

Re: Toward a Rational Definition of what is a Planet

Source: <http://sci.tech-archive.net/Archive/sci.astro/2005-09/msg00256.html>

- *From:* Daggaz <answer.in.this@newsgroup>
 - *Date:* Tue, 27 Sep 2005 18:44:39 +1000
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How about we forget about trying to keep Pluto as a planet. Pluto has significantly lower mass than at least 6 of the solar systems moons and is part of a large population of bodies (the Kuiper Belt) that includes objects of similar size to Pluto.

Setting the lower limit of a planet to Pluto's size would put Pluto, UB313 and who knows how many other objects to a higher status than many moons. This wouldn't be wrong if it wasn't so arbitrary. Setting the lower limit the minimum mass for sphericity would be impractical because it would include too many objects.

Therefore I think the mass of the solar system's largest and most massive moon, Ganymede, (but not its size, that would exclude Mercury) should be set as the lower limit for the mass of a planet. Anything smaller but still spherical is a planetoid.

On 26 Sep 2005 21:42:56 -0700, edward12@xxxxxxxxxxxx wrote:

|Why not just say that anything smaller than Pluto is just a "Minor
|Planet" and anything Pluto's size or larger is a Planet?

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- *Follow-Ups:*
 - ◆ ***Re: Toward a Rational Definition of what is a Planet***
 ◇ *From:* ybosde
 - ◆ ***Re: Toward a Rational Definition of what is a Planet***
 ◇ *From:* Paul Schlyter
- *References:*
 - ◆ ***Toward a Rational Definition of what is a Planet***
 ◇ *From:* ph42
 - ◆ ***Re: Toward a Rational Definition of what is a Planet***
 ◇ *From:* edward12

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