Telling star clusters from galaxies in the ultra-compact dwarf regime

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Somewhere between M32 and M4...



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What is a globular cluster?

Globular cluster := something that is made of Globular cluster stars

Light element variations

Second generation

[♠]N, Na, Al, (K, He?) ↓C, O, Mg

massive AGB stars (Parmentier+1999,...)

rapidly rotating massive stars (Decressin+2007)

mass-transfering massive binary stars (De Mink+2009)

Driven by timescale and density, unique to Globular Clusters

Light element variations



Driven by timescale and density, unique to Globular Clusters

Also the suspect stripped nuclei

ωCen (Bell & Dickens 1974)

M54 (Brown+1999)

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Also the suspect stripped nuclei

ωCen (Bell & Dickens 1974)

M54 (Brown+1999)

"... the halo cluster NGC 2419 was long thought to be a unique object, while it can now be seen as a harbinger of the new class of UCDs.. (Brodie+2011)



In integrated light



X-Shooter UCD sample



X-Shooter UCD sample







Sample: Chilingarian+2009, Huxor+2011, Huxor+2013, Paudel+2014 Spectra: SDSS

compact Ellipticals



What about nuclei?



Paudel+2011, FORS2@VLT



Paudel+2011, FORS2@VLT

What about nuclei?



Summary

Light-element enrichment gives information perpendicular to observing tidal stripping, measuring the SFH and kinematics

6 out of 7 UCDs fall right on the CN-enrichment trend of GCs

NGC4546-UCD1 is not a GC

at least one dE nucleus in our sample appears GC-like