

The K2 Halo Photometry Campaign

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ABSTRACT

While the *Kepler* mission was designed to look at tens of thousands of faint stars ($V \gtrsim 12$), brighter stars which saturate the detector are nevertheless some of the most interesting because of the ease with which they can be observed by other instruments and the wealth of knowledge about them that is already available. By considering the unsaturated scattered light ‘halo’ around these stars we retrieve precise light curves of most of the brightest stars in *K2* fields from Campaign 6 onwards. This halo campaign reveals stellar variability ubiquitously, including effects of stellar pulsation, rotation, and binarity. Here we describe our pipeline, and present a catalogue of the halo sources, with classifications and parametrizations of their variability and remarks on interesting objects. These light curves are publicly available as a High Level Science Product from the Mikulski Archive for Space Telescopes (MAST). 

1. INTRODUCTION

The *Kepler* Space Telescope was launched with a main goal of determining the frequency of Earth-sized planets around Solar-like stars (Borucki et al. 2010), a goal which it has substantially achieved (e.g. Fressin et al. 2013; Petigura et al. 2013; Foreman-Mackey et al. 2014). In order to explore these populations it was necessary to observe hundreds of thousands of stars, with the consequence that the *Kepler* the exposure time and gain were set to optimally observe eleventh or twelfth-magnitude stars, while bright stars are saturated and these saturated stars were intentionally avoided. In the two-wheeled revival as the *K2* mission, the *Kepler* telescope observed a sequence of ecliptic-plane fields containing many more very-saturated stars. While it is difficult to obtain precise light curves of these stars because of their saturation, they are some of the most-valuable targets to follow up with photon-hungry methods such as interferometry or high-resolution spectroscopy, and they typically have long histories of previous observations.

In order to recover precise photometry of the brightest stars in *K2*, we have developed two main approaches, ‘smear’ and ‘halo’ photometry. Smear photometry (Pope et al. 2016) uses collateral calibration data to recover light curves of stars which were not necessarily conventionally targeted. The more precise method of halo photometry, which is the subject of this paper, uses the broad ‘halo’ of scattered light around a saturated star to recover relative photometry, by constructing a light curve as a linear combination of individual pixel time series and minimizing a Total Variation objective function (TV-min). It has been employed for example on the Pleiades (White et al. 2017) and the brightest-ever star on *Kepler* silicon, Aldebaran (Farr et al. 2018), recovering photometry with a precision nearly that of normally-obtained *K2* observations of unsaturated stars. Unlike smear, this requires downloading data out to a 12–20 pixel radius around each star, and has accordingly only been possible for stars that were specifically targeted with apertures optimized for this method and for a small number of other stars for which this is fortuitously the case.

In this Paper we describe the complete catalog of long-cadence *K2* halo light curves which we have made publicly available. We have employed halo photometry on all stars targeted with appropriate apertures, and have done a preliminary characterization of interesting astrophysical variability. We also document the main changes in the halo data reduction pipeline, *halophot*, with respect to previous releases. These include oscillating red giants, pulsating and quiet main sequence stars, and eclipsing binaries, many of which are among the brightest objects of their type to have been observed with space photometry. We hope that this diverse catalog of light curves will be useful for an equally-diverse range of astrophysical investigations.

2. HALO PHOTOMETRY

We use an extension of the method of halo photometry, first described by White et al. (2017) and with further developments by Farr et al. (2018). Because SAP is

not possible, we consider instead the unsaturated pixels p_j at the wings of the broad and complex PSF, and construct a light curve as a linear combination with weights w_j of these time series, so that flux at cadence i is

$$f_i \equiv \sum_j w_j p_{ij}. \quad (1)$$

The weights are chosen to minimize an objective function

$$\Lambda_{k,l} \equiv \frac{\sum_i |f_i - f_{i-l}|^k}{\sum_i f_i}, \quad (2)$$

which is the L_k norm on a ‘lagged’ finite difference with a lag parameter l . For $k = 1$ and $l = 1$, $\Lambda_{1,1}$ is the standard Total Variation as used in previous halo papers, and can be seen as the L1 norm on the derivative of f or as a discrete approximation to its arc length. The lag parameter l allow for flexibility in modelling systematics occurring at different timescales from cadence-to-cadence, and we investigate its effects below. The order parameter k allows for flexibility in how sensitive we are to normally-distributed versus long-tailed noise. TV is a convex objective function **and I think the generalizations are too** and $\Lambda_{k,l}$ has analytic derivatives with respect to w_j (calculated with **autograd**; [Maclaurin et al. 2015](#)), and it is therefore extremely fast to optimize and converges well on a global solution.

This method differs from smear photometry ([Pope et al. 2016](#)), which uses collateral ‘smear’ data to obtain a 1-D spatial profile with $\sim 1/1000$ of the flux on each CCD. While this has also been used for photometry of very bright stars, the ‘halo’ method has the advantage of averaging over many more realizations of the K2 pointing systematics and permitting more significant calibration, achieving a generally higher photometric prevision.

While the halo procedure produces in most cases a fairly clean light curve, there are nevertheless residual systematic errors related to spacecraft motion. In order to correct these, we employ the K2SC code ([Aigrain et al. 2015, 2016](#)), which simultaneously models a light curve as a 3D Gaussian Process (GP) in time and predicted position (the K2 standard data product POS_CORR) in pixels (x, y) . The model prediction in time for fixed position is then a nonparametric model of the stellar variability, and the prediction in space evaluated for fixed time represents the pointing systematics and is subtracted from the input fluxes to obtain a final corrected flux, which is the time series we use and recommend for science. The target pixel files for C91, C92, and C101 include no position information, and there are no halo apertures for C112. As a result K2SC-corrected data are not available for these targets.

3. SAMPLE

The full sample of stars for which halo apertures were obtained is listed in Tables 1–6, broken down by Campaign. While some very bright stars were observed

with conventional apertures as part of these programs, simple aperture photometry is satisfactory on these targets and we exclude them from the present discussion and data release, which is oriented strictly towards targets only observable with halo photometry. We make an exception for Spica, which was observed in Campaign 6 without a halo aperture but in Campaign 17 with a halo aperture. In Campaign 6 it was assigned a normal aperture by mistake and simple aperture photometry performed extremely poorly, so we have processed it with the halo pipeline. The stars in Campaign 18 were also on-silicon in Campaign 5, but were not assigned apertures suitable for halo photometry in C5. A possible further extension of the present work would be to recover C5 light curves for these objects using either or both of smear or modified halo photometry.

Seven stars in Campaign 13 and one in Campaign 16 were not only assigned long-cadence halo apertures, but also downloaded at short cadence. For these targets we have provided both long and short cadence reductions.

Some of the objects here have been previously published, but we here provide the first public data releases for the Pleiades’ Seven Sisters (White et al. 2017), Aldebaran (Farr et al. 2018), ι Lib (Buysschaert et al. 2018), and ϵ Tau (Arentoft et al. 2019), as well as ρ Leo with halo photometry but without using the TV-min method (Aerts et al. 2018).

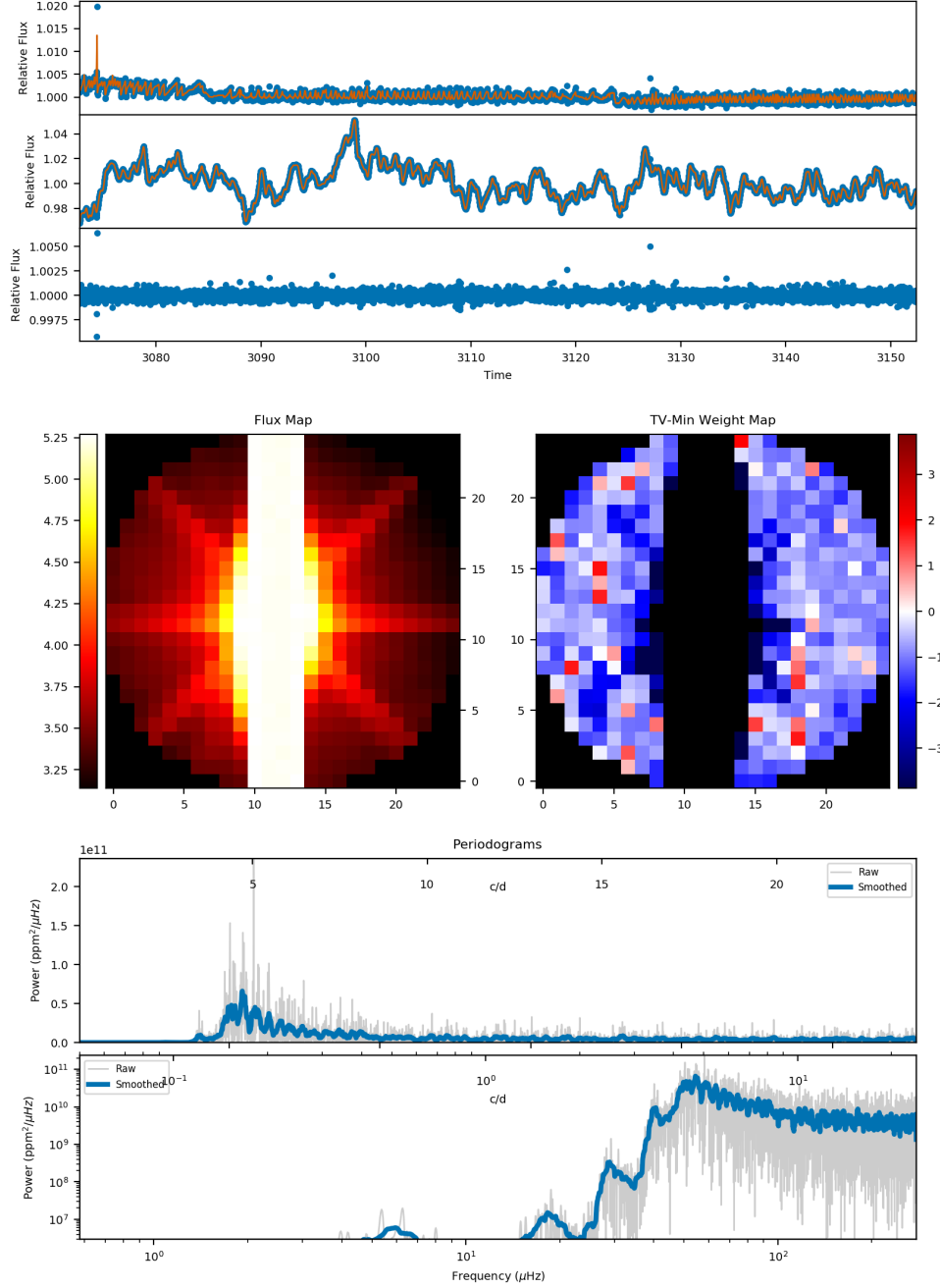
4. DISCUSSION

5. CONCLUSIONS

Some of the objects presented here are the subject of more detailed work in preparation, namely Spica (Buzasi et al., in prep.) and the Hyades giants (White et al., in prep.). In addition to this, we aim to separately publish asteroseismic catalogues of the red giants (Yu et al., in prep.) and main-sequence stars (Greklek-McKeon et al., in prep.).

The sample of K2 bright stars presented here only includes those with halo apertures, but while some others are available conventionally, many were not assigned target pixels and were not downloaded at all. Smear photometry has been used to recover the brightest otherwise-unobserved stars in nominal *Kepler* (Pope et al., in prep.), and this can also be done in K2, although in the latter case the sample is much smaller due to competition with halo apertures and the systematics correction is more difficult. A natural extension of both pieces of work would be to produce smear light curves of all bright stars without halo apertures in K2, which would finally make the *Kepler* extended mission magnitude-complete at the bright end.

The halo method naturally extends to other contexts where simple aperture photometry is not possible, such as for saturated stars observed by the Transiting Exoplanet Survey Satellite (TESS; Ricker et al. 2015). Although the saturation limit is brighter ($T_{mag} \sim 6$) and this problem accordingly affects fewer stars and less badly, there are situations such as for α Centauri or β Hydri where the bleed column reaches the

ρ Leo (EPIC 200182931) Detrended

edge of the chip and a SAP light curve is irrecoverable. We expect that TV-min halo photometry will therefore be valuable in ensuring that TESS can observe even the very brightest stars.

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Table 1. Stars in Campaigns 7-8 observed with halo photometry in K2.

| Name | EPIC | Spectral Type | V mag | Campaign | Comments |
|----------------|-----------|------------------|----------|----------|-------------------------------------|
| Alcyone | 200007767 | B7III | 2.986 | 4 | White et al. (2017) |
| Atlas | 200007768 | | 3.763 | 4 | White et al. (2017) |
| Electra | 200007769 | B6IIIe | 3.851 | 4 | White et al. (2017) |
| Maia | 200007770 | B8III | 4.305 | 4 | White et al. (2017) |
| Merope | 200007771 | B6IVe | 4.305 | 4 | White et al. (2017) |
| Taygeta | 200007772 | B6IV | 4.448 | 4 | White et al. (2017) |
| Pleione | 200007773 | B8Vne | 5.192 | 4 | White et al. (2017) |
| γ Tau | 200007765 | G9.5IIIabCN0.5 | 3.474 | 4 | |
| δ 1 Tau | 200007766 | G9.5IIICN0.5 | 3.585 | 4 | |
| Ascella | 200062593 | A2.5Va | 2.585 | 7 | |
| Albaldah | 200062592 | F2II-III | 2.88 | 7 | |
| τ Sgr | 200062591 | K1.5IIIb | 3.31 | 7 | |
| ξ 2 Sgr | 200062590 | G8/K0II/III | 3.51 | 7 | |
| σ Sgr | 200062589 | G9IIIb | 3.77 | 7 | |
| 52 Sgr | 200062585 | B8/9V | 4.598 | 7 | |
| Ainalrami | 200062588 | K1II | 4.845 | 7 | |
| ψ Sgr | 200062584 | K0/1III+A/F | 4.85 | 7 | |
| 43 Sgr | 200062587 | G8II-III | 4.878 | 7 | |
| ν 2 Sgr | 200062586 | K3-II-III:CN1Ba1 | 4.98 | 7 | |
| ϵ Psc | 200068392 | G9IIIbFe-2 | 4.28 | 8 | |
| Revati | 200068393 | A7IV | 5.187 | 8 | |
| 80 Psc | 200068394 | F2V | 5.5 | 8 | |
| 42 Cet | 200068399 | G8IV+A(8) | 5.87 | 8 | |
| 33 Cet | 200068395 | K4/5III | 5.942 | 8 | |
| 60 Psc | 200068396 | G8III | 5.961 | 8 | 15 Vega measurements HD4526 |
| 73 Psc | 200068397 | K5III | 6.007 | 8 | 17 Vega measurements HD 6386 |
| WW Psc | 200068398 | M2.5III | 6.14 | 8 | |
| HR 243 | 200068400 | G8/K0II/III | 6.368 | 8 | |
| HR 161 | 200068401 | K3III | 6.407 | 8 | |

Table 2. Stars in Campaign 9 observed with halo photometry in K2.

| Name | EPIC | Spectral Type | V mag | Campaign | Comments |
|-----------|-----------|-----------------------|----------|----------|----------|
| HR 6766 | 200069361 | G7:IIIbCN-1CH-3.5HK+1 | 4.56 | 9 | |
| HR 6842 | 200069360 | K3II | 4.627 | 9 | |
| 4 Sgr | 200069357 | A0 | 4.724 | 9 | |
| 11 Sgr | 200069358 | K0III | 4.98 | 9 | |
| 7 Sgr | 200069362 | F2II-III | 5.34 | 9 | |
| 15 Sgr | 200069359 | O9.7Iab | 5.37 | 9 | |
| HR 6838 | 200069363 | K2III | 5.75 | 9 | |
| Y Sgr | 200069364 | F8II | 5.75 | 9 | Cepheid |
| HR 6716 | 200069365 | B0Iab/b | 5.77 | 9 | |
| HR 6681 | 200069366 | A0V | 5.929 | 9 | |
| 9 Sgr | 200069368 | O4V((f))z | 5.97 | 9 | |
| 16 Sgr | 200069367 | O9.5III | 6.02 | 9 | |
| HR 6825 | 200069369 | ApSi | 6.15 | 9 | |
| 63 Oph | 200069370 | O8II((f)) | 6.2 | 9 | |
| HR 6679 | 200069373 | A1V | 6.469 | 9 | |
| HD 165784 | 200069371 | A2Iab | 6.58 | 9 | |
| HD 161083 | 200069374 | F0V | 6.58 | 9 | |
| 5 Sgr | 200069372 | K0III | 6.64 | 9 | |
| HD 167576 | 200069378 | K1III | 6.66 | 9 | |
| HR 6773 | 200069380 | B3/5IV | 6.71 | 9 | |
| HD 163296 | 200071159 | A1Vep | 6.85 | 9 | |
| HD 165052 | 200069379 | O5.5:Vz+O8:V | 6.87 | 9 | |
| 17 Sgr | 200069375 | G8/K0III | 6.886 | 9 | |
| HD 169966 | 200069376 | G8/K0III | 6.97 | 9 | |
| HD 162030 | 200069377 | K1III | 7.02 | 9 | |

Table 3. Stars in Campaigns 10-12 observed with halo photometry in K2.

| Name | EPIC | Spectral Type | V mag | Campaign | Comments |
|--------------|-----------|------------------|----------|----------|----------|
| Porrima | 200084004 | F1V+F0mF2V | 2.74 | 10 | |
| Zaniah | 200084005 | A2IV | 3.9 | 10 | |
| 21 Vir | 200084006 | B9V | 5.48 | 10 | |
| FW Vir | 200084007 | M3+IIICa0.5 | 5.71 | 10 | |
| HR 4837 | 200084008 | G8III | 5.918 | 10 | |
| HR 4591 | 200084009 | K1III | 6.316 | 10 | |
| HR 4613 | 200084010 | G8/K0III | 6.364 | 10 | |
| HD 107794 | 200084011 | K0III | 6.46 | 10 | |
| θ Oph | 200128906 | OB | 3.26 | 11 | |
| 44 Oph | 200128907 | kA5hA9mF1III | 4.153 | 11 | |
| 45 Oph | 200128908 | F5III-IV | 4.269 | 11 | |
| 51 Oph | 200128909 | A0V | 4.81 | 11 | |
| 36 Oph | 200129035 | K2V+K1V | 5.03 | 11 | |
| o Oph | 200128910 | | 5.2 | 11 | |
| 26 Oph | 200129034 | F3V | 5.731 | 11 | |
| HR 6472 | 200128911 | K0III | 5.83 | 11 | |
| HR 6366 | 200128913 | Fm dD | 5.911 | 11 | |
| HR 6365 | 200128912 | K0III | 5.977 | 11 | |
| 191 Oph | 200128914 | K0III | 6.171 | 11 | |
| κ Psc | 200164167 | A2VpSrCrSi | 4.94 | 12 | |
| 83 Aqr | 200164168 | F0V | 5.47 | 12 | |
| 24 Psc | 200164169 | K0II/III | 5.94 | 12 | |
| HR 8759 | 200164170 | G5II/III | 5.933 | 12 | |
| 14 Psc | 200164171 | A2II | 5.87 | 12 | |
| HR 8921 | 200164172 | K4/5III | 6.191 | 12 | |
| 81 Aqr | 200164173 | K4III | 6.215 | 12 | |
| HR 8897 | 200164174 | K4III | 6.34 | 12 | |

Table 4. Stars in Campaign 13 observed with halo photometry in K2.

| Name | EPIC | Spectral Type | V mag | Campaign | Comments |
|----------------|-----------|------------------|----------|----------|--|
| Aldebaran | 200173843 | K5+III | 0.86 | 13 | Farr et al. (2018) |
| θ 2 Tau | 200173845 | A7III | 3.41 | 13 | SC |
| ϵ Tau | 200173844 | G9.5IIICN0.5 | 3.53 | 13 | Arentoft et al. (2019) |
| θ 1 Tau | 200173846 | G9IIIFe-0.5 | 3.84 | 13 | |
| κ 1 Tau | 200173847 | A7IV-V | 4.201 | 13 | SC |
| δ 3 Tau | 200173849 | A2IV-Vs | 4.25 | 13 | C4 |
| τ Tau | 200173850 | B3V | 4.258 | 13 | |
| ν Tau | 200173848 | A8Vn | 4.282 | 13 | SC |
| ρ Tau | 200173851 | A8V | 4.65 | 13 | SC |
| 11 Ori | 200173853 | A1VpSiCr | 4.661 | 13 | |
| HR 1427 | 200173855 | A6IV | 4.764 | 13 | SC |
| 15 Ori | 200173854 | F2IV | 4.82 | 13 | |
| 75 Tau | 200173852 | K1IIIb | 4.969 | 13 | |
| 97 Tau | 200173857 | A7IV-V | 5.085 | 13 | SC |
| HR 1684 | 200173856 | K5III | 5.163 | 13 | |
| κ 2 Tau | 200173859 | F0Vn | 5.264 | 13 | SC |
| 56 Tau | 200173861 | A0VpSi | 5.346 | 13 | |
| 81 Tau | 200173860 | Am | 5.454 | 13 | |
| 53 Tau | 200173864 | B9Vsp | 5.482 | 13 | |
| HR 1585 | 200173858 | K1III | 5.49 | 13 | |
| 80 Tau | 200173866 | F0V | 5.552 | 13 | |
| 51 Tau | 200173865 | F0V | 5.631 | 13 | |
| HR 1403 | 200173867 | Am | 5.711 | 13 | |
| 89 Tau | 200173868 | F0V | 5.776 | 13 | |
| HR 1576 | 200173871 | B9V | 5.776 | 13 | |
| 98 Tau | 200173870 | A0V | 5.785 | 13 | |
| 99 Tau | 200173862 | K0III | 5.806 | 13 | |
| 105 Tau | 200173869 | B2Ve | 5.92 | 13 | |
| HR 1554 | 200173874 | F2IVn | 5.961 | 13 | |
| HR 1385 | 200173875 | F4V | 5.965 | 13 | C4 |
| HR 1741 | 200173873 | K0III | 6.107 | 13 | |
| HR 1633 | 200173872 | K0 | 6.188 | 13 | |
| HR 1755 | 200173876 | K0III | 6.205 | 13 | |

Table 5. Stars in Campaigns 14-15 observed with halo photometry in K2.

| Name | EPIC | Spectral Type | V mag | Campaign | Comments |
|----------------|-----------|-------------------|----------|----------|---------------------------|
| ρ Leo | 200182931 | B1Iab | 3.87 | 14 | Aerts et al. (2018) |
| 58 Leo | 200182925 | K0.5IIIFe-0.5 | 4.838 | 14 | |
| 48 Leo | 200182926 | G8.5IIIFe-1 | 5.07 | 14 | |
| 53 Leo | 200182928 | A2V | 5.312 | 14 | |
| 65 Leo | 200182927 | K0III | 5.52 | 14 | |
| 35 Sex | 200182929 | K2II-III+K1II-III | 5.79 | 14 | |
| 43 Leo | 200182930 | K3III | 6.08 | 14 | |
| Dschubba | 200194910 | B0.3IV | 2.32 | 15 | Buysschaert et al. (2018) |
| Zubenelhakrabi | 200194911 | G8.5III | 3.91 | 15 | |
| ι 1 Lib | 200194912 | B9IVpSi | 4.54 | 15 | |
| 41 Lib | 200194913 | G8III/IV | 5.359 | 15 | |
| ζ 4 Lib | 200194914 | B3V | 5.499 | 15 | |
| HR 5762 | 200194915 | A2IV | 5.52 | 15 | |
| HR 5806 | 200194916 | K0III | 5.79 | 15 | |
| ζ 3 Lib | 200194917 | K0III | 5.806 | 15 | Buysschaert et al. (2018) |
| HR 5810 | 200194918 | K0III | 5.816 | 15 | |
| ι 2 Lib | 200194919 | A2V | 6.066 | 15 | |
| HR 5620 | 200194920 | K0III | 6.14 | 15 | |
| 28 Lib | 200194921 | G8II/III | 6.17 | 15 | |
| HD 138810 | 200194958 | K1(III)(+G) | 7.02 | 15 | |

Table 6. Stars in Campaigns 16-18 observed with halo photometry in K2.

| Name | EPIC | Spectral Type | V mag | Campaign | Comments |
|-------------------|-----------|----------------------|----------|----------|----------|
| Asellus Australis | 200200356 | K0+IIIb | 3.94 | 16 | |
| Acubens | 200200357 | kA7VmF0/2III/IVSr | 4.249 | 16 | |
| ξ Cnc | 200200358 | G8.5IIIFe-0.5CH-1 | 5.149 | 16 | |
| α 1 Cnc | 200200360 | A5III | 5.22 | 16 | |
| η Cnc | 200200359 | K3III | 5.325 | 16, 18 | |
| 45 Cnc | 200200728 | A3III:+G7III | 5.65 | 16 | SC |
| α 2 Cnc | 200200361 | F0IV | 5.677 | 16 | |
| 50 Cnc | 200200363 | A1Vp | 5.885 | 16, 18 | |
| Spica | 200213067 | B1V | 0.97 | 17 | |
| 82 Vir | 200213053 | M1+III | 5.01 | 17 | |
| 76 Vir | 200213054 | G8III | 5.21 | 17 | |
| 68 Vir | 200213055 | K5III | 5.25 | 17 | |
| 80 Vir | 200213056 | K0III | 5.706 | 17 | |
| HR 5106 | 200213057 | A0V | 5.932 | 17 | |
| HR 5059 | 200213058 | A8V | 5.965 | 17 | |
| γ Cnc | 200233186 | A1IV | 4.652 | 18 | C5 |
| ζ Cnc | 200233643 | F8V+G0V | 4.67 | 18 | C5 |
| 60 Cnc | 200233188 | K5III | 5.44 | 18 | C5, C16 |
| 49 Cnc | 200233189 | A1VpHgMnSiEu | 5.66 | 18 | C5 |
| HR 3264 | 200233190 | K1III | 5.798 | 18 | C5 |
| 29 Cnc | 200233192 | A5V | 5.948 | 18 | C5 |
| HR 3222 | 200233193 | G8III | 6.047 | 18 | C5 |
| 21 Cnc | 200233196 | M2III | 6.08 | 18 | C5 |
| 25 Cnc | 200233644 | F5III _m ? | 6.1 | 18 | C5 |
| HR 3558 | 200233195 | K1III | 6.146 | 18 | C5 |
| HR 3541 | 200233194 | C-N4.5 | 6.4 | 18 | C5 |