Tracking Down the Highest Spindown Power Gamma-ray Pulsars

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Forty six γ-ray pulsars were reported in the First Fermi Large Area Telescope (LAT) Catalog of Gamma-ray Pulsars [2]. Over forty more have been seen since then. A simple but effective figure-of-merit for γ-detectability is $\sqrt{E/d^2}$, where $E$ is the pulsar spindown power and $d$ the distance. We are tracking down the best γ-ray candidates not yet seen. We present the timing and spectral analysis results of some new high spindown power, nearby γ-ray pulsars. We also update some population distribution plots in preparation for the 2nd Fermi LAT γ-ray Pulsar Catalog.

I. INTRODUCTION

The launch of the Fermi Gamma-ray Space Telescope has opened a new era in the study of γ-ray pulsars. Besides the 7 previously-known CGRO γ-ray pulsars, Fermi Large Area Telescope (LAT) has detected 88 γ-ray pulsars, among them 46 reported in the First Fermi Large Area Telescope (LAT) Catalog of Gamma-ray Pulsars [2]. These γ-ray pulsars fall into three different classes: young or middle-aged radio selected (using radio ephemerides), young or middle-aged gamma selected (by blind periodicity searches), and millisecond pulsars (MSP, currently only radio selected). Many of the radio MSPs were recently discovered at the positions of unidentified Fermi sources. The increasing population of γ-ray pulsars enables great improvements in the understanding of the γ-ray emission mechanisms and the Galactic population of pulsars through detailed study of their light curves and spectra. We present here the timing and spectral analysis results for some of these new high spindown power, nearby γ-ray pulsars, as well as some preliminary population distribution plots for the 2nd Fermi LAT γ-ray Pulsar Catalog.

II. NEW DETECTIONS OF YOUNG ENERGETIC γ-RAY PULSARS

Figure 1 shows (colored points) the 88 γ-ray pulsars (including the 7 previously-known CGRO γ-ray pulsars) detected with the Fermi LAT to date. 55 were discovered using radio ephemerides and 26 by blind period searches. We are tracking down the best γ-ray candidates not yet seen.

Ranked by $\sqrt{E/d^2}$ for ATNF [3] pulsars with $E > 10^{33}$ erg $s^{-1}$ & $P_0 > 10$ ms, nine recently-detected young energetic radio-selected γ-ray pulsars are listed in Table 1 along with the preliminary timing analysis results.

Figure 2 shows the preliminary γ-ray and radio profiles for two new γ-ray pulsars, J0908-4913 and J0940-5428. They have either two narrow peaks or one single wide pulse, typical for γ-ray pulsars.

The gamma peak separation - radio lag distribution (Δ-δ distribution, Figure 3) can be compared to predictions of the geometrical models of outer magnetosphere emission, e.g. “Two Pole Caustic” (TPC) [4] and “Outer Gap” (OG) [5], and help us probe details of the emission geometry. In particular, PSR J0908-4913 has been determined to be an orthogonal rotator through geometry studies in the radio domain [6].

Why are some pulsars invisible in γ-rays? As discussed by Dumora et al. [7]:

- Distance & the Galactic diffuse γ-ray background influence the signal-to-noise ratio. We see PSR J1410-6132 in spite of a very low $\sqrt{E/d^2}$. Its large DM distance bears further investigation.
- Timing model quality. PSR J1357-6429 was discovered once we obtained a good radio ephemeris.
- Physics (beam geometry): for those pulsars having reliable distance measurements and good timing models, exploration of geometry will help us constrain the emission models and improve the population syntheses [8].

III. ZOOM ON PSR J1357-6429

Discovered during the Parkes multibeam survey of the Galactic plane [9], PSR J1357-6429 is among the youngest and most energetic nearby pulsars known. It was in the top 2 highest $\sqrt{E/d^2}$ pulsars not yet seen with the LAT [7] and might have become a candidate “gamma faint pulsar” [8]. In fact, the absence of γ-ray pulsations was due to the lack of a good radio timing
We present the LAT analysis result using 29 months of data covering Aug 4, 2008 to Jan 15, 2011. We selected events with energies greater than 0.1 GeV but excluded those with zenith angles larger than 100° to minimize contamination from secondary γ-rays from the Earth’s atmosphere. We used Source events class which optimizes the trade-off between γ-ray detection efficiency and residual charged-particle contamination in a manner well-suited to localized, persistent sources, as distinct from the Transient or Diffuse classes. The events were analyzed using the standard software package ScienceTools, and photon phases were calculated using the “Fermi-plugin” available in the TEMPO2 pulsar timing software. We used the most recent P7SOURCE_V6 instrument response function (IRFs) as well as the Galactic Diffuse Model: gal_p7v6source.txt and the Extra-galactic Diffuse Model: iso_p7v6source.txt as documented at the Fermi Science Support Center.

### A. Timing analysis

Figure 4 shows the γ-ray light curves at energy above 0.1 GeV and within 0.8° around the radio pulsar position using an energy–dependent cone of radius \( \theta_{68} \leq \sqrt{(5.3^\circ \times (\frac{E}{100\, \text{MeV}})^{-0.745})^2 + 0.09^2} \). This choice takes into account the instrument performance to maximize the signal-to-noise ratio over a broad energy range. Performing an unbinned maximum-likelihood fit of the phases to a constant plus single Gaussian, we obtained an intrinsic pulsed fraction of...
FIG. 4: Top three panels: phase-aligned $\gamma$-ray histograms of PSR J1357-6429 within an energy-dependent circular region of $0.8^\circ$ around the radio pulsar position. Two rotations are plotted with 25 bins per period. The dashed line shows the background level estimated using two nearby circular regions of $1.5^\circ$ from the pulsar. Second panel from bottom: X-ray pulse profile extracted from the XMM-Newton data of 2009 in the 0.5-2 keV energy band. Two rotations are plotted with 15 bins per period. Bottom panel: radio pulse profile based on Parkes observations at a center frequency of 1.4 GHz with 256 phase bins. [10]

0.56 $\pm$ 0.13 with a Gaussian of width 0.48 $\pm$ 0.18, centered at phase 0.83 $\pm$ 0.03. X-ray (XMM-Newton 2009 data) and radio (1.4GHz from Parkes [15]) profiles are also presented, confirming of X-ray pulsations first suggested by Zavlin (2007).

B. Spectral analysis

The phase-averaged spectrum of PSR J1357-6429 was obtained using gtlike, a maximum likelihood spectral analysis tool implemented in the Fermi Science-Tools. The spectrum is best described by a power law with a spectral index of $\Gamma = 1.5 \pm 0.3 \pm 0.3$ with an exponential cut off at $E_c = 0.8 \pm 0.3 \pm 0.3$ GeV and an integral photon flux above 100 MeV of $F_{100} = (6.5 \pm 1.6 \pm 2.3) \times 10^{-8}$ ph cm$^{-2}$ s$^{-1}$. The integral energy flux above 100 MeV is $F_{100} = (1.9 \pm 0.2 \pm 0.8) \times 10^{-5}$ MeV cm$^{-2}$ s$^{-1}$. Assuming a distance of 2.4 kpc, the gamma ray luminosity is $L_\gamma = (2.1 \pm 0.3 \pm 0.8) \times 10^{34}$ erg s$^{-1}$, consistent with a $L_\gamma \propto \sqrt{E}$ relationship. The first error is statistical, while the second represents our estimate of systematic effects. Figure 5 shows the best fit spectrum as well as the 95% C.L. upper limits on the $\gamma$-ray emission from its potential Pulsar Wind Nebula HESS J1357-645 [10].

IV. CONCLUSION

The number of $\gamma$-ray pulsars has increased steadily since the launch of the Fermi Satellite in June 2008 and has reached 88 including the most recent detection of J0940-5428, the last piano key missing. We report 9 recently-detected young energetic radio-selected $\gamma$-ray pulsars ranked by a figure-of-merit for $\gamma$-detectability with some light curves and a preliminary update of the population distribution plots. The quality of timing models can influence or dominate $\gamma$-ray detection. The incoming 2nd Fermi LAT $\gamma$-ray Pulsar Catalog will provide a larger population which will give an opportunity to better constrain the $\gamma$-ray emission models.
TABLE I: Nine recently-detected young energetic radio-selected $\gamma$-ray pulsars

| Rank | PSRJ     | $P_0$ (s) | $E$ (erg s$^{-1}$) | $\sqrt{E}/d^2$ (erg s$^{-1}$cm$^{-2}$) | Dist1 (kpc) | GB (deg) | Npeak | radio lag | $\gamma$-ray peak sep. $\Delta$ |
|------|----------|-----------|-------------------|----------------------------------------|-------------|---------|-------|----------|-----------------------------|
| 15   | J1357-6429 | 0.1661    | 3.10E+36          | 2.82E+17                                | 2.50        | -2.51   | 1     | 0.38±0.02 | ...                         |
| 18   | J1531-5610 | 0.0842    | 9.09E+35          | 2.18E+17                                | 2.09        | 0.03    | 1     | 0.35±0.02 | ...                         |
| 23   | J0940-5428 | 0.0875    | 1.93E+36          | 1.58E+17                                | 2.95        | -1.29   | 1     | 0.30±0.01 | ...                         |
| 28   | J0908-4913 | 0.1068    | 4.92E+35          | 1.09E+17                                | 2.53        | -1.01   | 2     | 0.10±0.01 | 0.50±0.01                   |
| 37   | J1730-3350 | 0.1395    | 1.23E+36          | 8.74E+16                                | 3.54        | 0.09    | 2     | 0.05±0.01 | 0.45±0.01                   |
| 51   | J1801-2451 | 0.1249    | 2.59E+36          | 5.92E+16                                | 5.22        | -0.88   | 2     | 0.10±0.02 | 0.46±0.02                   |
| 87   | J1016-5857 | 0.1074    | 2.58E+36          | 2.52E+16                                | 8.0         | -1.88   | 2     | 0.10±0.01 | 0.50±0.01                   |
| 105  | J1648-4611 | 0.1650    | 2.09E+35          | 1.86E+16                                | 4.96        | -0.79   | 1     | 0.53±0.01 | ...                         |
| 129  | J1410-6132 | 0.0500    | 1.01E+37          | 1.30E+16                                | 15.6        | -0.09   | 2     | 0.03±0.01 | 0.42±0.01                   |

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