



Spitzer image from NASA/JPL-Caltech/R. Kennicutt (Univ. of Arizona).

# SEPTEMBER 2007



SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
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2	3	☾	4	5	6	7
	LABOR DAY					8
9	10	●	11	12	13	14
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## M51 Whirlpool Galaxy

This galaxy, M51 or the "Whirlpool Galaxy," is 37 million light-years away. The image above combines several wavelengths of light from the Spitzer Space Telescope's infrared array camera. This image reveals the glow from clouds of interstellar dust. This dust is the material from which stars are born. The smaller image to the right is a visible-light view, which shows light from stars in the galaxy.

Particularly puzzling in the Spitzer image above are the many thin filaments of red between the arms of the large spiral galaxy. Unlike the dust in the arms themselves, these spoke-like features are thin and regular, and apparent in the gaps all over the face of the galaxy.

The spiral galaxy is bright in the longer infrared wavebands (shown as orange and red), meaning it is rich in gas and dust necessary for forming new stars. Conversely, its companion is bright in the shorter wavelength infrared band (shown as blue) revealing that it is the home to an older population of stars. For more information on these and other images, see [www.spitzer.caltech.edu](http://www.spitzer.caltech.edu).



Visible-light image from the California Institute of Technology's Digitized Sky Survey.

