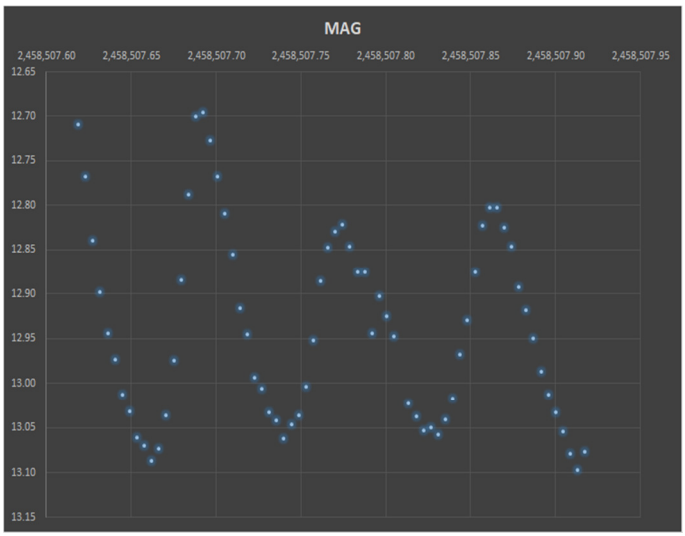
Variable Star Observation from DSOC

On the evening of the 23rd of January 2019 I had an opportunity to work with Dark Sky Observatory for a six to seven hour observing run. As an amateur astronomer, my intent was to test an experience beyond current capabilities and to investigate remote observing as a future capability. My hobby is photometry of variable stars usually eclipsing variables of short period pulsators. My current rig consists of an 80 MM APO refractor telescope and a Canon DSLR camera. The experience at DSO is quite a step up from my typical experience. The choice I made for observing was NT Camelopardalis (NSV 4019) a Delta Scuti (DSCT) variable with a period of approximately 2 hours with a magnitude less than 13.

Ron and Preston were great to work with. They had already performed the preliminary set up by the time I joined them via TeamViewer. Ron was the primary operator (my guide) and I very much enjoyed working with him. For the most part he let me drive, with his guidance. Once we got things set and operating we were up and running automatically for a few hours. We got back together around midnight in time to perform the meridian flip. Once again Ron walked me through the process and I was imaging once again. The next day I was emailed a link to download my images of NT Cam and a set of calibration frames. I am delighted with the results. The light curve reveals NT Cam to be an interesting double mode DSCT star.

I am looking forward to using this facility again; I have wanted to image an exoplanet transit for quite a while. This is something also beyond my current capabilities and the investment is more than I am interested in making. I probably would need to be walked through the process once again but I can envision a time when I could use this facility with minimal help through the process from Ron or Preston. All in all, a great experience.

Greg Conrad



NT Camelopardalis (NSV 4019)

Ron DiIulio and 16 inch RC