



(52246) Donaldjohanson and the Architecture of Bilobed Small Bodies

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The Lucy spacecraft flew by the Main Belt asteroid (52246) Donaldjohanson, hereafter DJ, on April 20, 2025. Images obtained during the flyby show DJ to be an elongated object, about 8 km long with an axis ratio greater than 2 to 1, consisting of two distinct lobes connected by a narrow neck. A detailed shape model [1] will be required to further quantify this structure.

Similarly shaped small bodies have been directly observed among Near Earth Objects [2-4], the Main Belt [5], comets [6-9] and in the Kuiper Belt [10]. Many more elongated/bilobed objects can be inferred from lightcurve observations [11]. DJ is a potentially valuable addition to understanding these objects because it resides in the Main Belt and is part of a collisional family of known age [12].

We compile estimated lobe dimensions and apparent orientations in a variety of small bodies of similar size to DJ and discuss observable trends. We compare results to expected behavior in collisional systems and accretion models [13-18].

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