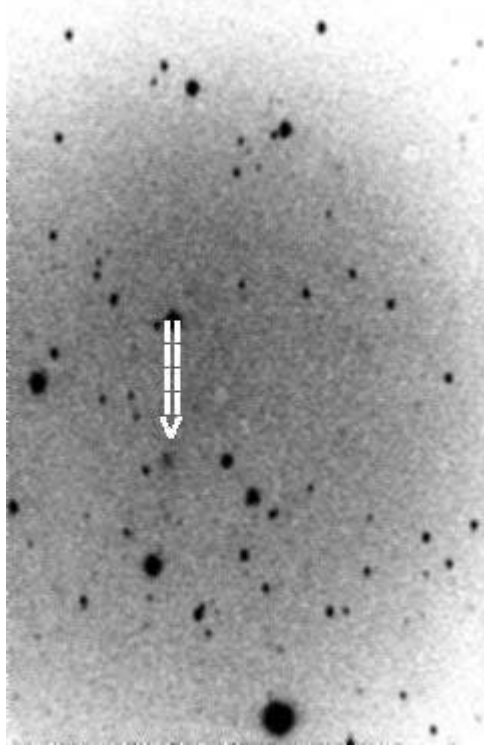
## ***Additional Images***



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The CCD image was taken on 1995 October 13.47, using a 0.20-m f/5.9 Meade LX-200 and an SBIG ST-6 CCD camera. The comet appears very tiny in this image, because its magnitude was then only slightly brighter than 16. It is indicated by the two marks.

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The CCD image was taken on 1995 December 10.04, using a 0.30-m f/7 Meade LX-200 and an SBIG ST-6 CCD camera. It is a 300-second exposure.

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