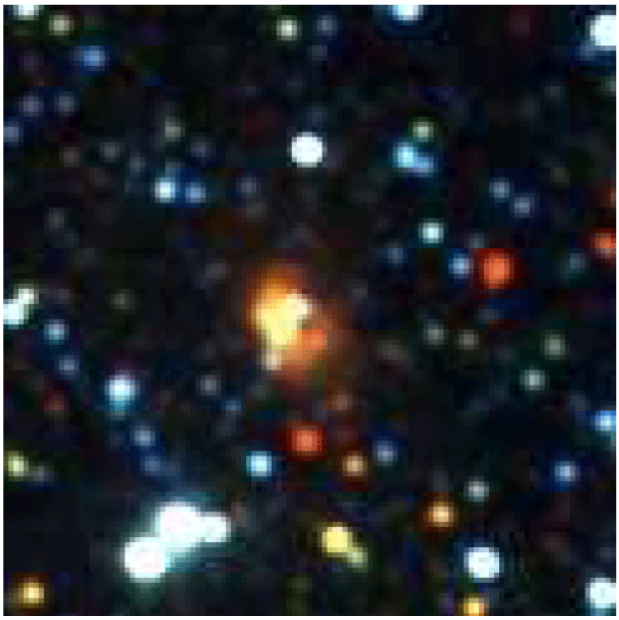
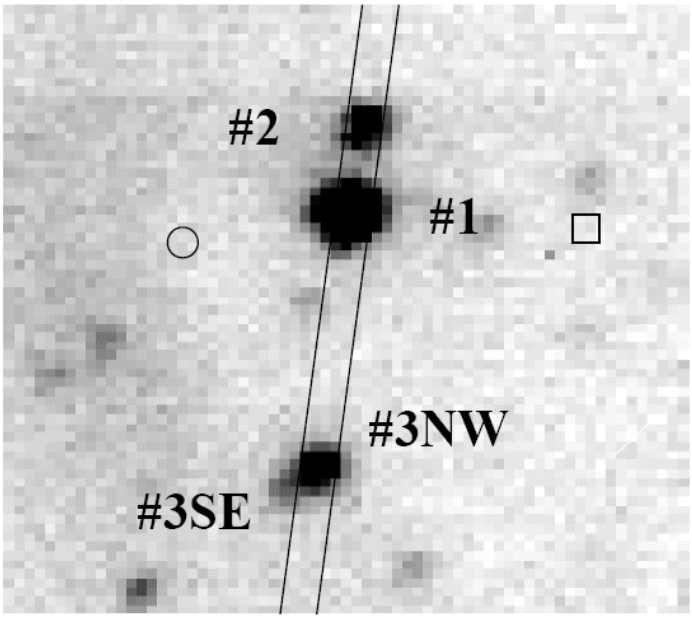
Astronomy & Astrophysics

HIGHLIGHTS: this week in A&A

Volume 492-1 (December II 2008)





In section 5. Galactic structure, stellar clusters, and population

"On the central ionizing star of G23.96+0.15 and near-IR spectral classification of O stars", by P.A. Crowther and J.P. Furness, A&A 492, p. 111

Uncertainty over the distance of many high-mass star-forming regions has persistently impeded efforts to understand their evolution. A recent development based both on maser VLBI work and IR spectroscopy has alleviated this situation. A dramatic example is the study by Crowther and Furness highlighted in this issue, which uses IR spectroscopy with the VLT to lower 23.96+0.15 from 4.7 to 2.5 kpc.

In section 8. Stellar atmospheres

"'Ultimate' information content in solar and stellar spectra: photospheric line asymmetries and wavelength shifts", by D. Dravins, A&A 492, p. 199

This paper offers an elegant demonstration of the limits achievable from increased resolution in stellar spectra. Its implications for precision studies of extrasolar planets, stellar pulsation, convection, and methods of probing stellar atmospheric structure is of considerable interest to the community.