

Figure 1: (a) Blue image (IIIa-J emulsion) on the Palomar/ESO Atlas of planetary nebula NGC 6826 (PK 083+12.1). (b) Corresponding red image (IIIa-F). (c) Infrared image (IV-N).

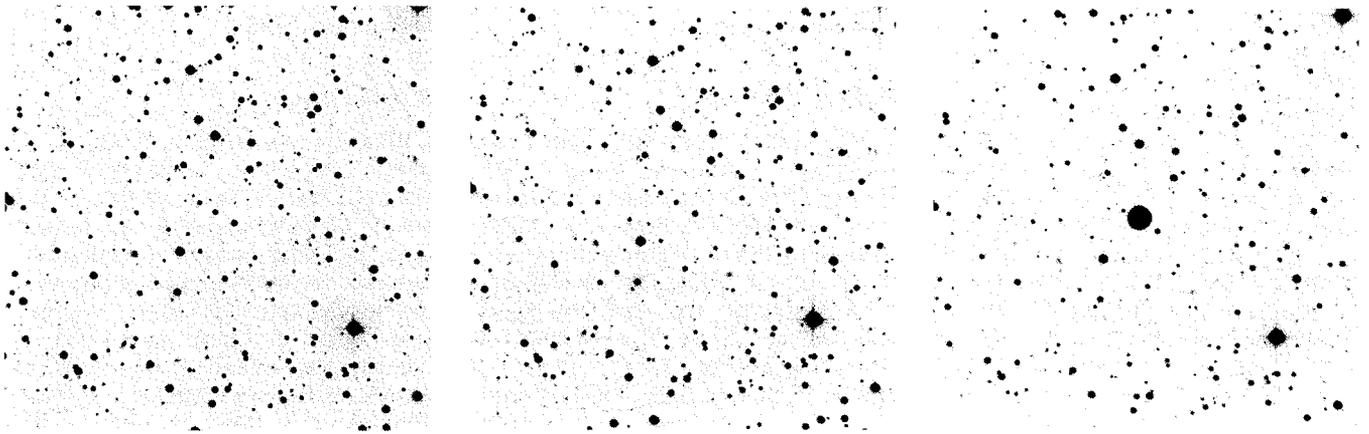


Figure 2: As Figure 1, now showing mysterious object near R.A. = 19 13; Decl. = 49 20 (2000.0) in blue (a), red (b) and infrared (c) light.

the original plate, both were there, so they were at least not due to the copying process. Just to be sure, she then had a quick look at the corresponding blue and red Atlas plates and quickly discovered that one of them belonged to a planetary nebula. A check in the available catalogues identified this object as NGC 6826 (PK 083+12.1). While the outer, filamentary nebula is well visible of the blue and red plates (Figs. 1a and 1b), only the central part can be seen on the infrared plate (Fig. 1c).

But what about the other object? Although it looks very similar to NGC 6826 (albeit somewhat fainter) on the infrared plate (Fig. 2c), at this position there is only a faint star on the two other plates (Figs. 2a and 2b)! How can such a faint object be so bright in the infrared? Here it should be remembered, that the photographic IR waveband covers the 7000–9000 Å interval, i.e. it is quite close to the red band.

A check in the computer catalogues at ESO did not provide any identification with a known object. In particular, there is no IRAS source listed in this direction.

So what is it? A plate fault on the infrared plate or a real object with a very strange spectrum? Or did it experience a most unusual outburst when the infrared plate was obtained? We do not know.

Just in case one of the *Messenger* readers would like to have another look to solve this riddle, here is the approximate position: R.A. = 19 13 01; Decl. = +49 19.5 (2000.0). *R.M. WEST, ESO*

STAFF MOVEMENTS

Arrivals

Europe

HESS, Matthias (D), Mechanical Engineer
 JANSEN, Ronald (NL), Accounting Assistant
 OCH, Susanne (D), Student

PELLEGRINI, Silvia (I), Fellow
 THEODORE, Bertrand (F), Coopérant
 VAN DER WERF, Paul, Fellow

Chile

CAPPELLARO, Enrico (I), Associate
 LEHMANN, Thomas (D), Student
 SWINNEN, Eric (B), Senior Technical Engineer

Departures

Europe

JØRGENSEN, Bruno (DK), Clerk (General Services)
 YOUNG, Andrew (USA), Guest Professor

Chile

DE JONGE, Peter (NL), Construction Site Manager
 EKMAN, Sture (S), Electro-Mechanical Engineer
 VAN WINCKEL, Hans (B), Student

Transfers

From Europe to Chile

FAUCHERRE, Michel (F), Optical Engineer