

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

INVITATION TO BLINK

To The Editor,

My photographic sky surveys yielded fourteen prediscovery photographs of Nova Cygni 1975 (V1500 Cyg) showing the nova during its rapid increase in brightness, and I have begun to organize interested astronomers for participation in a coordinated sky survey. The purpose of the undertaking is the earliest possible discovery of novae and comets, as well as the visual recording of variables through a combination of simple photography and comparison-blinking.

The program is extremely simple and allows anyone to take a meaningful part using conventional 35 mm cameras, ideally with 135 mm lenses. This equipment can be piggybacked on any driven but unguided telescope so that the assigned areas (and any others of the observer's own choice) can be recorded once--or several times--a month.

Four target coordinates with varying declinations and removed from each other by six hours in R.A. are given to each participant thus allowing for year-round coverage. Black and white negative film and/or high-speed color films can be used to photograph the 150 square degree areas which are selected to avoid duplication.

Resulting transparencies or cardboard-mounted negatives are subsequently comparison-blinked on a regular basis either in professional comparators or inexpensive PROjection BLInk COMparators (PROBLICOMS). These easy-to-construct units are described in Sky & Telescope, September, 1977, page 246.

Interested parties with access to blink comparators or able to construct a nominal system as illustrated, should send a self addressed stamped envelope to the undersigned. They will then receive an introductory letter and a questionnaire. Upon return of the necessary information, patrol areas in the form of coordinates will be assigned.

Ben Mayer  
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ASTRONOMY AWARDS FOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

To The Editor,

Cash prizes will be awarded for projects in astronomy carried out by high school students, as described in this Journal, volume 6, page 33. This year's deadline is February 15, 1979, and further information may be obtained from the undersigned.

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