

INTERNATIONAL ASTRONOMICAL UNION
Commission 9 Working Group on Sky Surveys

CATALOGUE
OF
WIDE-FIELD PLATE ARCHIVES

Version 3.1 - May 1998



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The Catalogue of Wide-Field Plate Archives is prepared in the Institute of Astronomy at the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences within the activities of the IAU Commission 9 Working Group on Wide-Field Imaging, founded in 1991. The first version of the catalogue, called "List of Wide-Field Plate Archives" was published in Newsletter No. 2 of the Working Group on Wide-Field Imaging in 1992. It is based on information from the answers of two circular letters sent to more than 200 professional astronomical institutes and observatories. In difference from the list of photographic plate archives created by B. Hauck (1982, in Automated Data Retrieval in Astronomy, p. 217) and C. Jashek (1988, Bull. Inform. CDS, No. 34, p. 159; 1989, *ibid.*, No. 36, p. 123) the present catalogue contains data for the existing wide-field plate archives separately for each observational instrument (reflector, astrograph, camera, Schmidt telescope, etc.) of the listed observatories/institutes. The total sum of wide-field plates in the listed 315 archives is 1 968 784. As a rule, the archives of the telescopes with field size larger than 1 deg. are included in the list (1992, M.K. Tsvetkov, WG WFI Newsletter, No. 2, p. 71).

The Catalogue of Wide-Field Plate Archives was distributed during the ESO/OAT International Workshop "Handling and Archiving Data from Ground-based Telescopes", Trieste, April 12-15, 1993, the IAU Symposium 161 "Astronomy from Wide-Field Imaging", Potsdam, August 23-27, 1993, the Colloquium 148 of the IAU "Future Utilization of the Schmidt Telescopes", Bandung, March 7-11, 1994, the XXIInd General Assembly of the International Astronomical Union in the Hague, August 15-27, 1994, 2nd Astronomical Conference of the Hellenic Astronomical Society, Thessaloniki, June 29 - July 1, 1995, JENAM'95 "Progress in European Astrophysics", Catania, September 25-29, 1995, the International Conference on Wide-Field Spectroscopy, Athens, May 20-24, 1996, the Colloquium "International Cooperation in Dissemination of the Astronomical Data", Pulkovo, July 2-9, 1996, the IAU Symposium 179 "New Horizons from Multiwavelength Sky Surveys", August 26-30, 1996 and the XXIII General Assembly of the International Astronomical Union in Kyoto, August 18-30, 1997.

The present version (3.1) is an updated and corrected version of the Catalogue. The successive columns of the Catalogue contain:

1. Wide-Field Plate Database instrument identifier (instrument code)
- 2-3. Location of the plate archive: town (site), country
- 4-6. Observatory: name, site, country
7. Marsden's number of observatory (private communication)
8. Time zone
9. Observatory longitude (deg, min)
10. Observatory latitude (deg, min)
11. Observatory altitude (m)
12. Clear aperture of the telescope (m)
13. Diameter of telescope mirror (m)
14. Focal length of the telescope (m)

15. Plate scale (arcsec/mm)
16. Instrument type: Ast - astrograph, Cam - camera, FEC - fish eye camera, Men - meniscus, RCr - Ritchey-Chretien, Rfl - reflector, Rfr - refractor, Sch - Schmidt
17. Field angular dimension (deg)
- 18-19. Years of telescope operation (from - to)
20. Symbol "F" for "film", blank for "plate"
21. Number of direct plates
22. Form of the archive data for the direct plates: T - printed table form, C - computer-readable form, TC - in preparation in computer-readable form
23. Number of objective prism plates
24. Form of the archive data for the objective prism plates: same as for column 21
25. Quality of the plate archive: A - very good, B - good, D - distributed
26. Astronomer in charge

Up to the present time 102 wide-field plate archives with a total of 454 254 plates have been included or are in preparation to be included in the Wide-Field Plate Database (1998, Tsvetkov, M.K. et al., WG SS Newsletter, No. 10). An on-line access to the WFPDB is now possible via Vizier catalogue browser in CDS-Strasbourg at <http://vizier.u-strasbg.fr/cats/VI.htx> (catalogue number VI/90).

We would like to express our deep thanks to all astronomers who sent us the data for the plate archives of their institutes/observatories. We hope that the use of this Catalogue as well as of the data from the Wide-Field Plate Database will encourage other colleagues to start preparing their plate catalogues and to give due attention to the importance of archiving work in astronomy.

We would appreciate all remarks, comments and collaboration in order to make the present data for the astronomical community complete and accurate to the most.

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