

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

"u versus U versus μ "

I would like to call attention to a minor but persistent error that has appeared consistently from the first issues of the Journal to the latest.

This error is the misidentification of the Beta Lyrae type eclipsing binary u Herculis as μ (mu) Herculis or U Herculis. Here are the references that have caught my attention:

Volume 12, pp. 60 and 63: the Greek letter μ is used in the table of photoelectric minima, and again in the light curve. This reference is the one that motivated me to write.

Volume 9, pg. 48: John Ruiz's obituary contains a reference to his work on u Her as U Her (twice).

Volume 7, pp. 25 and 26: the Greek letter μ is used in the table, and is actually spelled out in the light curve, another case in which useful astronomical data may be missed because of an erroneous designation.

Volume 6, pg. 94: the Greek letter μ is used casually in the Photoelectric Photometry Committee's report.

Volume 4, pg. 110: the designation U Her is used casually in the Eclipsing Binary Committee's report.

Having complained about the problem, I would also like to propose a solution. Simply referring to the star correctly as u Herculis is not entirely adequate, as some readers may then simply assume that this is a typographical error for the better-known Mira variable U Herculis. I suggest that the Flamsteed number be added to form a double designation, u (68) Herculis.

David B. Williams
9270-A Raquetball Way
Indianapolis, IN 46260

A sometime visual observer of μ (68) Herculis