





Alicante Survey of Massive Stars in H II regions (A-SMASHER)

A. Marco¹, I. Negueruela², D. de la Fuente^{1,5}, L. R. Patrick²,
A. Herrero^{3,4} and S. S. Eikenberry⁵

¹Departamento de Física, Ingeniería de Sistemas y Teoría de la Señal, EPS, Universidad de Alicante, Carretera de San Vicente s/n, E03690, San Vicente del Raspeig, Spain
email: amparo.marco@ua.es

²Departamento de Física Aplicada, Facultad de Ciencias, Universidad de Alicante, Carretera de San Vicente s/n, E03690, San Vicente del Raspeig, Spain

³Instituto de Astrofísica de Canarias, Vía Láctea s/n, E38200, La Laguna, Tenerife, Spain

⁴Departamento de Astrofísica, Universidad de la Laguna, Avenida Astrofísico Francisco Sánchez, s/n, Facultad de Ciencias, E38200, La Laguna, Tenerife, Spain

⁵CREOL, The College of Optics and Photonics, University of Central Florida, USA

Abstract. The aim of this survey is the homogeneous characterization of a large sample of H II regions with active star formation in order to detect observational trends supporting the two main models of massive star formation.

Keywords. stars: formation, stars: massive, stars: fundamental parameters, – open clusters and associations – Hertzsprung-Russell and colour-magnitude diagrams

1. Introduction

Two main theories exist to explain the formation of massive stars: (a) **Monolithic core accretion**, which is a scaled-up version of classical low-mass formation theories, where very high opacities allow infalling material to overcome the radiation pressure (Krumholz et al. 2009) and (b) **Competitive accretion** where massive stars are formed in cluster cores, benefiting from the gravitational potential of the whole cluster to accrete more material (Bonnell & Bate 2006).

2. Methodology

The sample was carefully selected from existing radio catalogues and consists of targets that have not been previously studied and contain near infrared point sources consistent with a massive star. We obtained deep near infrared photometry of one hundred such H II regions with WHT/LIRIS and we have carefully analyzed the corresponding color-magnitude diagrams.

3. Results

An initial separation has been made between regions containing obvious clusters and those that seem to include single sources (about 25%). For this latter subsample, we have already obtained intermediate-resolution spectroscopy with GTC/EMIR, while the clusters will be observed with multi-object configurations. Examples of the preliminary

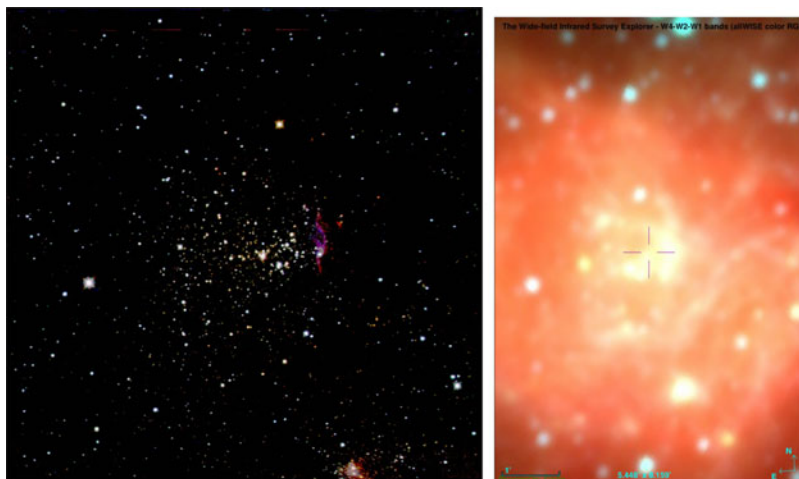


Figure 1. *Left:* J , H and K_S composite image (WHT/LIRIS) for a large cluster. *Right:* WISE image for the large cluster.

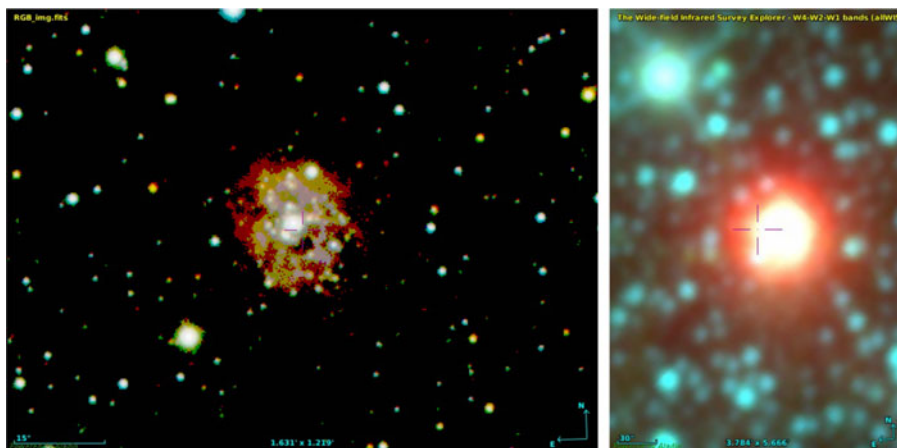


Figure 2. *Left:* J , H and K_S composite image (WHT/LIRIS) for a small cluster. *Right:* WISE image for the small cluster.

study of four H II regions with single sources can be seen in [de la Fuente et al. 2022](#) in these proceedings.

4. Conclusions

The statistical study of the properties of the populations contained within the H II regions in relation to the physical characteristics of the region itself and Galactic environment will provide novel insights into the conditions leading to (relatively) isolated or clustered massive star formation. Below, we show two examples corresponding to two very different H II regions, one containing a large population of massive stars (Figure 1) and the other, only a few members (Figure 2). There are two images for each object: a composite J , H , K_S image (WHT/LIRIS), where we can see the stars inside the H II region (left), and the image from WISE enhancing the content of gas (right).

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Supplementary material

To view supplementary material for this article, please visit <http://dx.doi.org/10.1017/S1743921322002368>.

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