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A Search for a Radio Counterpart to Swift J174540.7-290015

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on 9 Mar 2016; 18:29 UT

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Referred to by ATel #: [8881](#)

We report the results of VLA observations of the Galactic Center X-ray transient Swift J174540.7-290015 on 25 Feb 2016 between 16:28 and 17:09 UT in two frequency bands centered at 6 GHz (C band) and 15 GHz (Ku band) (ATels #8649, #8684, #8689, #8737, #8746). We did not detect a radio counterpart in synthesis imaging or in searching phased array data for a periodic signal. The X-ray source lies close to the Northern arm of Sgr A West, which made removal of diffuse structure necessary to achieve good sensitivity. The Ku and C band observations had rms of 6 mJy and 53 mJy, respectively, and a peak value of 15 mJy and 115 mJy, respectively, in the vicinity of the GC transient. The peak flux in both bands was not centered on the position of the GC transient but in the adjacent Northern arm of Sgr A West. The flux density of Sgr A* was 0.65 Jy and 1.16 Jy in C and Ku bands, respectively, consistent with past measurements. Simultaneously with the imaging data, we recorded high time resolution data from a single synthesized (phased array) beam at the position of the Swift transient. In both frequency bands, these data were taken using 4096 MHz total bandwidth, 1024 frequency channels, and 250 us time resolution. We searched for dispersed, periodic signals over dispersion measures ranging from 0 to 10,000 pc/cm⁻³ and pulse frequency drift (source acceleration) up to 5*10⁻⁵ Hz/s. At both frequencies, pulses from the bright, nearby 3.76-s magnetar PSR J1745-2900 (ATel #5020) were detected, but no other significant periodicities were found. Assuming 10% pulse duty cycle, the 10-sigma flux density limits for the periodicity searches were 30 uJy at C-band and 45 uJy at Ku-band. Ku and C band observations were obtained between 12.952 and 17.048 GHz and between 3.976 and 8.072 GHz, respectively. For cross-correlation and imaging, the data were split into 64 independent frequency windows, each with 128 channels, and in dual circular polarization mode. The VLA pipeline was used to provide basic flagging and calibration. Additional rounds of self-calibration were also performed. Ku and C band images were made

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with baselines of 50 and 20 klambda, respectively, and longer in order to remove extended structure. The Ku band beam size was 4.3 x 0.9 arcsec in position angle 29 deg East of North. The C band beam size was 7.8 x 2.3 arcsec in position angle 22 deg East of North. These observations are consistent with but more sensitive than lower-frequency GMRT observations, which also did not detect a radio counterpart in a periodic search (ATel #8729). Based on the X-ray luminosity and assuming a 10 solar mass black hole, we estimated a radio flux density of 1 mJy if the source were in the low-hard state using the fundamental plane relations. Our limits are not able to exclude this possibility. Current upper limits on radio and X-ray periodicities still leave open the magnetar and the accreting low mass X-ray binary scenarios (both if hosting a black hole or a neutron stars).

	J174535.5-285921
9196	Continued Swift/XRT observations of the new Galactic center transients SWIFT J174540.2-290037 and SWIFT J174540.7-290015
9152	VVV near-infrared observations of the Swift J174540.2-290037 field
9109	Swift/XRT detection of another active X-ray transient close to Sgr A*
9000	Hard X-ray activity from the direction to Sgr A* revealed by INTEGRAL
8881	Swift/XRT detects renewed activity of the Galactic center transient GRS 1741-2853
8793	A Search for a Radio Counterpart to Swift J174540.7-290015
8746	Chandra Position of Galactic Center X-ray Transient Swift J174540.7-290015
8737	VVV near-infrared observations of the Swift J174540.7-290015 field
8729	Search for pulsed radio emission from SWIFT J174540.7-290015
8689	Near-IR source content of the error region for SWIFT J174540.7-290015
8684	INTEGRAL observations of Swift J174540.7-290015
8649	New Galactic Center X-ray Transient Detected by Swift: SWIFT J174540.7-290015
7023	Swift resumes X-ray monitoring observations of the Galactic center
6083	Sgr A* at 22 GHz around the G2 peri-center passing with Japanese VLBI Network
6004	Progress Report of the Monitor of Sgr A* with Japanese VLBI Network at 22 GHz until 2014/76
5861	Continued Swift/XRT monitoring observations of the Galactic center
5847	Swift/XRT observations of the Galactic center have resumed
5332	Report on (non-)activity in the Galactic bulge region as seen by INTEGRAL
5254	Swift detection of a third burst from SGR J1745-29
5246	Swift/XRT detects activity of the Galactic center transient GRS 1741-2853
5226	New Swift/XRT observations confirm that the active Galactic center transient is AX J1745.6-2901
5222	Swift/XRT monitoring observations detect an active X-ray transient near the Galactic center
5184	Report of the Daily Monitor of Sgr A* at 22 GHz
5159	Limits on Low Frequency Radio Flux Density Changes for Sgr A*
5124	Swift/BAT detection of a burst from SGR J1745-29
5095	Chandra confirmation of transient X-ray activity from CXOGC J174540.0-290005 north of the Galactic Center
5076	Detection of radio pulsations at 22 GHz from the Magnetar PSR J1745-2900 in the archival data from 2011
5074	Swift/XRT detection of an active X-ray transient near the Galactic center
5073	NuSTAR detection of a transient in outburst north of

	Sgr A*
5070	Search for pulsed radio emission from PSR J1745-2900 at 1 GHz with the GMRT
5064	Polarisation profiles and rotation measure of PSR J1745-2900 measured at Effelsberg
5058	On-going radio observations of PSR J1745-2900 at Effelsberg, Nancay, and Jodrell Bank: flux density estimates, polarisation properties, spin-down measurement, and the highest dispersion measure measured.
5053	Detection by Sardinia Radio Telescope of radio pulses at 7 GHz from the Magnetar PSR J1745-2900 in the Galactic center region
5046	Spin-down Measurement of PSR J1745-2900: a New Magnetar
5043	Further radio pulsations from the direction of the NuSTAR 3.76-second X-ray pulsar, and a dispersion measure estimate.
5040	Detection of radio pulsations from the direction of the NuSTAR 3.76 second X-ray pulsar at 8.35 GHz
5037	Swift-BAT monitoring for additional bursts from SGR J1745-29 (Trigger 554491)
5035	Detection of radio pulsations from the direction of the Galactic center Soft Gamma-ray Repeater with Parkes and the GBT
5033	Searches for Dispersed Radio Pulsar Emission from the Sag A* SGR
5032	Chandra localization of the soft gamma repeater in the Galactic Center region
5027	Searches for radio pulsations from the 3.76 second NuSTAR X-ray pulsar in the Galactic centre.
5025	Limits on Radio Frequency Flux Density Changes in Sgr A*
5024	NICT VLBI Observations of Sgr A* at 8 GHz and 2 GHz
5020	NuSTAR discovery of a 3.76 second pulsar in the Sgr A* region
5018	1.3mm CARMA Flux Density for Sgr A*
5016	Continued Swift Monitoring of the Galactic Center Flare
5014	Brightening of Sgr A* at 32 GHz from VLA observations
5013	Possible brightening at 22 GHz of Sgr A*
5011	Swift XRT spectrum of transient X-ray source at Sgr A*'s position
5009	Swift/BAT detection of an SGR-like flare from near Sgr A*
5008	Ongoing X-ray activity from Sgr A*
5006	Large Flare from Sgr A* Detected by Swift
4923	Non-detection of flare at 22 GHz of Sgr A* induced by the approaching G2 cloud in February and March 2013
4249	Brightening and hardening of new X-ray transient in globular cluster Terzan 5
3525	Chandra Localization of the Galactic Center X-ray Transient Swift J174535.5-285921
3472	Swift/XRT discovers a new X-ray transient near the

**Galactic center: Swift
J174535.5-285921**
**1513 Chandra detects Swift
J174535.5-290135.6 in a
relatively bright state**

[**Telegram Index**]

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