

KOI Objects in the WDS Catalog

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Abstract: The very presence of Kepler Objects of Interest in the WDS catalog seems curious enough to have a closer look at a random sample of such objects. This report counter-checks about 50 double stars with reference to the Kepler mission for being potentially physical pairs

1. Introduction

The mission of the Kepler project is the detection of exo-planets so the very existence of objects with the designation KOI (Kepler Objects of Interest) in the WDS catalog is at first moment a bit surprising – but a look into referenced papers like Slawson et al. 2011 or Furlan et al. 2017 makes clear that the detection of binaries is a side result of the Kepler project. The next question arises when objects with other designations like for example DEA presented in Deacon et al. 2016 are also found to be based on results of the Kepler mission – the explanation seems simple: Research funded by Kepler mission sources resulted in KOI designations and other research using Kepler data but not funded by Kepler sources resulted in the usual discoverer code designations. But as Brian Mason/USNO points out: There are no fixed rules regarding discoverer codes which might meanwhile anyway have lost their original significance.

2. Results of Photometry and Catalog Checking

To have a closer look at a random sample of KOI and DEA objects we selected objects by a few basic parameters like current altitude in the northern sky, sufficient brightness of the secondary (usually listed with magnitudes in the red band) and sufficient angular separation allowing for resolution with the equipment available to us at least with some probability. For all selected objects one single image was taken with iTelescope iT24 with V-filter and 60s exposure time

because in most cases the secondary is very faint and not to resolve with shorter exposure times. This setup came at the price of CCD saturation for primaries brighter than 9 Vmag – in such cases no photometry for the primary was possible and precision of astrometry results was limited. Despite the long exposure time of 60s allowing resolution of stars up to about 19 Vmag several secondaries were too faint or too close to a bright primary to be resolved. The images were plate solved with Astrometrica using the URAT1 catalog with reference stars in the Vmag range of 8.5 to 17.5 giving not only RA/Dec coordinates but also photometry results for all reference stars used including an average dVmag error. The objects were then located in the center of the image and astrometry/photometry was then done by the rather comfortable Astrometrica procedure with point and click at the components delivering RA/Dec coordinates and Vmag measurements based on all reference stars used for plate solving. To use the existing image material to full extent we looked also for other WDS objects nearby and took measurements also for these. To counter-check the claim that the reported KOI and DEA objects are physical pairs we had a look at other catalogs to locate data allowing us to apply our standard common proper motion assessment procedure (Knapp and Nanson 2017). For this reason we report also catalog data with observation date before the “Last” WDS date but published after this date. As the work on this report overlapped with the availability of Gaia data release 2 we decided to check

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these data as an additional step allowing for a more precise assessment of these objects for being physical or not.

The measurement results are given in Table 1 with the following structure:

- First row gives the WDS data as of Oct 2017 (probably meanwhile updated):
 - * Name gives the discoverer code of the object
 - * RA/Dec gives the position in the HH:MM:SS/DD:MM:SS format for the primary
 - * Sep, PA, M1, M1, pmRA and pmDec give the WDS catalog data for this object
 - * Date gives the year of the last observation
 - * Source/Notes gives additional references to the WDS catalog
- Data rows give data from other checked catalogs like especially Gaia DR1:
 - * RA/Dec gives the position in degrees for the primary
 - * Sep gives separation in arcseconds in the data lines calculated from the coordinates for both components if available
 - * PA gives position angle in degrees in the data lines calculated from the coordinates for both components if available
 - * M1 and M2 if visual magnitudes are given in the used catalog
 - * Proper motion data if available in the used catalogs or in some cases calculated from position comparison between catalog positions
 - * Ap and Me give aperture and used observation method
 - * CPM Rat gives the common proper motion rating based on the available PM data according to the description in Appendix A
 - * CPM % gives an estimated probability for being a physical pair (see Appendix A)
 - * Source/Notes refers to the used catalogs with additional comments if necessary
- Measurement row gives the results from processing of own images:
 - * RA/Dec gives the position in degrees for the primary
 - * Sep gives separation in arcseconds in the data lines calculated from the positions of resolved pairs
 - * PA gives position angle in degrees in the data lines calculated from the positions of resolved pairs
 - * M1 and M1 give Vmags for both components measured by differential photometry
 - * Date gives the Julian observation epoch

- * Notes indicate the telescope used, number of images with exposure time and additional comments if considered necessary

3. Common Proper Motion Summary

The KOI objects in our random sample proved to be difficult objects for our imaging as well as for catalog data research. Many secondaries were simply too faint or too close to the primary to be resolved. Yet for a part of these objects we were able to provide new observations with Vmags from differential photometry and CPM assessment results mostly from 2MASS to Gaia DR1 positions and from Gaia DR2 proper motion data. This CPM assessment, with very few exceptions, did not provide the expected confirmation of the claim that all these pairs are physical. On the contrary, in most cases with the necessary data for CPM assessment available, the result was a clear “most probably optical”. The situation with the DEA objects is the other way around – most pairs were, with few exceptions, confirmed to be solid common proper motion pairs.

4. Check for Potential Gravitational Relationship

As most KOI objects are listed with very small proper motion values (too small for common proper motion assessment), we decided to also have a look at the parallax data provided from Gaia DR2 to check for potential gravitational relationship regardless proper motion speed. The result of this check is presented in Table 2.

5. Overall summary

While the DEA objects did rather well also with Gaia DR2 parallax data the expectation that the pattern of insignificant proper motion values for the KOI objects could be overruled by Gaia DR2 parallax data providing evidence of potential gravitational relationship was not realized. A large part of the DR2 parallax data for KOI objects showed quality issues with negative parallaxes, parallax values smaller than 3 times the Plx error range or duplicity issues. For the remainder the mostly insignificant Plx data with very few exceptions do not allow for gravitational relationship. This could either mean that even Gaia DR2 is not up to the task providing useful data for the KOI objects or that the data quality of the WDS KOI objects is especially poor.

(Text continues on page 156)

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Table 1. Results for selected KOI and DEA objects including other WDS objects found by chance in the same images

Table with 17 columns: Name, RA, Dec, Sep, PA, M1, M2, pmRA1, pmDec1, e_pm1, pmRA2, pmDec2, e_pm2, Ap, Me, Date, CPM Rat, Source/Notes. Rows include KOI 18 AG, KOI 18 AI, BRT 2248 AB, KOI 18, DEA 105 AB, and KOI 105.

Table 1 continues on the next page.

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Table 1 (continued). Results for selected KOI and DEA objects including other WDS objects found by chance in the same images

Table with 15 columns: Name, RA, Dec, Sep, PA, M1, M2, pmRA1, pmDec1, e_pm1, pmRA2, pmDec2, e_pm2, Ap, Me, Date, CPM Rat, CPM %, Source/Notes. Rows include KOI 2803 AB, KOI 2833 AB, KOI 2904 AB, and KOI 2904 AC.

Table 1 continues on the next page.

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Table 2. Assessment of selected objects for potential gravitational relationship

Table with 14 columns: Name, neg Plx, Dup, Plx 1, e_Plx 1, Plx 2, e_Plx 2, Best Case Dist, Realistic Case Dist, Worst Case Dist, Plx Dist, Plx Err, Plx Rat, Plx Score. Rows include objects like KOI 18 AG, BRT 2248 AB, DEA 105 AB, etc.

Table 2 concludes on the next page.

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5. Acknowledgements

The following tools and resources have been used for this research:

- 2MASS catalog
- 2MASS images
- AAVSO VPhot
- Aladin Sky Atlas v9.0
- Astrometrica v4.10.0.427
- AstroPlanner v2.2
- iTelescope
- iT24: 610mm CDK with 3962mm focal length. Resolution 0.625 arcsec/pixel. V-filter. No transformation coefficients available. Located in Auberry, California. Elevation 1405m
- Gaia DR1 catalog
- Gaia DR2 catalog
- MaxIm DL6 v6.08
- POSS images
- SIMBAD
- UCAC4 catalog
- UCAC5 catalog
- URAT1 catalog
- VizieR
- Washington Double Star Catalog

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Appendix A

Description of the CPM rating scheme according to Knapp/Nanson 2017 with extensions:

Four rating factors are used: Proper motion vector direction, proper motion vector length, size of position error in relation to proper motion vector length and relationship separation to average proper motion speed:

- Proper motion vector direction rating: "A" for within the error range identical direction, "B" for similar direction within the double error range and "C" for outside
- Proper motion vector length rating: "A" for within the error range identical length, "B" for similar length within the double error range and C for outside
- Error size rating: "A" for error size of less than 5% of the proper motion vector length, "B" for less than 10% and "C" for a larger error size
- Rating for relation separation to average proper motion speed: "A" for less than 100 years, "B" for 100 to 1000 years and "C" for above.

To compensate for (depending on the selected objects and available catalogs) excessively large position errors resulting an "A" rating despite rather high deviations absolute upper limits are applied regardless calculated error size:

- Proper motion vector direction: Max. 2.86° difference for an "A" and 5.72° for a "B"
- Proper motion vector length: Max. 5% difference for an "A" and 10% for a "B"

The higher precision of Gaia DR2 proper motion data allows for a more rigid assessment scheme:

- Proper motion vector direction: Max. 1° difference for an "A"
- Proper motion vector length: Max. 1% difference for an "A"

Description of the Plx rating procedure (according to Knapp 2018):

- "A" for worst case distance, "B" for realistic case distance and "C" for only best case distance less than 200,000 AU (means touching Oort clouds for two stars with Sun-like mass) and "D" for above
- "A" for Plx error less than 5% of Plx, "B" for less than 10%, "C" for less than 15% and "D" for above

The letter based scoring is then transformed into an estimated probability for being potentially gravitationally bound.

