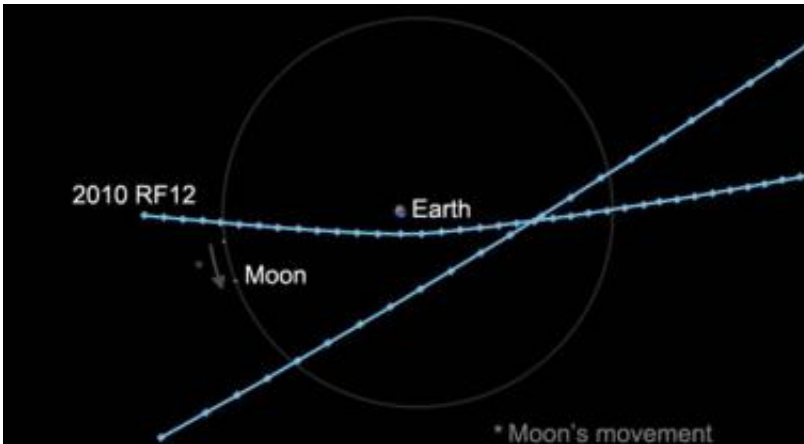


Two asteroids to pass by Earth Wednesday

September 8 2010

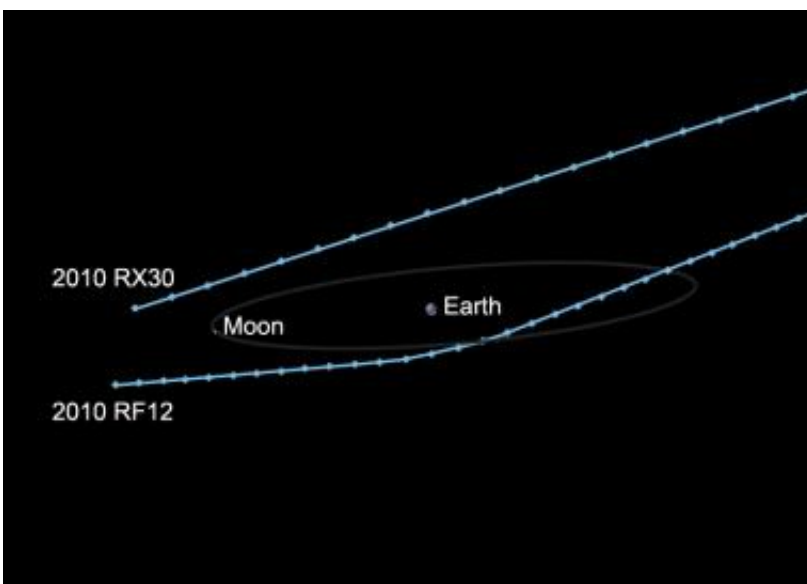


Two small asteroids in unrelated orbits will pass within the moon's distance of Earth on Wed. Both should be observable with moderate-sized amateur telescopes.

(PhysOrg.com) -- Two asteroids, several meters in diameter and in unrelated orbits, will pass within the moon's distance of Earth on Wednesday, Sept. 8.

Both asteroids should be observable near closest approach to [Earth](#) with moderate-sized amateur telescopes. Neither of these objects has a chance of hitting Earth. A 10-meter-sized near-Earth asteroid from the undiscovered population of about 50 million would be expected to pass almost daily within a lunar distance, and one might strike Earth's [atmosphere](#) about every 10 years on average.

The Catalina Sky Survey near Tucson, Ariz., discovered both objects on the morning of Sunday, Sept. 5, during a routine monitoring of the skies. The Minor Planet Center in Cambridge, Mass., first received the observations Sunday morning, determined preliminary orbits and concluded that both objects would pass within the distance of the [moon](#) about three days after their discovery.



Asteroids 2010 RX 30 and 2010 RF12 will make their closest approach to Earth this Wed. At time of closest approach for 2010 RX 30 (2:51 a.m. PDT), it will be approximately 154,000 miles (about 248,000 kilometers) above the North Pacific, south of Japan. At time of closest approach for 2010 RF12 30 (2:12 p.m. PDT), the asteroid will be approximately 49,088 miles (about 79,000 kilometers) above Antarctica.

Near-Earth [asteroid](#) 2010 RX30 is estimated to be 32 to 65 feet (10 to 20 meters) in size and will pass within 0.6 lunar distances of Earth (about 154,000 miles, or 248,000 kilometers) at 2:51 a.m. PDT (5:51 a.m. EDT) Wednesday. The second object, 2010 RF12, estimated to be 20 to

46 feet (6 to 14 meters) in size, will pass within 0.2 lunar distances (about 49,088 miles or 79,000 kilometers) a few hours later at 2:12 p.m. PDT (5:12 pm EDT).

More information: More information about asteroids is available at www.jpl.nasa.gov/asteroidwatch/ .

Provided by JPL/NASA

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