



THE R CORONAE AUSTRALIS REGION

The R Coronae Australis complex of young stars and interstellar gas clouds is one of the nearest star-forming regions, at a distance of approx. 500 light-years from the Sun. It is seen in the southern constellation of that name (The "Southern Crown").

This photo was obtained with the Wide Field Imager (WFI), a 67-million pixel digital camera that is installed at the 2.2-m MPG/ESO Telescope at ESO's La Silla Observatory.

The bright star at the centre of the field is R Coronae Australis, from which the entire complex is named. It illuminates the reddish nebula around it. The bright star in the lower part, illuminating a somewhat bluer nebula, is known as TY Coronae Australis. The nebulosity seen on this poster is mostly due to reflection of the stellar light by small dust particles.

The brightness of these two stars and several others in the same field is variable. They belong to the so-called "T Tauri" class that is quite common in star-forming regions and corresponds to an early stage of stellar evolution.

Technical information: The observations were obtained in August 2000. The image is a combination of twelve large (8000 x 8000 pix) CCD frames taken through B, V, and R filters; each exposure lasted 5 min. The field shown measures about 4.7 x 4.7 light-years. North is up and East is left.

More information about ESO can be found at URL: <http://www.eso.org>