

The Whirlpool Galaxy



William Herschel Telescope + PFIP



Messier 51 Galaxy, known as the Whirlpool Galaxy, is a bright spiral galaxy fairly close to us (7.5 Megaparsecs = 25 million light years). To the north of M51, at the top of the picture, is a companion galaxy which is being disrupted by the gravitational tidal forces of the main galaxy. The B-band image was obtained by SAR el Príncipe de Asturias (Crown Prince of Spain) on his visit to the William Herschel Telescope the day before of the first stone ceremony of the Spanish 10-m GTC telescope.

Credit: Javier Méndez and Nik Szymanek.

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