

second, travels in one year. Alioth is 49 light years away, while Benetnasch is nearly four times as far, at a distance of 192 light years! For the other stars the distances are:

Mizar	78 light years
Alioth	49 light years
Phecda	88 light years
Merak	76 light years
Dubhe	105 light years

As we look at these stars we look back into time. For example, the light from Benetnasch when you look at it tonight left on its long journey in 1859, the year in which John Brown, with 21 men, seized Harper's Ferry. Alioth we see as it was at about the time the 16th Amendment, empowering Congress to levy and collect income taxes, was proclaimed in effect on Feb. 16.

Other stars are still farther away, and the time their light left goes still farther back, even before men first appeared on earth, or even before the earth or the sun was born.

### Celestial Time Table for July

JULY	EDT	
2	4:31 p.m.	Moon in last quarter
5		Earth farthest from sun, distance 94,456,000 miles
	8:00 a.m.	Moon passes Jupiter
7	2:00 a.m.	Moon passes Mars
8	7:00 a.m.	Moon nearest, distance 223,100 miles
9	7:31 a.m.	New moon, partial eclipse of sun
16	7:48 a.m.	Moon in first quarter
18	3:00 a.m.	Venus passes Mars
20	5:00 p.m.	Moon farthest, distance 251,900 miles
24	11:58 a.m.	Full moon
26	noon	Venus at greatest brilliancy
	11:00 p.m.	Moon passes Saturn
31	11:30 p.m.	Moon in last quarter

Subtract one hour for CDT, two hours for MDT, and three hours for PDT.

• Science News Letter, 85:406 June 27, 1964

### ASTRONOMY

## Bright Comet Discovered In Northeastern Sky

➤ A NEW COMET, bright enough to be seen by the naked eye when far away from city lights, has been discovered independently by three astronomers, one in Argentina, the other two in Japan.

However, only real comet buffs or late-show viewers will be likely to see it, even under the best of conditions, since it does not rise above the horizon in Washington until nearly three a.m. Then it will be very low in the northeast sky, rising higher in the east as morning progresses, but morning twilight could interfere with spotting it.

The comet, rated as magnitude six, was discovered by the astronomer Gerber of Argentina's National Observatory, Cordoba, on June 8 and also on June 8 by the Japanese astronomer, Nimoto Honda. It was discovered earlier independently on June 6 by the Japanese astronomer Tomita.

Its position, on June 9, was right ascension two hours, 16.8 minutes; declination, 12 degrees, six minutes.

Comet Tomita-Gerber-Honda is diffuse but has a central condensation. It is moving northeastward, according to Harvard College Observatory, Cambridge, Mass.

Science News Letter, 85:407 June 27, 1964

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