

PHOTOMETRY FOR AMATEURS

Using iTelescopes to do Citizen Science

Gord Tulloch, RASC, Winnipeg Centre AAVSO:TGR











WHY CHANGES



itelescopes







T5 NEW MEXICO

- 250mm Reflector SBIG ST-10XME
- Paramount PME Mount
- Medium Wide Deep Field. Entry level Science Platform.
- Typically used for Science Missions. Photometry and Narrowband Imaging.
- **T5** is one of the busiest remote telescopes on the iTelescope Network. It allows its many drivers to gather valuable science data with its moderate wide angle FoV and sharp Takahashi optics.
- Includes photometric BVRI filters as well as RGB Ha SII OIII
- Up to 300s subs





T17 SIDING SPRING

• 430mm (17") Corrected Dall-Kirkham Astrograph - FLI ProLine PL4710 CCD

• T17 is a **Science Platform**. Normally used for Science Missions, Deep Photometry, Narrowband and 'Extended Red' light IR imaging. It is equipped with a FLI ProLine E2V CCD47-10-1-109 CCD. that has 'extended red sensitivity' when compared to standard CCD's. Giving it an almost 'Near Infrared' mission profile.

- **T17** is a unique telescope. T17 holds multiple <u>world record</u> achievements for the most distant objects imaged by amateur astronomers.
- T17 can detect **extremely distant galaxies** in 300 sec exposures. Some of its targets have been the most distant and oldest ever imaged on a publicly accessible telescope.
- If you wanted to bring out stars hidden in nebula with its Helium filter or chase targets that are very faint, then this CCD will do the job. Its extremely sensitive, so much so that OVER exposure becomes an issue and users should take care since its CCD is of the <u>NABG</u> variety.
- Includes BVRIU CIr RGBL g2 r2 i2 z2 Ha OIII HII filters
- Star-Analyser 200 Spectroscopic Grating

ITELESCOPES





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Advancing your Horizons in Astronomy ... No Network Messages

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★ Updated Launchpad!

We have been toiling behind the scenes to create this new version of the Launchpad. Please see Dr Christian Sasse's fantastic introductory video here for a tour of the new features.

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Support >	T31
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CONTROL



Siding Spring Observatory - Australia



Welcome Gord Tulloch

Basic Imaging One Click Image **One Click Comet** Single Image

Run Image Series Run Scripted Plan Acquire Comet/NEO

Pending Reservations Cal. (Dark/Bias) Deep Sky Catalog Welcome Page

AAVSO VPhot My Documents My Observing Plans Run Logs My Image Files Support Contact Support Video Tutorials

Observatory View Observatory Preview Last Image All Sky Camera Weather Data Telescope Info Abort Script

Release Observatory

Imaging

Toolbox Plan Generator System Status Preview Last Image

Auto-Guider Preview

If the System Status page isn't refreshing correctly or seems to be hung, please hit the reload button on your browser.

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Current Running Script Output:

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04:22:11	=== Guided Dither ===	
04:22:12	(guided dither, 1 good cycles)	
04:22:17	(guided dither, 2 good cycles)	
04:22:24	(guided dither, 3 good cycles)	
04:22:30	(guided dither, 4 good cycles)	
04:22:38	(guided dither, 5 good cycles)	
04:22:42	Guider X=0.06 Y=0.02	
04:22:56	Guider X=0.09 Y=0.08	
04:23:08	Guider X=0.05 Y=0.06	
04:23:22	Guider X=0.08 Y=0.08	
04:23:36	Guider X=-0.01 Y=0.04	
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Abort Sc	ript	

All Sky Camera

Siding Spring Observatory - Australia itelescope.net



Welcome Gord Tulloch

Basic Imaging

One Click Image One Click Comet Single Image

System Status

Preview Last Image

Auto-Guider Preview

Imaging

Run Image Series Run Scripted Plan Acquire Comet/NEO

Toolbox

System Status Plan Generator Make a Reservation Pending Reservations Cal. (Dark/Bias) Deep Sky Catalog Welcome Page AAVSO VPhot

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Observatory View Observatory Preview Last Image

All Sky Camera Weather Data Telescope Info Abort Script Release Observatory

If the System Status page isn't refreshing correctly or seems to be hung, please hit the reload button on your browser.

Observatory		Telescope		Imager			Activity		
In use		Side	real Track	Expose	180	sec.	Imaging		
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Current Running Script Output:

Abort Script

All Sky Camera

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04:22:11	=== Dither HA: 0.4165 ===	
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04:22:17	(guided dither, 2 good cycles)	
04:22:24	(guided dither, 3 good cycles)	
04:22:30	(guided dither, 4 good cycles)	
04:22:38	(guided dither, 5 good cycles)	
04:22:42	Guider X=0.06 Y=0.02	
04:22:56	Guider X=0.09 Y=0.08	
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BACK END



AREN'T ITELESCOPES EXPENSIVE?

- Cost is per imaging minute not slew, focus, calibrate etc.
- Each imaging minute is perfect or they refund your points
- How much per imaging minute for your own scope?
 - Cost of Equipment: \$5,000 \$20,000
 - How many perfect image mins do you collect per year? (12 hrs/mo x 12mo x ½ setup/teardown/equipment) say 4300
 - 4300mins or 350mins/month
 - iTelescope cost \$200-300 (incl moon discounts)
 - Breakeven = 2-8 years
 - Monthly subscription = accumulate minutes
 - Don't image = don't consume points
 - No up front costs to buy gear



VARIABLE STARS

- One of the best ways for amateurs to contribute to scientific knowledge
- Variable star primer
 - Intrinsic vs extrinsic
 - Cepheids yardsticks of the universe
 - Common types (per GCVS5.1)
 - Eruptive (generally intrinsic)
 - Cataclysmic (generally extrinsic)
 - Pulsating eg Cepheids
 - Rotating
 - Eclipsing Binaries



AG DRACONIS

- 9.8m symbiotic detached binary nova variable of Z And type consisting of an orange-red star (temp 3.5-5k), along with a white dwarf (80k), both of which revolve around a centre of gravity every 550 days.
 - The transfer of material from the larger companion to the smaller causes periodic outbursts once every 15 years which last about 3-6 years.
 - A reason to watch AG Dra is it was due an outburst doing interesting things







VPHOT





AAVSO

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#OBSCODE=TGR

#SOFTWARE=VPhot 3.1

#DELIM=,

#DATE=JD

#OBSTYPE=CCD

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LIGHT CURVES



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The historical light curve (LC) of AG Dra over the period 1889 - 2017, constructed on the basis of the photographic and the B band observations. The LC is divided into active (A - G) and quiescence (Q1 - Q6) stages by vertical lines. The thin curve shows spline fit to the data points. Credit: Šafárik et al., 2017. Read more at: <u>https://phys.org/news/2017-10-astronomers-unusual-outburst-binary-star.html#jCp</u>

OTHER PROJECTS

- Occultations
 Spectroscopy
 Evanlanct Transition
- Exoplanet Transits



OCCULTATIONS

- On 19 July 2016, Pluto passed in front of the faint star UCAC4 345-180315
- Offered rare chance to study it's atmosphere
- Image 1 pre-disappearance
- Image 2 mid-occultation
- Image 3 post-occultation
- Short duration makes these excellent iTelescope targets for time series imaging
- See right for a light curve from a 2007 even



AUGUST 14/15 2018 OCCULTATION



- Used T5 in New Mexico for this occultation (approx. Aug 14 11:30MT or Aug 15 5:30UT)
- 70 images over 20 mins 2 secs exp (about every 18 secs) 5:20-5:40UT
- Flats / bias / darks processed in AstroImageJ
- Plate solved with astronometry.net standalone server (ansvr)
- Still doing data reduction

SPECTROSCOPY



Dave Boyd (BAA) - Retrieved from https://britastro.org/node/7320













SO FAR NO GOOD

EXOPLANET TRANSITS

- Just completed an AAVSO CHOICE course in Exoplanet Observing conducted by Dennis M. Conti, Ph.D. Chair of the AAVSO Exoplanet Section (highly recommended)
- Course included processing of exoplanet photometry data using AstroImageJ







Source: NASA (https://exoplanets.nasa.gov/interactable/11/#/2)

OBSERVING EXOPLANETS

- Exoplanet transits can be observed with amateur telescopes via CCD photometry
- Not well suited to iTelescopes due to duration of transits (hours / days)
- AAVSOnet offers roboscopes that can be reserved via proposal to Time Allocation Committee in New Mexico, Arizona, Australia and NZ



WHEN TO OBSERVE?

 Many exoplanets have well established published ephemeris entries • "Trial run" highly recommended

VSO Home									
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AAVSO TARGET TOOL

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Star Name	RA (J2000.0)	Dec (J2000.0)	Const- ellation	☑ Var. Type	Min Mag	Max Mag	Period (d)	∂ Observing Cadence (d)	Observing Section	€ Filter/ Mode	ပ Last Observed	High Priority	Notes
WASP-76	01 ^h 46 ^m 31 ^s	+2° 42' 02"	Psc	EP	_	9.52 V	1.809886	0.2	EP	All	Near Solar Conjunction		Ephemeris info
HAT-P-12	13 ^h 57 ^m 33⁵	+43° 29' 36"	CVn	EP	_	12.84 V	3.2130598	0.3	EP	All	O 9 months ago		Ephemeris info
HAT-P-32	02 ^h 04 ^m 10⁵	+46° 41' 16"	And	EP	_	11.29 V	2.150008	0.2	EP	All	© 6 months ago		Ephemeris info
HAT-P-18	17 ^h 05 ^m 23⁵	+33° 00' 45"	Her	EP	_	12.76 V	5.508023	0.6	EP	All	© 9 months ago		Ephemeris info
HAT-P-3	13 ^h 44 ^m 22⁵	+48° 01' 43"	UMa	EP	_	11.86 V	2.899703	0.3	EP	All	© 8 months ago		Ephemeris info
HAT-P-38	02 ^h 21 ^m 31⁵	+32° 14' 46"	Tri	EP	—	12.56 V	4.640382	0.5	EP	All	No Observation		Ephemeris info
HD 149026	16 ^h 30 ^m 29⁵	+38° 20' 50"	Her	EP	—	8.16 V	2.8758887	0.3	EP	All	© 9 months ago		Ephemeris info
HAT-P-26	14 ^h 12 ^m 37⁵	+4° 03' 36"	Vir	EP	_	11.7 V	4.234516	0.4	EP	All	No Observation		Ephemeris info

https://filtergraph.com/aavso?exo=on&settype=true

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Gerald North

A Practical Guide to Exoplanet Observing

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QUESTIONS?