Taking your first image with *SPIRIT*

These are the steps to take your first image with *SPIRIT*:

STEP 1 Plan your target	→	STEP 2 Login to *SPIRIT*	→	STEP 3 Basic imaging	→	STEP 4 Download images
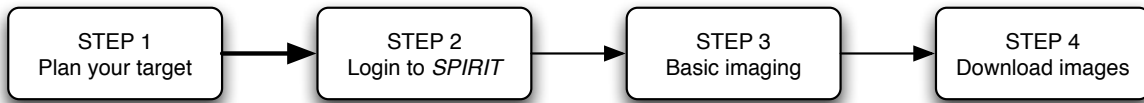
STEP 1: Plan your target

Use a planetarium program, such as Stellarium, to find out what's in the sky at the time you intend to image with *SPIRIT*. An introduction to Stellarium for target planning is available from the *SPIRIT* website (http://spice.wa.edu.au/spirit/).

SPIRIT is ideally suited as a deep-sky telescope, so you should start with a relatively bright, deep-sky target. Open clusters, globular clusters, nebulae and bright galaxies are all suitable.

STEP 2: Login to *SPIRIT*

The *SPIRIT* telescopes may be accessed from http://spice.wa.edu.au/spirit/spirit-telescope-access
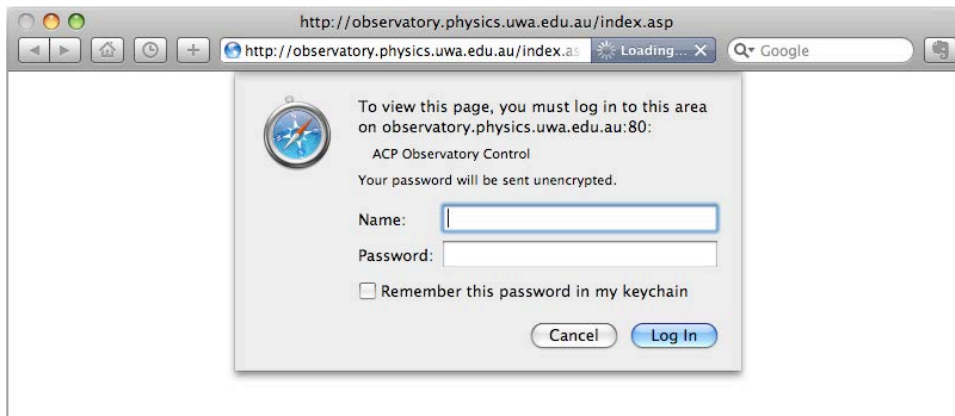
Enter your user name and password, twice.

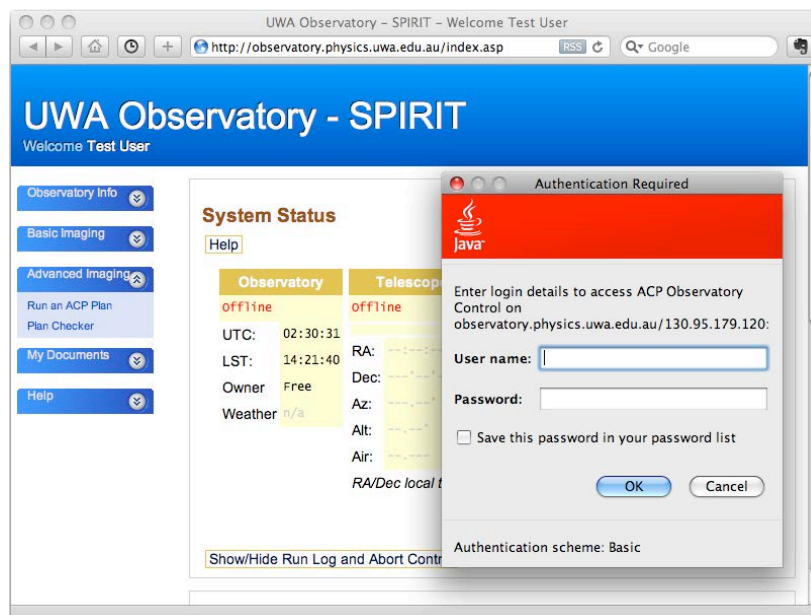figure 1: Enter your user name and password.

figure 2: Enter your user name and password again, after the first web page has loaded.

The *SPIRIT* home page ('Observatory Info') displays three panes: **System Status**, **Weather** and **Welcome**. Use the left hand menu to display other pages, such as 'Basic imaging'.
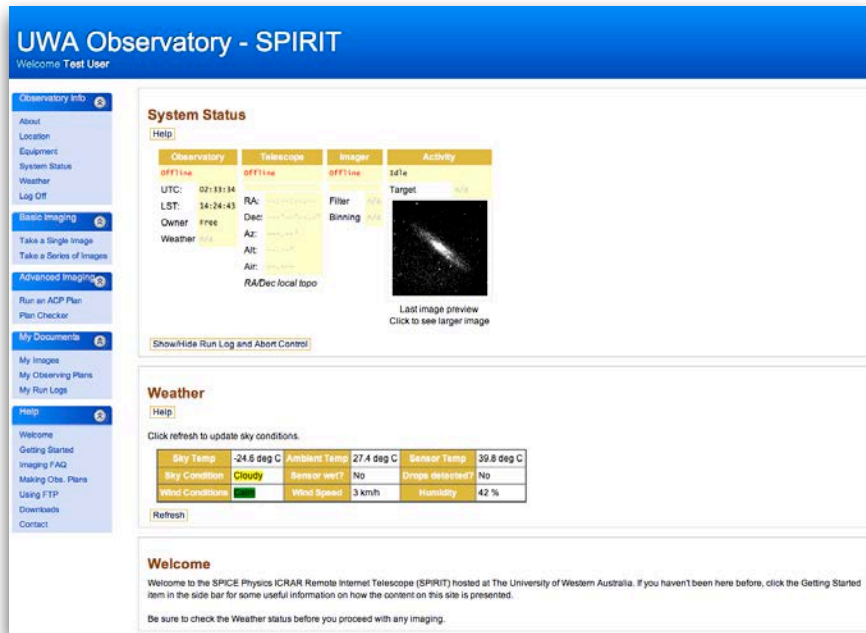

figure 3: *SPIRIT* home page

STEP 3: Basic imaging

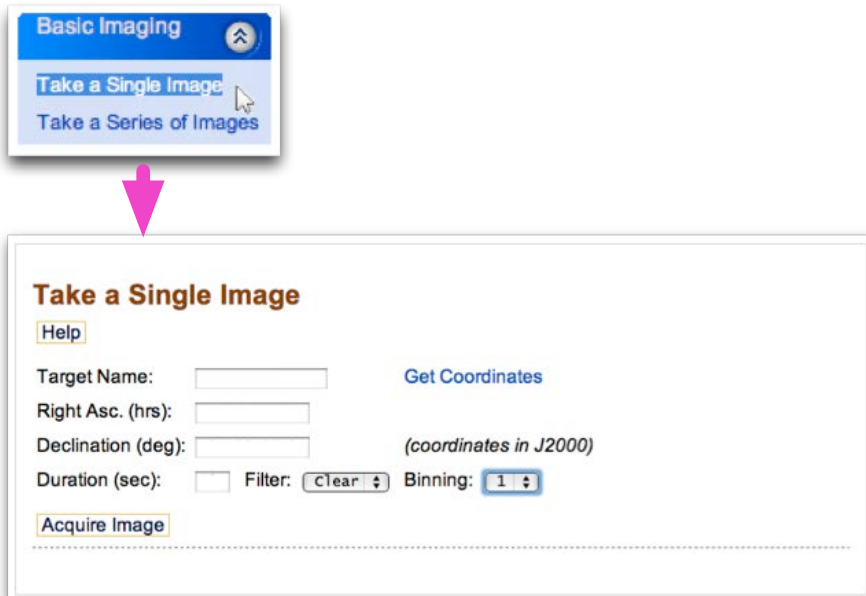Select **Take a Single Image** from the left hand menu.

figure 4: Enter parameters to take a basic image.

1. Enter your target name. Be sure to leave a space between the catalogue and number (eg 'm 8', not 'm8').

figure 5: Enter your target name.

2. Select **Get Coordinates**. This will automatically put values into fields for 'Right Asc.' (RA) and 'Declination' (Dec).

figure 6: Get the coordinates of your target.

3. Enter your exposure duration, in seconds. For your first deep sky object, an exposure of about 30 s is a good start.

figure 7: Setting an exposure duration of 30 s.
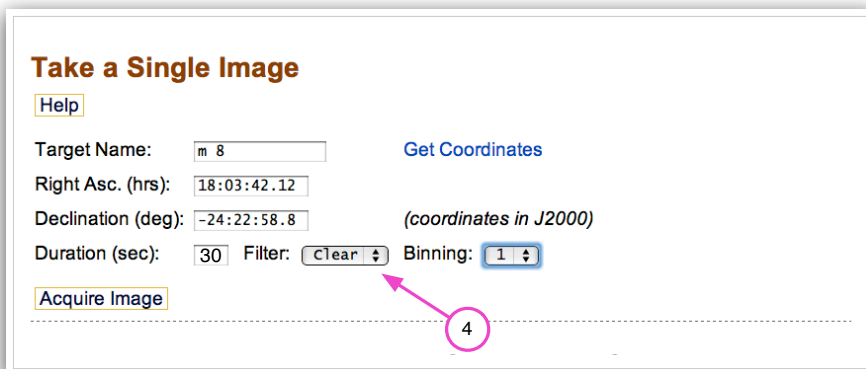
4. Select the 'clear' filter.

figure 8: Choose a filter.

5. Select **Acquire Image** from the left hand menu. An 'OK!' message should appear at the bottom of the pane.
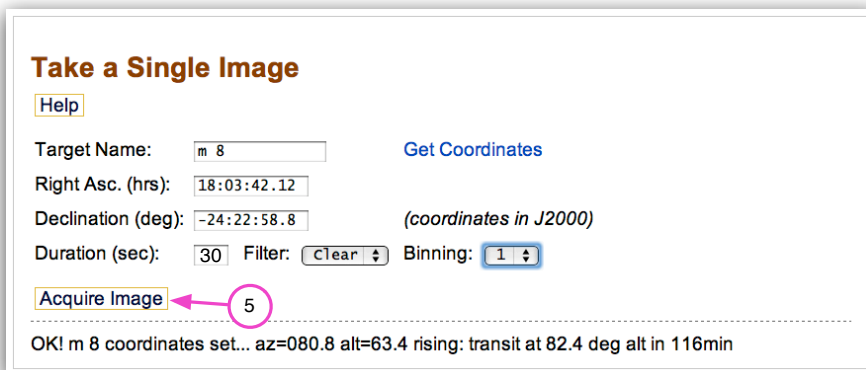

figure 9: Acquire the image once settings are complete.

The sequence of commands to take the image will now commence. You can monitor progress in the 'System Status' pane. Select **Show/Hide Run Log and Abort Control** to expand the progress window.
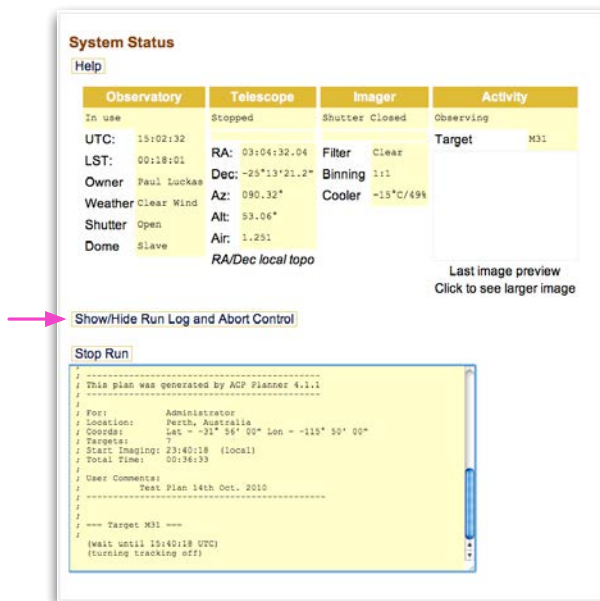

figure 10: Monitor the progress of image acquisition.

STEP 4: Download images

Once imaging is complete, a low quality image thumbnail appears in the 'System Status' pane. Select the image to enlarge the view.
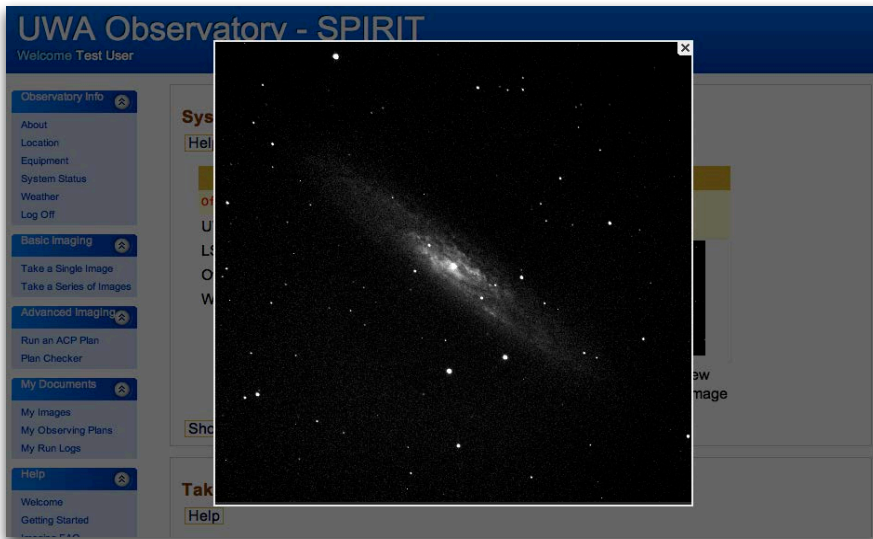

figure 11: Preview your image.

Your image can be viewed and downloaded from **My Images** under 'My Documents'. Images are grouped into folders, by date.
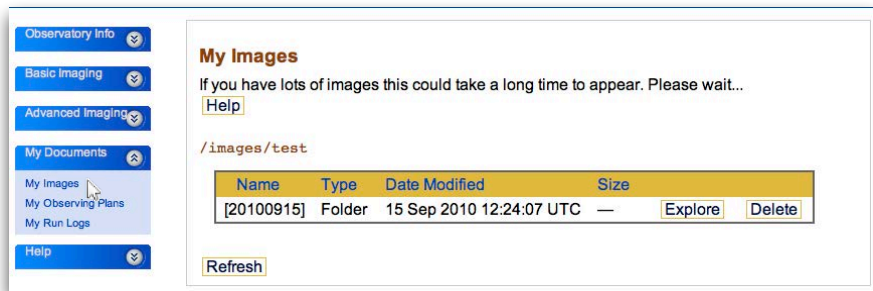

figure 12: Display a list of your images.

Navigate to the folder containing images you wish to download. JPEG versions of images may be downloaded and viewed without special software.
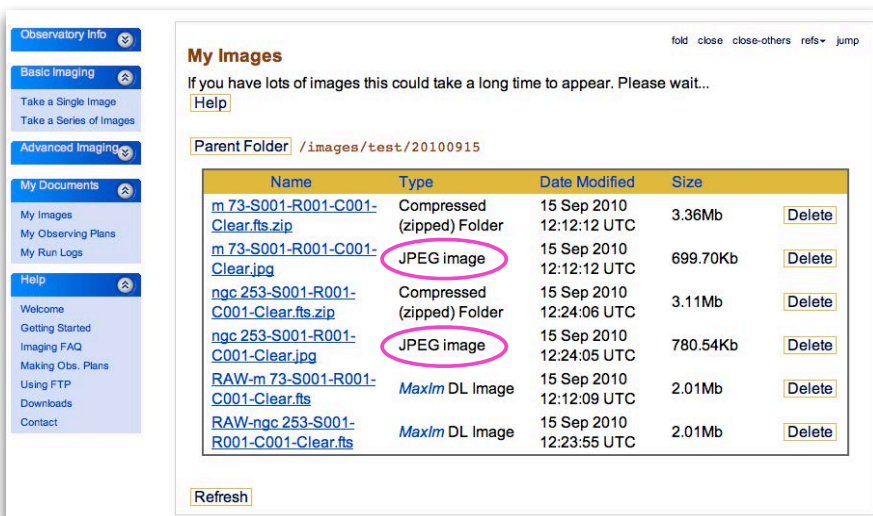

figure 13: JPEG images can be viewed without special software.

figure 14: image taken by *SPIRIT*