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Fig 78. The spiral galaxy M 74 (NGC 628). At a distance of 10.7 Mpc (35 million light years) and slightly smaller in size and stellar population than our own galaxy (about 30 kpc in diameter), M 74 is oriented face-on and gives a good idea of what we would see if we were able to travel a few hundred kpc above our galactic plane. The spiral structure is highlighted by vast amounts of gas and dust that provide the basic materials for star formation. Young star forming regions rich in hot massive stars give the bluish tinge to the less central parts of the spiral arms. The redder central regions of the galaxy are more densely populated by older, less massive and cooler stars as well as occasional evolved red giants. Our galaxy would, however, present more tightly woven spiral arms and portray a larger and slightly elongated ("barred") central bulge. The yellow circle has been scaled so as to put into context the heliocentric region of 2 kpc radius explored in fig 76 relatively to our position in our own galaxy, and illustrates its very local nature.

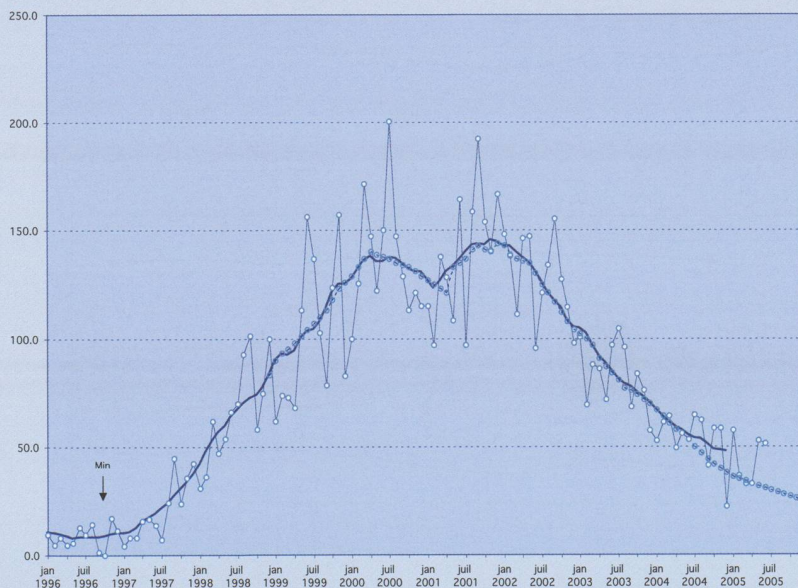


Such a "small" sampling would not be suited to infer the large scale spiral structure of our galaxy (Radio- and infrared wavelengths are applied to that purpose). Our study does, however, show that dust

lanes are not uniquely distributed along the spiral arms but also tend to bridge them, as seen at several locations in M 74. (Photo: Gemini North Observatory, GMOS team, Hawaii).

Swiss Wolf Numbers 2005

MARCEL BISSEGER, Gasse 52, CH-2553 Safnern



Mai 2005

Mittel: 53.2

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
49	70	59	54	61	60	50	60	74	111	
11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	
104	114	73	63	53	49	37	26	18	14	
21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31
21	26	23	29	37	57	56	56	54	47	63

Juni 2005

Mittel: 46.4

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
73	58	38	69	91	93	107	93	81	81	
11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	
69	66	35	57	49	64	60	39	42	43	
21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31
50	28	12	2	2	2	9	14	35	85	