

PUTTING (486958) ARROKOTH IN CONTEXT: NEW HORIZONS PHOTOMETRY OF OTHER SMALL COLD CLASSICAL KUIPER BELT OBJECTS. A. J. Verbiscer¹, S. B. Porter², J. J. Kavelaars³, P. Helfenstein⁴, S. D. Benecchi⁵, H. A. Weaver⁶, J. R. Spencer², K. N. Singer², S. A. Stern², J. W. Parker² and the New Horizons Science Team, ¹University of Virginia, P.O. Box 400325, Charlottesville, VA 22904-4325 (av4n@virginia.edu), ²Southwest Research Institute, ³National Research Council of Canada, ⁴Cornell University, ⁵Planetary Science Institute, ⁶The Johns Hopkins University Applied Physics Laboratory.

Introduction: In addition to its 3500-km flyby of Kuiper belt object (KBO) (486958) Arrokoth, NASA's New Horizons spacecraft has observed more than 30 other KBOs and dwarf planets at viewing geometries unattainable from Earth. Several of these KBOs, like Arrokoth, are members of the dynamically cold classical (CC) population; therefore, the New Horizons observations of these objects at high solar phase angles provide important context to place Arrokoth among other small CC KBOs ($H_V = 8-11$) in terms of their rotation rates, rotation pole orientations, shapes, and surface scattering properties.

Observations: New Horizons observed CC KBOs 2014 PN₇₀, 2014 OS₃₉₃, 2011 HF₁₀₃, 2011 HZ₁₀₂, 2011 JY₃₁, and 2011 JX₃₁ from distances as small as 0.09 au at multiple solar phase angles between 19° and 122°.

Results: Rotation periods range from 12.05 hours for 2014 PN₇₀, near Arrokoth's 15.92-hour period [1] to more than 35 hours for 2014 OS₃₉₃ and 2011 JY₃₁. The amplitudes of most CC KBO rotation curves increase with increasing solar phase angles (Fig. 1), likely due to their irregular shapes, in the same manner as the amplitudes of irregular saturnian satellite [2] and asteroid [3] rotation curves increase with phase angle. Binary CC KBO 2011 JY₃₁ [4-5], however, has a low-amplitude (0.2 magnitudes) rotation curve that does not increase in amplitude with increasing phase angle [6]. All CC KBOs observed by New Horizons, including Arrokoth, have steep solar phase curves and small phase integrals, much like those of other small, dark asteroids, comet nuclei, and satellites, and unlike the shallower phase curves exhibited by larger KBOs with more surface volatiles (Fig. 2) [7].

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References: [1] Stern S. A. et al. (2019) *Science*, 364, aaw9771. [2] Denk T. and Mottola S. (2019) *Icarus*, 128, 49. [3] Gehrels T. (1956) *ApJ*, 123, 331. [4] Porter S. B. et al. (2020) *BAAS*, 52, Abstract #307.03. [5] Weaver H. A. et al. (2022) *PSJ*, submitted. [6] Verbiscer A. J. et al. (2019) *AJ*, 158, 123. [7] Verbiscer A. J. et al. (2022), *PSJ*, submitted.

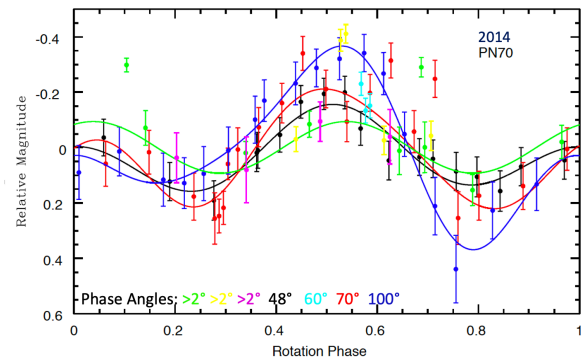


Figure 1: Rotation curves for CC KBO 2014 PN₇₀, once a potential close flyby target for New Horizons, which came within 0.1 au of this KBO in March 2019. 2014 PN₇₀ has a rotation period of 12 hours with double-peaked rotation curves that increase in amplitude with increasing phase angle. Amplitudes are 0.2 magnitude at phase angles <2° (green, yellow, and magenta), 0.3 magnitude at phase angle 48° (black), 0.4 magnitude at phase angle 70° (red), and 0.8 magnitude at phase angle 100° (blue).

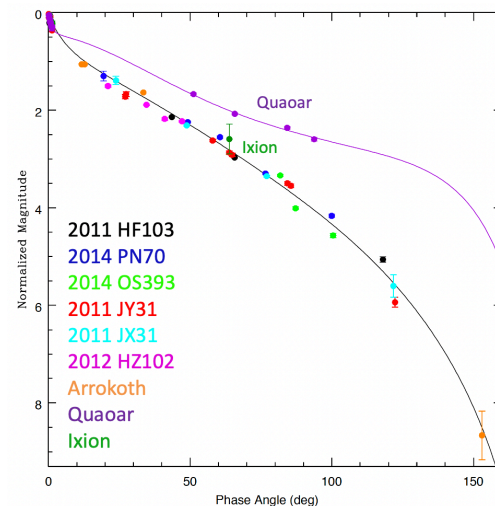


Figure 2: Solar phase curves of all CC KBOs observed by New Horizons and large KBOs Ixion and Quaoar. Quaoar has more surface volatiles than Ixion and the CC KBOs and therefore has a shallower solar phase curve [7].