

A Graceful Spiral in a Blizzard of Galaxies



Image Credit: Gemini Observatory/AURA

Gemini Observatory Legacy Image



The Gemini Observatory is operated by the Association of Universities for Research in Astronomy, Inc., under a cooperative agreement with the National Science Foundation on behalf of the Gemini Partnership.



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This stunning image shows the dynamic spiral galaxy IC 5332 in a field of view studded with smaller, more distant, galaxies. Popularly known as the Corsage Galaxy, IC 5332 displays beautifully symmetric spiral arms that unwind gracefully from a small and compact central bulge.

Actually, IC 5332 features two main spiral arms that continually split into more feathery ones as they extend outwards. Pink “bubbles” of nebulous matter dot the arms. These are massive regions of glowing hydrogen gas and the sites of active star formation.

The abundance of galaxies surrounding IC 5332 is a chance alignment with an assortment of more distant galaxies providing an extragalactic backdrop. Astronomers suspect that IC 5332 belongs to the Sculptor group of galaxies — one of the closest to our Local Group at a distance of about 10 million light years.

Isobelle Teljega (a student at St. Margaret’s Anglican Girls School in the Brisbane suburb of Ascot, Queensland, Australia) suggested Gemini South take this image as part of her winning entry in the student division of Australia’s 2013 Gemini Astronomy Imaging Contest.

Gemini Observatory Facts

PRIMARY MIRRORS:

Diameter: 8.1 meters; 26.57 feet; 318.84 inches

Mass: 22.22 metric tonnes; 24.5 U.S. tons

Composition: Corning Ultra-Low Expansion (ULE) Glass

Surface Accuracy: 15.6 nm RMS (between 1/1000 - 1/10,000 thickness of human hair)

TELESCOPE STRUCTURES:

Height: 21.7 meters; 71.2 feet; 7 stories (from “Observing Floor”)

Weight: 380 metric tonnes; 419 U.S. tons

Optomechanical Design: Cassegrain ; Alt-azimuth

DOMES:

Height: 46 meters; 151 feet; 15 stories (from ground)

Weight: 780 metric tonnes; 860 U.S. tons (moving mass)

Rotation: 360 degrees in 2 minutes

Thermal Vents: 10 meters; 32.8 feet (width – fully open)

GEOGRAPHICAL DATA:

Elevation: Gemini North: 4,214 meters; 13,824 feet

Gemini South: 2,737 meters; 8,980 feet

Location: Gemini North: 19°49.4’N; 155°28.1’W

Gemini South: 30°14.5’S; 70°44.8’W

To see this, and many other images, please visit:

<http://www.gemini.edu/legacyph>

