

The most un-loved variable stars

Some stars on the section's programmes are very popular with observers. Others, however, seem to receive little attention.

Looking at the Binocular Programme, the following stars have (as of May 2017) less than 20 observations in the database for 2016:

V Ari	SRb	9
KK Per	Lc	9
RX Vir	SRd?	11

Many more stars on the Telescopic Programme were similarly "neglected" in 2016. Some especially so:

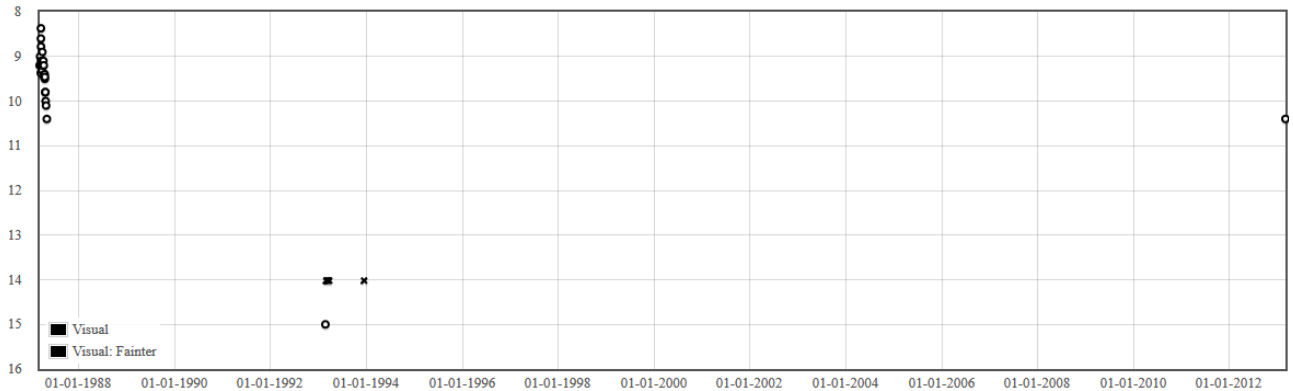
UW Aql	Lc	4	(none in 2015)
R Aqr	Mira	0	(13 obs in 2015, but only 4 during 2010-2014)
V386 Cep	SR/Mira	16	(but none for 2011-2015)
SU Cnc	Mira	13	
RT CVn	Mira	0	(1 obs in 2017, only 14 during 2012-2015)
T Dra	Mira	15	
V443 Her	ZAND	4	
R Hya	Mira	11	
RS Leo	Mira	16	
W LMi	SRd	2	(and only 10 during 2013-2015)
X Lyn	Mira	12	
V651 Mon	I+E	17	
V686 Mon	Mira	0	(last observed in 2013)
RS Per	SRc	18	(but only 4 in 2015)
BU Per	SRc	19	(but only 3 in 2015)
V513 Per	Mira	0	(none for 2011-2015 ... but has been observed in 2017)
FR Sct	ZAND	0	(last observed in 2004)

CVs are excluded from the above list as they could simply have been at minimum throughout the year. ICCE stars are also excluded.

The early 2017 observations of V513 Per were by Don Matthews. The early 2017 observation of RT CVn was by C D Beech.

It might seem that FR Sct is the most unloved star, having last been observed on October 13th 2004 - by Gary Poyner. It does, however, have a total of 57 observations in the database, whereas V686 Mon only has a mere 36, with 29 of these being from as long ago as 1987. The most recent observation of V686 Mon, on March 1st 2013, was by C Knight. Its (somewhat sparse) light curve, shown below, does suggest that it varies over a sizeable range and is worthy of further study ... so why not give it a go?

Light Curve for V686 MON



Symbol Key: Crosses = Negative observation, Triangle = Brighter than, Otherwise: Circle = Visual, Diamond = CCD, Square = Everything else

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Why are some stars being “neglected”?

Southerly declinations probably work against some stars, such as R Aqr, R Hya and FR Sct.

Some of the Mira variables may be too faint for observers’ instruments when near minimum.

Some might simply prove difficult to observe. e.g. if they are very close to other stars

Another factor will be access to charts, with observers being less likely to observe stars (such as RT CVn, V686 Mon, V513 Per and FR Sct) whose charts are not yet downloadable.

Similarly, it has probably been the case historically that the Binocular Programme has been seen as the “reds” programme and the Telescopic Programme has been seen as the “CVs” programme. Quite possibly some “reds” observers with larger instruments were unaware of the SRs and Miras on the Telescopic programme.

But, if you are looking for new stars to observe, the stars on the above list would welcome your attention.