

First public data release

The first public data release covers sources observed between October 1997 and January 2000.

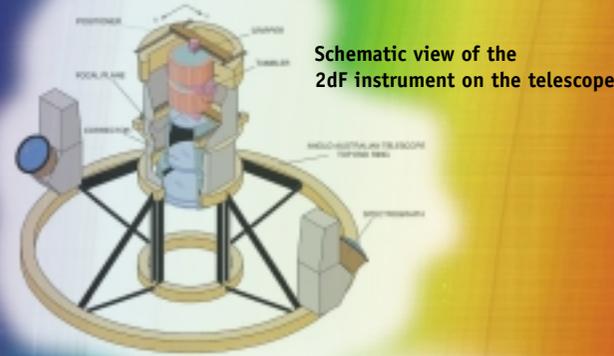
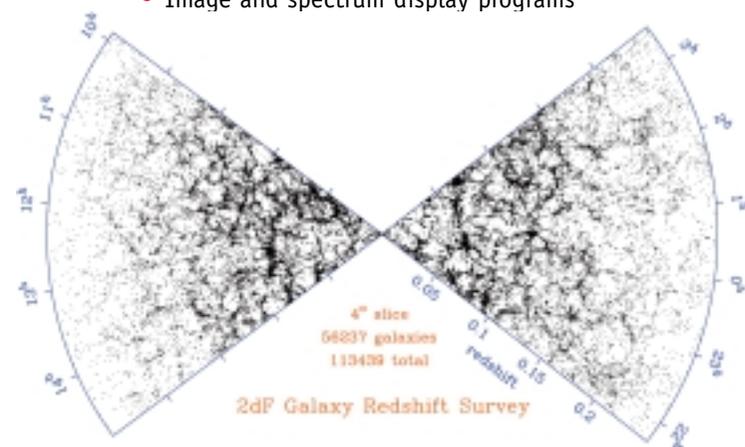
Total number of spectra = 109,453
Galaxies = 95,819 (+ 6507 repeats)
Galaxies in SGP = 46,061
Galaxies in NGP = 37,323
Galaxies in random fields = 12,435
Stars = 6,607 (+ 520 repeats)

This preliminary data release contains FITS files with the 2dF spectra and Digitized Sky Survey images of each galaxy, together with a host of other information such as the galaxies' positions, luminosities, redshifts and spectral types.

The data are also available in ASCII tables and, for Linux users, in the form of an mSQL database that allows sophisticated searching and matching facilities.

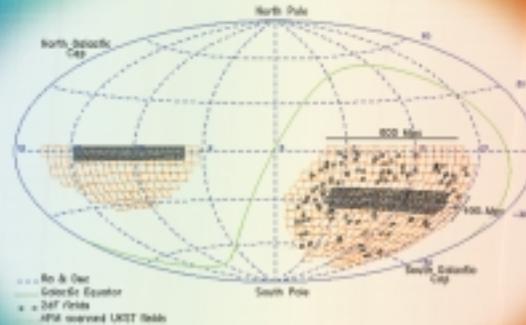
The release also contains:

- Programs for accessing the FITS files
- Descriptions of the input catalogues, the observations and the spectroscopic data
- Details of how the survey mask, selection function and completeness are determined
- Programs to compute these masks
- Image and spectrum display programs

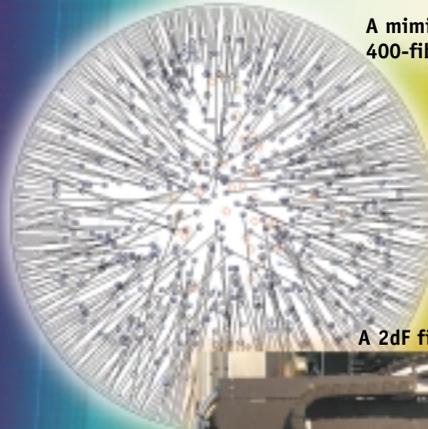


Schematic view of the 2dF instrument on the telescope

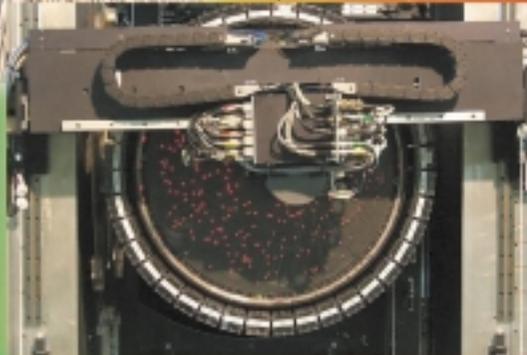
Sky plot with selected fields



A mimic display of a 400-fibre configuration



A 2dF field plate with the robot arm



Accessing the data

The data can be accessed in two ways:

- for free, over the Web at:
<http://www.mso.anu.edu.au/2dFGRS/>
Mirror sites will be available in the U.K. and U.S.A.; or
- at cost, on a set of CDs. The order form is at
<https://www.mso.anu.edu.au/2dFGRS/Public/Order>

The 2dF (two-degree field) system

The 2dF is one of the world's most complex astronomical instruments. Designed and built by the Anglo-Australian Observatory in Australia, it allows the acquisition of up to 400 simultaneous spectra of objects anywhere within a two-degree field on the sky. It consists of a wide-field corrector, an atmospheric-dispersion compensator, a robot gantry that positions optical fibres to 0.3", and two spectrographs, each of which accepts 200 of the fibres to produce low to medium resolution spectra. A tumbling mechanism with two field plates allows one field to be configured while another is being observed.

