

SKYRAIDER

[Version 4.0]
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[SkyRaider User Manual]

This document will quickly introduce you to the wonders of the MallinCam SkyRaider Camera. It will include instructions on how to install the Software and Drivers and how connect the SkyRaider to your computer along with explanations of the camera's major settings. The purpose of this guide is to quickly get you up and running with the SkyRaider Camera so that you can image. For a more detailed explanation of the various camera parameter settings, look for the **SkyRaider User Manual**.

Revision History

Version	Date	Revision Description
1.0	07/17/2015	Template Creation
2.0	08/26/2015	Modified Screens
3.0	02/27/2017	Version 3.7.6824
4.0	03/17/2017	Added SharpCap, AstroToaster, AstroLive

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1. Introduction

After years of designing and testing under all operative conditions, MallinCam has created the next generation of Live Astronomical Video CCD Cameras. Not only live observation is possible, the series of SkyRaider Cameras can take images and video recording too! No one in the industry has developed and pushed the envelope in an astronomical camera with such a state of the art product. We are the leader in the Live Video CCD camera industry and plan to stay that way for the benefit of astronomical advancement for the amateur community and professionals alike.

The software package features the most advanced live video imaging system ever created. MallinCam has created the world's first software with the MC **DarkField** Subtraction System, on-the-fly eliminating the need of a Peltier cooler under live application and yet retaining the best low noise live image ever encountered on the market today. A MallinCam Advanced exclusive, the MallinCam **Dark Field** live subtraction feature is unique to the MallinCam SkyRaider Series of cameras. Images can be saved in the same manner or video files can be created with the same On-The-Fly **DarkField** correction. Among other advanced features, a live on-the-fly histogram make final image adjustment possible to produce the finest live image, with the option to save your view as an image or video file. The MallinCam **SkyRaider-DS** features the world renowned Hyper-circuit with a buffered variable gain. The Hyper circuit is used in our other camera designs and allows a user to increase sensitivity with low noise without increasing exposure time. A MallinCam Exclusive. Installation of the Hyper circuit in the **SkyRaider-DS** differs from other MallinCam cameras in that it uses a triple buffered electronic section to keep noise to a low level and still can be used with the Live MC Dark Field Subtraction for even lower noise. The MallinCam **SkyRaider-DS** features dual independent on board memory, ensuring separate video / imaging signal / data from the camera control through USB2 demand. No other video CCD camera system has these exciting unique features on the market today. The MallinCam **SkyRaider-DS** uses a two stage step up voltage driver to operate the CCD sensor to its maximum sensitivity at 15.3 volts from a 5 volts source. A MallinCam unique feature not found on any other video CCD cameras using USB2 system.

The **SkyRaider** Cameras are USB cameras and due to the physical limitations of USB, the length of the cable is restricted to about **5 metres**; even though some users may try to extend that distance using other hardware, there is no guarantee that the video signal (timing issue) will be recognized when going beyond the recommended maximum.

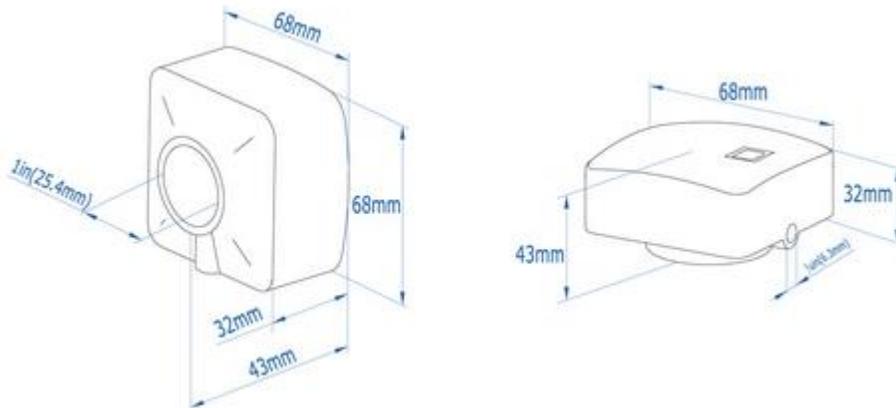
Special thanks to **Chris Appleton** and **Rock Mallin** who expertise and experience are way beyond my capabilities.

So thank you for your purchase, and let the adventure begin.

The Contents of the SkyRaider-DS Package

The MallinCam SkyRaider-DS features the world renowned Hyper circuit with a buffered variable gain. The Hyper circuit is used in our other camera designs and allows a user to increase sensitivity with low noise without increasing exposure time. A MallinCam Exclusive. Installation of the Hyper circuit in the SkyRaider-DS differs from other MallinCam cameras in that it uses a triple buffered electronic section to keep noise to a low level and still can be used with the Live MC Dark Field Subtraction for even lower noise. The MallinCam SkyRaider-DS features dual independent on board memory, ensuring separate video / imaging signal / data from the camera control through USB2 demand. No other video CCD camera system has these exciting unique features on the market today. The MallinCam SkyRaider-DS uses a two stage step up voltage driver to operate the CCD sensor to its maximum sensitivity at 15.3 volts from a 5 volts source. A MallinCam unique feature not found on any other video CCD cameras using USB2 system.

Specifications:



- PC Win XP, Win7, Win 8, Win 10. Will include a separate Mac software.
- Hypered Buffered Gain circuit for greater low noise sensitivity
- Two stage voltage step up to ensure full ccd sensor sensitivity
- Dual independent memories for image / camera control
- 5 meter (15 feet) USB2 cable included
- 1.25" C mount eyepiece adapter included
- Zinc Aluminum Alloy construction for unmatched durability
- Sealed multi coated optical window with 350 to 950nm range
- Grade 1 Industrial electronic components throughout
- 5 volts USB operation at low 250 ma current draw
- 13.30 oz / 377 grams
- Uses ceramic Sony ICX829 EXview HAD II Chip
- Available with color ccd sensor SkyRaider-DSc
- Available with monochrome ccd sensor SkyRaider-DSm
- 17.5 mm spacing between chip and front of SkyRaider-Ds

System Requirements:

- Equal to Intel Core2 2.8GHz or Higher
- Memory: 2GB or More
- USB port: USB2.0 High-speed Port
- Display: 17" or Larger Recommended

In the Box

Depending upon the SkyRaider Model purchased, the contents may vary, but all SkyRaider cameras include the following standard equipment:

- MALLINCAM SkyRaider-DS Camera
- High Precision 1.25" C mount Eyepiece Adapter
- 5 metre USB 2.0 cable.
- CDROM that contains the driver and software for the SkyRaider.



The Contents of the SkyRaider-SLP Package

The New SkyRaider-SLP has been designed for Solar, Lunar and Planetary live viewing and imaging. Part of the SkyRaider series of USB type cameras, the New SkyRaider SLP has a 3MP sCMOS with pixel size of 2.5 x 2.5um capable of binning mode of 2048 X 1536, 1024 X 768, 684 X 512 in full color. A monochrome mode is also included in the software. The new MallinCam SkyRaider-SLP uses the same software of all other SkyRaider Series cameras. A 5 meter (15 feet) USB cable is included, sealed sensor chamber, passive cooling, and attractive stainless steel front mount to keep the sensor alignment with the optical train and make this camera built to last. There is no other camera designed and built for Solar, Lunar and Planetary like the new MallinCam SkyRaider-SLP.

Specifications:

- PC Win XP, Win7, Win 8, Win 10.
- Up to 8 Seconds exposure @ 2048 X 1536
- Binning mode 2048 X 1536, 1024 X 768, 684 X 512
- Ceramic sCMOS sensor (super CMOS or scientific CMOS)
- Passive cooling for greater temperature stability
- Super low noise
- Superb Dynamic Range
- Up to 8 seconds exposure at full resolution
- Hypered Buffered Gain circuit for greater low noise
- Dual independent memories for image / camera control
- 5 meter (15 feet) USB2 cable included
- 1.25" C mount eyepiece adapter included
- Aluminum / Stainless Steel construction for unmatched durability
- Sealed multi coated optical window with 350 to 970nm range
- Grade 1 Industrial electronic components throughout
- 5 volts USB operation at low 200 ma current draw
- 9.30 oz / 263 grams
- Exclusive On-The-Fly Dark Frame subtraction
- Full live video mode, full screen selectable
- Full imaging capabilities
- Seamless fast download live video observation

System Requirements:

- Equal to Intel Core2 2.8GHz or Higher
- Memory: 2GB or More
- USB port: USB2.0 High-speed Port
- Display: 17" or Larger Recommended

In the Box

- MALLINCAM SkyRaider-SLP Camera
- High Precision 1.25" C mount Eyepiece Adapter
- 5 metre USB 2.0 cable.
- CDROM that contains the driver and software for the SkyRaider.



The Contents of the SkyRaider-AG Package

The New SkyRaider-G Guider-Imager is the most affordable camera in its class. Packed with stunning features, it can perform very well as an imager. The camera can be used as a guider or an imager for Lunar, Planets, Solar and Deep sky objects. Using an Aptina ARO130 CMOS sensor, the camera delivers sharp images and provide superb accuracy when used as a **Guider**. The New SkyRaider-G is the most affordable astronomical camera ever offered and it's a MALLINCAM. Available with an Aptina color sensor or a monochrome sensor, there is a SkyRaider-G just for your specific requirement. Fully ST-4 compatible, Native WDM drivers for easy connection with 3rd party software astrophotography software.

Specifications

- * Passive Sensor Cooling
- * Carefully Selected Aptina ARO 130 color or mono sensor available
- * 3.75X3.75 pixels size
- * 1280 X 960 resolution and 640X480 binning mode
- * 1.2 Mp sensor, 1/3" size (6 mm)
- * Protective sealed Window with Double-sided AR coatings
- * Exposure up to 16 minutes 40 seconds
- * 1.25" threaded adapter included
- * ST4 guiding cable included
- * 15 feet USB cable (5 meters)
- * Aluminum CNC housing with built-in passive sensor cold finger offering thermal heat transfer from the sensor to camera body
- * Dedicated astrophotography software to support live video, image acquisition, video saving and Auto guiding
- * MallinCam unique Dark Field Correction
- * Built-in ST4 auto-guider port
- * 2.15 oz (61 grams)
- * 2.5 Inches long

System Requirements:

- Equal to Intel Core2 2.8GHz or Higher
- Memory: 2GB or More
- USB port: USB2.0 High-speed Port
- Display: 17" or Larger Recommended

In the Box

- MALLINCAM SkyRaider Camera
- High Precision 1.25" C mount Eyepiece Adapter
- 5 metre USB 2.0 cable.
- CDROM that contains the driver and software for the SkyRaider.
- SkyRaider-AG also includes 2 metre ST4 Guider cable



2. Installing Driver and Software

System Requirements

PC running either Windows® (32-bit & 64-bit) XP, Vista, 7, 8, 8.1, Mac OSX.

Performance is not guaranteed if the following specification cannot be reached.

- DirectX 9.0 or later installed
- 2.0GHz processor (Recommend dual core 2.8GHz or more)
- USB 2.0 Port or USB 3.0 Port
- CD-ROM drive
- 2GB RAM (Recommend 2GB or more)
- 200MB Free HDD

Installing the Software

Step 1

Insert the Mallincam CD into CD-ROM drive of your computer. Have windows open the CD and you will be presented with 4 files:

- 95
- MALLINCAMDshowSetup
- MALLINCAMSKYSetup
- MALLINCAMTwainSetup



Note

It is recommended that you visit www.mallincam.net and download all of the latest SkyRaider Drivers.

Step 2

Double-Click on the **MALLINCAMSKYSetup** File

Windows may display a warning asking for permission to run the program, if it does, select **YES**.

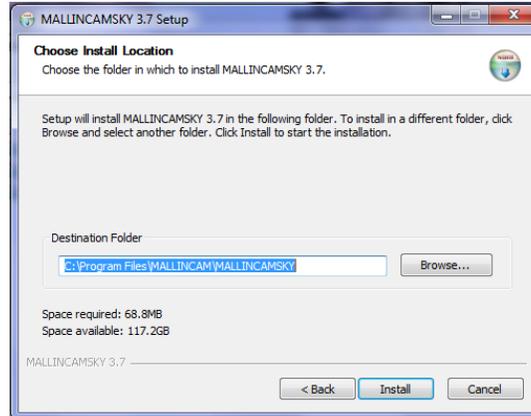
The following **MallincamSky Setup Screen** will then appear:



Step 3

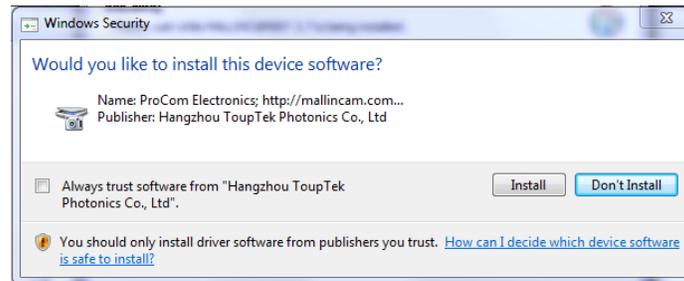
Click on **Next** to start the installation process.

The installation program now wants to know where you would like to install the software. Either choose your own location, or select the **default**.

**Step 4**

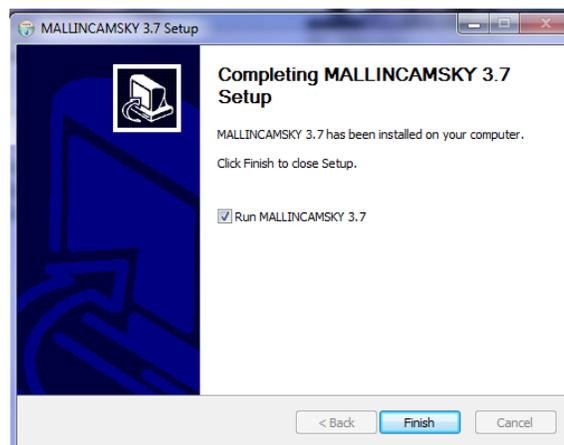
Click on **Install** to proceed.

Windows may again ask for permission to install the device software.

**Step 5**

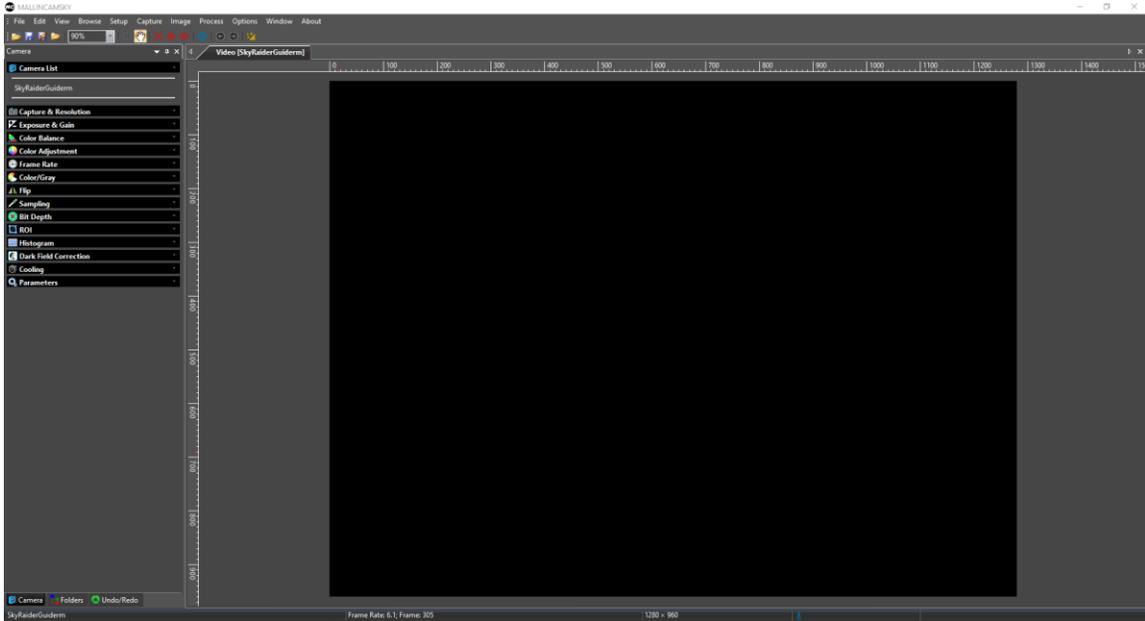
Click on **Install** to accept.

The **MallincamSky Software** will take about a minute to be installed. When completed, the following screen will appear:





Click on **Finish**, and the **MallincamSky** will start and will appear on your screen.



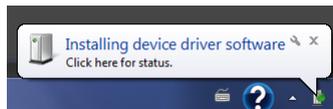
3. Connecting the SkyRaider

Connecting the SkyRaider-DS Camera to Computer

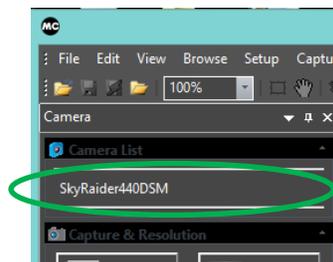
Attach the 5 metre USB 2.0 Cable from the back of the SkyRaider-DS to a free USB 2.0 port on your computer.



Windows will then load the specific **SkyRaider Camera Driver** onto your computer.



Once the driver has been successfully loaded, you will see the name of the **SkyRaider Camera** in the **MallinCamSky Camera List** on the upper left of the Window. You can install more than one SkyRaider Camera to your computer, but the software can only control one SkyRaider Camera at a time.





Connecting the SkyRaider-DS Camera to Telescope

Remove the rubber dust cover from the front of the SkyRaider-DS camera (place it back in the box for safe keeping).

Screw in the C-mount adapter to the front of the SkyRaider-DS



Insert the SkyRaider-DS (with C-Mount attached) into a 1.25" eyepiece adapter on your Telescope.

Depending upon the telescope, you may need extenders so that you can reach focus with your telescope. It is recommended that you set this up in the daytime so you can see what you are doing (plus can aim at an easy to find tree or telephone pole).



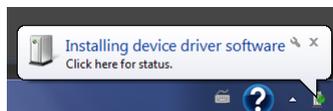


Connecting the SkyRaider-G Camera to Computer

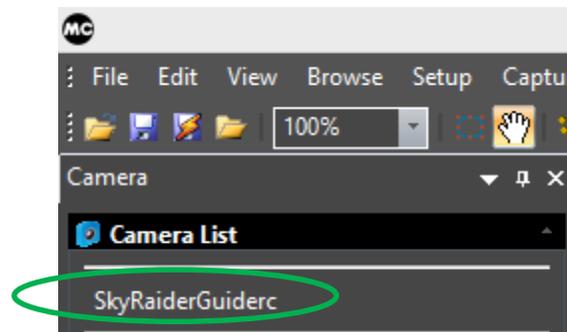
Attach the 5 metre USB 2.0 Cable from the back of the **SkyRaider-G** to a free USB 2.0 port on your computer.



Windows will then load the specific **SkyRaider Camera Driver** onto your computer.



Once the driver has been successfully loaded, you will see the name of the **SkyRaider Camera** in the **MallincamSky Camera List** on the upper left of the Window. You can install more than one SkyRaider Camera to your computer, but the software can only control one SkyRaider Camera at a time.





Connecting the SkyRaider-G Camera to Telescope

Remove the rubber dust cover from the front of the **SkyRaider-G** camera (place it back in the box for safe keeping).

Screw in the **C-mount** adapter to the front of the **SkyRaider-G**.



Insert the **SkyRaider-G** (with C-Mount attached) into a 1.25" eyepiece adapter on your Telescope.

Attach one end of the **ST4** cable into the **ST4** slot on the back of the **SkyRaider-G**, and the other end into the **ST4** port on your Telescope Mount



Depending upon the telescope, you may need extenders so that you can reach focus with your telescope. It is recommended that you set this up in the daytime so you can see what you are doing (plus can aim at an easy to find tree or telephone pole).





Connecting the SkyRaider-SLP Camera to Computer

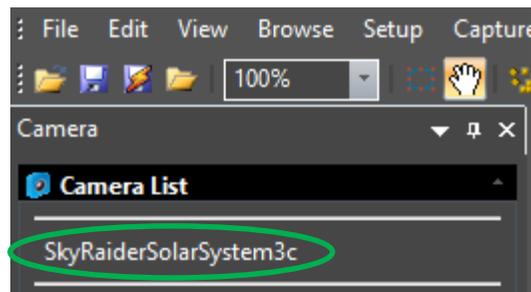
Attach the 5 metre USB 2.0 Cable from the back of the **SkyRaider-SLP** to a free USB 2.0 port on your computer.



Windows will then load the specific **SkyRaider Camera Driver** onto your computer.



Once the driver has been successfully loaded, you will see the name of the **SkyRaider Camera** in the **MallincamSky Camera List** on the upper left of the Window. You can install more than one SkyRaider Camera to your computer, but the software can only control one SkyRaider Camera at a time.

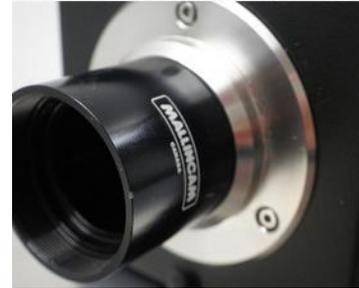




Connecting the SkyRaider-SLP Camera to Telescope

Remove the rubber dust cover from the front of the **SkyRaider-SLP** camera (place it back in the box for safe keeping).

Screw in the **C-mount** adapter to the front of the **SkyRaider-SLP**.



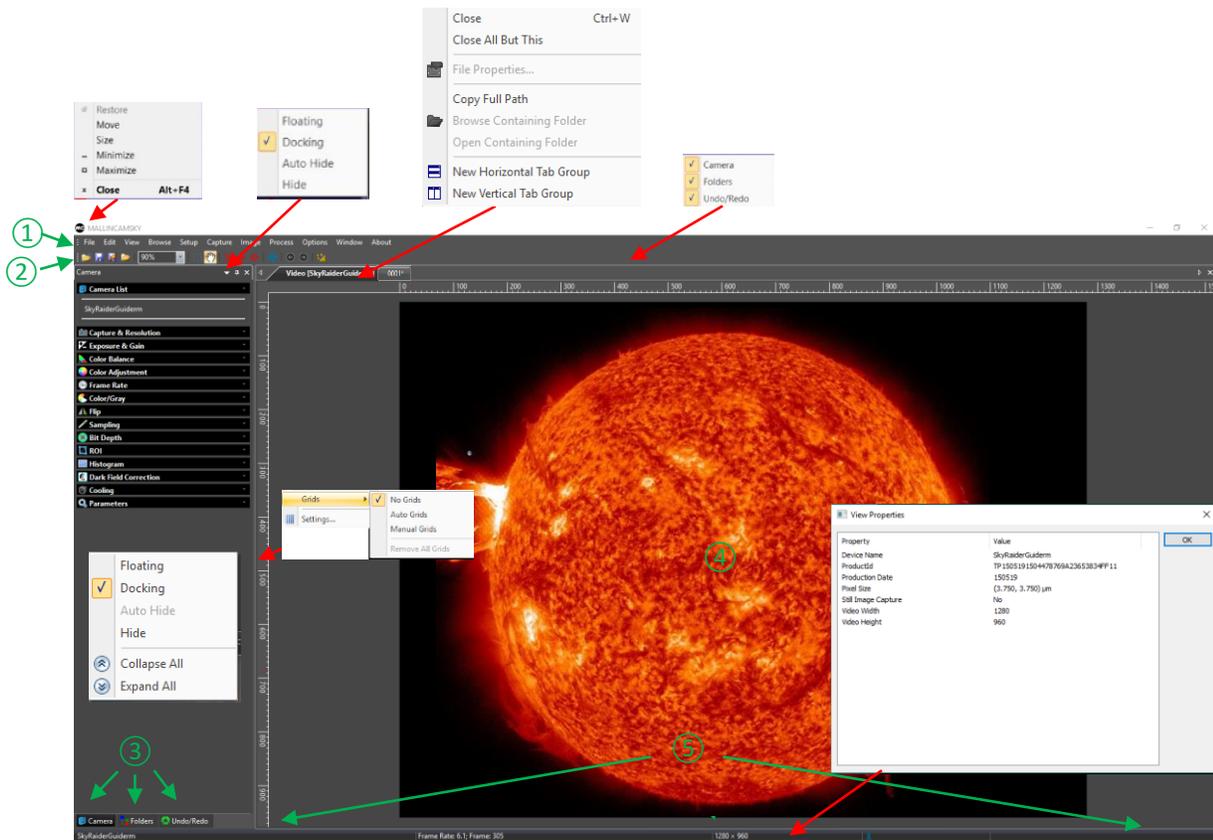
Insert the **SkyRaider-SLP** (with C-Mount attached) into a 1.25" eyepiece adapter on your Telescope.

Depending upon the telescope, you may need extenders so that you can reach focus with your telescope. It is recommended that you set this up in the daytime so you can see what you are doing (plus can aim at an easy to find tree or telephone pole).



4. Using MallincamSky Software

The MallincamSky Window

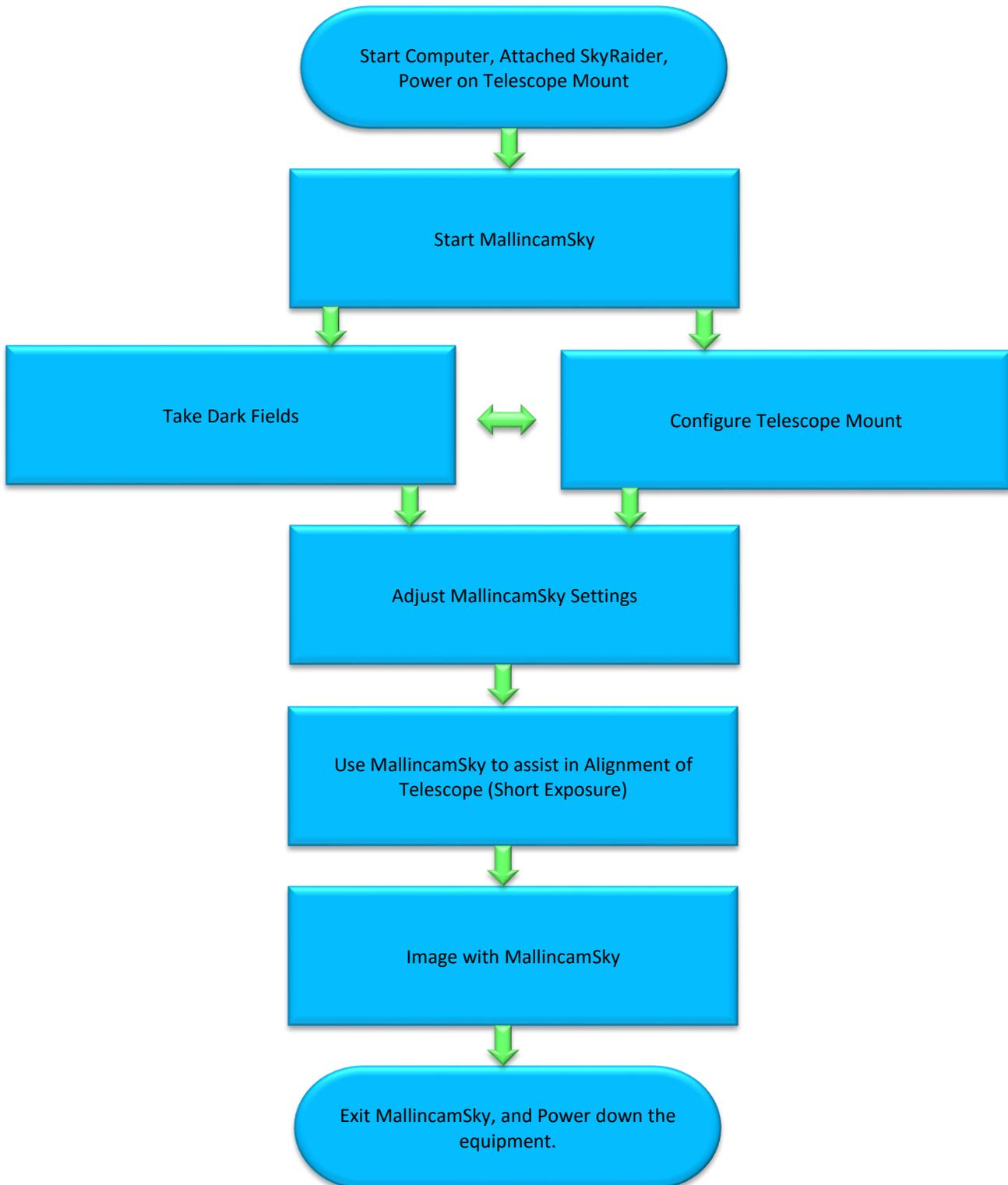


The **MallincamSky Software Window** is segmented into a few regions to make viewing and adjusting the SkyRaider camera easy and intuitive.

- ① The **Top Menu Line** provides dropdown menus to allow you to make major settings of the software
- ② The **MallincamSky Toolbar** provides the simple click activation and selection capabilities.
- ③ The **Left SideBar** provides selection options for **Camera**, **Folders**, or **Undo**. **Left Clicking** on the selection choice will fill the **SideBar** with its options.
- ④ The **Video Window** will contain the display from the **SkyRaider Camera**. It is here that you will see the live video, or images.
- ⑤ The **Information Line** will indicate the current camera, current frame rate, number of frames displayed, resolution, information about captures, etc.

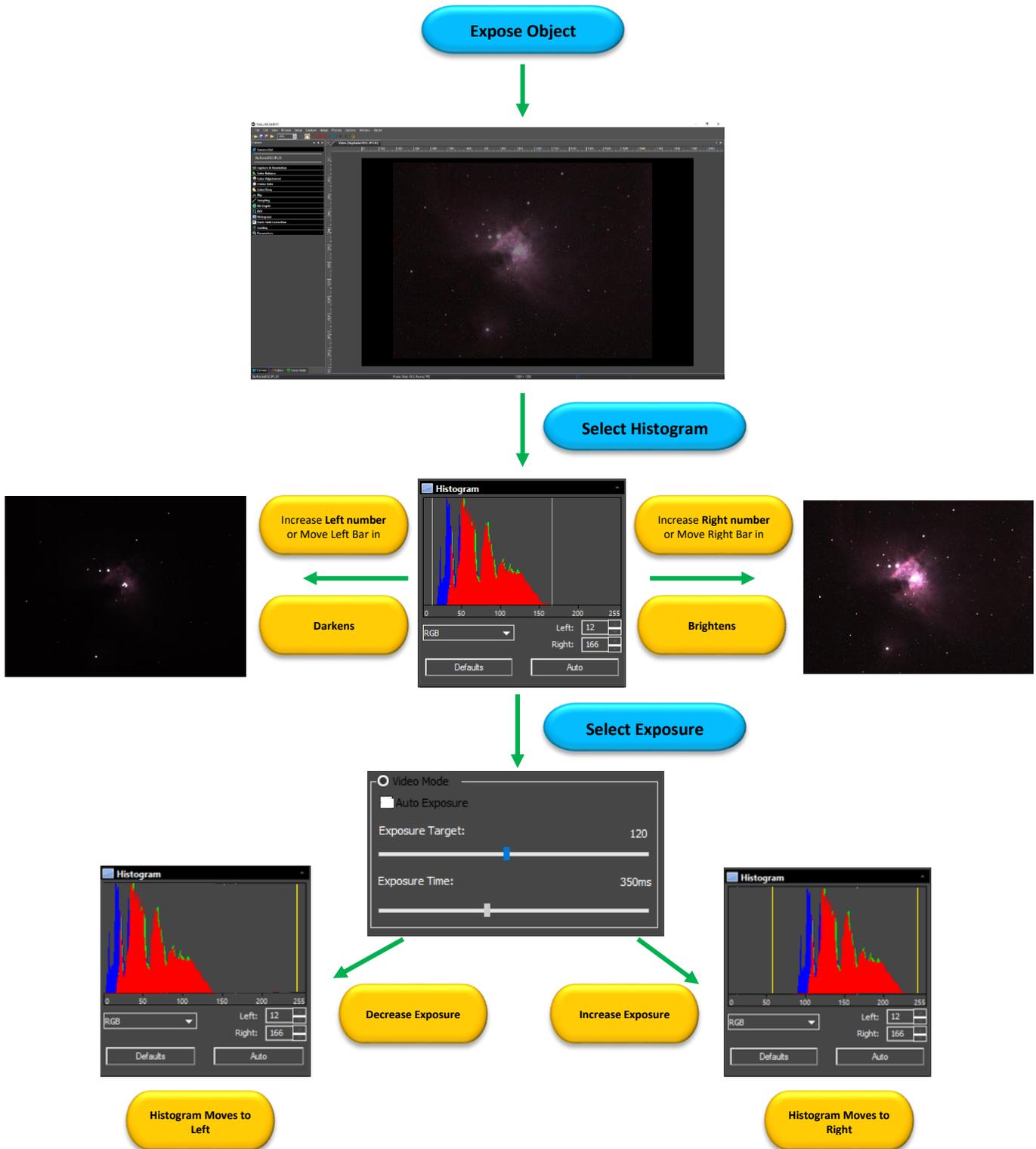
SkyRaider Quick Setup and WorkFlow

The following is a typical workflow when using the **SkyRaider** with **MallincamSky**.



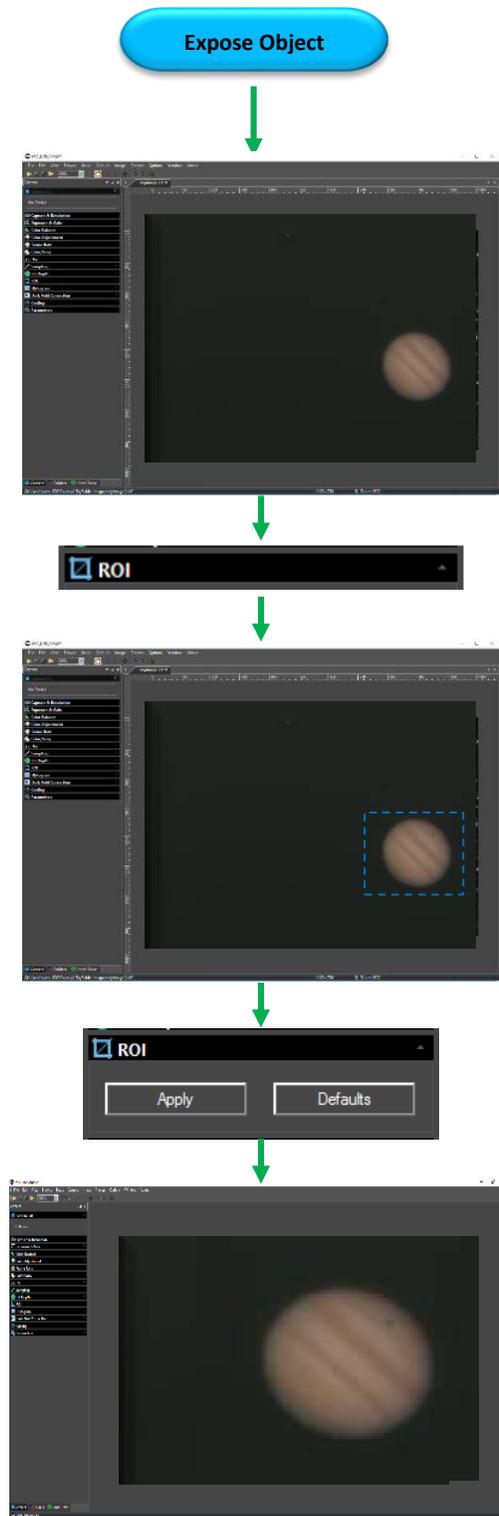
Histogram Pictorial Work-Flow

A typical workflow when using the **Histogram Command** with **MallincamSky**.



ROI Pictorial Work-Flow

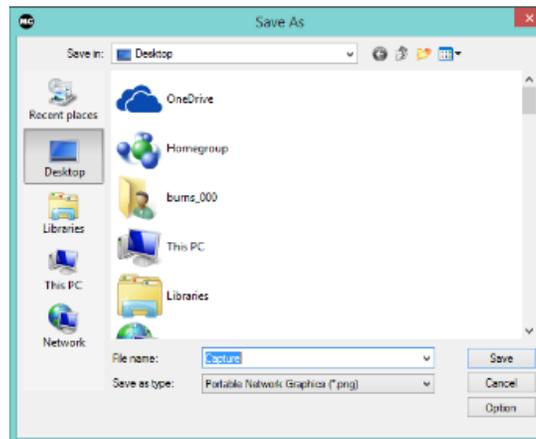
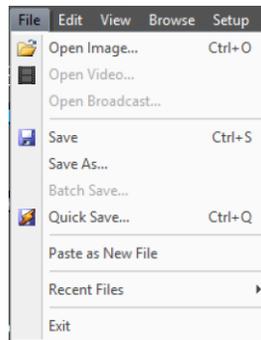
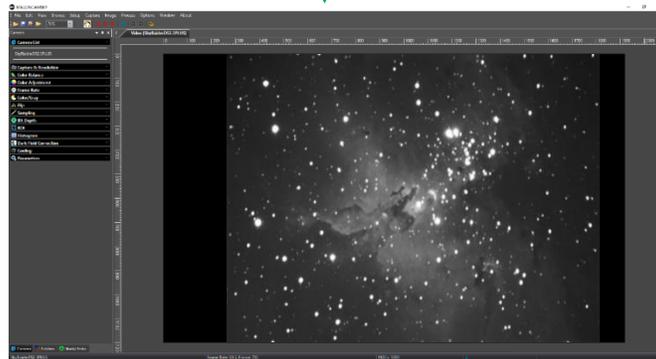
A typical workflow when using the **ROI Command** with **MallincamSky**.



Save Image Pictorial Work-Flow

A typical workflow on how to Save an Image with **MallincamSky**.

Expose Object



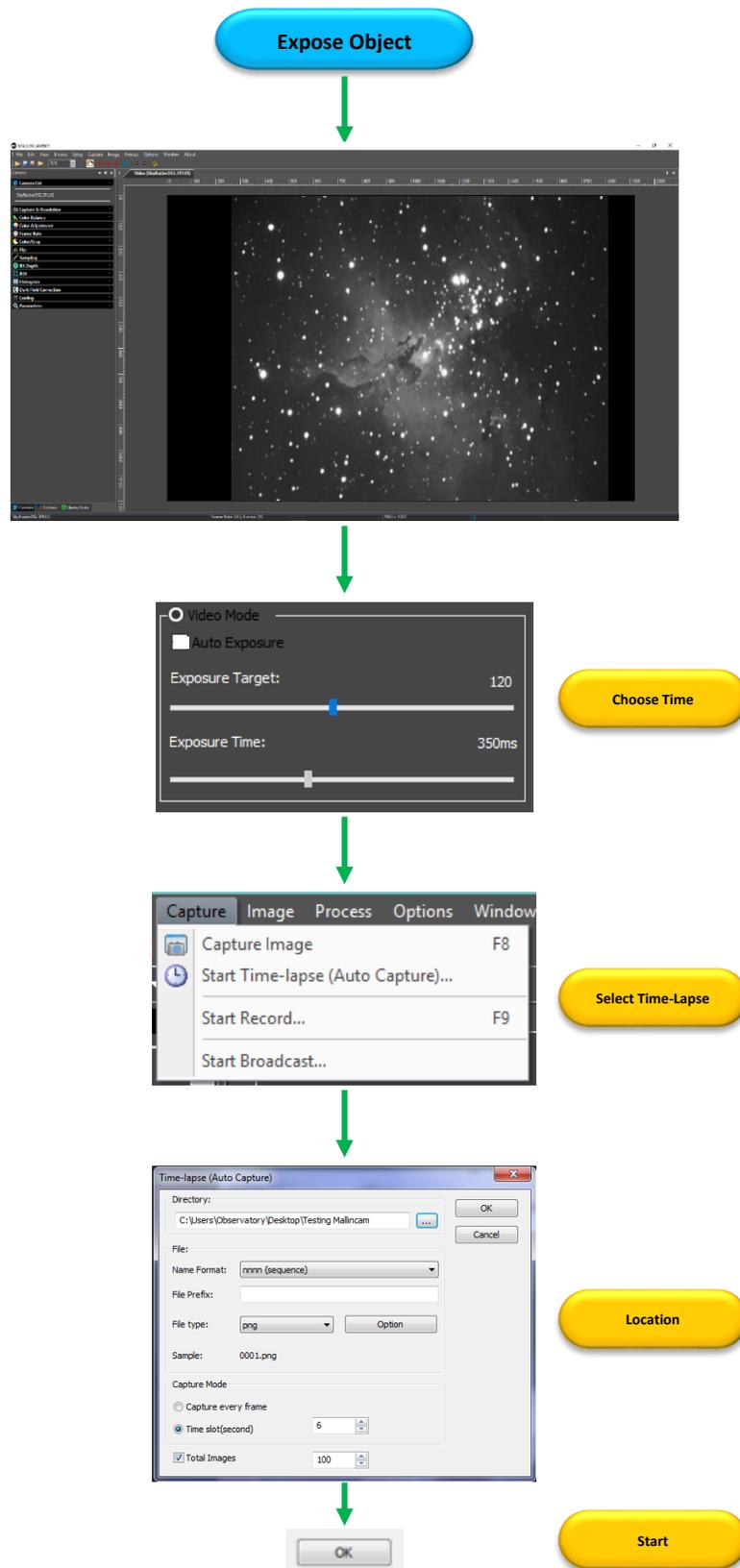
Record Video Pictorial Work-Flow

A typical workflow on how Record a Video with **MallincamSky**.



Save Sequence of Images Pictorial Work-Flow

A typical workflow on how to Save Image **Command** with **MallincamSky**.



More Detailed Work-Flow Procedure

➔ Quick Workflow for MallincamSky

So, you don't like to read manuals, and you just want to just jump right into imaging. Then this section gives you a **Quick and Dirty** method to get going. Then, I follow this section with an even more detailed section on **Planetary Imaging Workflow**, and finally a more detailed section on **Workflow on Deep Sky Objects**.

The **Mallincam SkyRaider Cameras** provide a processing technique called **Dark Field Correction** (see the **Appendix** for a complete description of **Dark Field Correction**).

Step 1

Double Click on the MallincamSky Icon to start the program. 

Step 2

Select a **SkyRaider Camera** from the **Camera Tab**.

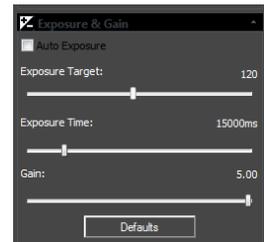
With the **Camera Tab** selected on the **Left SideBar**, **Left-Click** on the **Camera** you are currently using (between lines in **Camera Heading**). Once a camera is selected, a black rectangle (with **SkyRaider Camera** name) will appear in the **Video Window** of the **MallincamSky** Software along with the Horizontal and Vertical Rulers.



Step 3

Select an Exposure Time for Dark Field Correction

With the **Camera Tab** selected on the **Left SideBar**, **Left-Click** on the **Exposure & Gain Line** (a **Green Rectangle** with the word **Exposure** will appear in your **Video Window**, to inform you that you are setting an exposure time. Closing the **Exposure Window** will remove the **Green Rectangle**). The **Exposure & Gain Window** will open up and you can either slide the **Exposure Time** bar (**Left-Click Hold and Drag**) or **Left-Click** on the current Exposure Time value, and an another Window will open to allow you to manually enter a time (don't forget to click **OK**).



Exposure Target is only active when **Auto Exposure** is selected. The **Green Rectangle** is used to see if reference region it encloses matches **Exposure Target** that you set (We recommend that **Auto Exposure** is not selected).

Note

You can **Left-Click Hold and Drag** corners of the **Green Exposure Rectangle** to resize it to either cover the whole image window, or even to be a zero size box at one of the corners of your image window. This way you can always have the **Exposure & Gain** tab open without the green rectangle in the middle.

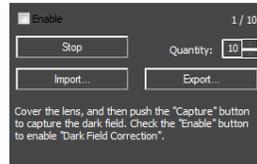
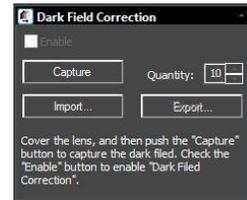


Take Dark Field Correction

Ensure that the cover is either on the **SkyRaider Camera** or the Telescope is covered. With the **Camera Tab** selected on the **Left SideBar**, **Left-Click** on the **Dark Field Correction Line**.

The **Dark Field Correction Line** will open up allowing you to select the **Quantity of Dark Fields** and the option to start the **Dark Field Capture** process.

Select up to 99 for the **Quantity** (Start with **5** with **30** second exposures to get a feel of the process). Then **Left-Click** on the **Capture Button**. The Software will display its progress above the selected **Quantity**. It is beneficial to set the Dark Field exposure time greater than the longest time you will be imaging at.



Note

Due to the unique way the **Mallincam SkyRaider DS** cameras utilize odd and even image acquisition, a **Dark Field** is obtained for each of the odd and even frames. That is, five 30 seconds **Dark Fields** will take twice the time of (5 x 30 seconds) or a total of 300 seconds to complete. You can use this time to finish setting up your equipment.

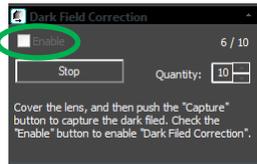
Once the **Dark Fields** have been taken, you have the option of saving them with the **Export button** in the **Dark Field Correction** Tab.



Note

You can import previously saved **Dark Fields** by using the **Import Button**.

Click in the **Enable check box** to have **Dark Fields** applied in real time to your video.



M57, 20 Seconds exposure, VRC 6", F/4.5 with MallinCam 0.5X focal reducer, NO Dark Field Correction. No processing, as seen live on monitor. Single frame.



M57, 20 Seconds exposure, VRC 6", F/4.5 with MallinCam 0.5X focal reducer, One Single DARK FIELD CORRECTION APPLIED LIVE, No processing, as seen live on monitor, Single frame.

Step 5**Reduce Exposure Time to Align Telescope**

As you will most likely use the camera to align your Telescope, now is the time to reduce the **Exposure Time** to **1** or **2** seconds, and if not already attached to the Telescope, remove the lens cap from the **SkyRaider Camera** and insert the c-mount on front end of the camera and slide camera into eyepiece holder of telescope. The shorter exposure will make it easier for you to align and focus your telescope.

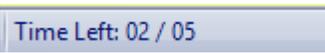
Step 6**Increase Exposure Time to Image**

Now is the time to display some images. Adjust the **Exposure Time** to match the target and the equipment you are using. Remember on the **DS series** of Skyraider Camera, due to the dual image capture process, a **30 second** exposure will actually take **60 seconds** to display (you will actually see the half interlaced image at 30 seconds, then the final image at 60 seconds).

Note

For any Exposure **over 5 seconds**, you can determine how long your camera's exposure time has left by looking at the lower right hand corner of the MallinCamSky's Window. It will indicate to you the current time remaining of the exposure time that you had previously set.

For the **SLP** and **G** series of SkyRaider cameras, the screen will display the Time Left using the following format: **Time Left/Exposure Time**



Time Left: 02 / 05

The example on the left is telling us that we have **2 seconds** remaining on our **5 second** exposure.

For the interlaced camera's such as the **DS series** of SkyRaider cameras, the MallinCamSky display screen will display the countdown time using the following format: **Time Left: ((Exposure TIME x Number of Interlaced Frames)).**



Time Left: 08 / (05 x 2)

The example on the left is telling us that we have **8 seconds** remaining before the completed image will be displayed, and that the exposure time we set was **5 seconds** and it has two interlaced frames (5 seconds each) to expose.

If you have enabled the **Dark Field Corrections** for this session (**Dark Fields** are stored directly in the **SkyRaider Camera** and will be deleted when the camera is turned off), the **SkyRaider** will automatically apply the best **Dark Field Correction** to your image when **Dark Field Correction** is **enabled**.

Step 7

Adjust the Parameters

Depending upon what **SkyRaider Camera** you are using, determines what sort of image corrections you can apply (a Monochrome camera will not be able to adjust the colours). Choose a parameter from the **Camera Tab** on the **Left SideBar** and see what you can adjust, and how it affects your image.



Note

You will have to wait until the next image is exposed to see how your adjustments look (keep an eye at the bottom of the screen to see when the next adjusted image will appear).

Step 8

Have Fun and Experiment

You can now spend some time to become more comfortable with the **MallincamSky** Software. The **SkyRaider User Manual** will go into more detail about all of the options and adjustment you can perform with the **SkyRaider** series of camera. But, don't be afraid to experiment.

Hint

Go into **Options** from the **Top Menu Line**, and choose **Preferences**. It is here that you can set options for the **MallincamSky**. If you go into **Misc.**, you can change the Color Style of the **MallincamSky** software. If you select another **Color Style**, **Apply**, then **Left-Click** on **OK**. Choose the **Color Style** which works for you. (Use a bright **Color Style** if using computer in Daylight).

Detailed Workflow of Video Imaging Planetary Objects

The following instructions will guide you in setting up your SkyRaider camera for imaging Solar, Lunar, or Planetary Objects.

For planetary objects, the exposure setting will be very small (as the objects themselves are usually very bright). It is recommended that imaging objects, such as the Moon and planets, will allow you to become comfortable with all of the adjustments that MallincamSky provides for you. With planetary objects, you want as much resolution and data as possible, so choose the highest resolution your SkyRaider provides.

Note

Since the exposure rate is so short, you may find that you do not need to take any Dark Fields preparation shots before imaging. But, if you do notice warm pixels and would like to eliminate them. Then follow the step-by-step instructions located in the section called: **Dark Field Correction** later in the manual.

The following instructions are used as a guide to assist you in doing planetary video imaging. Don't forget, when finished with a particular step that uses a particular feature tab, close the Tab (This will remove, the green and blue boxes which may be displayed over your image).



Step 1

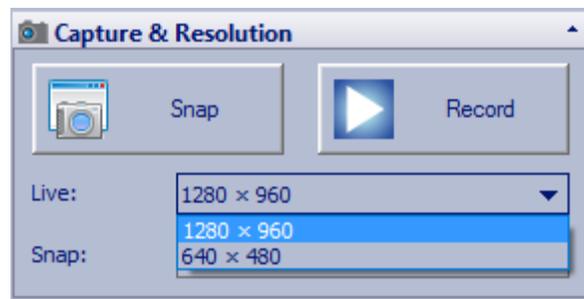
Have your telescope pointed to the Planetary Image of interest, and use a Barlow attached to your SkyRaider to provide a "Larger (Longer Focal Length)" image.

Note

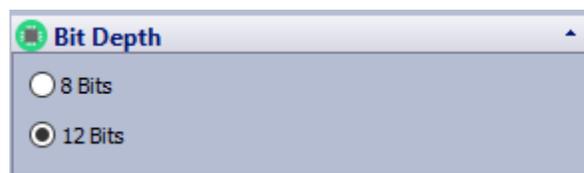
Since you will want to "**push**" the capabilities of the SkyRaider in displaying the Planetary object, you will require the **highest resolution** that your particular SkyRaider can produce, along with the largest **bits of data** (for color or shades of Back and White) for each pixel that the SkyRaider is able to produce. This will provide enough data for external stacking programs to pull out the finest detail from your video images.

Step 2

From the **Capture and Resolution Tab** on the **MallincamSky ToolBar**, and select the **Largest** resolution values that you SkyRaider is capable of.

**Step 3**

If you are going to be saving and processing images taken with the SkyRaider, you may want to increase the Bit depth to the highest value your particular SkyRaider camera supports.

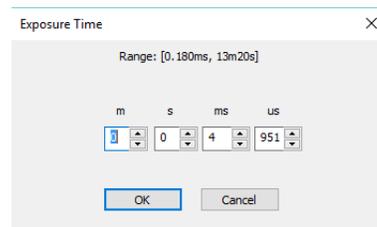
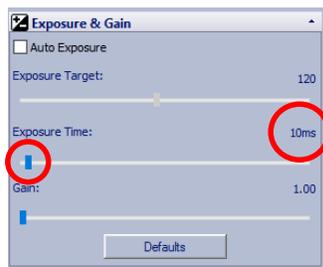
**Note**

Since you have chosen a **High Resolution** and a **Large Bit Count**, this will slow down the **Frames per Second** rate at which the MallincamSky can process the images (huge amounts of data moving through the system). We will make an adjustment in a later step that will increase the **Frames per Second** rate.

Step 4

With MallincamSky running, open up the **Exposure Tab** on the left of the Window.

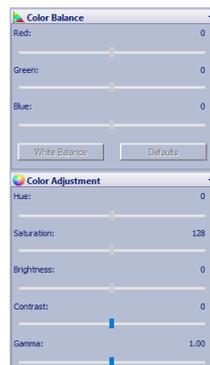
- Move the **Gain** Slider all the way to the Left.
- **Make sure that the Auto Exposure CheckBox is unchecked.**
- Set your exposure to a small value, say **10ms** as a starting point (we are using a small time, but the actual exposure amount depends upon the f/ratio, size of telescope, filters, seeing conditions, ...). You can adjust the exposure using one of the three methods below:
 - You can either use the **left mouse button** and **Click, Hold and Drag** the **Slider Marker** (This method is best for making large movements).
 - You can **Click** on the **Slider Marker**, then use the **left** and **right** arrows keys on your keyboard to precisely move the **Exposure Marker** (this method provides the most accurate tiny adjustments to the exposure times).
 - You can **Click** on the **Exposure Time's** current setting and a pop-up window will appear that allows you to enter the required exposure time (This allows you to be very precise in the exposure time you require).



You should be able to see the Planetary object of interest on your screen. You can now adjust the **Exposure Time** to make the object bright enough match your viewing requirements.

Step 5

Depending on the SkyRaider camera being used, open up and adjust the **Color Balance** and **Color Adjustment** (Contrast, Gamma, ...) to your required preferences.



Step 6

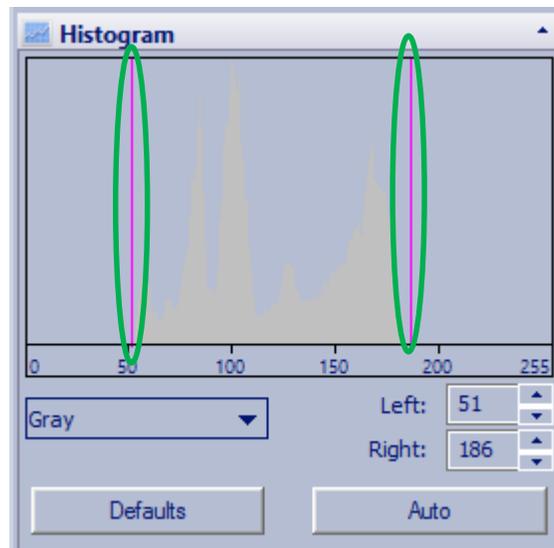
To improve the Through-put (**Frames per Second**), choose a **Region of Interest (ROI)** that just includes the image of the planetary object. You selected the **ROI** by **Left Click, Hold and Drag** the handles of the **Blue Rectangle** that will appear over your **Image Window** when you selected the **ROI Tab**. Once you have framed the **Blue ROI Rectangle** over your image, **Click** on the **Apply** button in the **ROI Tab** to accept it.

**Note**

Using the **Scroll Wheel** on your **mouse**, when the mouse is over the **Image Window**, will enlarge and reduce the image size in the **Image Window**.

Step 7

To finely adjust the image characteristics, open up the **Histogram Tab**, and either enter in the **Left** and **Right** values, or **Left Click, Hold and Drag** the two Vertical Bars so that you are not clipping data, on either side of the window. These adjustments will help improve the image on the screen. The Histogram Tab will take a bit of practice to become comfortable with it.

**Hint**

Try to set the exposure so that the **Peak of the Histogram** lies somewhere between **50** and **100**.



Detailed Workflow of Video Imaging Deep Sky Objects

The following instruction will guide you in setting up your SkyRaider camera for imaging Deep Sky Objects (**DSO**).

For Deep Sky Objects, the exposure setting will be very large (as the objects themselves are usually very dim). It is recommended that practice in imaging objects, such as the these, will allow you to become comfortable with all of the adjustments that MallincamSky provides for you. With Deep Sky Objects, you want as much resolution and data as possible, so choose the highest resolution your SkyRaider provides.



Since the exposure rate can be very long, you will need to prepare your system by taking **Dark Fields**. If this is the first time imaging DSO's, you may not have saved previous **Dark Fields**, so this Walk-Through will take you through the Dark Field preparation step.

Remember complete explanations of each of the processes and controls are provided later in the User Manual.

The following instructions are used as a guide to assist you in doing Deep Sky imaging. Don't forget, when finished with a particular step that uses a particular feature tab, close the Tab (This will remove the green and blue boxes which may be displayed over your image).



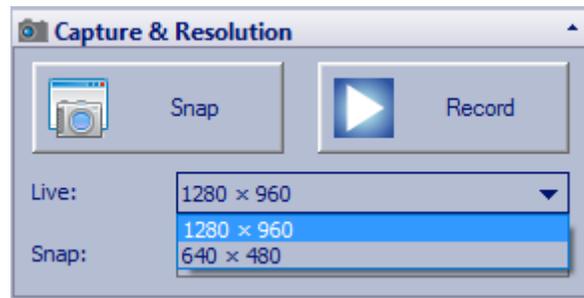
Have your SkyRaider connected to your telescope, and since you are video imaging Deep Sky Objects, you should have a **Focal Reducer** attached. This will provide you two benefits: first you will be presented with a larger field of view (see more of the object), and second, you will have a faster telescope (shorter exposure times).



Since you will want to “**push**” the capabilities of the SkyRaider in displaying the Deep Sky Object, you will require the **highest resolution** that your particular SkyRaider can produce, along with the largest **bits of data** (for color or shades of Back and White) for each pixel that the SkyRaider is able to produce. This will provide enough data for external stacking programs to pull out the finest detail from your video images.

Step 1

From the **Capture and Resolution Tab** on the **MallincamSky ToolBar**, and select the **Largest** resolution values that your SkyRaider is capable of.

**Step 2**

If you are going to be saving and processing images taken with the SkyRaider, you may want to increase the Bit depth to the highest value your particular SkyRaider camera supports.



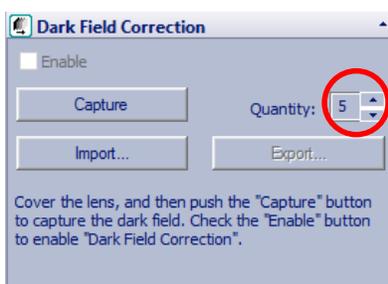
Due to the Large Exposure times you will be using in imaging Deep Sky Objects, the SkyRaider (in fact every camera no matter what the cost) will sometimes display noise such as, warm pixels and amp glow. The longer the exposure the more noise that can appear on your image. The MallincamSky can remove this noise, by applying pre-prepared Dark Fields to your images, effectively removing the noise.

Step 3

Either place the Lens cap over your Telescope, or place the dust cover cap over your SkyRaider camera to block any light from hitting the sensor of the camera.

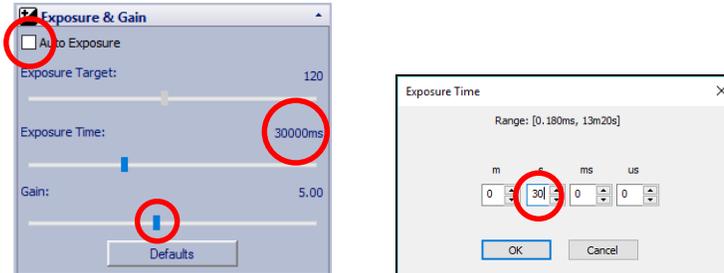
Step 4

Open up the **Dark Field Correction Tab** on the **Left SideBar** of MallincamSky. You will normally determine the maximum exposure time that you will be using for evening, but to get started for the first time, we will choose **5** exposures of **30** seconds. Adjust the **Quantity** to **5**.

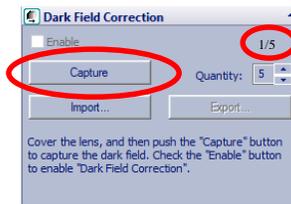


Step 5

Open up the **Exposure Tab**, and ensure that **Auto Exposure** box is unchecked. Move the **Gain** to about the middle, say **5** and **Click** on the **Current Exposure Time** value to open up the **Time Selection Window**. Enter in **30** seconds in this window and **Click** the **OK** button to accept.

**Step 6**

Back to the **Dark Field Tab**, **Click** on the **Capture Button**. This process will take about 2 and a half minutes (5 x 30 s), you can watch the process timer in the **Dark Field Tab** as it takes each Dark Field. The Dark Fields are now ready, we will not yet activate them, but they are stored in the SkyRaider ready for use (as long as you don't unplug the camera).

**Note**

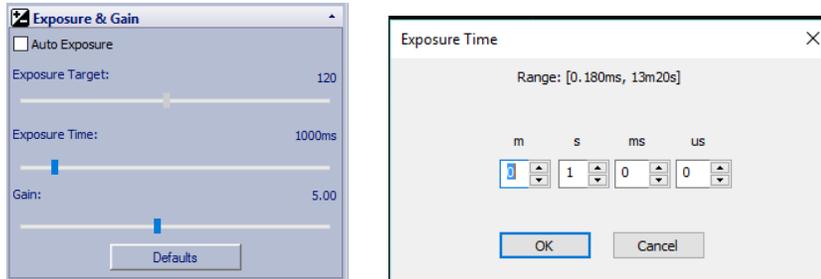
Once it is finished, you have the option of saving (**exporting**) these Dark Fields, so that you can use them again without having to take another set.

Now is the time to get busy with actually imaging our Deep Sky Object since the preliminary work is done.

Hopefully, your telescope is mostly polar aligned, and you are ready to visit your first DSO, and produce an image to impress one's friends and neighbors (and spouse, so you can justify spending all of your hard earned money on all of the pieces of equipment you are currently using).

Step 7

Open up the **Exposure Tab**, and ensure that **Auto Exposure** box is unchecked. Move the **Gain** to about the middle, say **5** and **Click** on the **Current Exposure Time** value to open up the **Time Selection Window**. Enter in **1** second in this window and **Click** the **OK** button to accept.

**Note**

We will use a small exposure so we can verify that the object is someplace in the field of view. This is a great time to check your focus as the images will be updated very quickly. You can use the **Crosshair's Button** at the top of the MallincamSky window to assist in centering you object (or focus star).



If the image is too dim, try increasing the **Gain**.

Now, you have your Deep Sky Object (or a least a dim version of it, centered in your screen. It is time to crank-up-volume. Well, for us, time to increase the exposure time.

Step 8

With MallincamSky running, open up the **Exposure Tab** on the left of the Window.

- Set your exposure to a larger value, say **30s** as a starting point (we are using a longer time, but the actual exposure amount depends upon the f/ratio, size of telescope, filters, seeing conditions, ...). You can adjust the exposure using one of the three methods below:
 - You can either use the **left mouse button** and **Click, Hold and Drag** the **Slider Marker** (This method is best for making large movements).
 - You can **Click** on the **Slider Marker**, then use the **left** and **right** arrows keys on your keyboard to precisely move the **Exposure Marker** (this method provides the most accurate tiny adjustments to the exposure times).
 - You can **Click** on the **Exposure Time's** current setting and a pop-up window will appear that allows you to enter the required exposure time (This allows you to be very precise in the exposure time you require).

Note

Now, we are heading into the "Art" of video imaging. You can **decrease** the **Exposure Time**, as long as you **increase** the **Gain**. But, by increasing the **Gain**, you also **increase any noise** that is present. Use your own judgment in what you are willing to accept on your image.

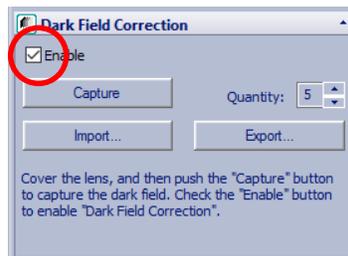
Note

Depending upon the type of SkyRaider camera being used, you may have to wait twice as long for your images to appear (i.e. 60 seconds rather than 30 seconds, as specific models (the DS series) separate the image into odd and even sections (the image is interlaced). it will image the odd, then the even (just look at the timer indicator located on the bottom of the screen.) and combine them back into one masterpiece.

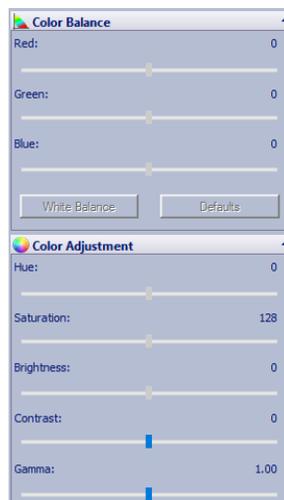
Step 9

Now, that we have an image that we are happy with, it is time to enable **Dark Field** subtraction.

Just **Click** on the **Enable CheckBox** in the **Dark Field Correction** Tab. Dark Fields will be automatically apply during the next image refresh.

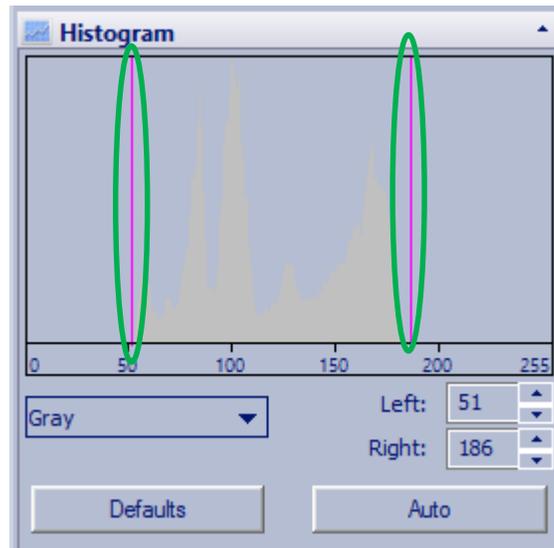
**Step 10**

Depending on the SkyRaider camera being used, open up and adjust the **Color Balance** and **Color Adjustment** (Contrast, Gamma, ...) to your required preferences.



Step 11

To finely adjust the image characteristics, open up the **Histogram Tab**, and either enter in the **Left** and **Right** values, or **Left Click, Hold and Drag** the two **Vertical Bars** so that you are not clipping data, on either side of the window. These adjustments will help improve the image on the screen. The **Histogram Tab** will take a bit of practice to become comfortable with it.



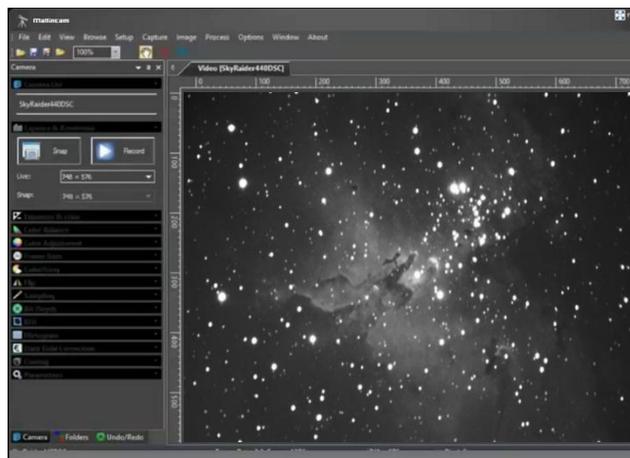
Hint

Adjust the exposure show that the **Peak of the Histogram** lies somewhere between **50** and **100**.

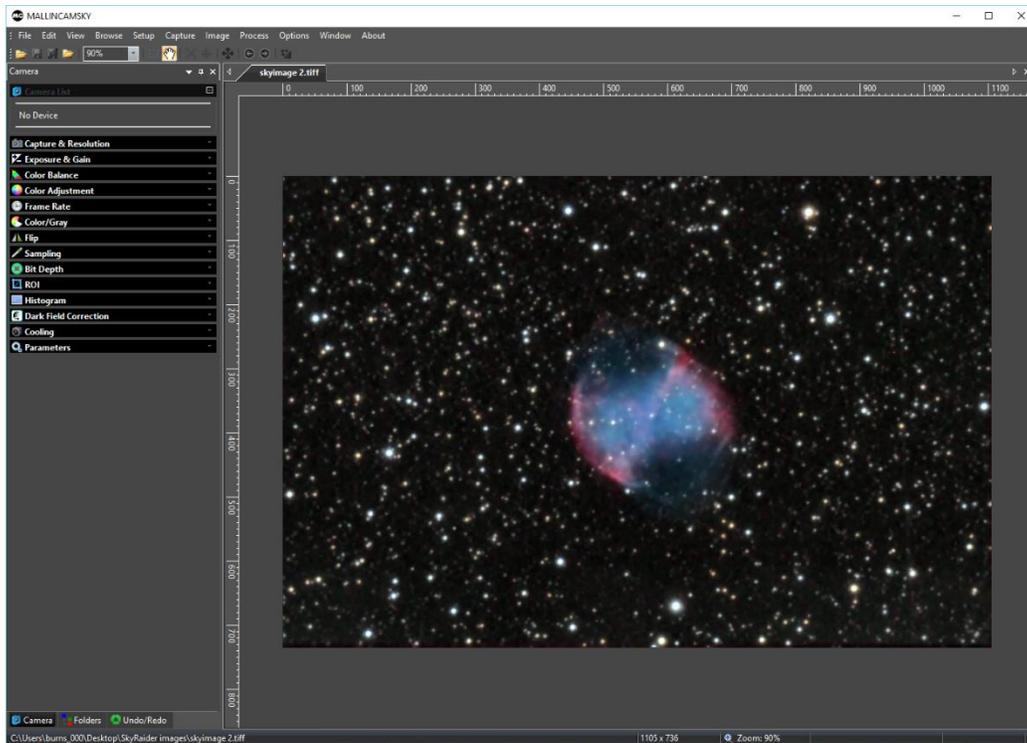
Note

Remember, every adjustment in MallincamSky such as Exposure, Gain, Gamma, Brightness, Contrast, ... will not appear on the Video Window until the SkyRaider has done its next refresh (or both interlaces refreshed, if using the DS model).

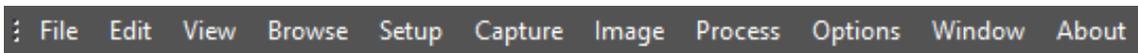
This is where you have to take over, as each telescope, night sky, seeing conditions are different from user to user. So, have fun and experiment with the settings and see how they affect your image. Remember, these are your images and you decide what is best for you.



5. The SkyRaider Software Controls

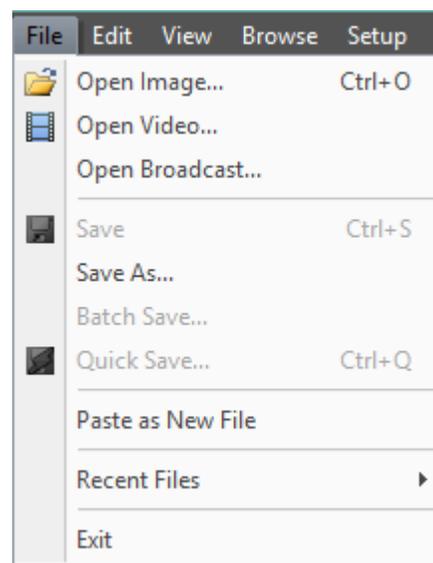


Top Menu Line



File

This **Drop-Down Menu** will allow you to **load** and **save** images, play video files, plus the **future ability** to **View** or **Broadcast** video stream on **Night Skies Network**.





The **Open Image** command is used to open an existing image file. This command can also be used to preview an image in small size, or to view its statistics and information without actually opening the image itself. You can use this command to quickly locate a particular image. **MallincamSky** supports and can open a variety of image formats. These are identified in the **Files of type** list box.

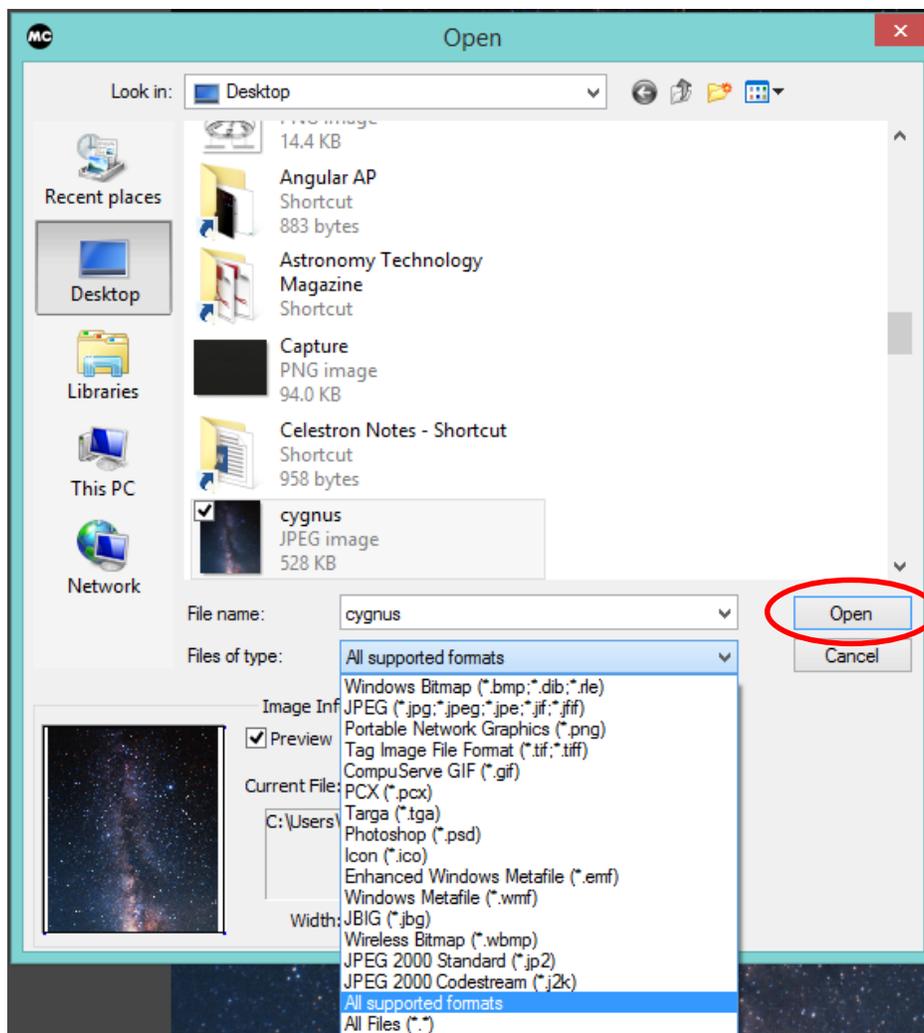
MallincamSky can open more than one image simultaneously by:

- **Ctrl + Left Mouse Click** on each required File, then **Left-Click** on **Open**
- **Shift + Left Mouse Click** method to highlight the files to be opened, then **Left-Click** on **Open**

When an image is opened, **MallincamSky** places it into a new image window. It then becomes the active image.

Note

MallincamSky maintains, at the **File>Recent Files** submenu, a list of the last opened files.





Open Video

Open Video...

Use the **Open Video Command** to open an existing video on your computer. The **Open Video** command is only enabled when no **SkyRaider** Camera is present when **MallincamSky** is started. Only a single video can be opened at a time. If a SkyRaider is started, this menu will be disabled and the **Open Video** command will be disabled.

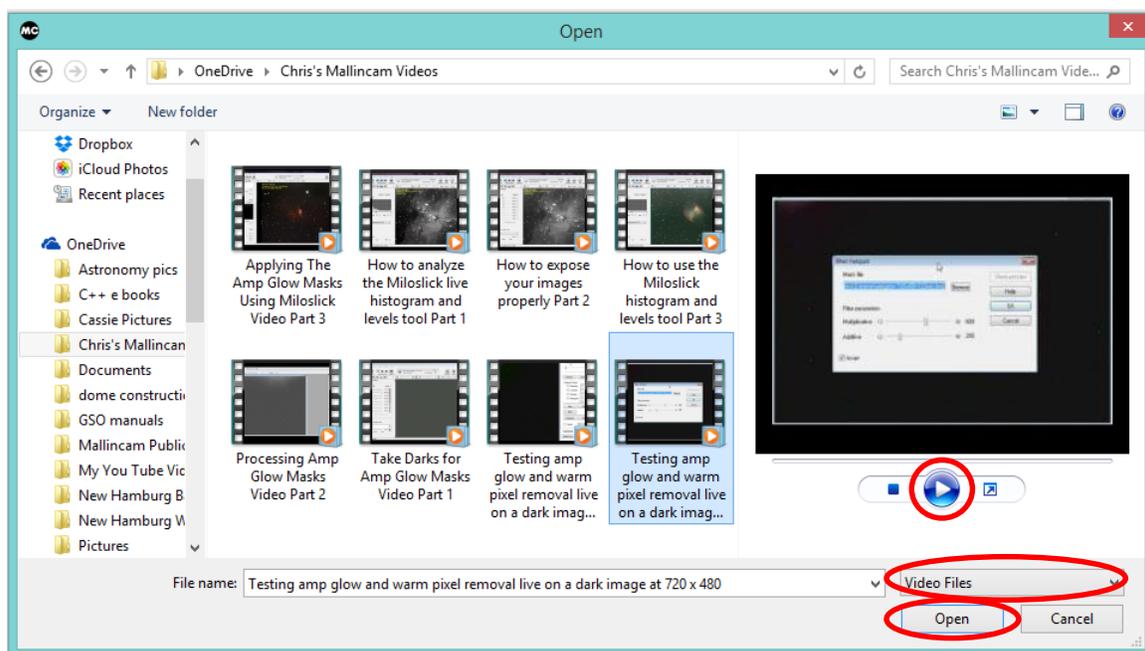
Hint

Right-Click on **Video Window's Title**, then choose **Close**. This will shut-down the video stream and allow you use the **File>Open Video** command.

Select the name of the file you want to open. If the file does not appear, select the option for showing all files from the **Video Files Drop-Down Button**. The video file type can be **wmv**, **asf**, or **avi** format.

You can preview the Video by **Left-Clicking** on the **Play Button** on the **Preview Window** on the right side of the **Open Window**.

Click **Open** to open a video file, this will create a video window and begin to start the video stream. The video window will be associated a name called "Video [XXX.XXX]" (i.e., its title bar will display "Video [XXX.XXX]", here, XXX.XXX is the video file name). No sound will be heard when playing the video stream.





The **Open Broadcast** command is not active as the programmers may use this control for interfacing with **Night Skies Network (NSN)** at some time in the future.



The **Save** command allows you to save the updated image onto your computer. The command immediately stores the current window image to its file (the filename is listed on the window's title bar) while leaving the image still active in its window.

If the image is untitled or titled with a digit, **MallincamSky** will issue the **File>Save As** dialog automatically. The default "**Save as type**" will be "Window Bitmap (*.bmp,*.dib,*.rle)".

The **File>Save** command can be used to save the most recent changes to disk. It is often performed as a precautionary measure during lengthy or involved processes to reduce the amount of reprocessing that might be required in the event of a system failure or operational error.

When an image is being closed (**Right-Click** on Image title) and "**not to save its changes**" is chosen from the Popup Window, **MallincamSky** discards all changes made since the last **File>Save** operation.

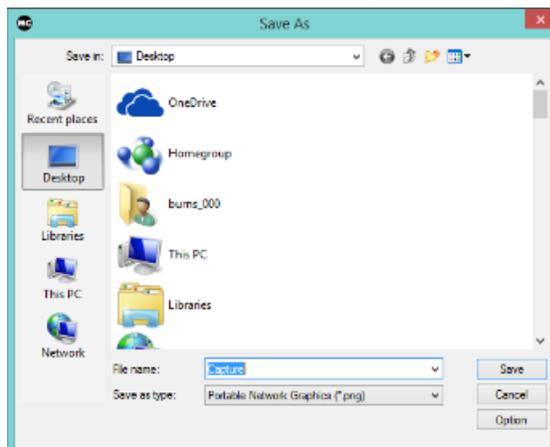


The **File>Save** command saves the contents of the entire window, unless if there was an **ROI** (Region of Interest) defined on it, in which case it will save the **ROI** contents. The **File>Save** command will be disabled if the file is not changed or the changes have been saved.



The **Save As** command allows you to save an image onto your computer with a specified file format. At the end of a **File>Save As** operation, the image window will be associated with the new file and the new format (i.e., its title bar will display the new file name). **MallincamSky** supports the following file formats:

- Window Bitmap (*.bmp,*.dib,*.rle)
- JPEG (*.jpg,*.jpeg,*.jpe,*.jif,*.jfif)
- Portable Network Graphics (*.png)
- Tag Image File Format (*.tif,*.tiff)
- PCX(*.pcx)
- Targa (*.tga)
- JPEG 2000 Standard (*.jp2)
- JPEG 2000 Codestream (*.j2k)
- MallincamSky File Type (*.tft)



The **Save As** command has several important uses beyond simply storing an image to a new file name. **Left-Click** on the **Option** button to select the different parameters to encode the file (based on selected **Save as Type**).



JPEG

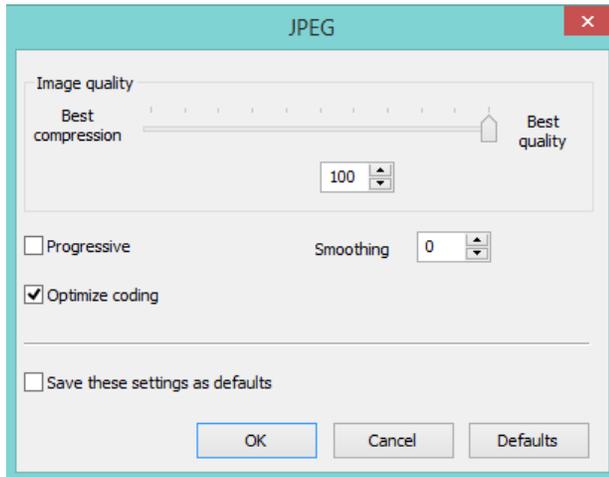
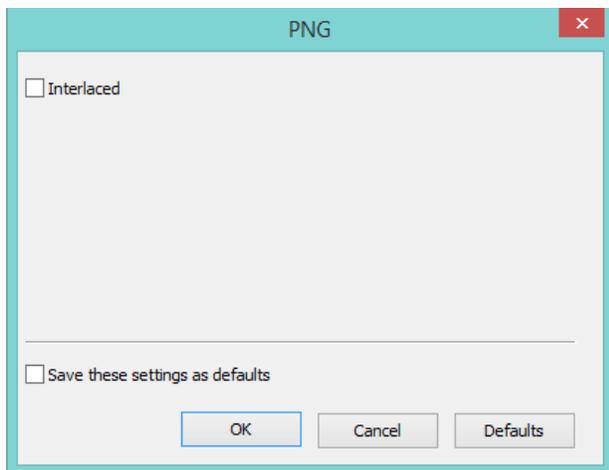


Image quality	If you save an image in JPEG format (*.jpg), you may adjust image quality in the edit box. The values range from 0 to 100. Default value is 75.
Progressive	The default is unchecked.
Optimize Huffman codes	The default is unchecked.
Smoothing	The values range between 0 and 100. The default value is 0.
Save these setting as defaults	When saving a file, the current settings will be saved as defaults for the next file save operation.

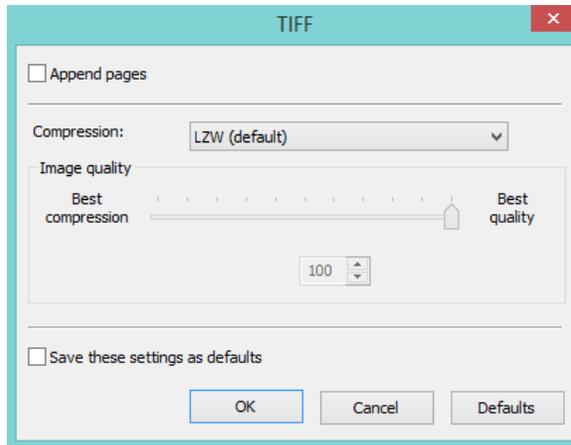


PNG



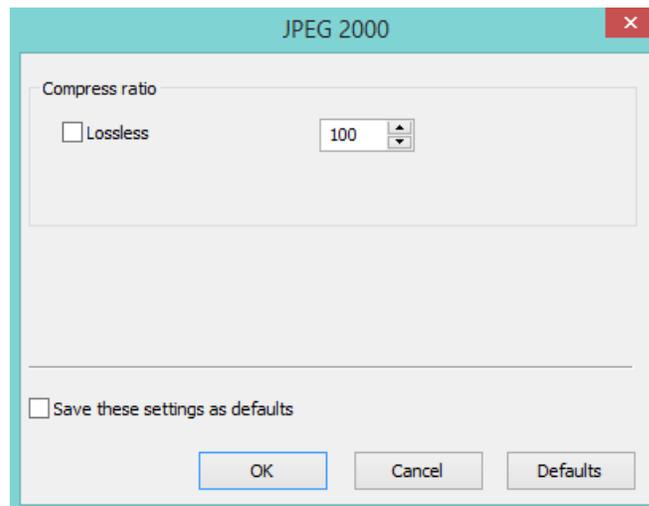
Interlaced	The default is unchecked.
Save these setting as defaults	When saving a file, the current settings will be saved as defaults for the next file save operation.

➔ TIFF

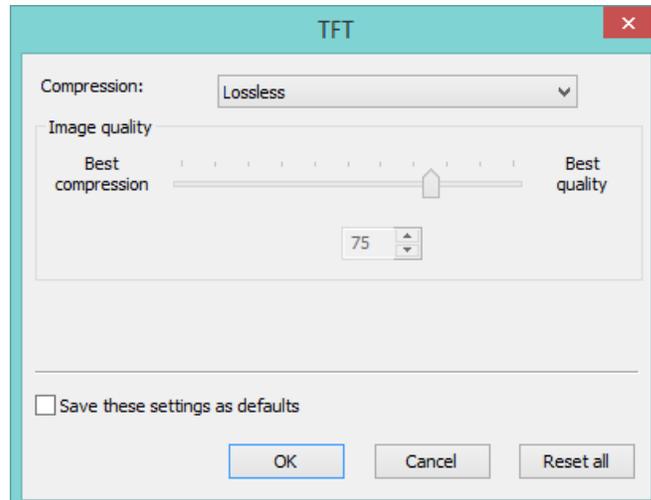


Appended Pages	Determine whether the current image will be saved in multiple pages' style or not.
Compression	Specifies a method for compressing the composite image data. For saving a 32-bit TIFF file, one can specify that the file be saved with predictor compression, but have no option to use JPEG compression.
Image Quality	If choosing Compressions as "JPEG", the Image quality can be adjusted by the slider bar. The values range between 0 and 100. The Default value is 75.
Save these setting as defaults	When saving a file, the current settings will be saved as defaults for the next file save operation.

➔ JPEG 2000



Compress Ratio	If choosing Compressions as "JPEG 2000", the Image quality can be adjusted by the slider bar. The values range between 0 and 100. The Default value is 0.
Save these setting as defaults	When saving a file, the current settings will be saved as defaults for the next file save operation.



Compression	Choose Lossless or JPG (Lossy)
Image Quality	If choosing Compressions as "JPEG", the Image quality can be adjusted by the slider bar. The values range between 0 and 100. The Default value is 75.
Save these setting as defaults	When saving a file, the current settings will be saved as defaults for the next file save operation.



For Bitmap (*.bmp), PCX (*.pcx), Targa (*.tga); There is no **Option choices**.

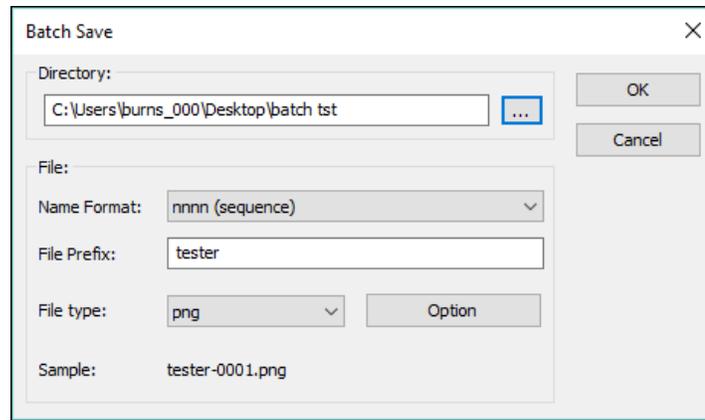


The **File>Batch Save...** command will be enabled when:

- a) An image is opened.
- b) An image is captured from the camera.
- c) An image window is created by choosing the **File>Paste as New File** command.
- d) An image window is created copied from the **Undo/Redo** Sidebar.

To start the **File>Batch Save...** command, you have to:

1. Choose the **File>Batch Save...** command to bring up a Batch Save dialog:



- ➔ **Directory:** Enter the name of the drive and directory where your captured images will be saved. You may either type the path information, or use the Browse button to locate it from a standard Browse Folder dialog.
- ➔ **Name Format:** The year, month, date, hour, minute and second or a number **nnnn** (sequence) are used as part of the filename. If more files are saved within a second when using a time format, a (xx) suffix is attached to the end of Name Format to avoid the possible name conflict. For the **nnnn** (sequence) "Name Format", no suffix is needed.
- ➔ **File Prefix:** Enter a file name prefix for Batch Save when generating files names for a series of images. This prefix will be combined with Name Format to form a final file name naming paradigm.
- ➔ **File Type:** In this combo box, select the format in which you want the image to be saved (can be BMP, JPG, PNG, TIF). Click the **Option Button** to set the different parameters for encoding the file (For BMP format, the Option will be disabled. See **File>Save As ...** command about the details of the format encoding methods).
- ➔ **Sample:** The final file name is shown at the right of the Sample label for quick reference.

2. Once the settings are made, **Left-Click** the **OK** button to begin the file batch save process or **Cancel** to cancel the **File>Batch Save ...** command and return to the application.



- when the **File>Batch Save ...** command has finished, the **Title** on the **Image Tab** or **Image Window** will be modified with the file name formed in the **Batch Save dialog**.
- The **File>Batch Save ...** will perform no saving operation if the file is not modified.

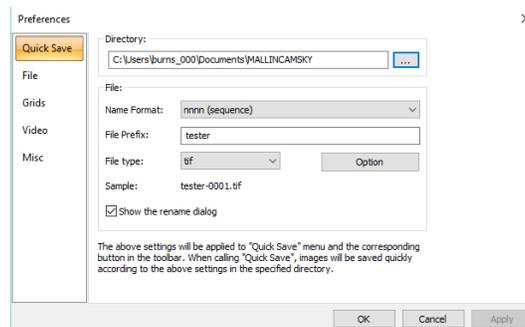
Quick Save...

The **File>Quick Save** command will be enabled when:

- A new image is captured from the camera;
- An Image Window is created by choosing the **File>Paste as New File** command.

File>Quick Save can save the file a quick way with no need to specify the file directory, file name and file format. All those are specified in **Options>Preferences •••, Quick Save** Property Page.

If in **Options>Preferences•••**, the **Show the Rename** checkbox is **checked**, then when you perform the **Quick Save**, a window will pop-up asking for the new name for the image (it will still use the File Type as specified in the Preferences)



Paste as New File

The **File>Paste as New File** command will be enabled when there is valid image data on the clipboard first (see the **Edit>Copy** command). If there is no image data on the clipboard, the **File>Paste as New File** command will be disabled.

Choose the **File>Paste as New File** command to place the contents of the clipboard image into a new image window, which becomes the active image. The new image type will be the same as that of the original image.

This is useful for bringing in a previously saved image (that you have selected via the operating systems **copy command**) into the **MallincamSky Image Window**. You can modify the image properties via the **Image Menu** choice (see [Image](#) section in user Manual).

MallincamSky will accept image data from other applications via the clipboard as long as it is in Windows Bitmap (DIB) format.

Note

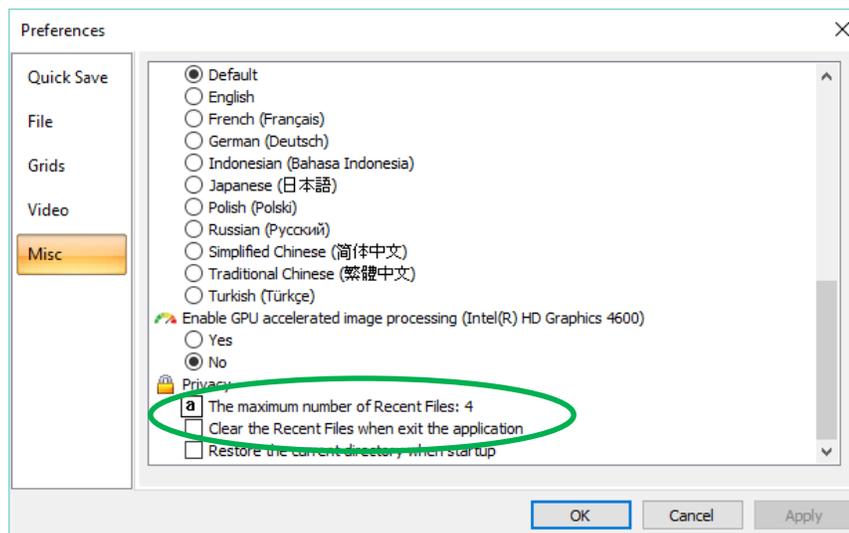
MallincamSky will assign a digit to the **Paste as New File** command in the created image window **Title Bar**.



MallincamSky maintains 4 (default) of the most recently opened document files under the **Recent Files** command. Choosing one of these submenus will reopen that file immediately.



- The maximum number of **Recent Files** can be modified by choosing the **Options>Preferences...** command and clicking the **Misc** selection. Here, clicking the 4 (default) edit box will allow you to enter the number of the Recent Files Submenu that you want. The value ranges from 0 to 8, the default is 4;
- One can also check the **Clear the Recent Files when exit the application** to clear the Recent Files after exiting the **MallincamSky** application.



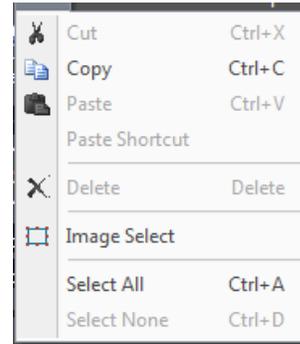
Choosing the **File>Exit** command will close video, all of the image windows and Browse window and remove their windows from the screen. After all of the windows are closed, **MallincamSky** will end itself.



If an image has been modified before attempting to **Exit**, **MallincamSky** will issue a warning to ask if user wants to save the images or not.

Edit

This **Drop-Down Menu** will allow you to **Cut**, **Copy** and **Paste Layers** over your images. From the **Edit Menu** you can also select a **Region of Interest (ROI)** from your **image** and copy it to the **Windows Clipboard**, or even **de-select** the **ROI** if you have changed your mind.



Cut Cut Ctrl+X

This command is or future implementation.

Copy Copy Ctrl+C

This **Edit>Copy** command can be used to copy a selected part of your image (see **Select Image** command) to the **Windows Clipboard**. Then you can use another software's **Paste Command** to place this selected image inside that software, or **File>Paste as New File** to paste into a new MallincamSky Window.

Hint

Using the **Select Image** command, you can select a region of your currently live image (using the **Left-click Hold and Drag technique**) then choose **Edit>Copy** (or **Ctrl+C**). Now you can **Paste** that selected image into another document (such as **Microsoft Word**, or **Microsoft Paint**) for later use.

Paste Paste Ctrl+V

This control allows you to place a **copied File** (you have previously selected the **File** and then have used **Edit>Copy**) into your currently selected folder. Remember to use **File>Paste as New File** to paste image into a new MallincamSky Window.

Paste Shortcut

This control allows you to place a **copied File Shortcut** (you have previously selected the **File** and then have used **Edit>Copy**) into your currently selected folder.



This control allows you to **delete** a selected file from your currently selected folder.



You can select a **Region of Interest** on your **Image Tab** (live or static) by using the **Left-Click Hold and Drag** technique. Once selected then you can **Copy (Ctrl+C)** the selected region and then **Paste** it into another software program.



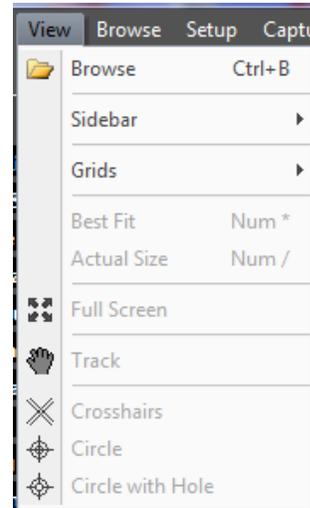
You use it to select the **Whole Video Image Window** (live or static). Once selected, then you can **Copy (Ctrl+C)** the selected region and then **Paste** it into another software program or **File>Paste as New File** to paste image into a new MallincamSky Window.



This command can be used to **De-Select** the image that was selected using either the **Image Select** or the **Select All** commands.

View

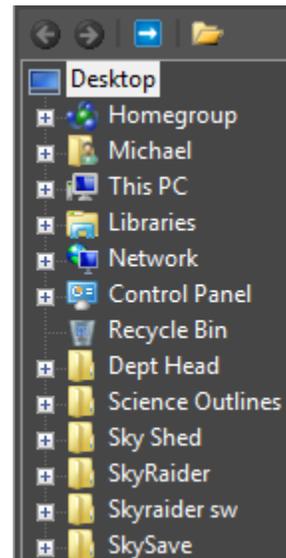
This **Drop-Down Menu** will allow you to **Browse** folders, **Display** or **Remove Tabs** from the **Sidebar**, **Activate Grids** or **Reticules** on the **Video Window**, Change the **Video Window Size** to match your computer real-estate, and Allow you to **move** the image around in your **Video Window**.



The **View>Browse** command from the **View Menu** (or the **Browse Icon** on the **Icon Tool Bar**) is used to browse images under the specified directory in the **Folders Sidebar**.

The **Browse Window** resembles the **Windows Explorer**. **Left-Clicking** on the **+** will expand a folder so that you can examine its contents.

You can **Right-Click** on a **Folder** (or file) and the actual Windows controls will pop as in **Windows Explorer**.



As you get deeper into the **Browse Window**, you can **Back-Out** or Move Deeper via the **Green Left** or **Right Arrow** in the **Browse Window**.



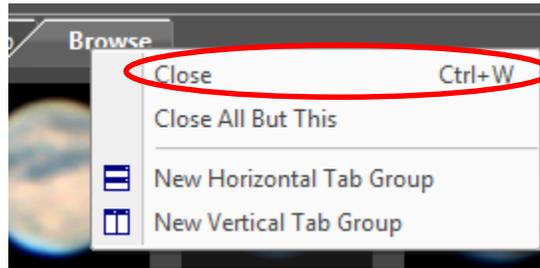
The **Blue Right Arrow** will take you to your computer's **Root Directory**.

Left-Double Clicking on a **Folder** will open up a **Window Tab** in the **Video Window** (this **Window** will be labeled **Browse**). This **Tab** will display all of the graphic files inside that Folder. If you **Left-Double Click** on a **Graphics File** inside the **Video Window**, it will open up that **Graphics File** in a new **Tab** in the **Video Window**.

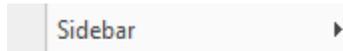


Hint

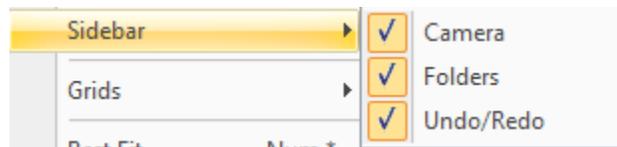
You can close the **Tab** in the **Video Window** by **Right-Clicking** on the **Tab's Title (Browse)**, then choosing **Close**.



Sidebar



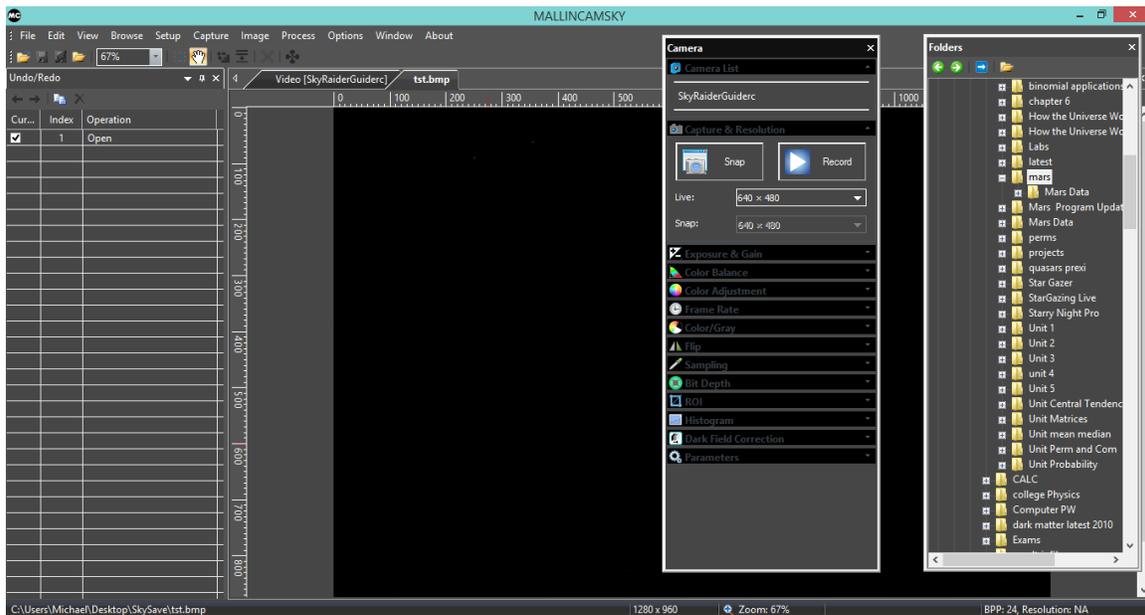
The **SideBar** can contain **3** different Tabs: **Camera**, **Folders**, and **Undo/Redo**.



Left-Click on the **SideBar** control to expand it. You will see the **3** choices (each with a **check-mark** beside it), **Left-Click** on the **check-mark** to **Select** or **De-Select** which ones of the **3** you would like to see displayed in the **SideBar**.

Note

The **Tabs** on the **SideBar** can remain docked to the **SideBar** or can be free floating. Just use the **Left-Click Hold and Drag** technique to move the **Tab** to another location on your **Desktop Window**.



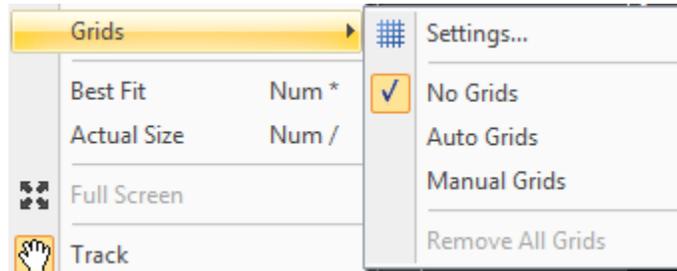
To **Dock** the **Floating Tab** back to the **SideBar**, just **Left-Double Click** on its **Name**.



Grids



The **View>Grids** control has the ability to display a grid overlay on top of your **Video Window**. You can use the **Auto Grid** style of create your own grid format.



Left-Click on the choice you require (No Grids, Auto Grids, or Manual Grids) to activate.

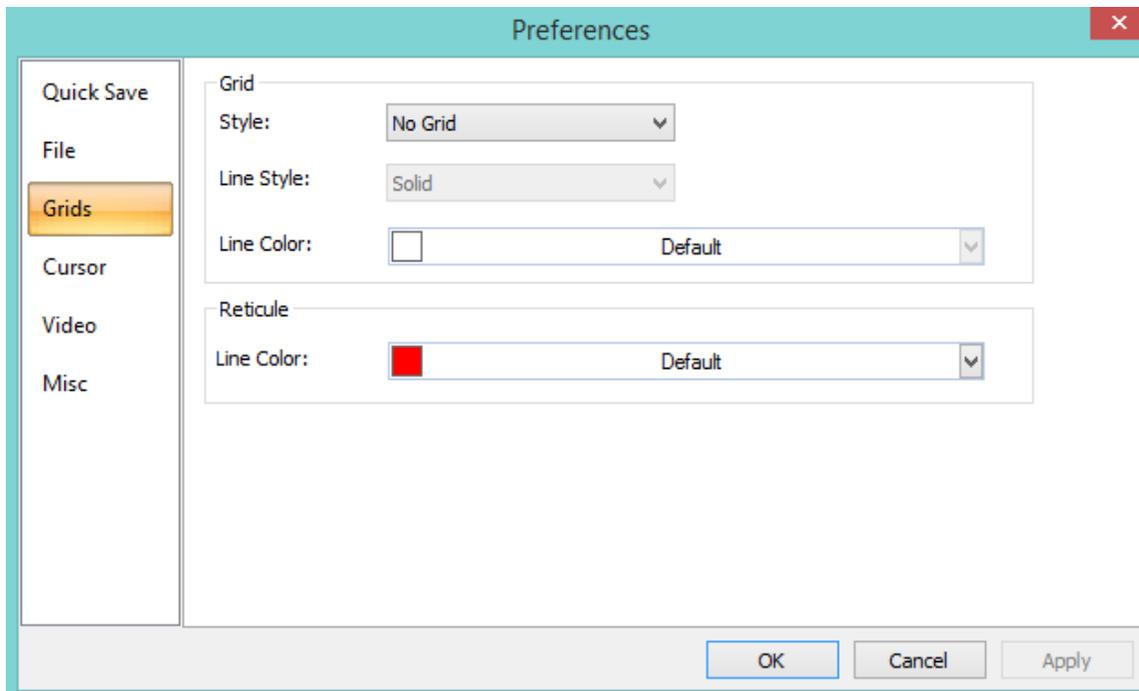


Auto Grids

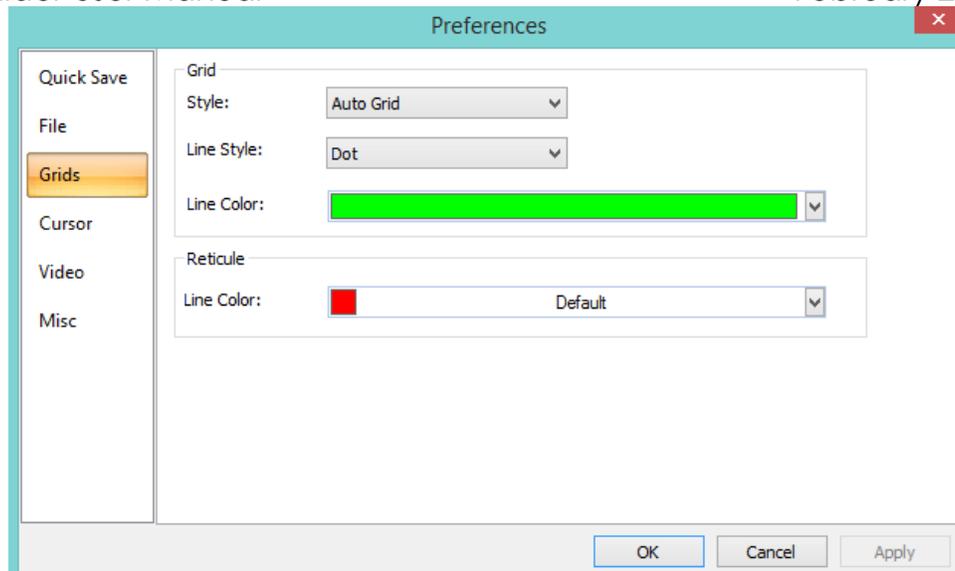
Auto Grids can be set in the **View>Grids>Settings** control.



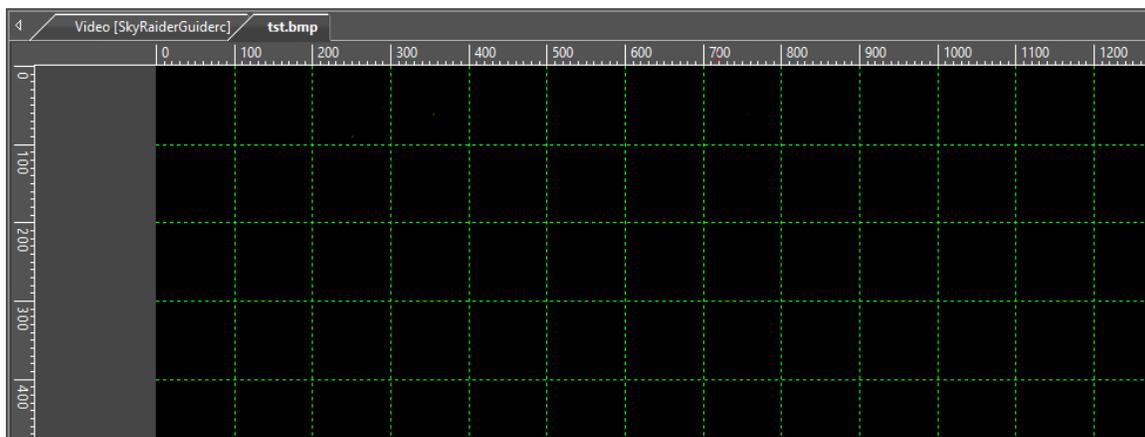
This command will pop-up the **Preferences Window**.



Left-Click on the **Grids** option on the left of the **Preferences Window** and adjust the **Style** (No Grid, Auto Grid, and Manual Grid), **Line Style** (Solid, Dash, Dot, or DashDot), and **Color** that you are interested in.



Left-Click on the **Apply** button to display the **Grid**, then **Left-Click** on **OK** to accept.



➔ Manual Grids

Choosing this control will display two small **Blue Right Arrow** and **Down Arrows** overlaid on the top of the **Vertical Ruler** and on the left of the **Horizontal Ruler** as shown below:



Use the **Left-Click Hold and Drag** technique to move the **Blue Down Arrow** along the **Horizontal Ruler** to where ever you want. When it is dragging over the video/image, there will be a **Vertical Line** (in the **Color** and **Style** chosen by you) appeared to let you judge where to release this line on the video/image. You can drag as many lines as you require to overlay them on the video/image.

Similarly, you can drag down as many **Vertical Lines** as you like to create **Vertical Grids**.



You can at any time, grab and move the **Blue Arrows** to adjust the locations of the **Horizontal** and **Vertical Grid Lines**.



No Grids

The **No Grids** control can be used to **temporarily remove** the grid overlay from the **video/image**.

If you re-select **Manual Grids**, your previous designed **Grid Lines** will re-appear.

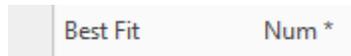


Remove All Grids

This will **remove** the **Grid Overlay** from your **video/image**. It will also **delete** your **Manual Grid Lines** settings (thus allowing you to create a new set of **Manual Grid Lines**).



Best Fit



Select the control **View>Best Fit** to automatically resize the **image/video** to fit inside the **Video Window Tab**.



Actual Size

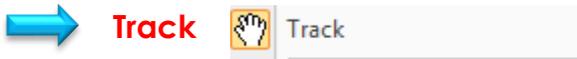


Select the control **View>Actual Size** to **reset the Zoom** to 100% (**Actual Size** will be disabled if the **View** is already set to 100%) and place the **image/video** inside the **Video Window Tab**.



Selecting the **View>Full Screen** control will display the video window in full screen style. You will not see any commands or controls while in this mode.

Pressing the **Esc** key on your keyboard will return MallincamSky to the **Default Video Window**.



If the **video/image's** actual size is larger than the **video/image Window**, then this control will allow you to position the actual **video/image** within in the **video/image Window**. This control is activated automatically when necessary.

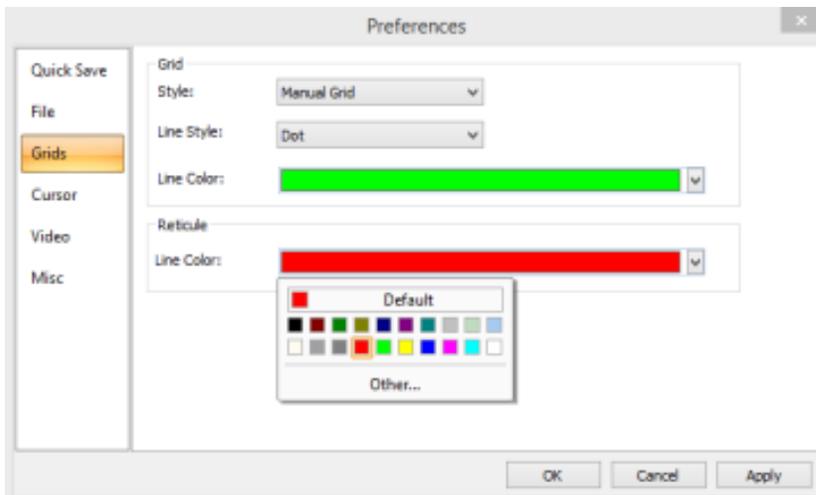
Its function is similar to the scroll bars. It is an alternative to using the arrows on the scroll bars for positioning the **video/image** within the window. Position the mouse (make sure to choose a location outside a **Region of Interest** rectangle. You may need to close the **ROI** rectangle if necessary) on the actual **video/image**.

Left-Click and Hold (the **Open Hand** will change to a **Closed Hand**). Now drag the image around inside the video/image Window

If the **video/image** size is smaller than the **video/image Window** size, then the track operation will be disabled.



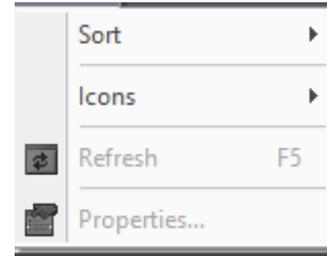
MallincamSky provides three Reticules (or cross-hairs) styles to aid in aligning your telescope to a star (or other stellar object). You can change the **color** of the reticule via the **Option>Preferences** control in the **Top Menu Line**.



Left-Click on Reticule icon to Activate and **Left-Click** again on Reticule icon to **De-Activate**.

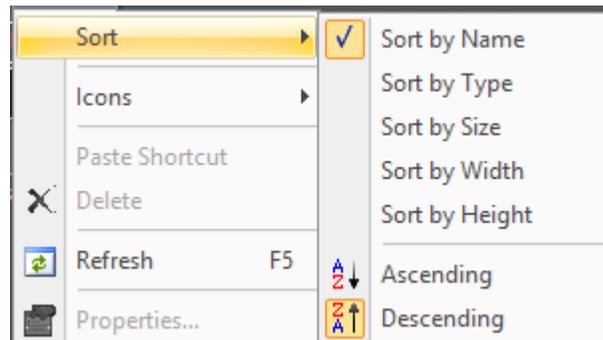
 **Browse**

This command is used to determine how **MallincamSky** should display the graphic files when you are **viewing the Folders**. This command will allow you to change the size of the image icons, determine how to sort the files, add shortcuts to the folders, delete files, refresh the folders, and even determine the properties of the image file all without having to perform these tasks thru **the Windows Environment**.



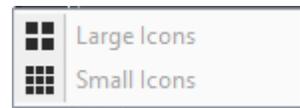
 **Sort** 

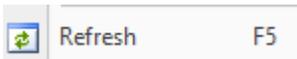
This control allows you the option of rearranging the image files via a variety of choices (**Name, Type, size, Width, and Height**. All in either **Ascending** or **Descending** order.). Just **Left-Click** on the choice that best suits your needs and **MallincamSky** will automatically rearrange the files.



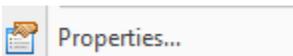
 **Icons** 

This control allows you to display the **Graphic Files** as either **Large** or **Small** Icons. Simply **Left-Click** to make your Selection.



 **Refresh** 

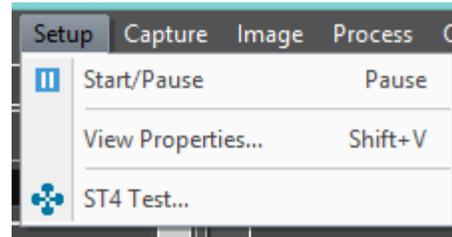
This control allows you to **refresh** the contents of the currently selected folder.

 **Properties** 

This control will display the current File **properties** for the **Graphics File** that you have selected (This is identical to **Right Clicking** on a File while using **Windows Explorer**).

Setup

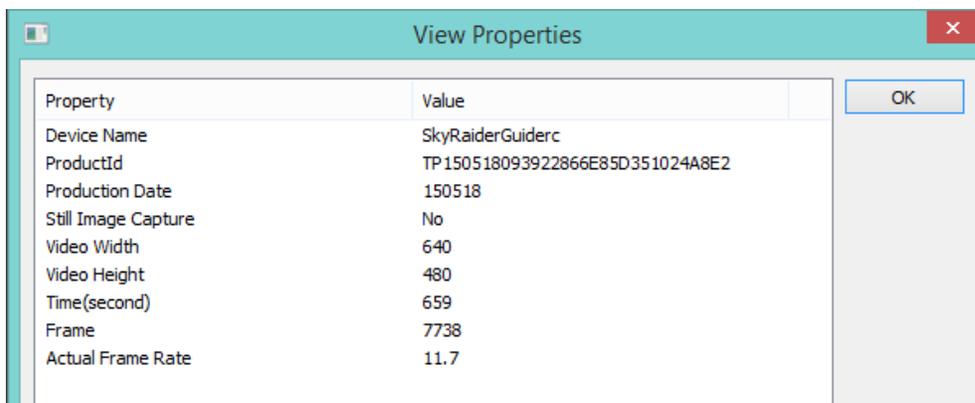
This **Top Menu Line Command** is used to provide you information about the current **SkyRaider Camera** activated thru **MallincamSky**.



Left-Clicking on this control will **Pause** the **SkyRaider Camera's** live display. **Left-Clicking** on this control again will activate the live display.



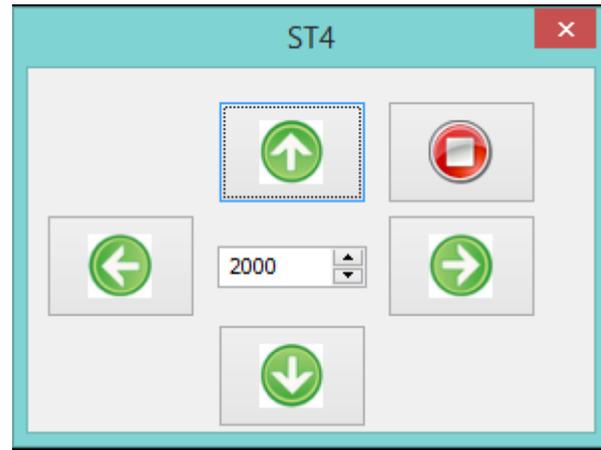
Left-Clicking on this control will pop-up the **View Properties Window** that contains information about the currently activated **SkyRaider Camera**.





If your **SkyRaider** camera (such as the **SkyRaiderG Autoguider series**) has a **ST4** port, then it can be used to **AutoGuide** your telescope mount.

This control is used to check if the camera can correctly communicate with the **Telescope Mount**.



Connect the **ST4 cable** provided with the **SkyRaider Camera** to the **ST4 Port** on your **Telescope Mount**. Turn on the **Telescope Mount** to ensure that it is ready to be tested.

Left-Click on this control and the **ST4 Popup Window** will appear.



The **ST4 Window** will contain 4 **Green Arrow** keys that when pressed will send a specific direction command thru the **ST4 cable**. Press each **Green Arrow** and note if the **Telescope Mount** moves in a specific direction.



Due to the various orientations of the **SkyRaider Camera** once inserted inside the telescope, the **Green Directions Arrows** will not necessarily match the direction of **Mount** movement. Don't worry; all **guiding software** will automatically orient itself with the movements.



You can abort the movement by **Left-Clicking** on the **Red Stop button** in the **ST4 Popup Window**.



The **number box** located in the middle of the 4 **Green direction Buttons** can be **increase** or **decrease** to affect the distance the **Telescope Mount** moves when a **Green Direction Button** is pressed. You can directly enter a number into the **number box**, or **Left-Click** on the **up** and **down** arrows to scroll up or down the value in the **number box**.

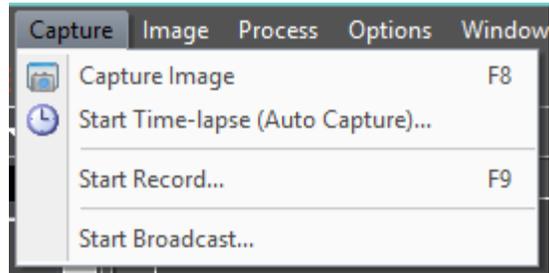


Attempt to orientate the **SkyRaider Camera** in the eye piece holder of the telescope in such a manner as to match the **Green Directions Buttons** movement of the stars in the video display.



Capture

This **Top Menu Line** command allows you a more in depth capture routine of either a **still image** or a **video stream**. This command will offer connection to **Night Skies Network (NSN)** future releases.



Capture Image



During the **video preview**, you can always choose the **Capture>Image Capture** command to capture the video image. After the image is captured, the captured image (**still image**) will be placed the current active window with an automated title (0001*).

The **Capture>Capture Image** menu now be disabled (as you are now viewing a still image). If you wish to capture another image again, **Left-Click** the active video window (**Video [SkyRaider]**) title to activate the **Video Window** and the **Capture>Capture Image** menu will be enabled again.

Note

The **Snap Button** on the **Camera SideBar** can continuously shoot the image even if the video window is not activated. **Left-Click** this **Snap** button on the **Camera SideBar** to a capture image quickly

Note

Only when the video window is active, the **Capture>Capture Image** menu will be enabled. If the **Live** and **Snap** resolutions are different, then **MallincamSky** needs to switch the resolution from **Live** to **Snap** in the background to capture an image with **Snap resolution**. After the **Snap** is finished, then **MallincamSky** will switch back to the **Live resolution** to continue the video stream process. Therefore, it will take more time to capture a still image.



Start Time-Lapse (Auto Capture)...



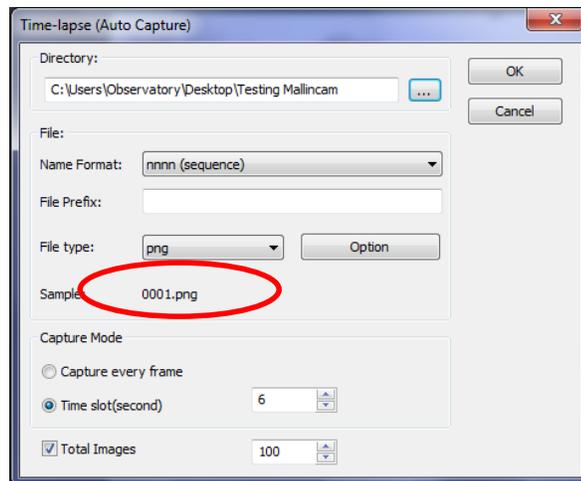
This function can capture a sequence of pictures with the same time interval; you can precisely set the time interval (2 to 3600 seconds) and the total number of images you require taken. The images will be saved to the computer (not displayed in the video/image window) **Left-Clicking** the **Capture>Time-Lapse (Auto Capture)...** command will bring up **Time-lapse(Auto Capture) Dialog Window** as shown below:

→ Directory:

The file **Directory** can be select by **Left- Clicking** the **Browse** button (...).

→ File:

The **File Name**; This can be a combination of **Name of Format**, **File Prefix**, and **File Type** as shown in the Sample.



→ Capture every frame:

You can either choose capture every frame or select a Time slot. If Capture every frame is chosen, then **MallincamSky** will capture the number of images indicated by the **Total Images** count.

→ Time Slot:

This Time slot (in Seconds from **2s** to **3600s**) is the time that **MallincamSky** waits before capturing another image (**5s** would indicate waiting another **5** seconds before capturing another image).

→ Total Images:

Checking **Total Images** will enable its edit box. You can enter the Total Images (from **1** to **9999**) to be captured. **MallincamSky** will stop the **Time-lapse capture** process automatically when the **Total Images** are reached.

If **Total Images** is **unchecked**, **MallincamSky** will capture the images continuously until you choose the **Capture>Stop Time-lapse (Auto capture)** command again to stop the **Time-Lapse capture**.

Left-Click OK to begin the Time-lapse capture, or **Cancel** to cancel the **Start Time-Lapse (Auto Capture)...** command.

Note

Clicking on the **OK Button** starts the capturing process. After the Time-lapse capture is started, the **Capture>Start Time-Lapse (Auto Capture)...** menu will be changed to the **Capture>Stop Time-lapse (Auto capture)** menu. Choosing this command will stop the Time-lapse capture.

There are a variety of image format available (they are **bmp**, **jpg**, **png**, and **tif**) to save the captured image. For example, when choosing the **jpg** format, you can set the parameters of **Option** to adjust its compression quality or encoding method. Please check the **File>Save As...** menu for more details.



Start Record...

Start Record...

F9

Left-Click this control to start the process of recording videos of what your SkyRaider is currently imaging. The video format can be in either **avi** or **ser** format.

A **Video File** window will pop-up so that you can give the captured video a **file name** and **location**. Enter a name and choose a location for your video files. **Left-Click** on **Browse** to help choose a directory location

Then **Left-Click** on **Next** to choose the File format that you would like **MallincamSky** to save the video in (choose **avi**).

If you **Left-Click** on the **Finish** button, **MallincamSky** will start recording until you **Left-Click** on the **Stop Recording Button** that appears on the **SideBar**.

You can now enter the **length** of the Video you want **MallincamSky** to record by **Left-Clicking** the **Time Limit (Minutes) Checkbox** and choosing a time (from **1m** to **1440m**); leaving the check box unchecked will record until you click on the **Stop Record Button** in the **SideBar**.

You can also insert a **Time-Lapse** value from **1** to **100**

Note

This **Time-Lapse** seems to record every **Time-Lapsed** frame from the **Frame Rate** of the **Sky Raider Camera**. The following are the observed recording times when choosing a 1-minute recording. **Take extra note of the length of the video when you set the Time-Lapse to 2.**

- At 60 seconds a Time-Lapse of 1 will produce a video of about 60s
- At 60 seconds a Time-Lapse of 3 will produce a video of about 41s
- At 60 seconds a Time-Lapse of 10 will produce a video of about 26s
- At 60 seconds a Time-Lapse of 30 will produce a video of about 6s
- At 60 seconds a Time-Lapse of 50 will produce a video of about 3.5s
- At 60 seconds a Time-Lapse of 100 will produce a video of about 1s

- At 60 seconds a Time-Lapse of 2 will produce a video of about 90s

Note

The only way to view Videos using **MallincamSky** is to restart **MallincamSky** without a **SkyRaider** plugged into the computer.

Note

When capturing; the resolution is chosen from the **Capture & Resolution** settings in the left window pane. You will also notice that the **Blue Arrow Record** icon now change to a **Red Stop** icon. Clicking on this Button will stop the capture process.

Hint

Use **Windows Explorer** to View your saved videos.

Hint

I would leave to **Time-Lapse** at **1**, as this best matches the capabilities of your SkyRaider Camera's output.

**Start Broadcast...**

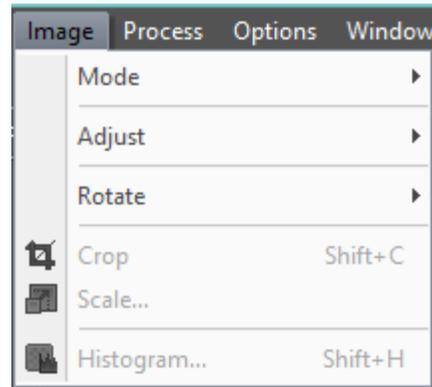
Start Broadcast...

This menu will be used for future plans. The intention is to give this command the ability to broadcast on Night Skies Network (NSN)



Image

The Image menu will allow you to adjust the properties or any captured image in an active Image Tab in MallincamSky video/image window.

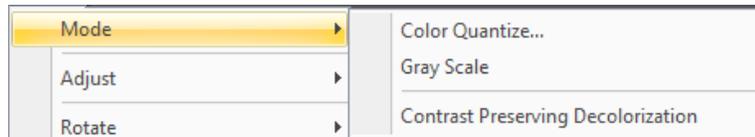


You can use the **SideBar's Undo/Redo Tab** to revert any correction back to a previous state.

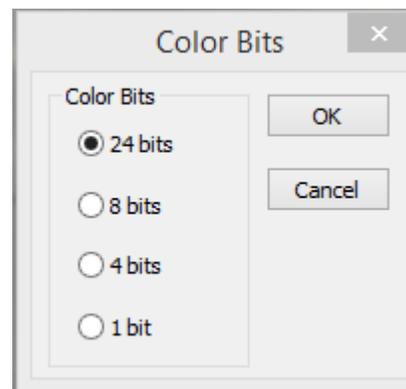


Mode

The Mode Control will give you the ability **Color Quantize, Gray Scale, and Decolorize** the selected **still image**.

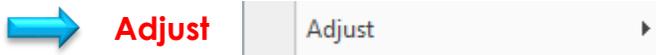


The **Color Quantize** command is widely used to change the image bit. **MallincamSky** supports the mutual changes among 24 bit, 8 bit, 4 bit or 1 bit images. When the **Colour Bits** dialog is opened, the default checked color bit is the current image's color bit. Check the desired bit and click **OK** to end the command. The image will be converted to the selected color bits in the image window.

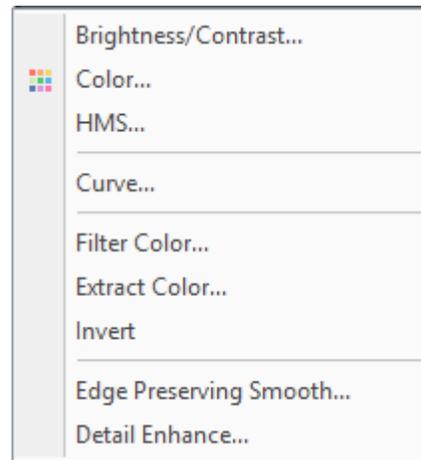


The **Gray Scale command** to convert a color image (true color image or index color image) to a gray scale image. If the original image is 24 bit, the new image is 8 bit. Otherwise the bit of the image will not be modified.

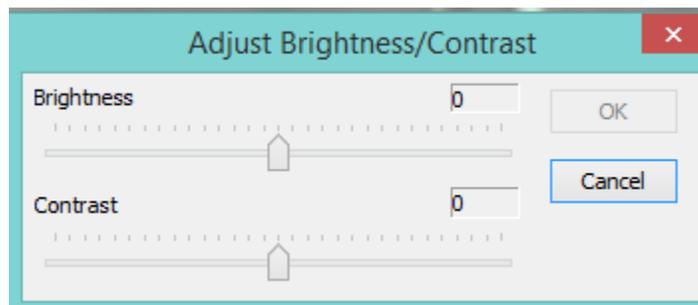
The **Contrast Preserving Decolorization** command to convert a color image (true color image or index color image) to a gray scale image with a unique algorithm to preserved as much of the color contrast for each channel into Monochrome image. If the original image is 24 bit, the new image is 8 bit. Otherwise the bit of the image will not be modified.



The Adjust menu will allow you to adjust the Brightness and Contrast of the image. You will be able to modify the RGB Color balance, as well as the **High Lights, MidTones** and **Shadows** values. Color Curves and Filtering algorithms are also in the menu control. You will have the ability to Invert the image as well as perform some Detail Enhancement procedures on the image.



Adjust Brightness/Contrast

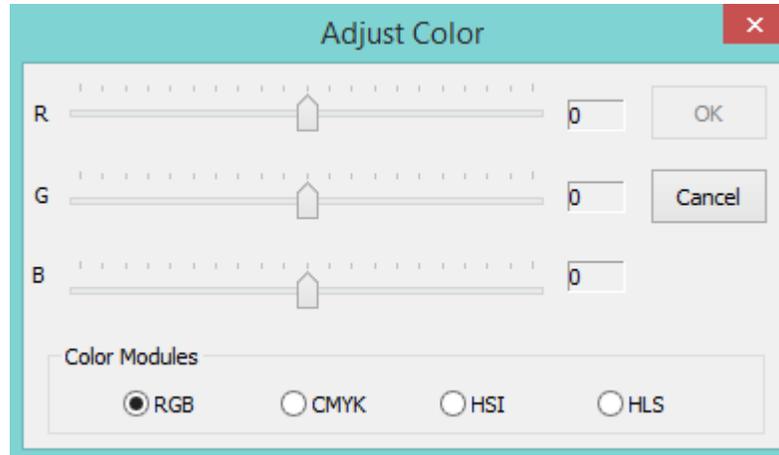


The **Image>Adjust>Brightness/Contrast...** command offers simple adjustments to the tonal range of an image. This command makes the same adjustment to every pixel in the image. The **Brightness/Contrast** command does not work with individual channels and is not recommended for high-end output because it can result in the loss of details about the image.

Brightness: Dragging the slider bar to the left decreases the level and dragging it to the right increases the level. The numbers on the right of the slider bar displays the Brightness value. Values can range from **-150** to **+150**. The **Default** value is **0**.

Contrast: Dragging the slider bar to the left decreases the level and dragging it to the right increases the level. The numbers on the right of the slider bar displays the Contrast value. Values can range from **-150** to **+150**. The **Default** value is **0**.

Make your adjustments to the **Brightness** and **Contrast values** and **Left-Click** on **OK** to accept.



Choose the **Image>Adjust>Color** command to modify the overall mixture of the colors in an image.

There are **four** color modules that are supported by **MallincamSky**:

RGB

MallincamSky uses the **RGB** model. It assigns an intensity value to each pixel ranging from 0 (black) to 255 (white) for each of the **RGB** components in a color image.

For example, a bright red color might have an **R** value of 246, a **G** value of 20, and a **B** value of 50. When the values of all three components are equal, the result is a shade of neutral gray. When the value of all components is 255, the result is pure white; when the value is 0, pure black.

RGB images use three channels to reproduce up to 16.7 million colors on-screen. In addition to being the default mode for new Mallincam images, the **RGB** mode is used by computer monitors to display colors. This means that when working in color modes other than **RGB**, such as **CMYK**, **MallincamSky** uses **RGB** mode for display on-screen.

Although **RGB** is a standard color mode, the exact range of colors represented can vary, depending on the application or display device.

CMYK

The **CMYK** mode is based on the light-absorbing quality of ink printed on papers. As white light strikes translucent inks, certain visible wavelengths are absorbed while others are reflected back to the eyes.

In theory, pure cyan (**C**), magenta (**M**), and yellow (**Y**) pigments should combine to absorb all light and produce black. For this reason, these colors are called subtractive colors. Because all printing inks contain some impurities, these three inks actually produce a muddy brown and must be combined with black (**K**) ink to produce a true black. (**K** is used instead of **B** to avoid confusion with blue.) Combining these inks to reproduce color is called four-color process printing.

The subtractive (**CMY**) and additive (**RGB**) colors are complementary colors. Each pair of subtractive colors creates an additive color, and vice versa.

HSI

Based on the human perception of color, the **HIS** model describes three fundamental characteristics of colors:

Hue is the color reflected from or transmitted through an object. It is measured as a location on the standard color wheel, expressed as a degree between 0° and 360°. In common use, Hue is identified by the name of the color such as red, orange, or green.

Saturation, sometimes called Chroma, is the strength or purity of the color. Saturation represents the amount of gray in proportion to the hue, measured as a percentage from 0% (gray) to 100% (fully saturated). On the standard color wheel, Saturation increases from the center to the edge.

Intensity is the relative lightness or darkness of the color, usually measured as a percentage from 0% (black) to 100% (white).

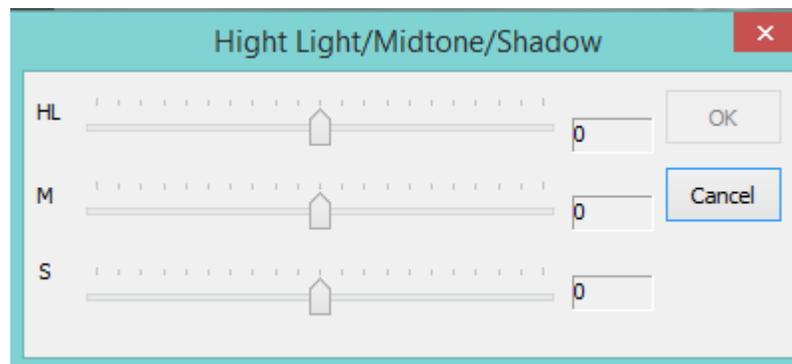
HLS

The **HLS** model is very similar to the **HSI** color model. The main difference between them is the calculation used to produce the brightness value. In the HLS model, a pixel's brightness (**L**) is derived from its three (R, G and B) color values. That is, a pixel's brightness (**L**) is determined by the minimum and maximum values of its three color values.

The values beside the slider bar show the color changes in various color channels.

- The **RGB** channel values can range from -100 to +100. The Default values are 0.
- The **CMYK** channel values, they can range from -100 to +100. The Default values are 0.
- In the **HSI** channel, the **H** value can range from -180 to 180, the **S** value can range from -275 to 275, and the **I** value can range from -442 to 442. The Default value are 0.
- In the **HLS** channel values, the **H** value can range from -180 to 180, the **L** value can range from -100 to 100, and the **S** value can range from -100 to 100. The Default values are 0.

→ HMS



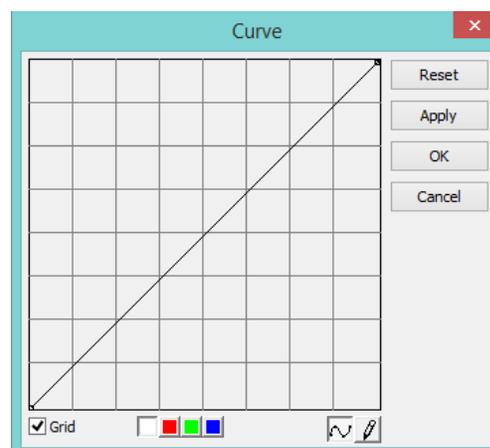
Select the **Image>Adjust>HMS...** command to adjust the **HL** (Highlight), **M** (Midtone), and **S** (Shadow) parts of the image.

Each part's value ranges from -100 to 100. This command is only available for 24 bits true color image.

→ Curve

Sometimes you may desire more precise control, or more unusual, nonlinear effects. The Curves tool in MallincamSky provides more arbitrary remapping of the color channels; it is the color-correction tool of choice among many print and photographic professionals.

Using Curves, the input-output mapping of color channels can be defined by an arbitrary cubic spline or can be drawn freehand. This flexibility provides extreme generality.

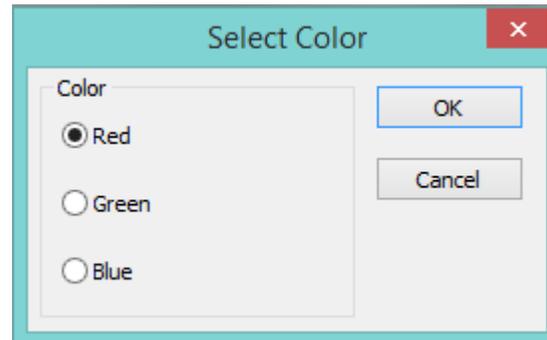


It is worth the effort to review how color curves work in such graphics programs such as Photoshop (tons of information about curves on the internet).

➔ Filter Color...

Select the **Image>Adjust>Filter Color** command to filter out a special color channel from a color image. Check either **Red**, **Green**, or **Blue** color to filter.

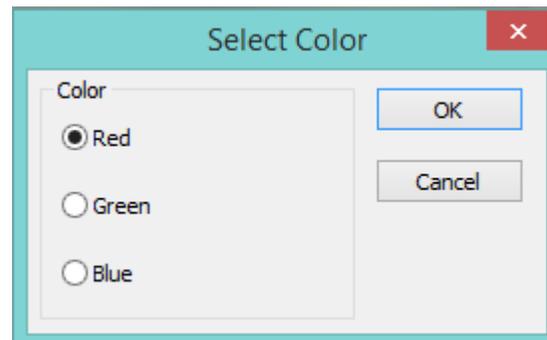
For Example, if **Red** color is checked, then only information about the **Red** channel will be discarded. The **Green** and **Blue** information will remain there.



➔ Extract Color...

Select the **Image>Adjust>Filter Color** command to retain a special color channel from a color image. Check either **Red**, **Green**, or **Blue** color to filter.

For Example, if **Red** color is checked, then only information about the **Red** channel will be retained. The **Green** and **Blue** information will be discarded.

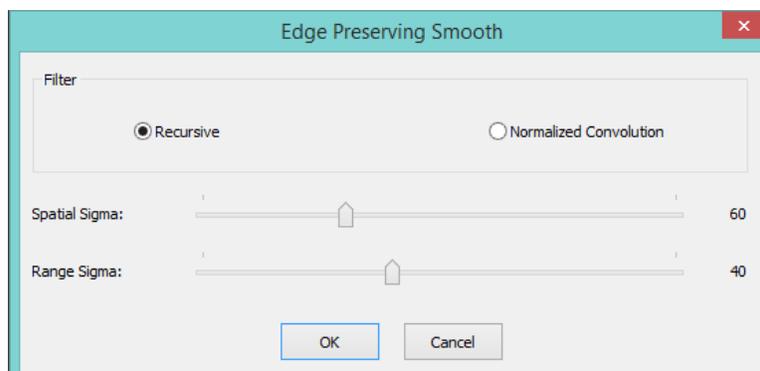


➔ Invert

Select the **Image>Adjust>Invert** command to reverse the pixel values of the active image.

➔ Edge Preserving Smooth

This control looks for the most homogeneous neighborhood area around each point in a picture, and then gives each point the average gray level of the selected neighborhood area. It removes noise in a flat region without blurring sharp edges, nor



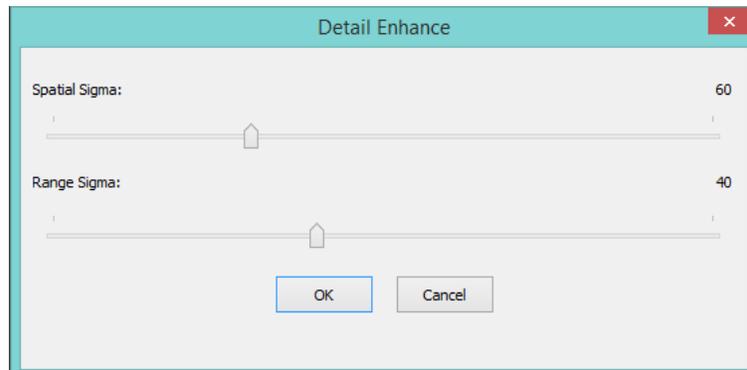
destroying the details of the boundary of a region. This smoothing also has the ability to sharpen blurred edges.

Choose either a **Recursive** or the **Normalized Convolution**. By adjusting the **Spatial Sigma** (like the domain) and the **Range Sigma**, you can affect how many pixels the algorithm uses when applying the smoothing.

Detail Enhance

This filter works by identifying sharp edge boundaries in the image, such as the edge between a subject and a background of a contrasting color, and increasing the image contrast in the area immediately around the edge. This has the effect

of creating subtle bright and dark highlights on either side of any edges in the image, called overshoot and undershoot, leading the edge to look more defined when viewed from a typical viewing distance.



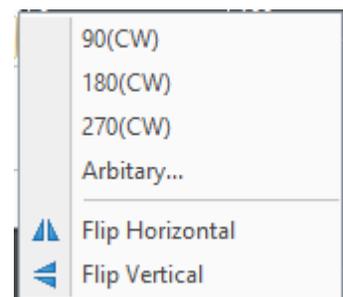
Choose either a **Recursive** or the **Normalized Convolution**. By adjusting the **Spatial Sigma** (like the domain) and the **Range Sigma**, you can affect how many pixels the algorithm uses when applying the smoothing.

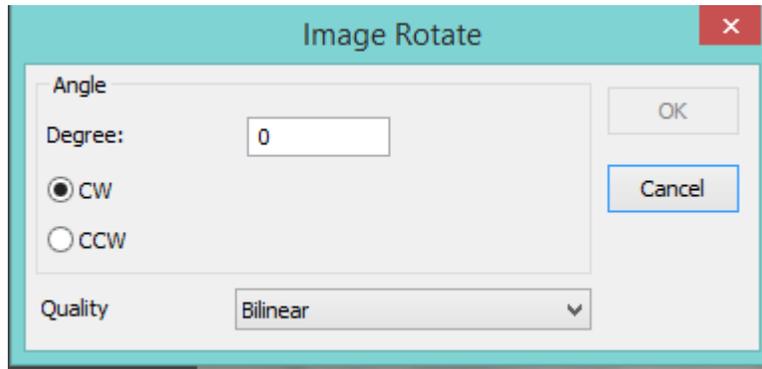
Rotate Rotate

This control allows you to rotate and or flip your image across an axis.

Your options include:

- Rotate the image 90 degrees Clockwise (CW)
- Rotate the image 180 degrees Clockwise (CW)
- Rotate the image 270 degrees Clockwise (CW)
- Rotate the image an Arbitrary amount





To **Rotate** the image a specified amount (in **degrees**) in a chosen direction (**clockwise** or **counter clockwise**), **Left-Click** on the **Arbitrary** control. When this option is selected, the **Image Rotate Window** will popup, where you can

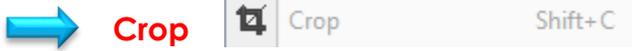
enter in the required values. You also have two redrawing algorithm choice for it to use when rotating the image (**Bilinear** or **Bicubic**). **Bicubic** seems to be better for images, but it is your choice that counts.



This control also allows you to flip your image **Horizontally** or **Vertically**.

Flip Horizontal reverses the image in the application area so that the top right corner of the original image is now the top left, and the top left corner of the original image is now the top right corner.

Flip Vertical reverses the image in the application area so that the top right corner of the original image is now the bottom right corner, and the top left corner of the original image is now the bottom left corner.



Choose the **Image>Crop** command to remove the portions of an image that does not want so that the focus is on the part of the image that is left.

First select **Edit>Image Select** (the mouse cursor will change into cross hairs) from the **Top Menu Line**. Next use the **Left-Click Hold and Drag** technique to draw a rectangle around the portion of the image you would like to keep. Finally select **Image>Crop** and your **image window** will now only contain the portion of the original image that was inside the **Image Select's Rectangle**.



When you create an **Image Select Rectangle**, you can **Left-Click Hold and Drag** the rectangle around your full image to move it to a different location.



You can also resize the **Image Select Rectangle** by grabbing one of the little boxes around the rectangle and dragging the mouse to increase, decrease, or change dimensions of the rectangle.

**Scale...**

Scale...

Select the **Image>Scale...** command to change the image to a specified size. This process actually changes spatial resolution by adding (replicating) or removing (decimating) pixels to achieve the specified dimensions.



Width and Height:

When choosing the **Image Scale** command; the dialog box displays the dimensions of the original image in pixels. The **Width** and the **Height** can be set on the new image by adding or removing pixels. If **Constrain Proportions** is checked, the **Width** and **Height** will stay proportionate to each other. If the **Constrain Proportions** is unchecked, the **Width** and the **Height** can be set independently, but this will distort the image.

Reset:

Resets the image's **Width** and **Height** to the original settings.

Constrain Proportions:

To maintain the current proportions of pixel Width and Height, **check** Constrain Proportions. This option automatically updates the **Width** as the **Height** is modified, and vice versa. Otherwise, **uncheck** the Constrain Proportions button.

Scale method:

There are 2 options for the algorithm that the **Scale method** uses to resize the image. They are: **Bilinear**, and **Bicubic**. The default scaling method is **Bilinear**.

Once you have selected your parameters, **Left-Click** on **OK** to make the new **Image Scale** final.

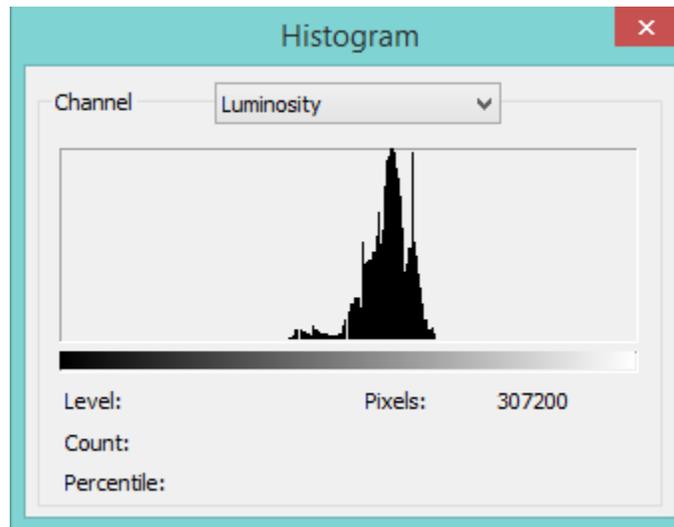


Histogram



A **Histogram** illustrates how pixels in an image are distributed by graphing the number of pixels at each color intensity level. The **Histogram** shows detail in the shadows (shown in the left part of the histogram), mid-tones (shown in the middle), and highlights (shown in the right part).

A **Histogram** can help you determine whether an image has enough detail to make a good correction.



A histogram is a mathematical graph that shows you the current **tonal range** of an **image**. This way you can evaluate it and, if necessary, correct it.

Tonal range refers to the range of brightness levels in the image. A histogram shows us how much of the image is currently pure black, how much is currently pure white, and how much of it falls somewhere in between.

It is very important to note that even though we're talking about brightness levels, we're *not* just talking about black and white (grayscale) images, but Histograms work equally well, and are just as important, with full color images.

This is because, even though we don't always think of color as being anything but color; yet every color in your image has its own brightness level.

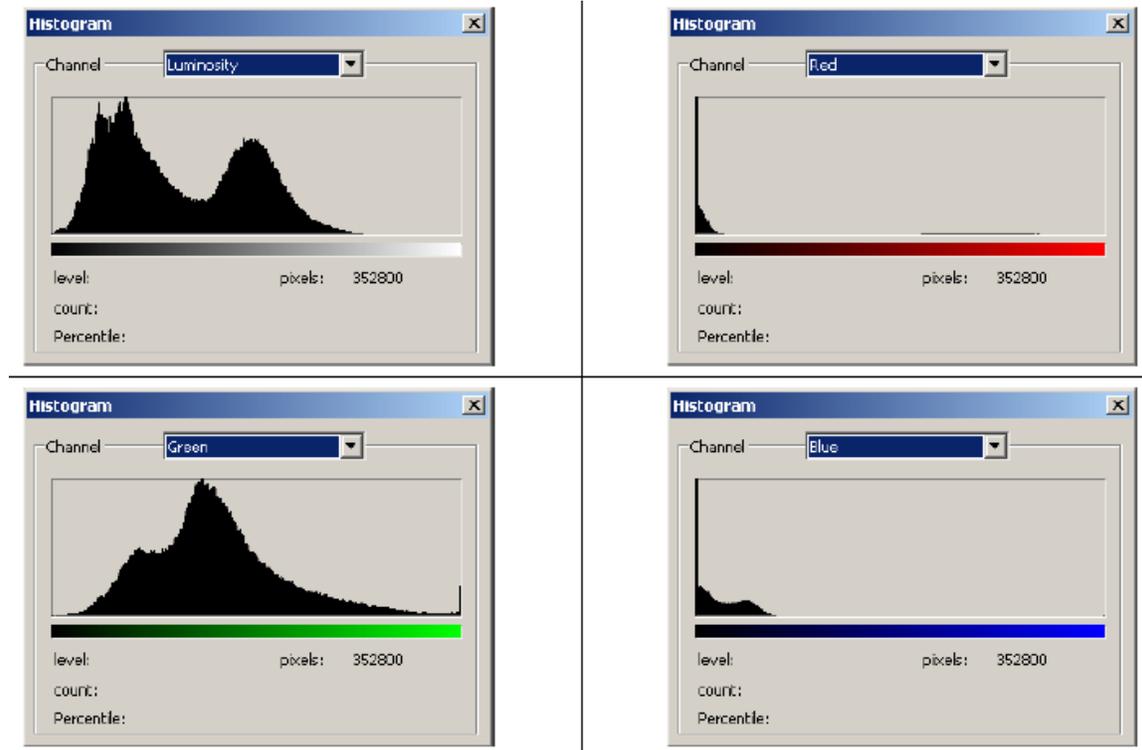
Orange, for example, are typically very light; while blues and reds are much darker. These differences in brightness values mean that color can have a huge impact on the tonal range of your image.

Do a Google Search on **How to Read and Understand Image Histograms in Photoshop** to find out more information on how to use Histograms to improve your images.

Choose the **Image>Histogram...** command to open the **Histogram Window**. Depending on the image's color mode, choose **R**, **G** and **B**, or **Luminosity** to view a composite Histogram of all the channels.

If the image is **RGB true color**, choose **Luminosity** to display a Histogram representing the luminance or intensity values of the composite channel.

If the image is **RGB true color**, choose **R**, **G** and **B** to display a composite Histogram of the individual color channels in color.



Do one of the following:

- To view information about a specific pixel value, **place the mouse pointer in the Histogram.**
- To view information about a range of values, click down **the Left-Click hold and Drag** the mouse into the Histogram to **highlight the range.**

The Histogram Window displays the following statistical information below the Histogram:

- Pixels:** Represents the total number of pixels used to calculate the Histogram.
- Level:** Displays the intensity level of the area underneath the pointer.
- Count:** Shows the total number of pixels corresponding to the intensity level underneath the pointer.
- Percentile:** Displays the cumulative number of pixels at or below the level underneath the pointer. This value is expressed as a percentage of all of the pixels in the image, from 0% at the far left to 100% at the far right.



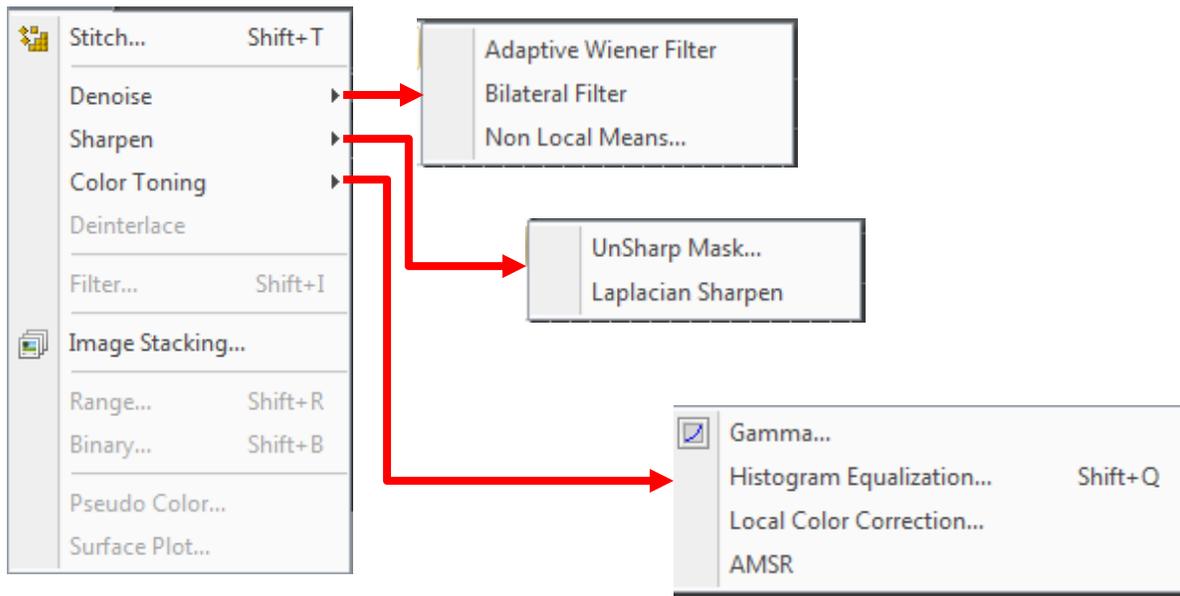
The Histogram from **Image>Histogram** (still images) provides different information about the video/image window than the **SideBar's Histogram** (live video capture).

Process

MallincamSky provides some very advance image processing tools. You can apply these tools to your image to tweak the final output. It would take a novel to explain each of these standard graphical enhancement tools. So I will leave it up to you to Google Search the enhancement type to see if it is something you could use.

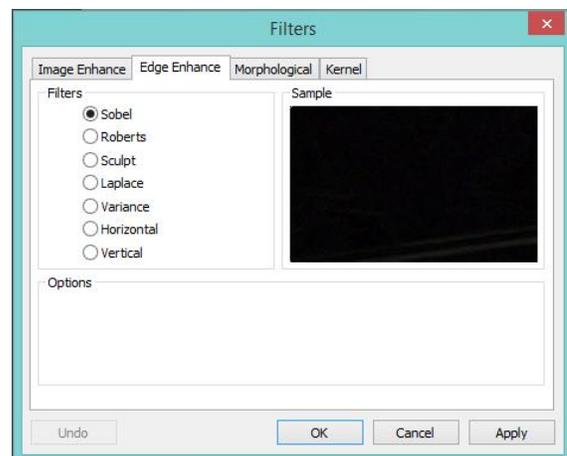
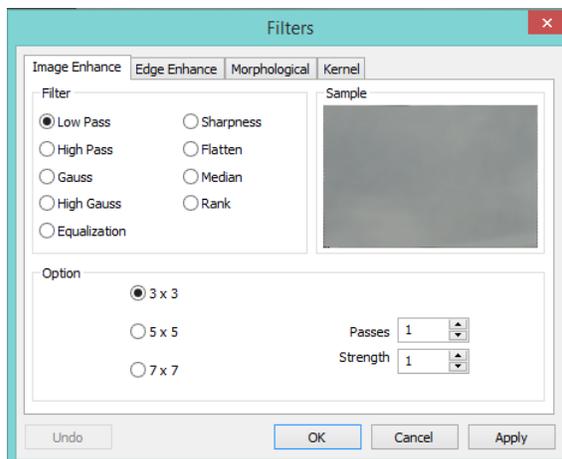


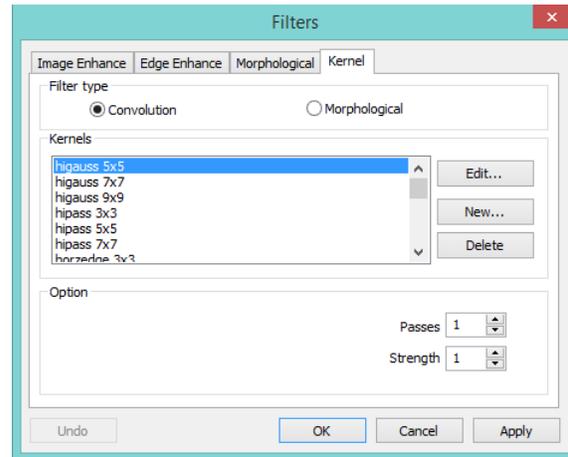
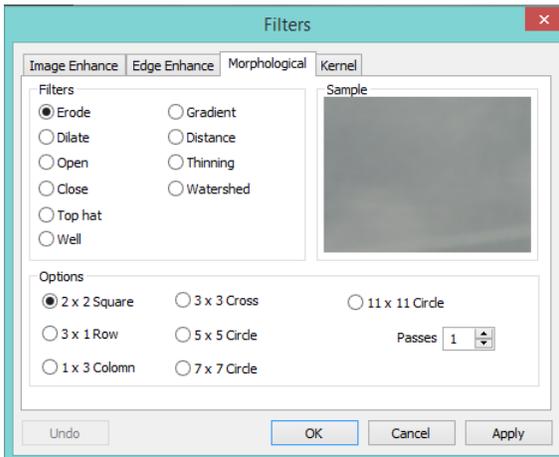
You can use the **SideBar's Undo/Redo Tab** to revert any correction back to a previous state.



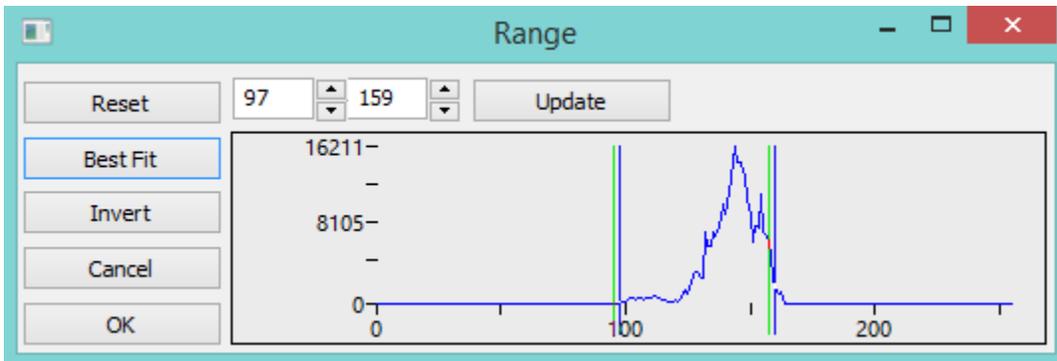
Stitch: See Stitch section later in the manual

You can find **Enhancement Filters** inside the **Process** command to sharpen your image.

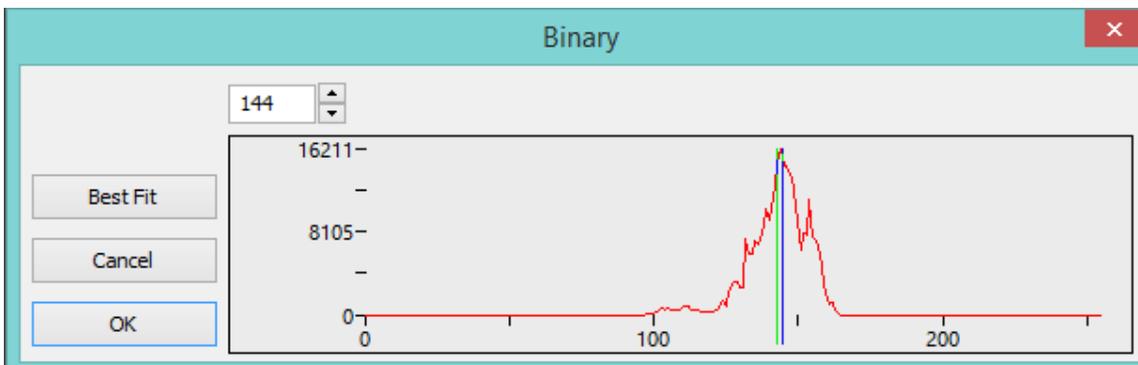




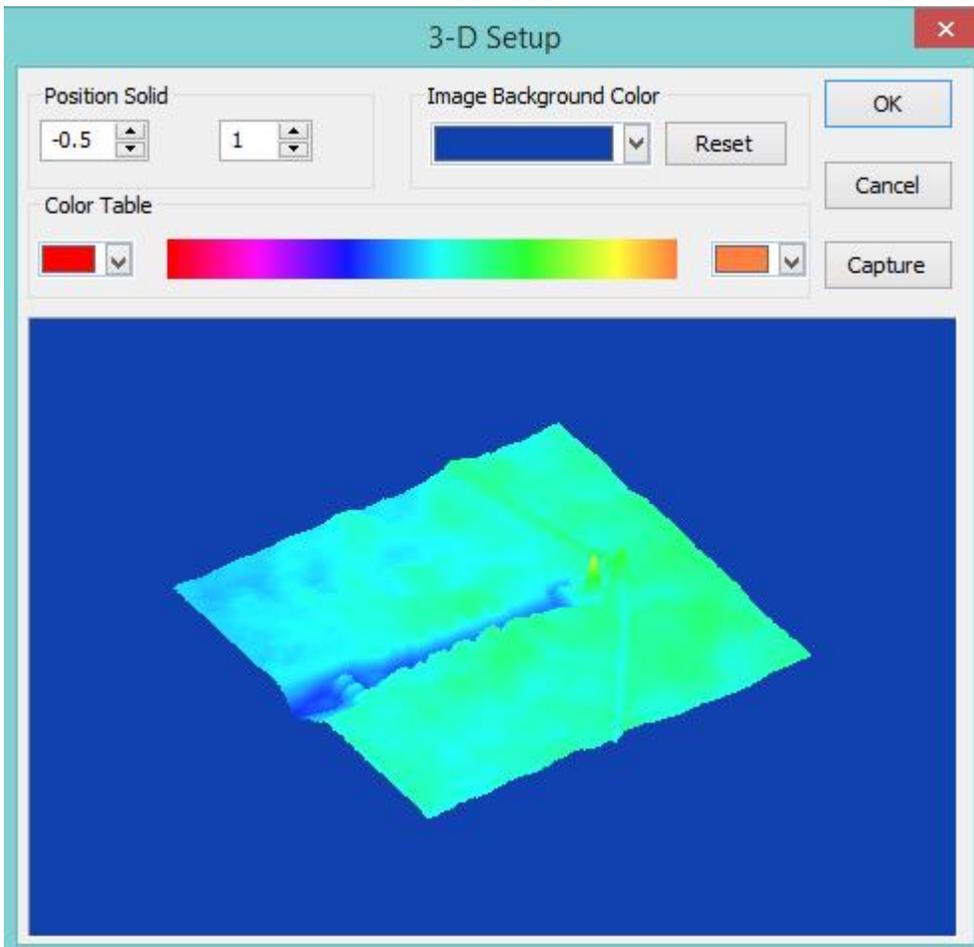
You can modify the color effectiveness range with the **Range** control to color sharpen your image.



You can modify the image the **pixel/no pixel** count with the **Binary** control



You can examine the image as a 3-D color contour map with the **3-D setup** control



You can apply the **Pseudo Color** application tools to turn a Black and White image into color tones.

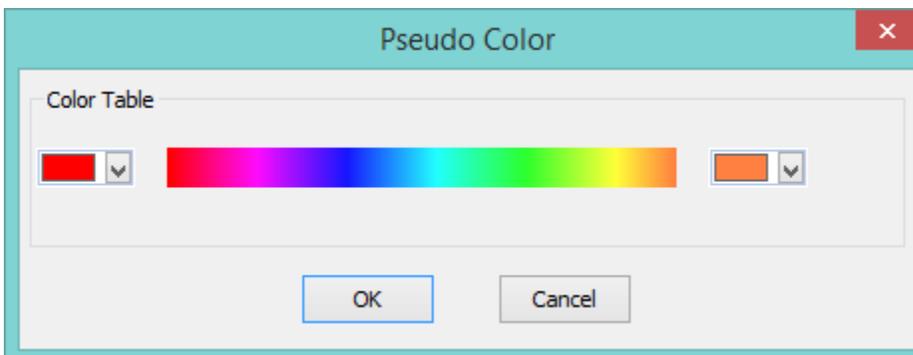


Image Stacking

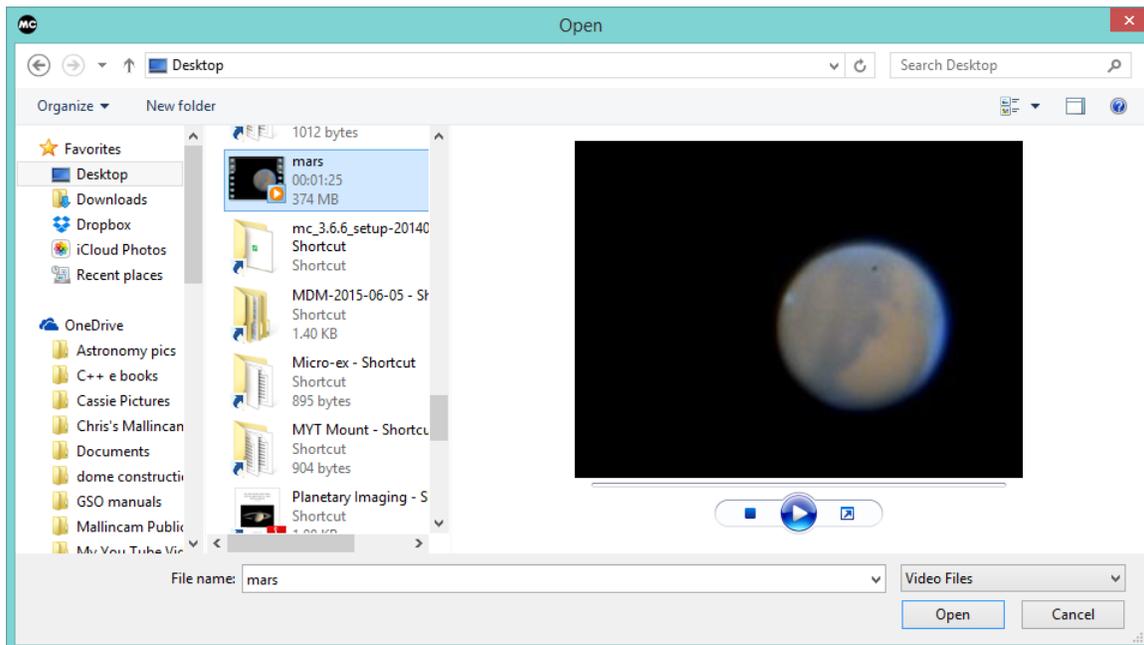
Image Stacking control will allow you to select a saved video file, then it will do a elementary stacking process on the file.

In the Image Stacking process, **MallincamSky** takes the first frame as the reference image, this means the first frame is very important and should be assure the first frame to be the right image scene and the subsequent frames have a greater overlap region with the first frame.

The stacked image signal to noise ratio is greatly improved. The stacked image may have had some black edges, this is because the images in the video has moved and in the stacking process, **MallincamSky** will added black to the image area that has no corresponding pixel in the reference image.

This Image Stacking process will not align the video images, so may be better suited for Deep Sky than for planets.

Left-Click on the control and **MallincamSky** will open up a **Dialog Window**.

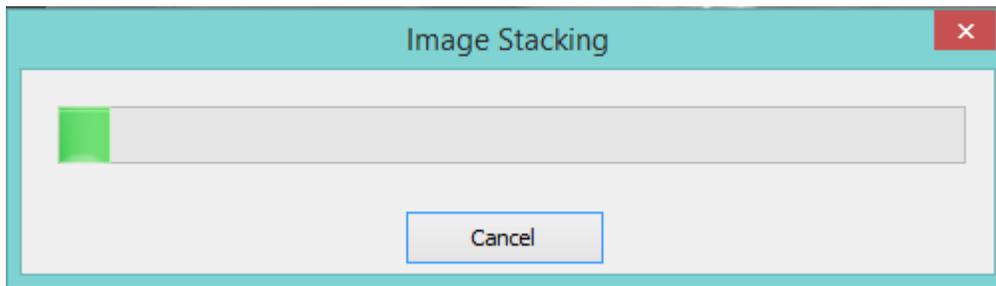


Using the **Open Dialog Window** move to the directory and **Left-Click** on the File you would like to apply the Stacking process to, then **Left-Click** on Open.

Note

MallincamSky supports the following video formats for the **Image Stacking** process: wmv , asf , avi , mp4 , m4v , 3gp , 3g2 , 3gp2 , 3gpp , mov , mkv , flv , rm , and rmvb .

MallincamSky will Open an Image **Stacking Progress Bar** to inform you of the process.

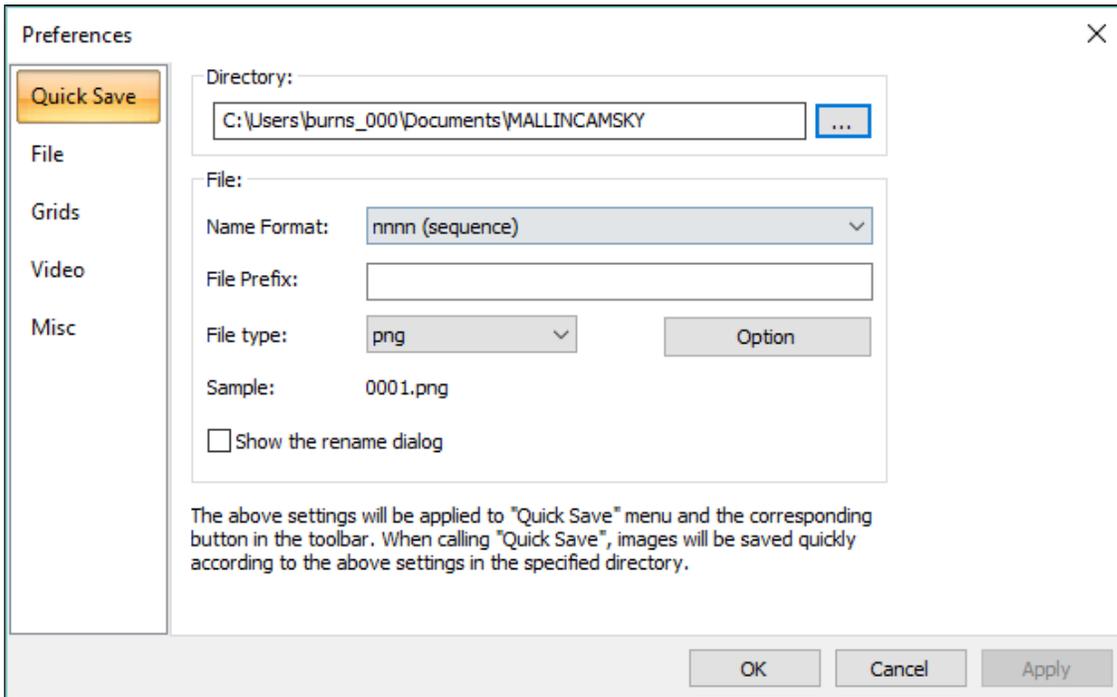
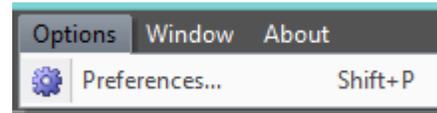


Once completed, the stacked image will appear in the Video/Image window. You can now apply other processing techniques to this image which has a large signal to noise ratio.



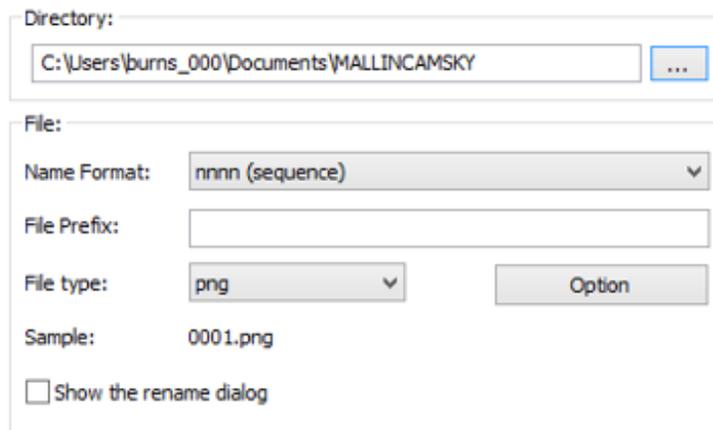
Options

The **Options** Menu provides 6 Tabs in the **Preference Window**. They are: **Quick Save**, **File**, **Grids**, **Cursor**, **Video**, and **Misc**.



File>Quick Save menu or the **Quick Save Icon** can save the file with no need to specify the file directory, file name and file format.

All those are specified in **Options>Preferences...**, **Quick Save** property page.



The above settings will be applied to "Quick Save" menu and the corresponding button in the toolbar. When calling "Quick Save", images will be saved quickly according to the above settings in the specified directory.

Directory:

Enter the name of the drive and directory where the new image will be saved. You may either type the path information, or use the **Browse button** to locate it from a standard **Browse Folder dialog box**.

Name Format: The year, month, date, hour, minute and second or **nnnn** (sequence) are used as part of the filename. If more files are saved with in a second, a (**xx**) suffix is attached to the end of Name Format to avoid the possible name conflict. For the **nnnn** (sequence) Name Format, no suffix is needed.

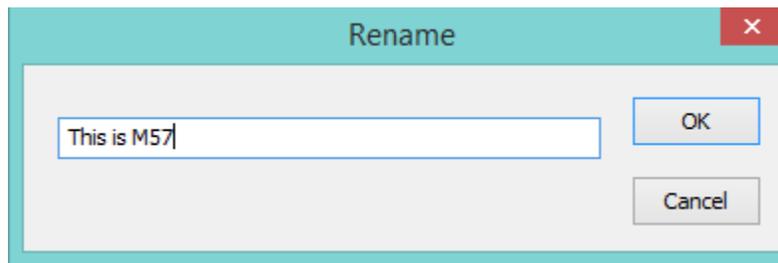
File Prefix: Enter a file name prefix for **Quick Save** when generating files names for a series of images. This prefix will be combined with **Name Format** to form a final **file-name** naming paradigm.

File Type: In this combo box, select the format in which you want the image to be saved (can be BMP, JPG, PNG, TIF). **Left-Click** the **Option** button to set the different parameters for encoding the file (For **BMP** format, the **Option** will be disabled). See **File>Save As...menu** about the details of the format encoding methods.

Sample: The final file name is shown at the right of the Sample label for reference.

Show the rename file dialog: Show the rename dialog

The file name can be renamed according to this item. When this item is checked, a **Rename Dialog** window will pop up after choosing **File>Quick Save** command or click the **Quick Save Icon** on the toolbar. The new name can be specified again according to the requirement.



One can check a **File Extension** for the specified file Format and its Abbr. (abbreviation), to determine whether or not it will be displayed in the **Browse** window or not (The checked Format can be displayed in the Browse window).

Extension	Format	Abbr.	Browse
bmp	Windows Bitmap	BMP	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
dib	Windows Bitmap	BMP	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
rle	Windows Bitmap	BMP	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
jpg	JPEG	JPEG	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
jpeg	JPEG	JPEG	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
jpe	JPEG	JPEG	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
jif	JPEG	JPEG	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
jfif	JPEG	JPEG	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
png	Portable Network Graphics	PNG	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
tif	Tag Image File Format	TIFF	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
tiff	Tag Image File Format	TIFF	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
gif	CompuServe GIF	GIF	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
pcx	PCX	PCX	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
tga	Targa	TGA	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Grids

The **Grids** Tab allows you to determine if you would like a **Grid** displayed, and if so how should it be draw. Grids can also be used to define the color of the **Reticule** that can be drawn over the image.

Grid

Style:

Line Style:

Line Color: Default

Reticule

Line Color: Default

Grid Style: The Grid Style can be **No Grid**, **Auto Grid** or **Manual Grid**. Default is **No Grid**.

Grid Line Style: The Line Style for the grid can be Solid, Dash, Dot or DashDot. The Default is Solid.

Grid Line Color: The color of the grid line. The Default color is Red (255,0, 0).

Reticule Color: The color of the **Reticule**. The Default color is Red (255,0, 0)

Video

You can overlay the Date and Time on the **Video Window** (With a location and color of your choice). You can also have **MallincamSky** display the **Clarity Factor** (can assist in focusing) on the image. These overlays are updated in Real-time.

Position: Background:

Font Size: Font Weight:

Date Time

Type:

Color:

Clarity Factor

Show

Color:

For Example:

The settings on the Right will overlay the video stream with

Will produce the overlay:

In the top left corner.



Position: Background:

Font Size: Font Weight:

Date Time

Type:

Color:

Clarity Factor

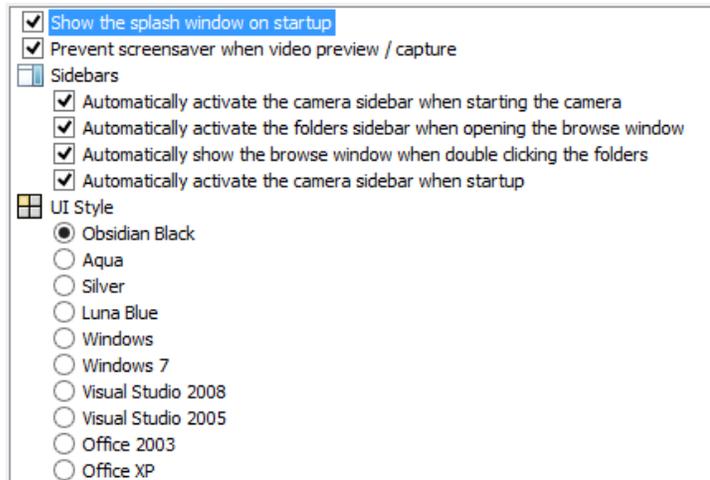
Show

Color:

Misc

The **Misc** page is mainly used for the control of the MallincamSky's User Interface. It mainly includes:

1. MallincamSky's special file format warning information.
2. Sidebars.
3. User Interface Style;
4. Language.
5. Graphics accelerator
6. Privacy.

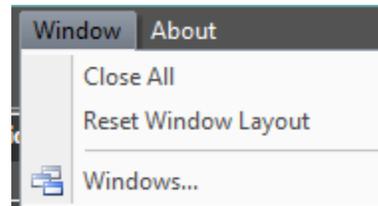


Just **Left-Click** in a **checkbox** to choose your required Option.



Window

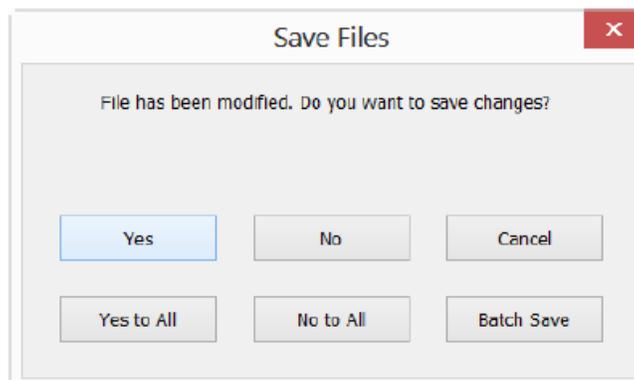
The menu control will close all open windows (Tabs), and can reset the lays back to its default settings.



Close All



Selecting the **Closes All** command will close all of the pictures opened or captured inside **MallincamSky's** frame. If you have made any modifications to the pictures or if you have captured some pictures from the camera, choosing the **Close All** will let you finish the saving operations quickly.

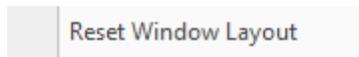




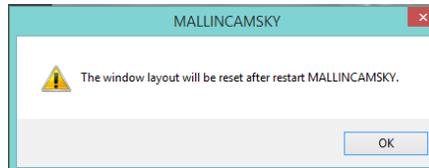
The **Close All** will actually close down the live **Video Stream** window. You can now use the **File>Open Video** to view a saved video. **Left-Click** on camera will again open the **Video Stream** window.



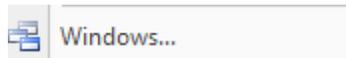
Reset Window Layout



Choosing this command will **reset** the **MallincamSky** window layout to the original one. The reset will be effective after restart.



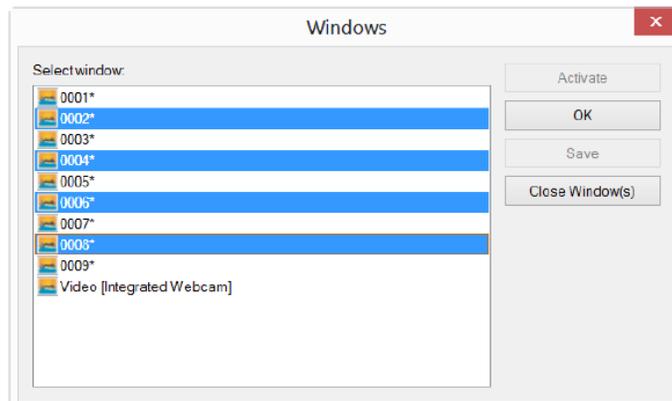
Windows...



Choosing the **Windows>Windows...** control will open a dialog box that lets you manage the currently opened windows.

The dialog allows you to manage large lists of open windows by assigning them into groups. Let us say you have eight windows open, but want to close four of them scattered through the list.

1. Choose the **Windows>Windows...** control.
2. Select the windows you want to close. Hold **Ctrl** or **Shift key** to select more than one at a time. Here, 4 windows are selected.



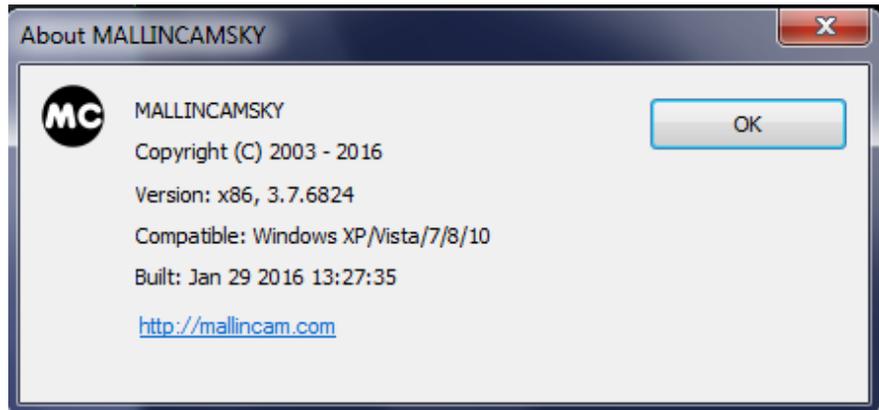
3. Click **Close Window(s)** button, those four selected windows will be closed, leaving the other files or captures available for editing.

You can use this command to switch to a required window on a list by hitting **Activate**.

 **About**

This control will pop-up a window that informs you of the version number, and built date of this version of **MallincamSky**.

Left-Click on **OK** to Close.



MallincamSky Toolbar



Open

The **Open Image** command is used to open an existing image file. This command can also be used to preview an image in small size, or to view its statistics and information without actually opening the image itself. You can use this command to quickly locate a particular image. **MallincamSky** supports and can open a variety of image formats. These are identified in the **Files of type** list box.

MallincamSky can open more than one image simultaneously by:

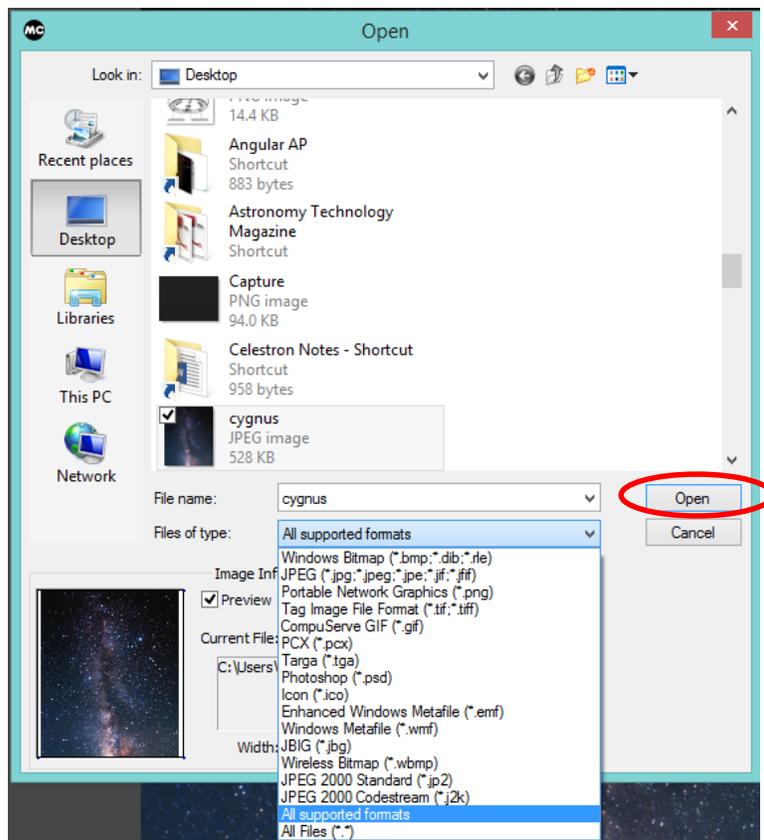
- **Ctrl + Left Mouse Click** on each required File then **Left-Click** on **Open**
- **Shift + Left Mouse Click** method to highlight the files to be opened, then **Left-Click** on **Open**

When an image is opened, **MallincamSky** places it into a new image window. It then becomes the active image.



Note

MallincamSky maintains, at the **File>Recent Files** submenu, a list of the last opened files.



**Save** 

The **Save Icon** allows you to save an image onto your computer. The command immediately stores the current window image to its file (the filename is listed on the window's title bar) while leaving the image still active in its window.

If the image is untitled or titled with a digit, **MallincamSky** will issue the **File>Save As** dialog automatically. The default "**Save as type**" will be "Window Bitmap (*.bmp,*.dib,*.rle)".

The **Save Icon** can be used to save the most recent changes to disk. It is often performed as a precautionary measure during lengthy or involved processes to reduce the amount of reprocessing that might be required in the event of a system failure or operational error.

When an image is closed and not to save its changes is chosen, **MallincamSky** discards all changes made since the last **Save** operation.

**Note**

The **Save Icon** always saves the contents of the entire window, even if there is an **AOI** (Area of Interest) defined on it;

**Hint**

The **Save Icon** can be used to save a **Snap Shot** to the default File folder of an active **Video Stream** (it will ask you for a **File Name**).

**Quick Save** 

The **Quick Save Icon** will be enabled when:

- a) A new image is captured from the camera;
- b) An image window is created by choosing the **File>Paste as New File** command.

The **Quick Save Icon** can save the file a quick way with no need to specify the file directory, file name and file format. All those are specified in **Options>Preferences •••, Quick Save Property Page**.

The file name can be renamed according to the setup in the **Options>Preferences •••, Quick Save Property Page's Show the rename dialog item**



Browse

The **Browse Icon** from the **MallincamSky Tool Bar** is used to browse images under the specified directory in the **Folders Sidebar**.

The **Browse Window** resembles the **Windows Explorer**. **Left-Clicking** on the **+** will expand a folder so that you can examine its contents.

You can **Right-Click** on a **Folder** (or file) and the actual Windows controls will pop as in **Windows Explorer**.



As you get deeper into the **Browse Window**, you can **Back-Out** or Move Deeper via the **Green Left** or **Right Arrow** in the **Browse Window**.

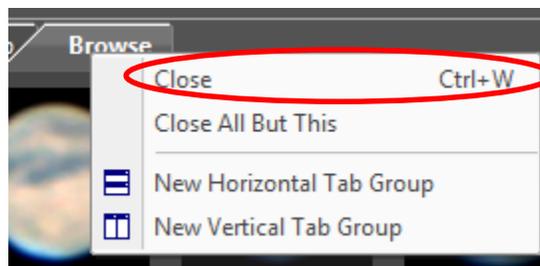


The **Blue Right Arrow** will take you to your computer's **Root Directory**.

Left-Double Clicking on a **Folder** will open up a **Window Tab** in the **Video Window** (this **Window** will be labeled **Browse**). This **Tab** will display all of the graphic files inside that Folder. If you **Left-Double Click** on a **Graphics File** inside the **Video Window**, it will open up that **Graphics File** in a new **Tab** in the **Video Window**.

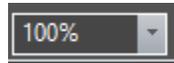


You can close the **Tab** in the **Video Window** by **Right-Clicking** on the **Tab's Title** (**Browse**), then choosing **Close**.

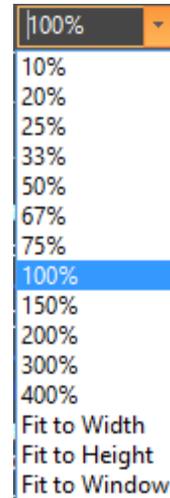




Zoom



The Zoom Icon allows you to Zoom-In or Zoom-Out while viewing a Video/image window. The Drop-Down list will offer you the zoom options. Just highlight the zoom option with your mouse and release the mouse button.



Hint

You can also Zoom by scrolling your mouse's **Scroll Wheel** (if it has one).



Image Select



You can select a **Region of Interest** on your **Image Tab** (live or static) by using the **Left-Click Hold and Drag** technique. Once selected then you can **Copy (Ctrl+C)** the selected region and then **Paste** it into another software program.



Note

Once a **Region of Interest Rectangle** is on the screen, you can **drag** it around, or grab one of its handles and **resize** it.



Note

Left-Clicking on the **Image Select Icon** again will remove the Region of Interest Rectangle from the screen.



Track



If the **video/image's** actual size is larger than the **video/image Window**, then this control will allow you to position the actual **video/image** within in the **video/image Window**. This control is activated automatically when necessary.

Its function is similar to the scroll bars. It is an alternative to using the arrows on the scroll bars for positioning the **video/image** within the window. Position the mouse (make sure to choose a location outside a **Region of Interest** rectangle. You may need to close the **ROI** rectangle if necessary) on the actual **video/image**.

Left-Click and Hold (the **Open Hand** will change to a **Closed Hand**). Now drag the image around inside the **video/image Window**

If the **video/image** size is smaller than the **video/image Window** size, then the track operation will be disabled.

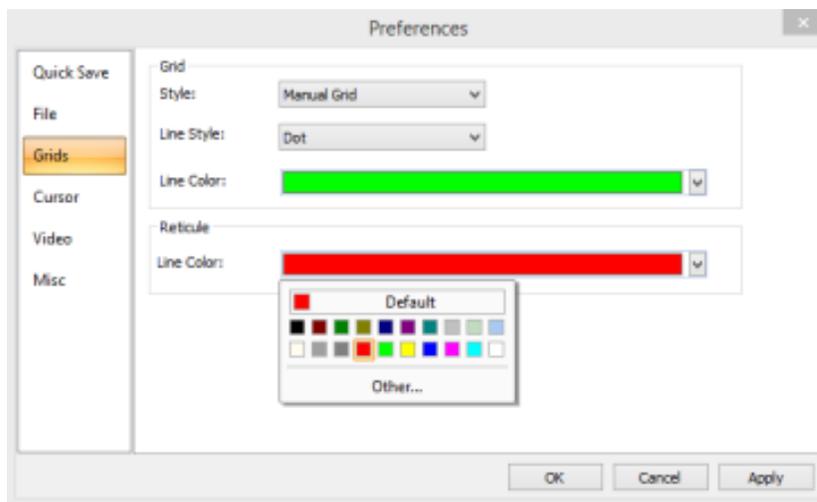


Reticule



MallincamSky provides three **Reticules** (or cross-hairs) to aid in aligning your telescope to a star (or other stellar object).

Left-Click on a Reticule Icon to activate it and **Left-Click** again to **De-Activate**.



You can change the **color** of the reticule via the **Option>Preferences** control in the **Top Menu Line**.



ST4 Test



If your **SkyRaider** camera (such as the **SkyRaiderGm**) has a **ST4** port then it can be used to **AutoGuide** your telescope mount.

This control is used to check if the camera can correctly communicate with the **Telescope Mount**.

Connect the **ST4 cable** provided with the **SkyRaider Camera** to the **ST4 Port** on your **Telescope Mount**. Turn on the **Telescope Mount** to ensure that it is ready to be tested.

Left-Click on this control and the **ST4 Popup Window** will appear.



The **ST4 Window** will contain 4 **Green Arrow** keys that when pressed will send a specific direction command thru the **ST4 cable**. Press each **Green Arrow** and note if the **Telescope Mount** moves in a specific direction.

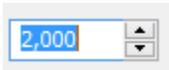


Note

Due to the various orientations of the **SkyRaider Camera** once inserted inside the telescope, the **Green Directions Arrows** will not necessarily match the direction of **Mount** movement. Don't worry; all **guiding software** will automatically orient itself with the movements.



You can abort the movement by **Left-Clicking** on the **Red Stop button** in the **ST4 Popup Window**.



The **number box** located in the middle of the **4 Green direction Buttons** can be **increase** or **decrease** to affect the distance the **Telescope Mount** moves when a **Green Direction Button** is pressed. You can directly enter a number into the **number box**, or **Left-Click** on the **up** and **down** arrows to scroll up or down the value in the **number box**.



Hint

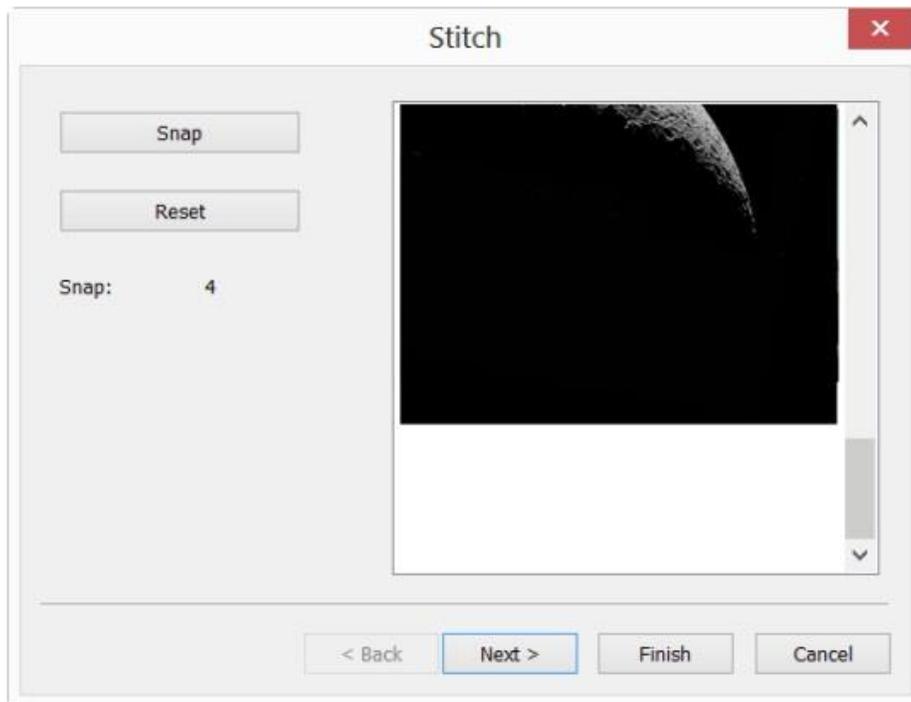
Attempt to orientate the **SkyRaider Camera** in the eye piece holder of the telescope in such a manner as to match the **Green Directions Buttons** movement of the stars in the video display.



When Viewing a Video (.ser format) you can **advance** or **reverse** the current frame you are examining.

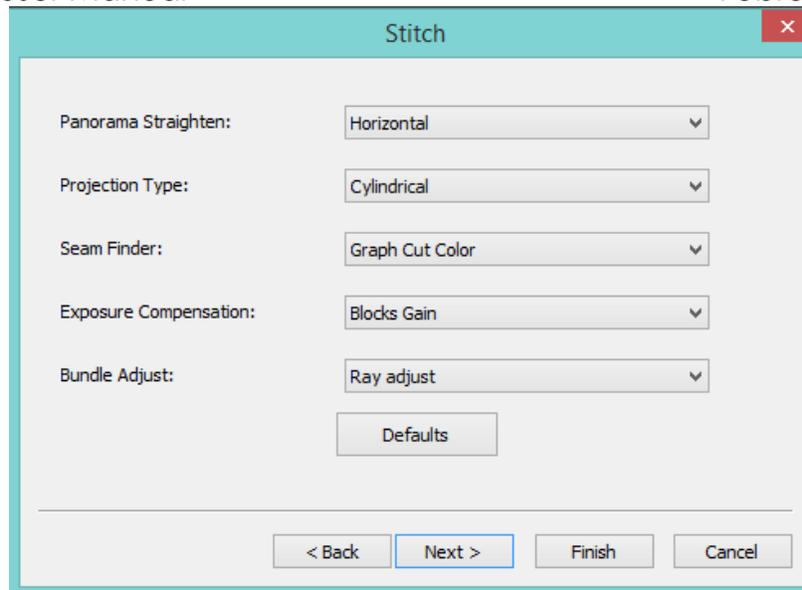
**Stitch**

When the Video Window is active, choosing the Stitch Icon will invoke the video Stitch dialog window as below:



The purpose on this control is to stitch (glue) together images to create a panoramic view (image) so plan ahead with this control; are you going to create a horizontal panoramic image, or a vertical panoramic image.

- Have the camera viewing a specific location (or object), Now **Left-Click** on the **Snap** button. This will place a snapshot in the viewing box.
- Move the telescope so that you have some overlap in the image, and **Left-Click** on the **Snap** button again.
- Repeat as needed.
- When you are completed taking the snaps, **Left-Click** on **Next** to bring up the next **Stich Window**.



- Examine the options in this window and make the appropriate decisions on how you would like **MallincamSky** to Stich the snapped images together (this is where the pre-planning comes in handy). You will still be experimenting with your decisions.

Panorama Straighten: The image stitching direction can be **Horizontal**, **Vertical**, or **None**.

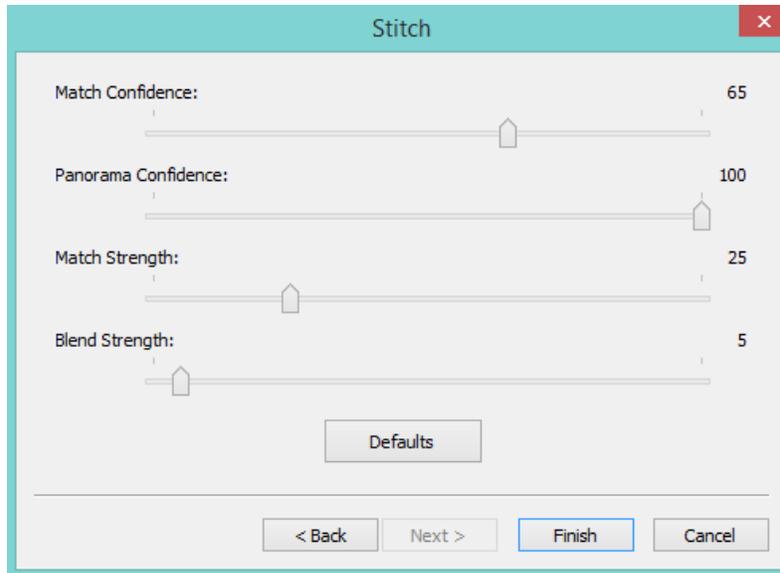
Projection Type: For image pieces that have been taken from the same location, stitched images can be arranged using one of following projection mappings: **Plane**, **Cylindrical**, **Spherical**, **Fisheye**, **Stereographic**, **Mercator** or **Transverse Mercator**.

Seam Finder: MallincamSky provides four Sean Finding algorithms: None, **Voronoi Diagram**, **Graph Cut Color**, or **Graph Cut Color Grad**.

Exposure Compensation: This is used to minimize the exposure differences between the stitched images. Compensation algorithms available are: **None**, **Gain**, and **Blocks Gain**.

Bundle Adjust: This is the process of simultaneously refining the 3D coordinates that describe the geometry in accounting for the relative motion of the images. Two algorithms are available: **Ray Adjust** and **Reprojection Error**.

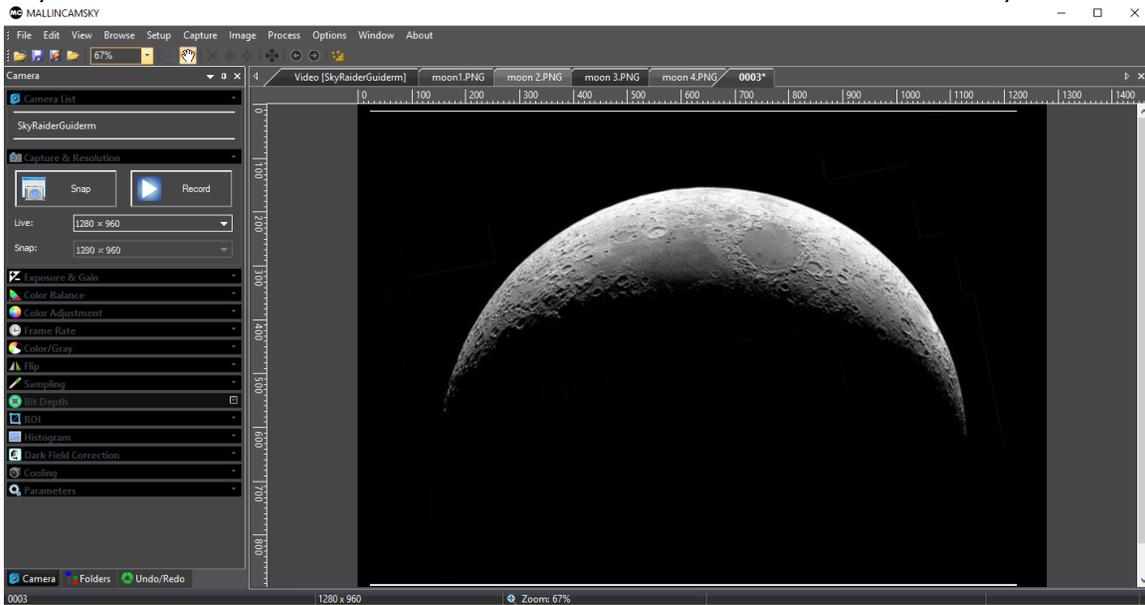
- Once completed, **Left-Click** on **Next** to bring up the final **Stich Window**.



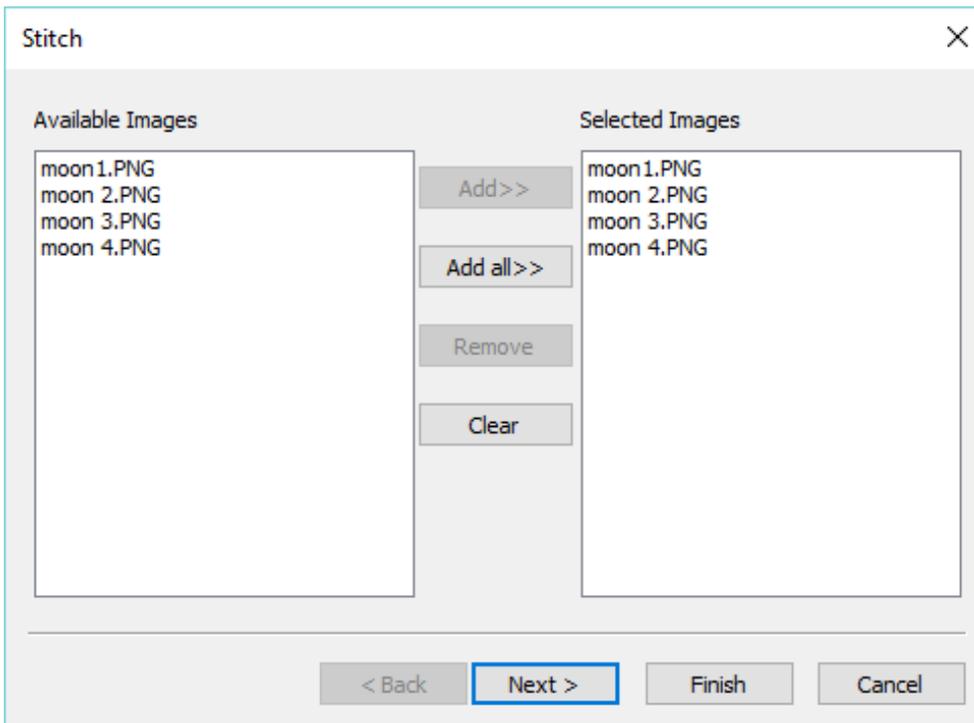
- Again make some logical guesses with the numbers, and **Left-Click** on the **Finish button** when decisions have been made.

MallincamSky will work thru the **Snaps** (and apply the choices you have made) and will place the final result in an **image window** for your viewing pleasure.





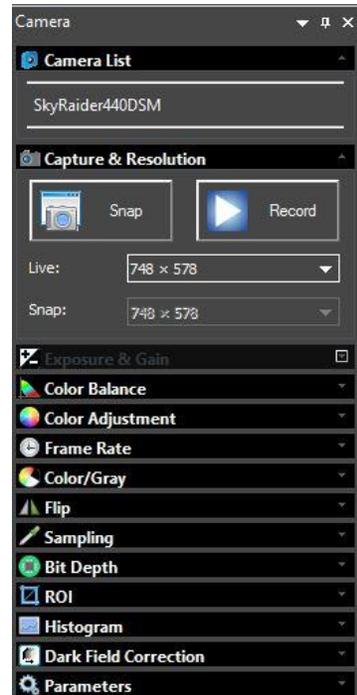
You can try other **Stitching decision** by having the **Stitched imaged** active in your **Video Window** and **Left Clicking** on the **Stitch Icon** again. You will notice that your original snapped image is available for you to play with and combine in other ways.



6. Controlling the SkyRaider

Once you have a connection to the **SkyRaider Camera**, your next task will be to adjust the controls that make it possible to improve the image the **SkyRaider** is capturing. These controls are located on the **Left SideBar Menu** on **MallincamSky**.

The Controls all have drop-down arrows; **Left-Clicking** on the **Down-Arrow** in the control heading will expand that control. Some controls will also display a coloured rectangular box on the **Video Window** to remind you that that control is in effect. You will be able to collapse the control window by **Left-Clicking** on the **Up-Arrow** on the control heading.



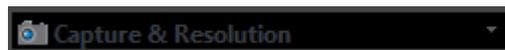
Camera List



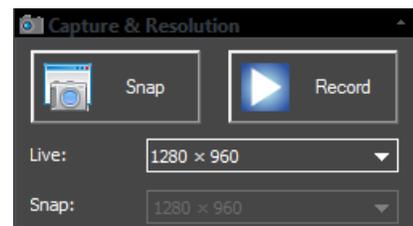
The **Camera List** control lists the current **SkyRaider** cameras connected to the computer. **Left-Clicking** on the camera name will start the camera video window. You will see a tabbed frame (with SkyRaider Camera Name) appear in the window after selecting the Camera from the list.

You can only access one **SkyRaider Camera** at a time.

Capture and Resolution



This control allows you to adjust both the display and capture resolution of the **SkyRaider Camera** (each model of the **SkyRaider Camera** will have its own resolution settings that will appear in the list. Once the resolution is set, this control will also allow you to either take a snap shot of the image, or save a video recording of what is currently being displayed.



Left-Click on the **Drop-Down** list on the **Live Control** to see all the allowable resolutions available for your **SkyRaider**. Simply **Left-Click** on the resolution you require, and the **MallincamSky** will now display the image in the **Video Window** with the selected resolution.

The **Snap Shot** resolution is usually adjusted to match the **Live Resolution**. But if your **SkyRaider** allows independent settings, its **Drop-Down List** will be enabled and you can select a resolution of the saved image.



Left-Clicking on **Snap** will tell **MallincamSky** to display in a **New Tabbed Window** a snap shot of the image that is currently being exposed by **SkyRaider Camera**. The image will appear in the **Video Display Window**, with a name which follows the naming convention **nnnn*** (for example 0001*).

Every time you **Left-Click** on **Snap**, another **tabbed window** with the name number increased will appear in the Window. The image is only displayed in the **Video Window**; it is not saved on your computer.



You can save the image (and thus rename it), by using the **Save icon**, or **File>Save As...** command from the **Top Menu Line**.



Left-clicking on **Record**, will tell **MallincamSky** to start recording a video of what is currently being captured by the **SkyRaider**.

MallincamSky will open up a **Video File** window where you can indicate where you would like the video file to be saved (via the **Browse Button**), and what name you would like give the file.

You can then either **Left-click** on **Finish** to Start the video recording process, or **Left-Click** on **Next>** to choose which one of two formats that **MallincamSky** can save the video in.

 A screenshot of a dialog box titled "Video File" with a red close button in the top right corner. The dialog contains two steps:

1. Set the name for the captured video file. Below this is a text input field.
2. Select the directory for the video file. Below this is a text input field and a "Browse..." button.

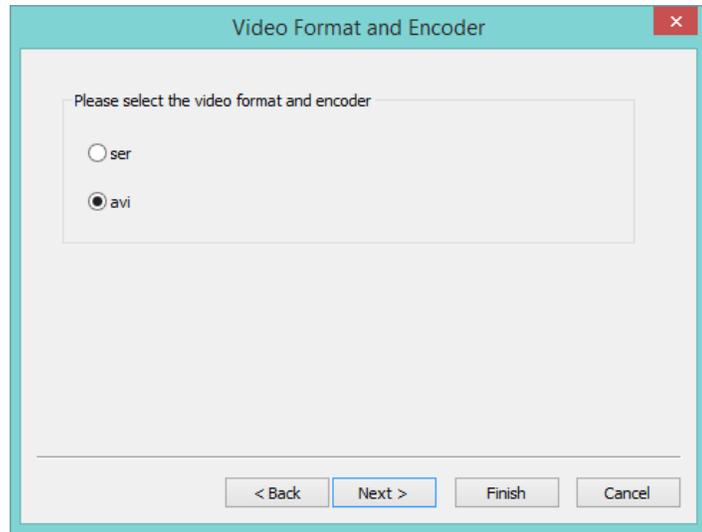
 A "Tip" box below the second step contains the text: "The file name extension .ser or .avi will be appended automatically to the file name." At the bottom of the dialog are four buttons: "< Back", "Next >", "Finish", and "Cancel".

Left-Click on **Next>**

The **Video Format and Encoder** window will open up. It is here where you choose the Video format to save your video in.

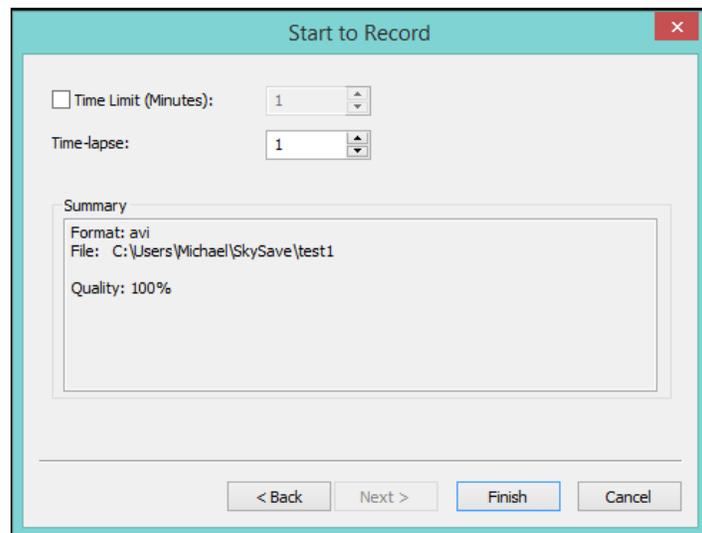
You can now choose either **ser** or **avi**, we recommend selecting **avi**.

Left-Click on **Next>** to display the **Start to Record Window**.



Here you can set the time length of the Video (you can only select minutes).

If the **Time Limit Check Box** is unchecked, then you manually stop the recording by **Left-Clicking** on the **Stop Icon** that will replace the **Record Icon** on the **SideBar**.



Time-Lapse will allow you to the rate at which the frames are captured. See **Start Record ...** in the **Capture** section of the **User Manual** for more detailed information on using **Time-Lapse**.

Left-Click on **Finish** to Start to recording process, the process will then continue recording until you **Left-Click** on the **Stop Record Icon**, or when it reaches the **Time Limit** (if you selected a **Time Limit**).

Note

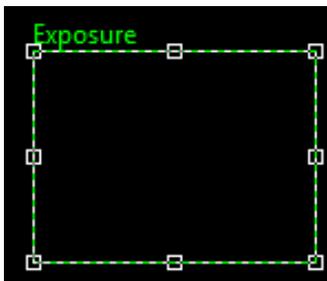
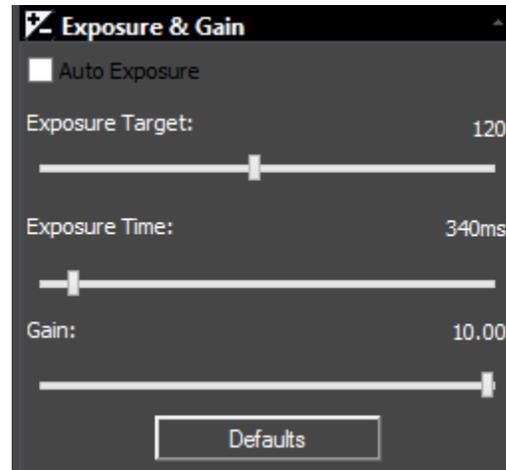
If you need to record video in units other than Minutes, use the **Capture>Start Time Lapse (Auto Capture)...** from the **Top Menu Line**. This command will allow you to select a time in units of seconds rather than minutes. You must have the **Video Window** active to use this command.

In your Video is saved in .ser format, MallincamSky can reload it into a Window and you can examine it frame by frame using the  Keys located on the **Tool Bar**.

Exposure & Gain



The **Exposure & Gain** control will allow you to set the **Exposure** and **Gain** for the **SkyRaider Camera**. This control also allows for **Auto Exposure**, but for Astro-Photography we recommend that you set your own Exposure and Gain values. This control allows you to adjust the values via a slider, arrow keys, or by entering a specific time value.



When **Exposure & Gain** is expanded, you will see a **Green Rectangle** (labelled **Exposure**) will appear over your **Video Window**. This **Green Rectangle** is a marked region that is a reference region for judging if the image brightness has reached the **Exposure Target Value** (When **Auto Exposure is selected**). Dragging or Resizing the **Green Exposure Rectangle** to a dark area will increase the video brightness and **Dragging** it or **Resizing** it to a bright area will decrease the video brightness.



The **Green Exposure Rectangle** will be removed when you minimize the **Exposure & Gain** control, but since most of us will leave that control open so that we can make changes to the values as we image; I recommend that you enlarge the **Green Exposure Rectangle** to the full size of the **Video Window (Left-Click Hold and Drag)** or drag and reduce the green rectangle to a corner of the image window.

Exposure Target



To use **Exposure Target**, Auto Exposure must be checked. You can change the Exposure Target by **Left-Click-Hold and Drag** the marker bar to the required value.

If you Left-Click on the Slider Bar (which selects it), you can use the left and right arrow keys of your keyboard to move the slider (this gives you more control). See above on how to use the Green Exposure Rectangle.

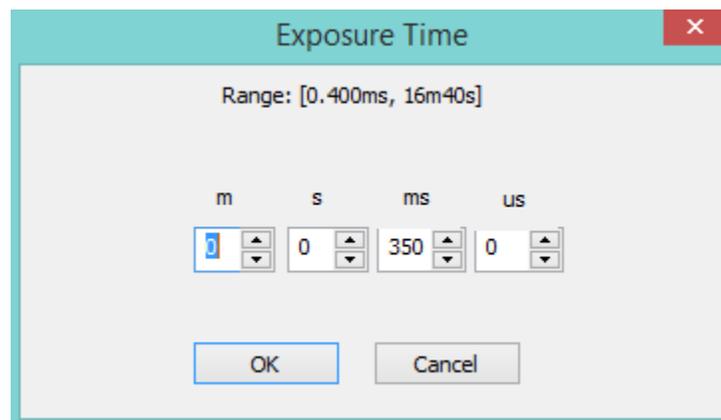
Exposure Time



The current Exposure time is displayed above the slider. **MallincamSky** will display the exposure time in **ms**, until **60000 ms** is reached, then it will switch to **minutes**, **seconds**, and **ms**.

To use **Exposure Time**, **Auto Exposure** must be **unchecked**. You can modify the **Exposure Time** in three different ways:

- By **Left-Click-Hold and Drag** the marker bar to the required value.
- If you **Left-Click** on the **Slider Bar** (which selects it), you can use the **Left** and **Right Arrow Keys** of your keyboard to move the slider (this gives you more control).
- If you **Left-Click** on the **Current Exposure Time Value**, a window will open up where you can enter in the exact exposure time you require. This window will also provide you the exposure limits your **specific SkyRaider Camera** can handle.



Don't forget to **Left-Click** on **OK** to have **MallincamSky** accept the entered exposure time.



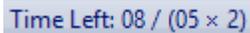
For any Exposure **over 5 seconds**, you can determine how long your camera's exposure time has left by looking at the lower right hand corner of the MallincamSky's Window. It will indicate to you the current time remaining of the exposure time that you had previously set.

For the **SLP** and **G** series of SkyRaider cameras, the screen will display the Time Left using the following format: **Time Left/Exposure Time**



The example on the left is telling us that we have **2 seconds** remaining on our **5 second** exposure.

For the interlaced camera's such as the **DS series** of SkyRaider cameras, the MallincamSky display screen will display the countdown time using the following format: **Time Left: ((Exposure TIME x Number of Interlaced Frames)).**



The example on the left is telling us that we have **8 seconds** remaining before the completed image will be displayed, and that the exposure time we set was **5 seconds** and it has two interlaced frames (5 seconds each) to expose.

If you have enabled the **Dark Field Corrections** for this session (**Dark Fields** are stored directly in the **SkyRaider Camera** and will be deleted when the camera is turned off), the **SkyRaider** will automatically apply the best **Dark Field Correction** to your image when **Dark Field Correction** is **enabled**.

Gain



This control allows you to adjust the gain. **Gain** will brighten up the image (but it can also brighten up the artifacts). The higher the **Gain** value; the shorter the exposure that you will require. All you need to do is find the highest **Gain** value that provides you with the image you are satisfied with.

The **Gain Control Bar** will indicate the maximum **Gain** value that is available for your specific **SkyRaider Camera**.

You can modify the **Gain** in two different ways:

- By **Left-Click-Hold and Drag** the marker bar to the required value.
- If you **Left-Click** on the **Slider Bar** (which selects it), you can use the **Left** and **Right Arrow Keys** of your keyboard to move the slider (this gives you more control).

Hint

For **Deep Sky Objects**, start **Gain** at around **5**, for **Planetary Objects**, start **Gain** at around **2**.

Defaults

Defaults

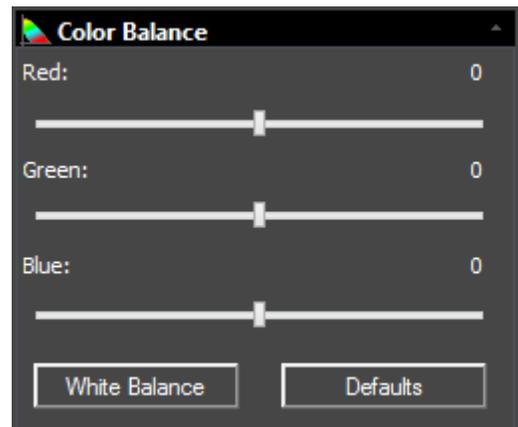
If you (or the **SkyRaider Camera**) ever get confused with what settings you have entered into the **Exposure & Gain** control, you can reset these values back to their defaults by **Left-Clicking** on the **Default Button**.

Color Balance**Note**

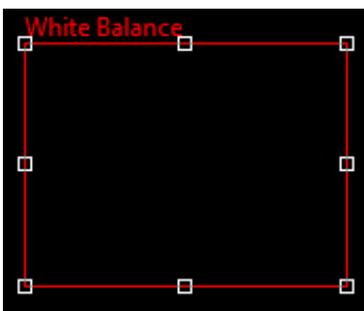
This control is only enabled on those **SkyRaider Cameras** that can produce color.

The **Color Balance** control allows you to manually adjust the individual **Red**, **Green**, and **Blue** components of your image to better match your requirements.

Once this control is expanded, **MallincamSky** will draw A **Red Region of Interest Rectangle** on your **Video Window**. You can adjust the size and location of this rectangle by using **Left-Click Hold and Drag** mouse techniques.



White Balance



Drag or **Resize** the **Red Rectangle** to a pure white area and **Left-Click** on the **White Balance Button** to establish the video **White Balance** for future video streaming process.

To adjust the **Red**, **Green**, or **Blue** components of **Color Balance** use the **Left-Click Hold and Drag** technique to move the sliders., or **Left-Click** on a slider (to activate it), then use your **Left** and **Right** Keys on your Keyboard to move the sliders.

Note

If you (or the **SkyRaider Camera**) ever get confused with what settings you have entered into the **Color Balance** control, you can reset these values back to their defaults by **Left-Clicking** on the **Default Button**.

Color Adjustment



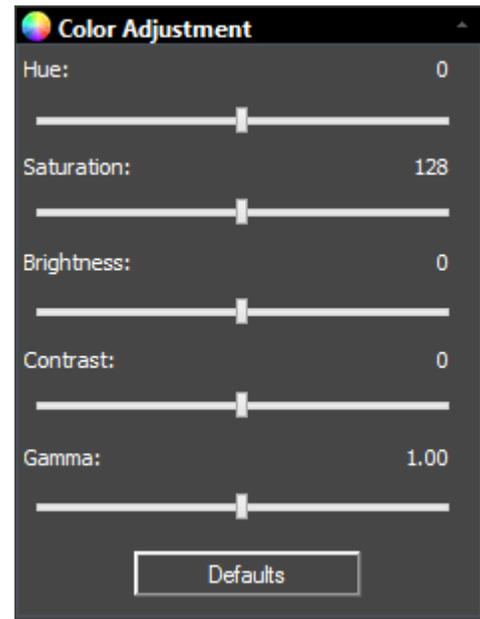
Note

This control contains commands that are only enabled on those **SkyRaider Cameras** that can produce color.

The Color Adjustment control will allow you to adjust: the Hue, the Saturation, the Brightness, the Contrast, and the Gamma of the object that the SkyRaider is exposing.

Note

Any changes to these commands will only be display after the next camera refresh.



Hue



This command controls the **Hue** of the Video image. **Hue** is one of the main properties of color. By adjusting **Hue**, you are changing the balance of **Red**, **Green**, and **Blue** in the image.

You can either **use the Left-Click Hold and Drag** technique to move the slider to the left or right, or just **Left-Click** on the **Hue's** slider (this selects it), then use your **Left** and **Right** arrow keys on your Keyboard to adjust the value. The value of the **Hue** setting will be displayed above the slider. **Only works with a color SkyRaider.**

Saturation



This command controls the **Saturation** of the Video image. **Saturation** increases the separation of colors on a video image. It has the ability to enhance or inhibit the colors on the video image.

You can either **use the Left-Click Hold and Drag** technique to move the slider to the left or right, or just **Left-Click** on the **Saturation's** slider (this selects it), then use your **Left** and **Right** arrow keys on your Keyboard to adjust the value. The value of the **Saturation** setting will be displayed above the slider. **Only works with a color SkyRaider.**

Brightness

This command controls the **Brightness** of the Video image. **Brightness** makes the video image brighter or dimmer. This is a linear adjustment.

You can either **use the Left-Click Hold and Drag** technique to move the slider to the left or right, or just **Left-Click** on the **Brightness's** slider (this selects it), then use your **Left** and **Right** arrow keys on your Keyboard to adjust the value. The value of the **Brightness** setting will be displayed above the slider. **Only works with a color SkyRaider.**

Contrast

This command controls the **Contrast** of the Video image. **Contrast** is defined as the separation between the brightest and darkest areas on the video image. When you adjust the **Contrast**, you increase the separation between bright and dark.

You can either **use the Left-Click Hold and Drag** technique to move the slider to the left or right, or just **Left-Click** on the **Contrast's** slider (this selects it), then use your **Left** and **Right** arrow keys on your Keyboard to adjust the value. The value of the **Contrast** setting will be displayed above the slider.

Gamma

This command controls the **Gamma** of the Video image. **Gamma** adjusts the mid-tones in a non-linear manner. That is, rather than make the image look brighter; it can increase the brightness of the shadows and mid-tones, without affecting the highlights in the image (This control is like adjusting the mid-tone slider on a histogram).

You can either **use the Left-Click Hold and Drag** technique to move the slider to the left or right, or just **Left-Click** on the **Gamma's** slider (this selects it), then use your **Left** and **Right** arrow keys on your Keyboard to adjust the value. The value of the **Gamma** setting will be displayed above the slider.

Note

If you (or the **SkyRaider Camera**) ever get confused with what settings you have entered into the **Color Adjustment** control, you can reset these values back to their defaults by **Left-Clicking** on the **Default Button**.

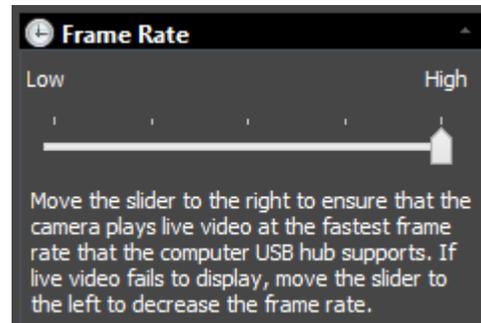
Defaults

Frame Rate



The speed of the through-put on the USB port on your computer can depend on many parameters that are specific to the processes running on your computer. This through-put can be affected by the current Windows environment, CPU, graphics cards.

Using the **Left-Click Hold and Drag** technique, move the slider to the highest frame rate that your computer can support.



Note

Start with the **Frame Rate** slider at the highest value, and only adjust lower if video image fails to appear. Most will find setting frame Rate towards the **Low** end of the scale better.

Color/Gray

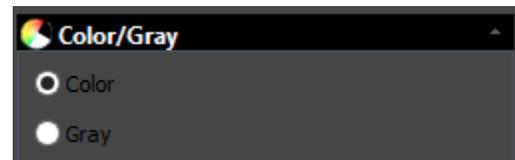


Note

This control contains commands that are only enabled on those SkyRaider Cameras that can produce color.

If you require the color video to be displayed in **Color**, then **Left-Click** on the **Color** choice.

If you require the color video to be displayed in shades of **Gray**, the **Left-Click** on the **Gray** choice.

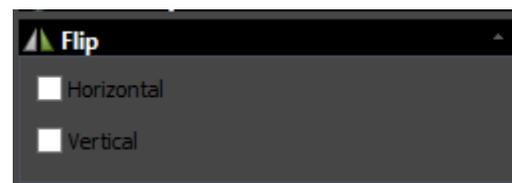


Flip



This control allows you to **Flip** the video image, **Horizontally**, **Vertically**, or **Both**.

Left-Click to place a **check mark** in the **Horizontal**, **Vertical** boxes to have the image immediately reflect your choices.



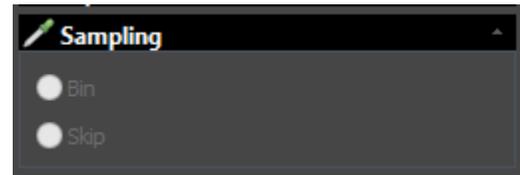
Sampling



Note

This control contains commands that are only enabled on those **SkyRaider Cameras** that support binning.

If you require to **Bin** or **Skip** your video sampling rate from the **SkyRaider Camera**, then this control allows you to select and/or change the current setting.



Bin refers to the method of combining (averaging) pixels of block of neighboring same color pixels to resize the video to a lower resolution (can increase video frames/second).

Skip (also known as decimation) means that a certain amount of pixels is not read out but skipped (horizontally, vertically or in both axes). This reduces resolution of the resulting video but introduces subsampling artifacts.

Left-Click on the required button to select the Sampling technique you need.

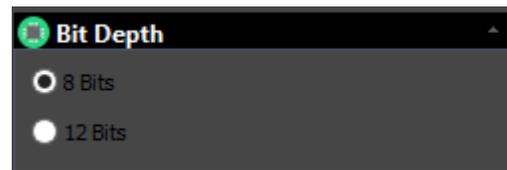
Bit Depth



Note

This control contains commands that are only enabled on those **SkyRaider Cameras** that support various **Bit Depth** capabilities.

Pixel Bit Depth relates the number of bits assigned to produce a color (or shade of Gray). The larger the number of bits, the larger the number of assigned colors (or shades of Gray) that the camera can produce.



In an **8 bit** image; for each color channel (Red, Green, Blue), there are 8 bits assigned. That is, there are **256** (2^8) shades of Red, Green, and Blue available.

In a **12 bit** image; for each color channel (Red, Green, Blue), there are 12 bits assigned. That is, there are **4096** (2^{12}) shades of Red, Green, and Blue available.

The larger the **Bit Depth**, the larger the data, and the harder the CPU must work to produce image adjustments.



ROI or **Region Of Interest** relates to the rectangular portion of the video image that you may be interested in. You will lose your **Dark Field** using this control.

When you are recording video images of planetary objects, the size of the video can grow very quickly. The **ROI** allows you to instruct MallincamSky to only show and save a specific area of the screen (a smaller region that just contains the image of the planet as indicated by a blue rectangle). This has 2 benefits: smaller files sizes, and as an added bonus, will allow for a faster frame rate.

When selected, a **Blue Rectangle** will appear over your **Video Window**. You can adjust it using the **Left-Click Hold and Drag** technique, or **Left-Click and Hold** to drag it over a specific portion of your **Video Window**.



Once you have resized and placed the **Blue ROI Rectangle** on your **Video Window**, **Left-Click** on the **Apply Button** to selection this as the **New Video Window**. Then the **Next Refresh** will fill in the ROI Window

You can then resize the **New Video Window** by either the **Drop-Down Size** command in the **MallincamSky Tool Bar** or by scrolling the wheel on your mouse (if your mouse has a scroll wheel).

This command allows you to **Zoom** in on a specific area of your original Video image.

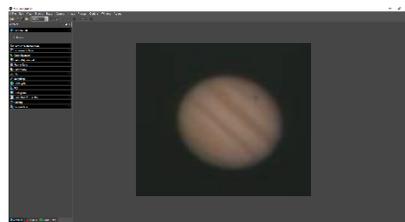
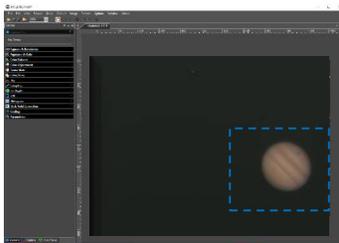
Note

If you (or the **SkyRaider Camera**) ever get confused with what settings you have entered into the **ROI** control, you can reset the **ROI** to its full screen by **Left-Clicking** on the **Default Button**. You may need to set **Fit to Window** in the **Drop-Down Size** command in the **MallincamSky Tool Bar**.

A screenshot of a single button labeled 'Defaults' in a dark grey box.

Note

If you are trying to improve the frame rate (frames per second) when viewing planetary objects. By selecting a Region of Interest around the planet will allow MallincamSky to only capture that **ROI** portion of the whole image. As a result, the frame rate will dramatically increase.



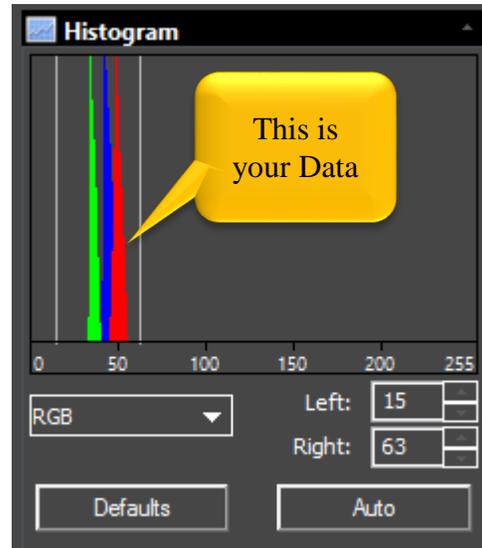
Histogram



A **Histogram** illustrates how pixels in an image are distributed by graphing the number of pixels at each color intensity level. The **Histogram** shows detail in the shadows (shown in the left part of the histogram), mid-tones (shown in the middle), and highlights (shown in the right part).

A **Histogram** can help you determine whether an image has enough detail to make a good correction.

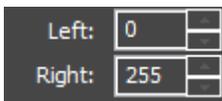
The **Top Window** in the expanded **Histogram Control** shows the **Histogram** of current active video.



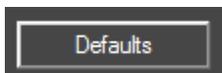
Two vertical **line markers** (white) show the **upper** and **lower** limits of the intensity levels. These markers can be dragged with mouse (**Left-Click Hold and Drag**).



If you are looking at a color image, the **Histogram** will reflect the **RGB (Red, Green and Blue** channels histogram at the same time) values with shading of the same color. You can also use the **Pull-Down** to select the **Histogram** for just the **Red**, or just the **Green**, or just the **Blue** channel.



You can also enter directly the desired values in the **Left** or **Right** boxes below the **Histogram chart** for both **Left** and **Right** Histogram boundaries.



Left Click on the **Defaults Button** to return the **Left** and **Right** Histogram boundaries to their original settings.



Left-Click on the **Auto Button** to automatically locate the **Left** and **Right** boundaries thus letting MallincamSky determine the best video quality.

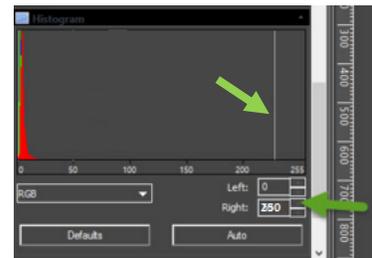


Adjust the exposure so that the **Peak of the Histogram** lies somewhere between **50** and **100**.

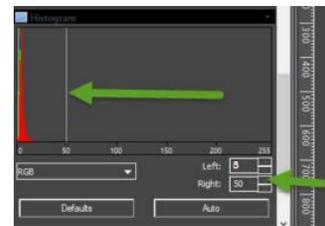
To illustrate what you can do with the Histogram, I have (thanks to Jim Meadow's amazing images) included some before and after pictures.

- **Increasing** the **Left Bar Darkens** the image
- **Decreasing** the **Right Bar Brightens** the image

The Before image is a 3 second exposure with **Left at 0** and **Right at 250**



The After image, same 3 second exposure, with the **Left at 3** and the **Right at 50**



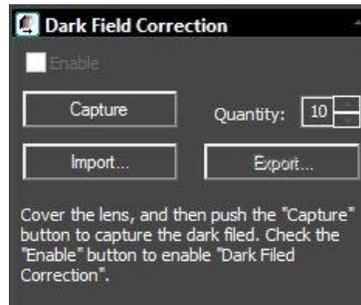
Notice that in both Histograms, the data was **mostly** to the left. This tells we have some exposure room the play with. Don't forget **Gain** also has a role as well.

Dark Field Correction

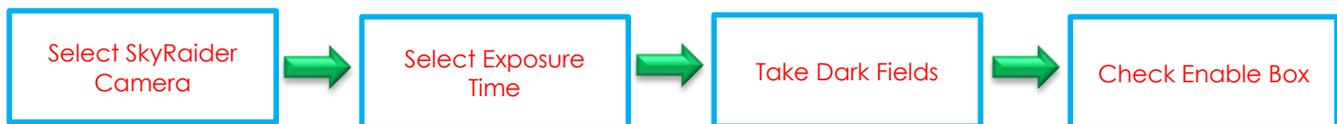


What makes the **Mallincam SkyRaider** series of cameras unique is the built in ability to take **Dark Fields**.

The best explanation of what a **Dark Field** is come from **Simon Hanmer**. See Appendix for his explanation.



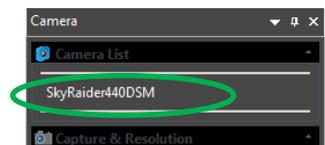
To have the **SkyRaider** camera to automatically apply **Dark Fields**, you need to follow the following procedures before imaging.



Step 1

Select SkyRaider Camera

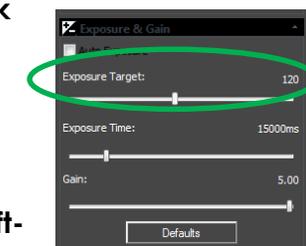
With the **Camera Tab** selected on the **Left SideBar**, **Left-Click** on the **Camera** you are currently using (between lines in **Camera Heading**). Once a camera is selected, a black rectangle (with **SkyRaider Camera** name) will appear in the **Video Window** of the **MallincamSky** Software along with the Horizontal and Vertical Rulers.



Step 2

Select an Exposure Time for Dark Field Correction

With the **Camera Tab** selected on the **Left SideBar**, **Left-Click** on the **Exposure & Gain Line** (a **Green Rectangle** with the word **Exposure** will appear in your **Video Window**, to inform you that you are setting an exposure time. Closing the **Exposure Window** will remove the **Green Rectangle**). The **Exposure & Gain Window** will open up and you can either slide the **Exposure Time** bar (**Left-Click Hold and Drag**) or **Left-Click** on the current Exposure Time value, and an another Window will open to allow you to manually enter a time (don't forget to click **OK**).



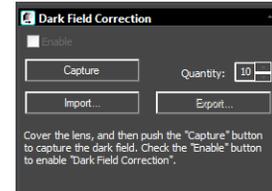
Exposure Target is only active when **Auto Exposure** is selected. The **Green Rectangle** is used to see if reference region it encloses matches **Exposure Target** that you set (We recommend that **Auto Exposure** is not selected).



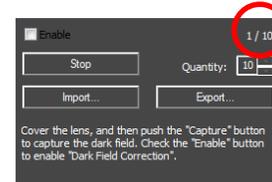
Take Dark Field Correction

Ensure that the cover is either on the **SkyRaider Camera** or the Telescope is covered. With the **Camera Tab** selected on the **Left SideBar**, **Left-Click** on the **Dark Field Correction Line**.

The **Dark Field Correction Line** will open up allowing you to select the **Quantity of Dark Fields** and the option to start the **Dark Field Capture** process.



Select up to 99 for the **Quantity** (Start with **5** with **30** second exposures to get a feel of the process). Then **Left-Click** on the **Capture Button**. The Software will display its progress above the selected **Quantity**.



Note

Due to the unique way the **Mallincam SkyRaider DS** cameras utilize odd and even image acquisition, a **Dark Field** is obtained for each of the odd and even frames. That is, five **30 seconds Dark Fields** will take **two times (5 x 30 seconds)** or **300 seconds** to complete.



Hint

Once you have finished taking your **Dark Field**, don't forget to **remove the lens cap** on your camera, so that you can actually image (I won't mention any names...).



Enable Check-box

Click in the **Enable check box** to have Dark Fields applied in real time to your video.



Note

Once you have collected your **Dark Fields**, you can then **save** them with the **Export Button** (choose a location and File name that allows you to locate the correct Dark Fields if you would like to reuse them).

You can load previously saved **Dark Fields** via the **Import Button**. Just browse to the folder where you saved them when you used the **Export Button**.



Note

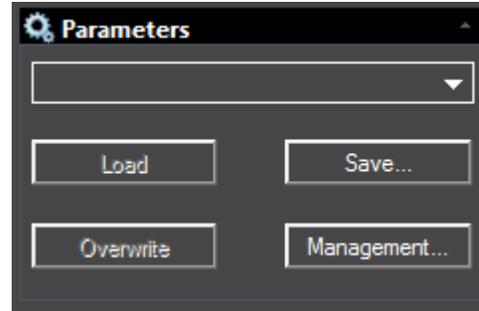
It has been found that setting the **Histogram** to 0 and 255 is best for Dark Fields.

Parameters



The **Parameters** control allows you to:

Load a previous set of camera control parameters, or **Save** the current camera control parameters for another session. The parameters includes most of the settings in the **SideBar** including the **Rectangle Regions of Interest**.



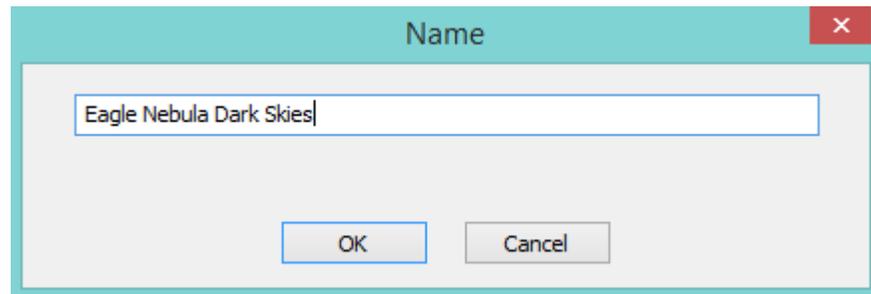
The **Drop-Down** control provides a list of previous (if any) saved parameter settings. Just select the parameter session that you require from the list.



Left-Click on the **Load** command and it will load the control parameters from the above file in the **Drop-Down List**.



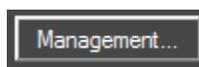
Left-Click on the **Save** command and **MallioncamSky** will open a window that will allow you to give a name to the current sessions, and then will save the current camera parameters under that name (see **Management command** below).



Give a **Name** that is easy to determine what the parameters in the file contain. That is, choosing a name like **Eagle Nebula Dark Skies**, would indicate that the parameters in the File are designed for the Eagle Nebula when you have great dark skies.

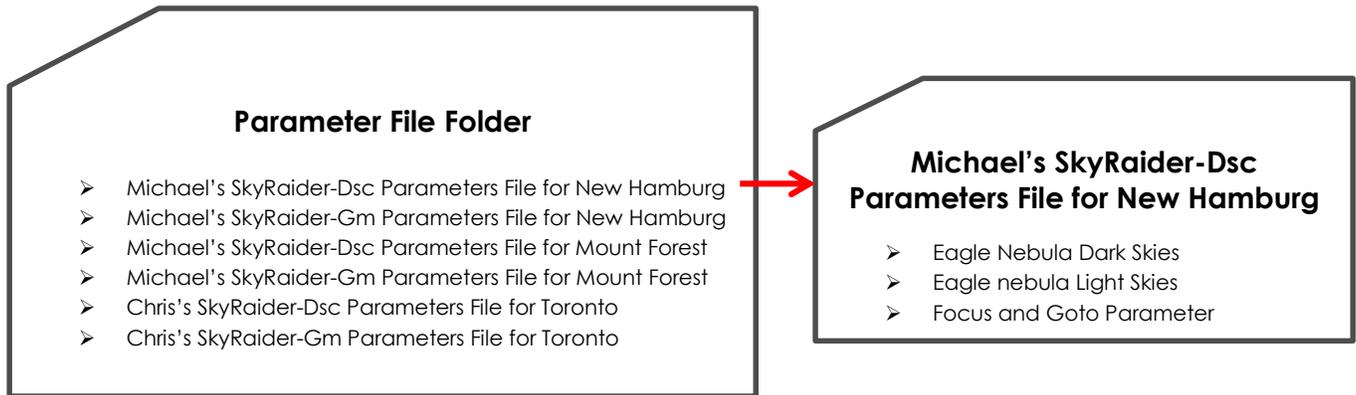


Left-Click on the **Overwrite** command and it will overwrite any setting changes you made to the current parameter file.



Left-Click on the **Management** command and a **Management Dialog Window** will open up.

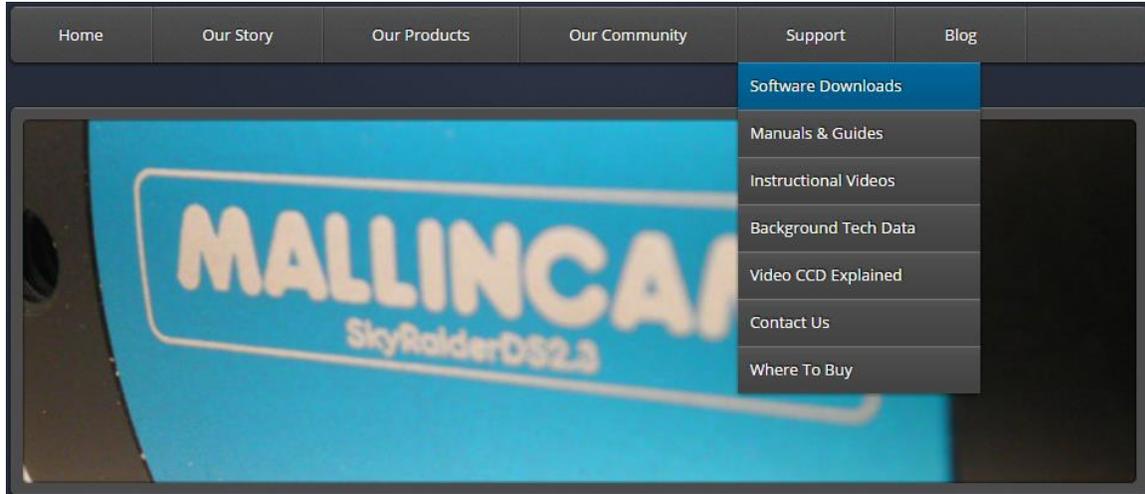
This way you can save a **another set** of parameter files for another **SkyRaider Camera** In the same folder (**Parameters File Folder**) this way you can load parameter files for a specific camera. Also you can also include other colleagues parameters files in the same Folder (**Chris's skyRaider-DSc Parameter Files for Toronto**). This allows you a method to reload your parameter files after trying colleagues (and not have them overwritten).



7. Installing Optional Software

Step 1

Visit the Software Downloads Page in the Support Tab located on the website:
www.mallincam.net



Step 2

Select the **Blue Click Here Button** to download the Drivers and MallinCamSky Software for a Windows PC.

- MALLINCAMSKY Software/Dshow/Twain FOR ALL SkyRaider Cameras for WINDOWS
- [Click Here](#)

Note

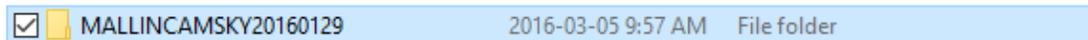
If you have a Mac, or Linux computer, just choose the appropriate download form the download page. The following instruction will represent a Windows Computer.

Your Browser should download a zipped file called mallincamsky20160129 (the last eight number may be different as they will change if software is updated)

Step 3

Place your mouse on the zipped file, **Right-Click** to pop-up an **Action Window**, and choose **Extract All ...**

Just **Click** on the **Extract** button, when the next Window pops-up. Windows should now open up the actual folder that contains the software to install.



Step 4

Double-Click on the folder to open it up, revealing the 3 programs it contains.

	MALLINCAMDshowSetup	2016-03-05 9:57 AM	Application	1,192 KB
	MALLINCAMSKYSetup	2016-03-05 9:57 AM	Application	22,227 KB
	MALLINCAMTwainSetup	2016-03-05 9:57 AM	Application	1,151 KB

The **MALLINCAMDshowSetup** contains the Direct Show Drivers for the camera
 The **MALLINCAMSKYSetup** contains the camera control software.
 The **MALLINCAMTwainSetup** contains the Train driver for the camera

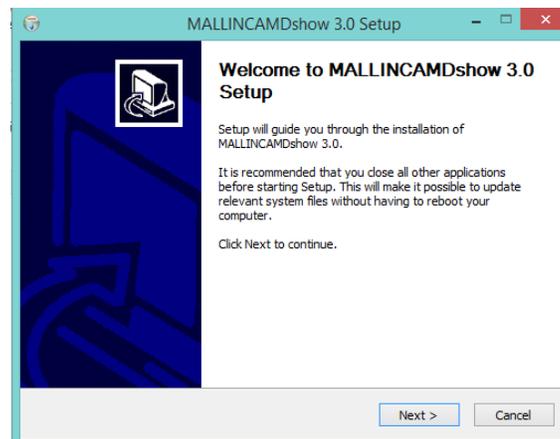
Installing DirectShow Driver

Step 1

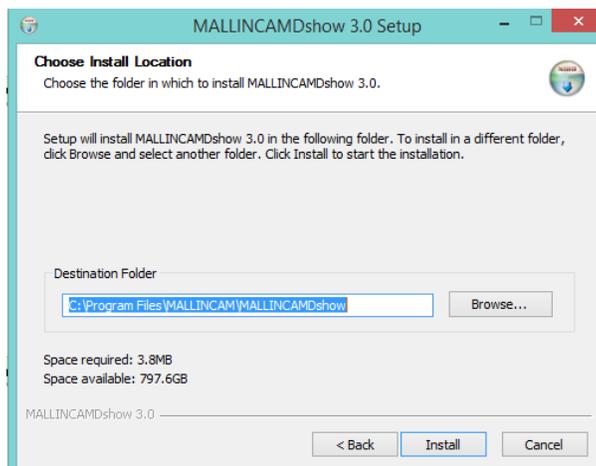
Double-Click on the **MALLINCAMDshowSetup** File

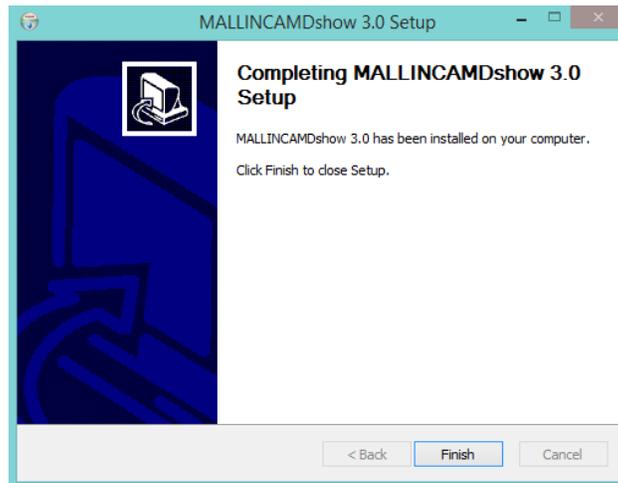
Windows may display a warning asking for permission to run the program, if it does, select **YES**

The following **MallincamSky Setup Screen** will appear:

**Step 2**

Click on **Next** to start the installation process.



Step 3**Click** on **Install** to start the installation process.**Step 5****Click** on **Finish** to close the process.**Note**

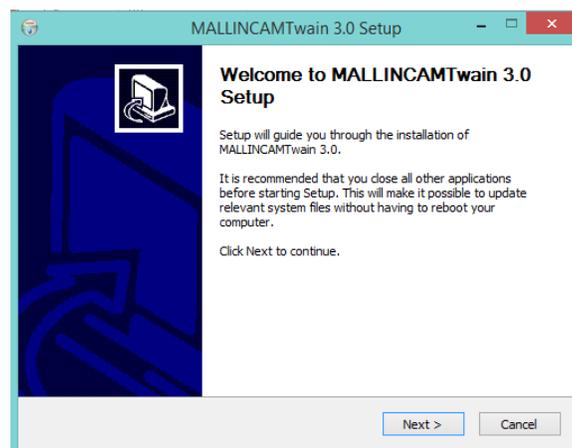
The **DirectShow** driver will give you the ability to display the **SkyRaider** video using other video display software. The software that uses the **DirectShow** video protocol, will always have a button that pops up the **DirectShow Control Window** where you can control the exposure, and other settings on the **SkyRaider** camera.

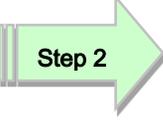
Installing WDM Driver

Step 1**Double-Click** on the **MALLINCAMTwainSetup** File

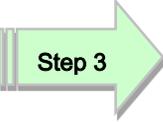
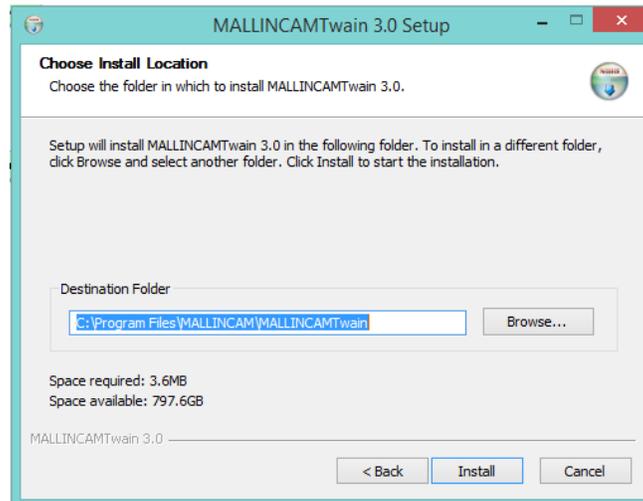
Windows may display a warning asking for permission to run the program, if it does, select **YES**

The following **MallincamSky Setup Screen** will appear:

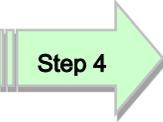
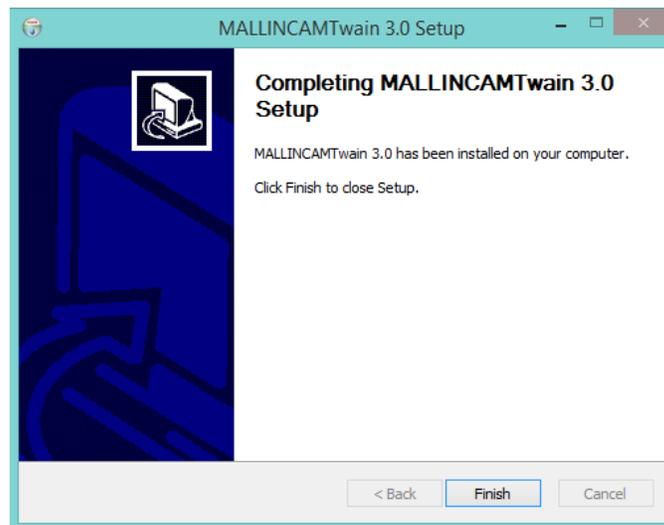


Step 2

Click on **Next** to start the installation process.

Step 3

Click on **Install** to start the installation process.

Step 4

Click on **Finish** to close the process.

Note

The **WDM** driver will give you the ability to display the **SkyRaider** video using other video display software. The software that uses the **WDM** video protocol, will always have a button that pops up the **WDM Control Window** where you can control the exposure, and other settings on the **SkyRaider** camera.

Installing Mallincam ASCOM Driver

Step 1

Visit www.Mallincam.net

Select the Support Tab

Go into Software Downloads

Near the bottom of the page under **MallincamSky Downloads** is the **SKYRAIDER ASCOM DRIVER** link

Step 2

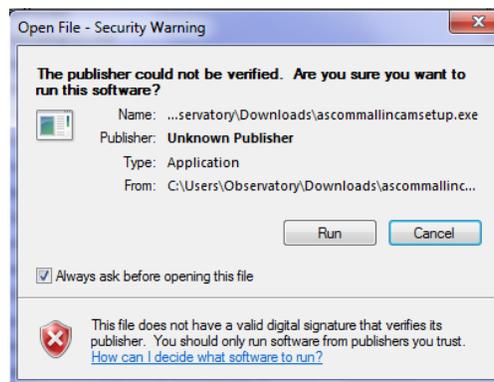
Download the SKYRAIDER ASCOM driver (ascommallincamsetup.exe)

**Note**

You must have already installed the latest **ASCOM Platform** on your computer (www.ascom-standards.org).

Step 3

Double Click on the **Driver** to install it onto your computer system (Windows). Depending upon the version of Windows, the following screen might appear.

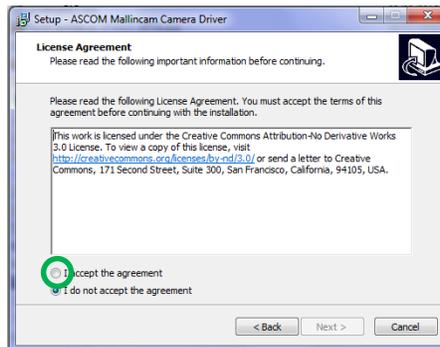
**Step 4**

Click on the Run Button. The following Window should now Pop-Up.

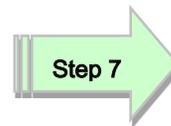
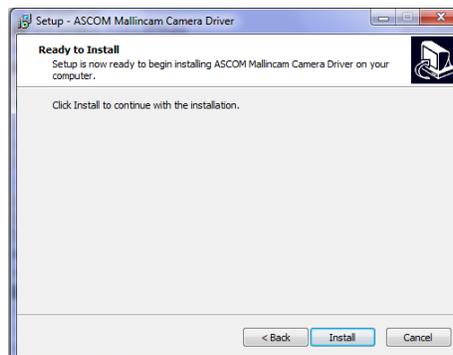




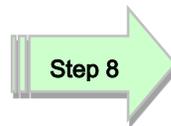
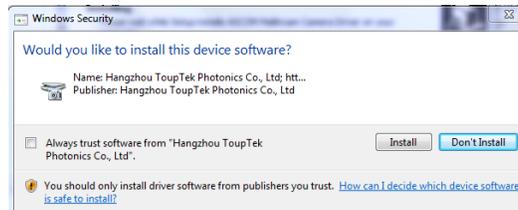
Click on **Next** to Continue. The **License Agreement Window** should now appear.



Click in the **'I accept the agreement'** Radial Button, then **Click** on **Next**. The **Ready to Install Window** will appear.



Click on **Install** to install the ASCOM Driver. Depending upon the version of Windows, you may see the Following Pop-up. **Install** it.



That's it. The installation process will provide you with the final Pop-up window to inform you that the installation was successful. **Click** on the **Finish Button** to acknowledge.



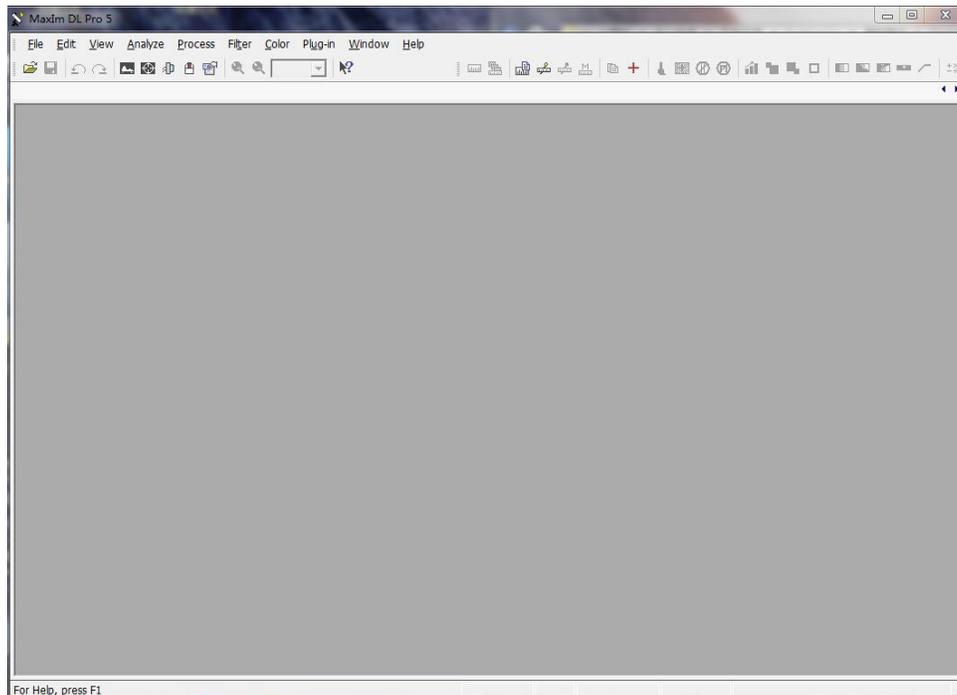
8. AutoGuiding with SkyRaider G

Guiding with MaximDL and Mallincam ASCOM

The following is a pictorial procedure on how to select the **Mallincam ASCOM driver** (assumes you have already installed this driver on your computer) in **MaximDL**.

Step 1

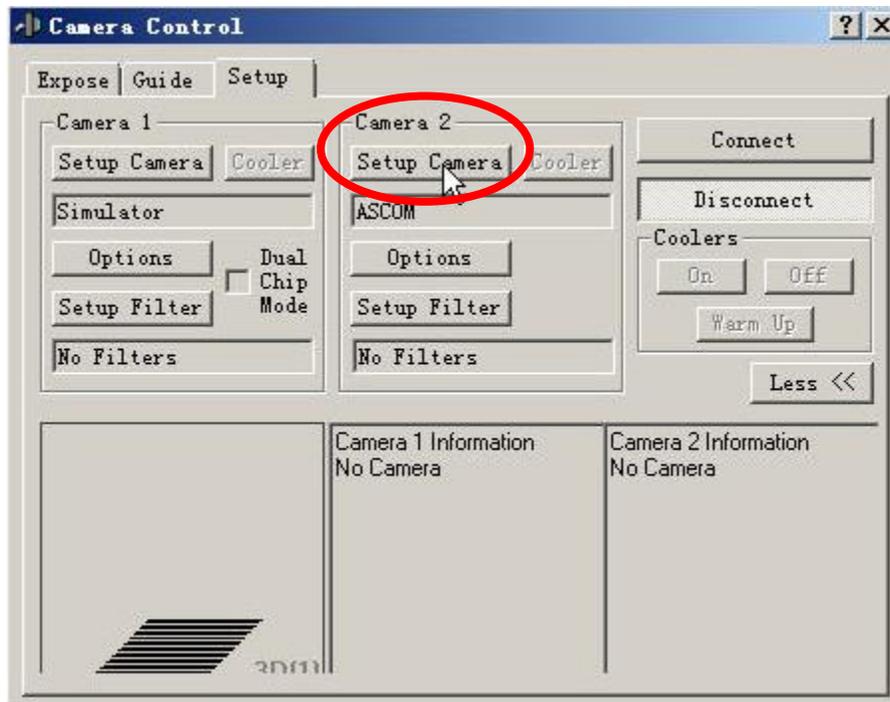
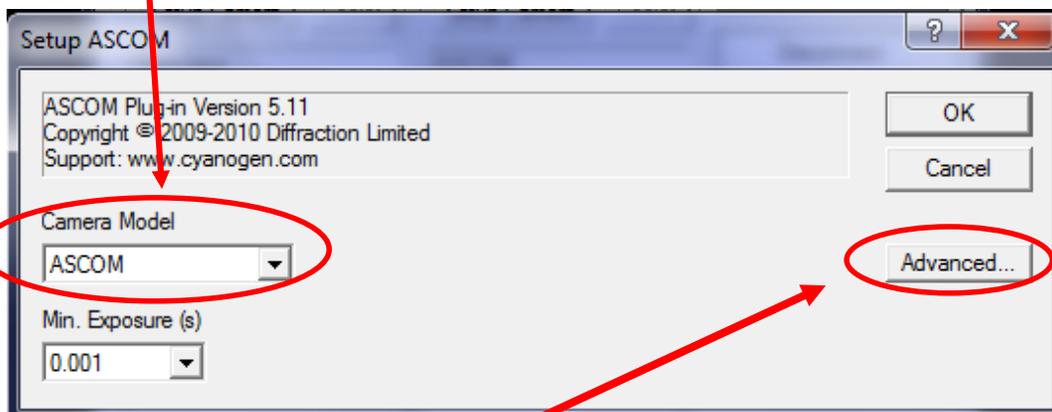
Start **MaximDL**



Step 2

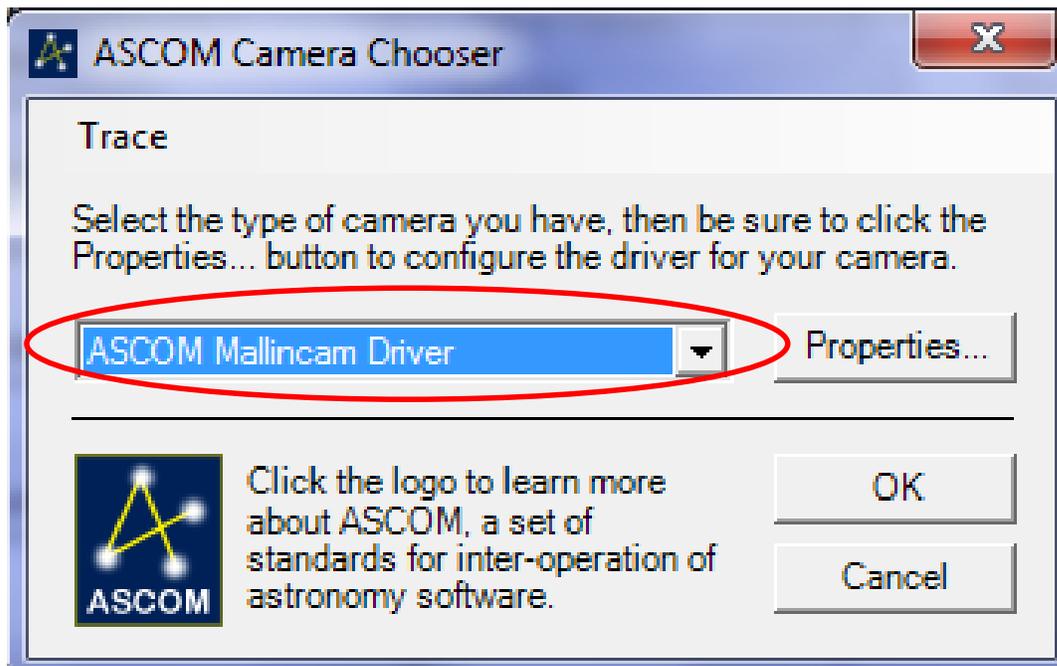
Left-Click the **Toggle Camera Control Icon** (**Camera Control Window** will open up).



Step 3**Left-Click** the **Setup Camera** button on Camera 2 from the **Setup Tab**.**Step 4**Choose **ASCOM** (from **Camera Model** in **Setup ASCOM** popup Window)**Step 5**Now **Left-Click** on the **Advanced...** Button in the **Setup ASCOM** popup Window. This will pop up the **ASCOM Camera Chooser** Window.

Step 6

Choose **ASCOM Mallincam Driver** from the pull down selector.

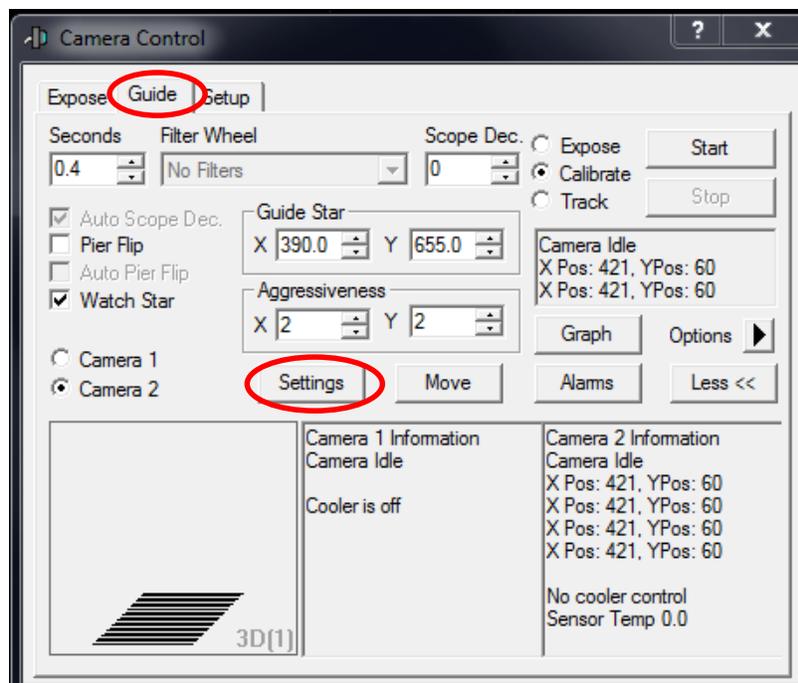


Step 7

Left-Click on the **OK** Button to accept the Mallincam Driver in the **ASCOM Camera Chooser** Window. You will be returned to the **Setup ASCOM** window, then **Left-Click** on its **OK** button to accept this, and you will be returned to the **Camera Control** Window.

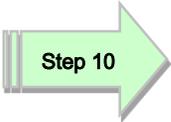
Step 8

Left-Click on the **Guide Tab** to switch to the Guide Options screen.

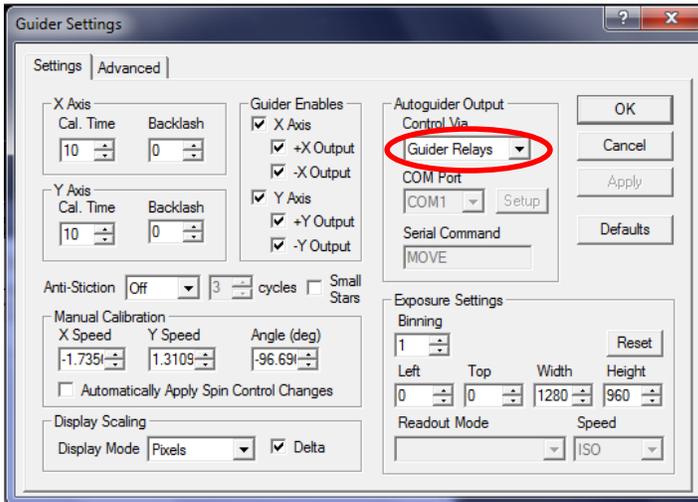




Left-Click on the **Settings Button** in the **Guide Tab**, and the **Guider Settings** Window will pop up.



Select **Guider Relays** in the **Autoguider Output Control** pull down selector.



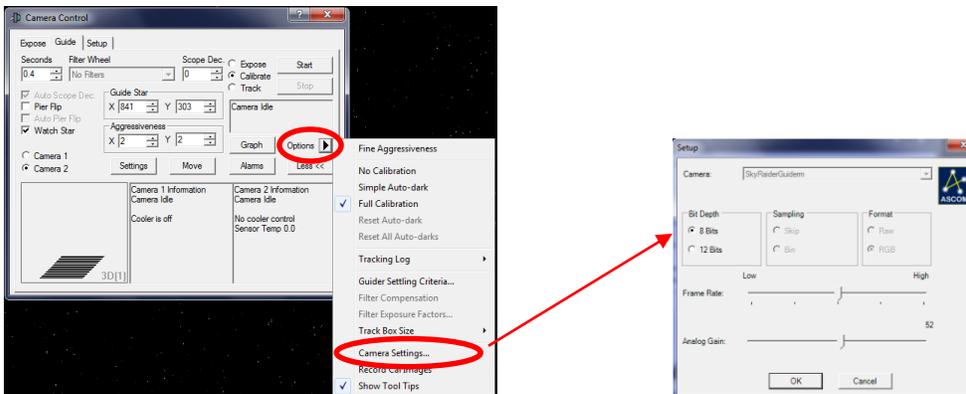
Left-Click on the **OK** Button to accept the settings and return to the **Camera Control** Window.

All you need to do now is select **Connect** from the **Setup Tab** to activate the camera and start using MaxIm-DL as you normally would Remember that MaxIm-DL control the **exposure** via the **Seconds** selector in the **Guide Tab**.

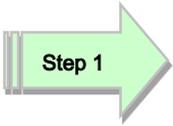


Note

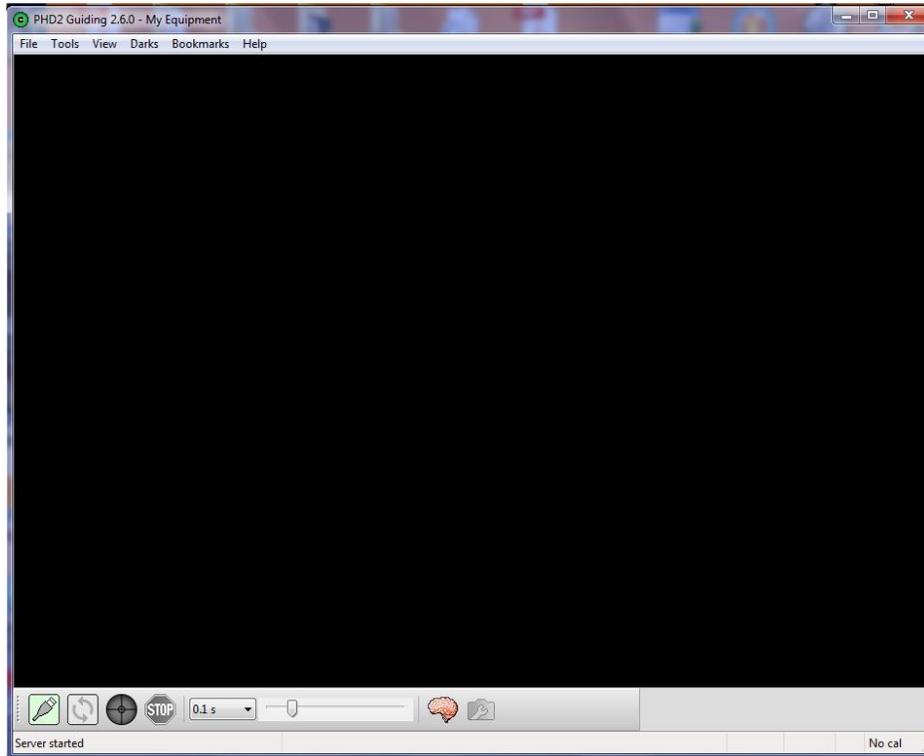
In the **Guide Tab Options** display, you can use **Camera Settings** to adjust a few of the SkyRaider's settings such as **Bit Depth** and **Gain**.



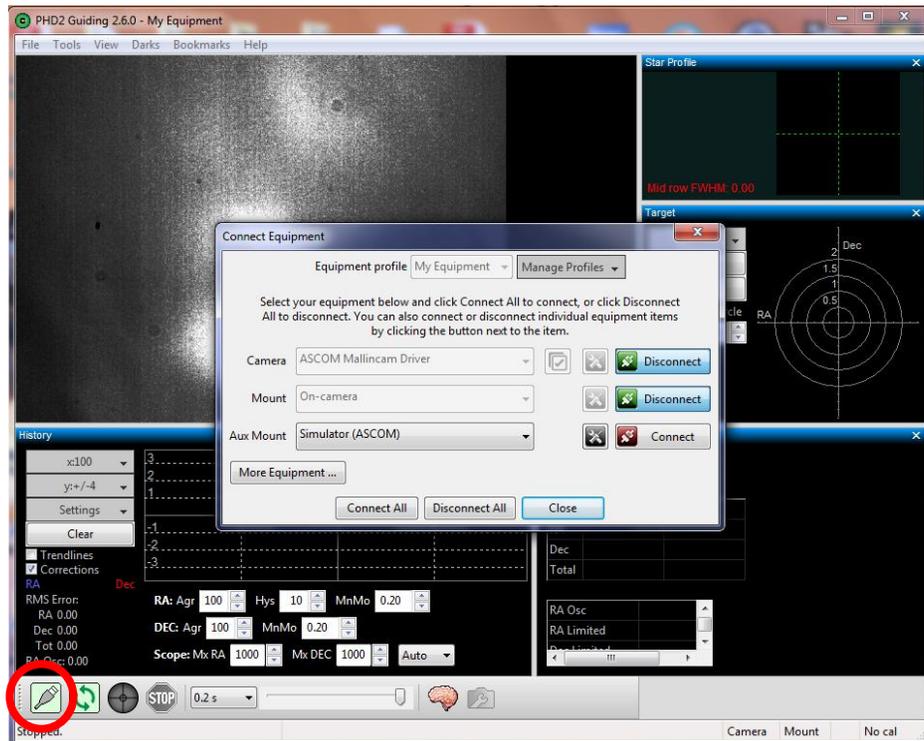
Guiding in PHD2 with Mallincam ASCOM Driver

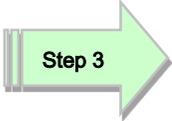


Start the **PHD2** software.

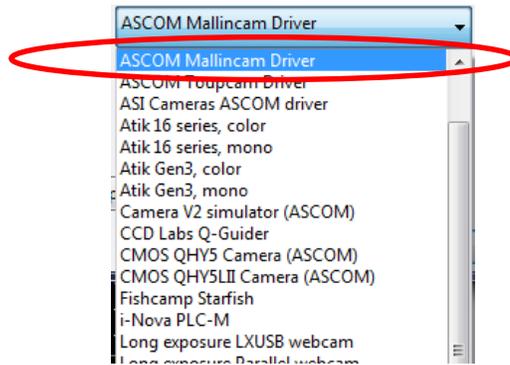


Click on the **Connection Icon** to open up **Connect Equipment Window**.

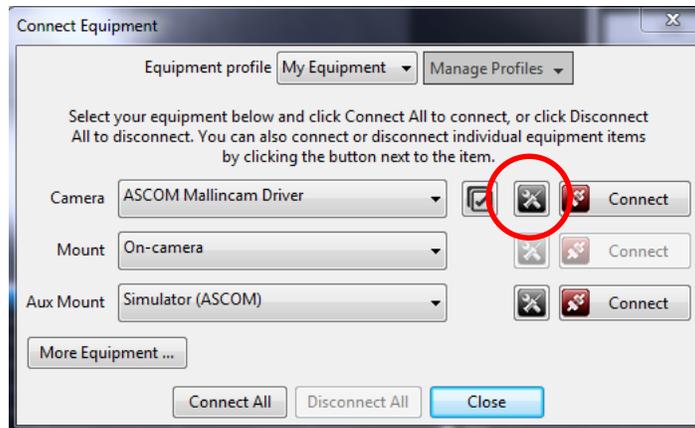




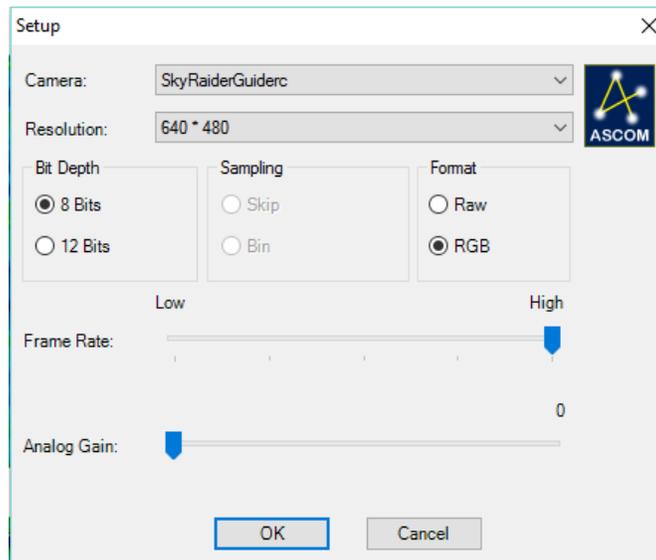
Choose **ASCOM Mallincam Driver** from **Camera Drop Down List**.



Left-Click on the **Camera Setup Button** to open **Setup** Window.



Setup Recommendations for SkyRaider is to use **640 * 480 Resolution** with the **8 Bit Depth** and **Low Frame Rate**. Left-Click on **OK** to go back to **Connect Equipment Window**.



Don't be afraid to adjust these settings to match your requirements.

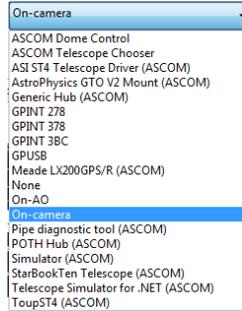
Step 6

Left-Click on the **Connect** button on **Camera List** to connect camera.



Step 7

Select **On-Camera** from the **Mount Dropdown** list



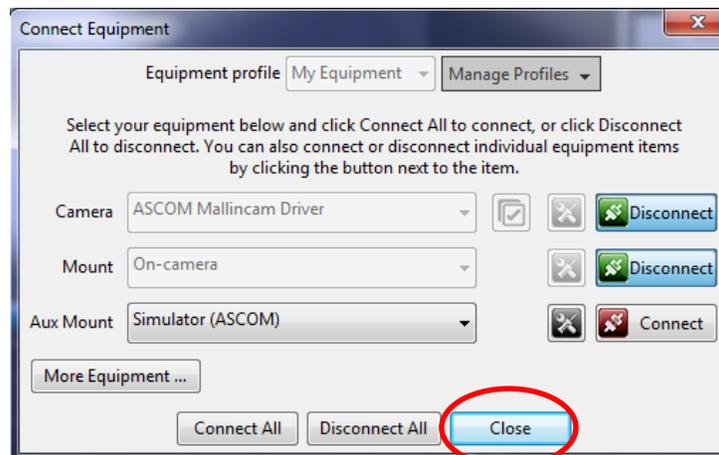
Step 8

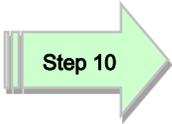
Left-Click on the **Connect** on **Mount List** and select **On-camera** to tell **PHD2** that the mount that the **SkyRaider** controls the ST4 port itself.



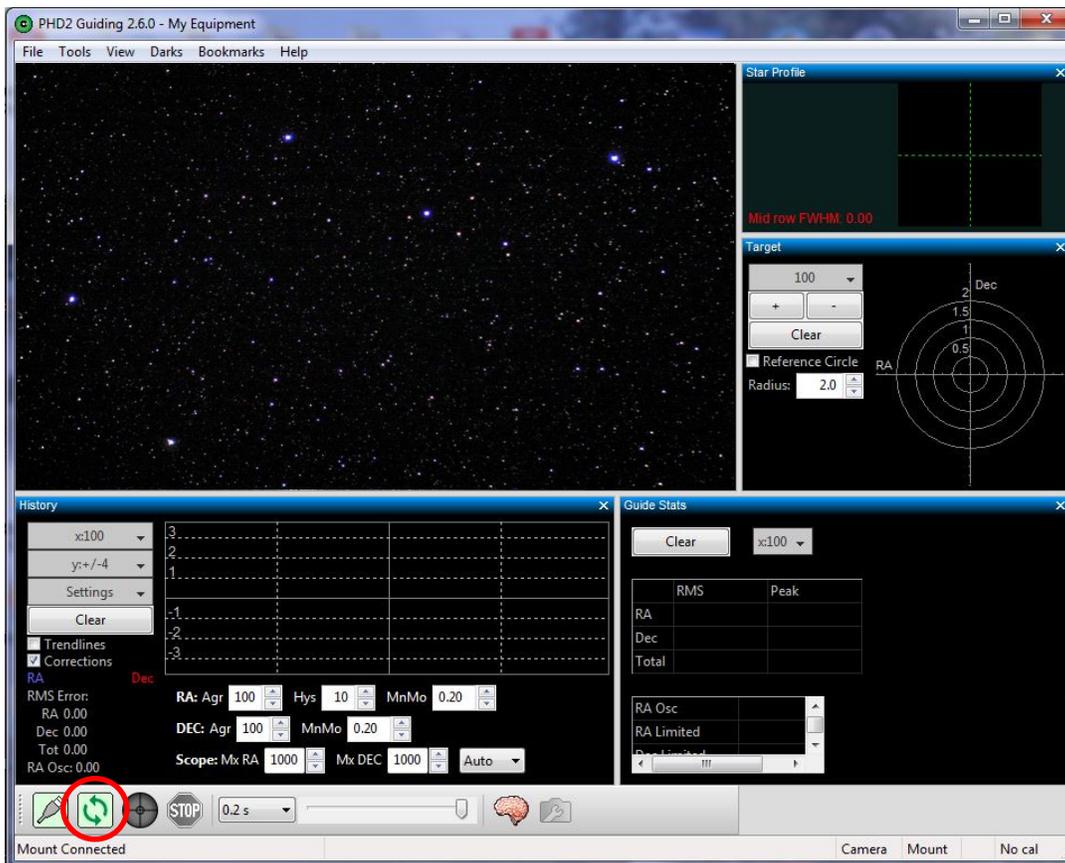
Step 9

Left-Click on the **Close** to close the **Connect Equipment Window**.

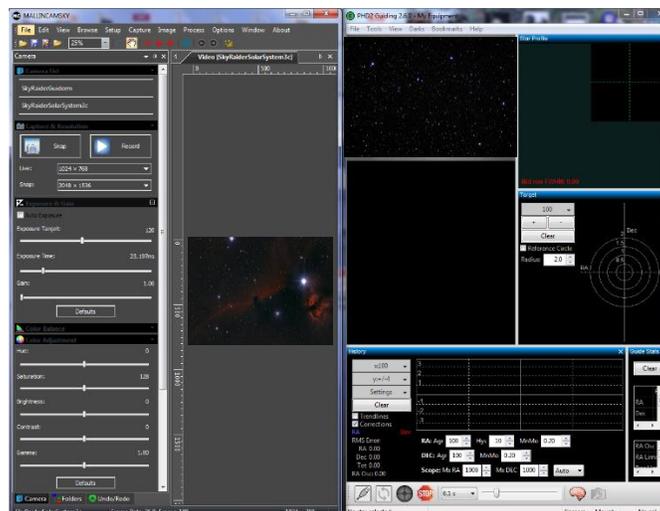




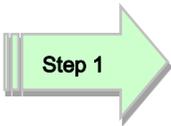
Left-Click on the **Looping Icon** to start the **SkyRaider** imaging and then start using **PHD2** as you normally would. PHD can control the exposure time of the SkyRaider Camera with the exposure drop down button.



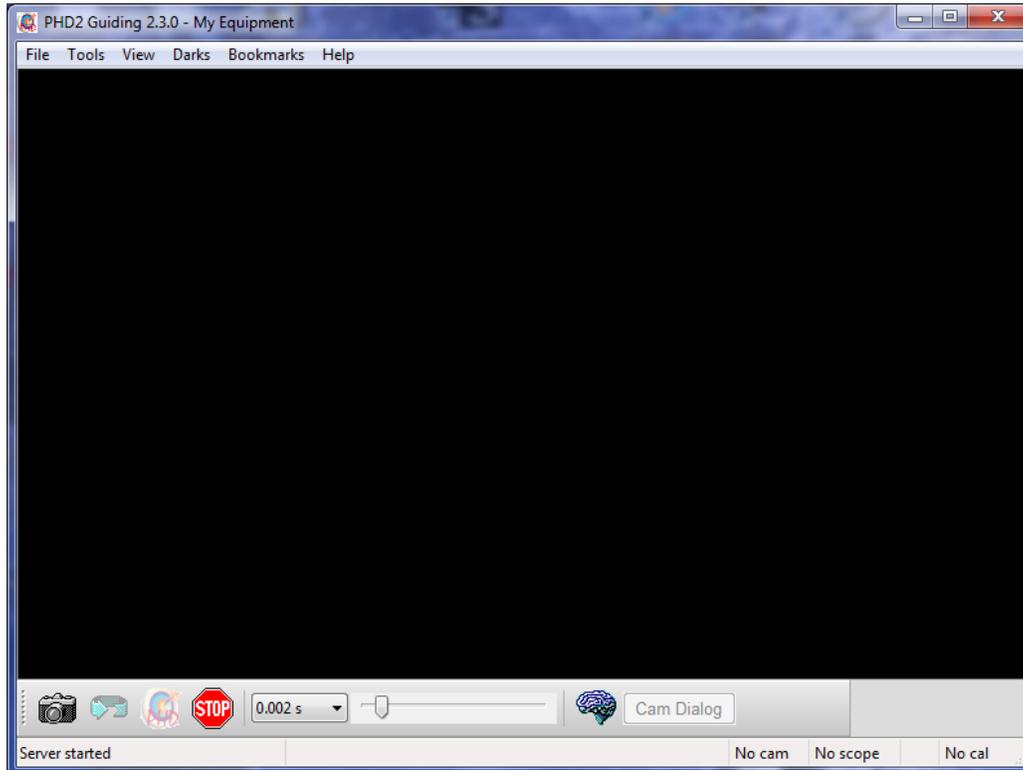
If you are using a Mallincam **SkyRaider Guide** camera to do your auto-guiding with PHD, and you are using another MallinCam camera, say the **DS** model, for imaging in **MallincamSky**, then: **Connect the Guide camera with PHD first**, followed by connecting the **DS** model to **MallincamSky**.



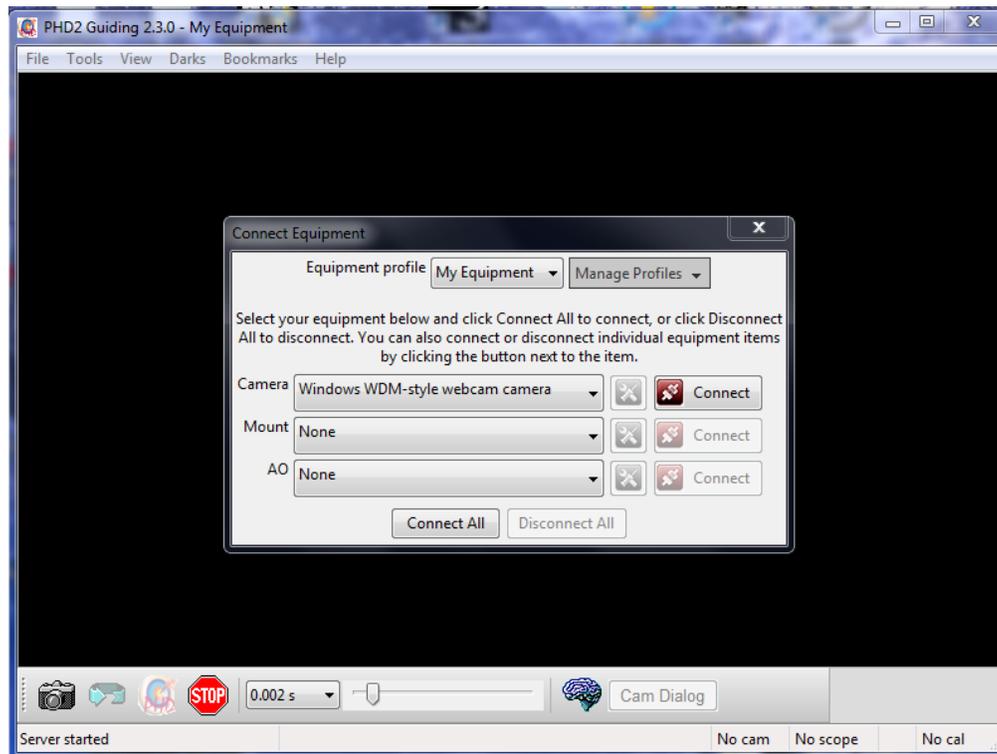
Running PHD2 with WDM Driver + ToupST4 Driver

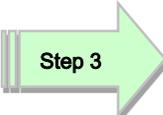
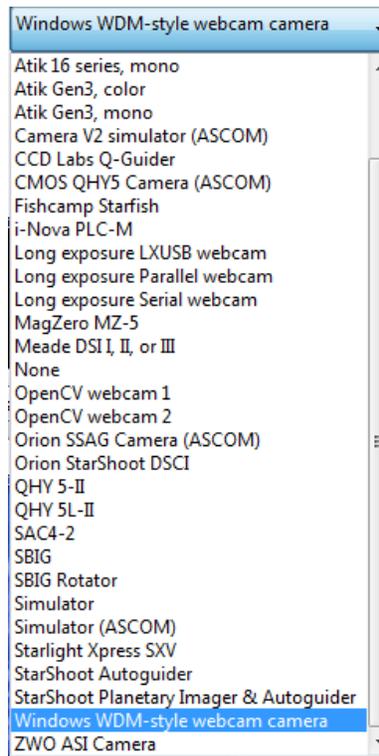
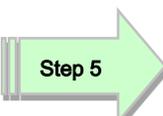
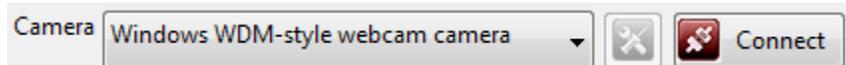
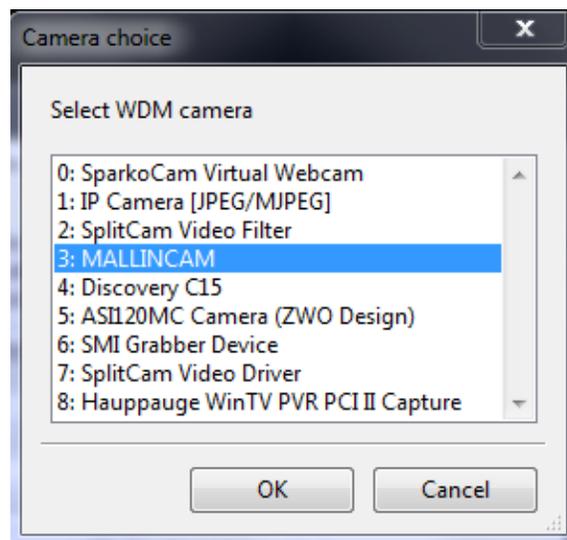


Start **PHD2** software



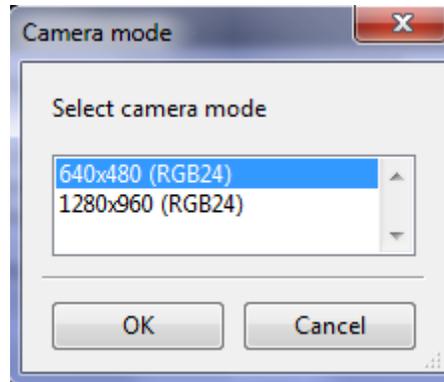
Click on the **Camera Icon** to open up **Connect Equipment Window**.



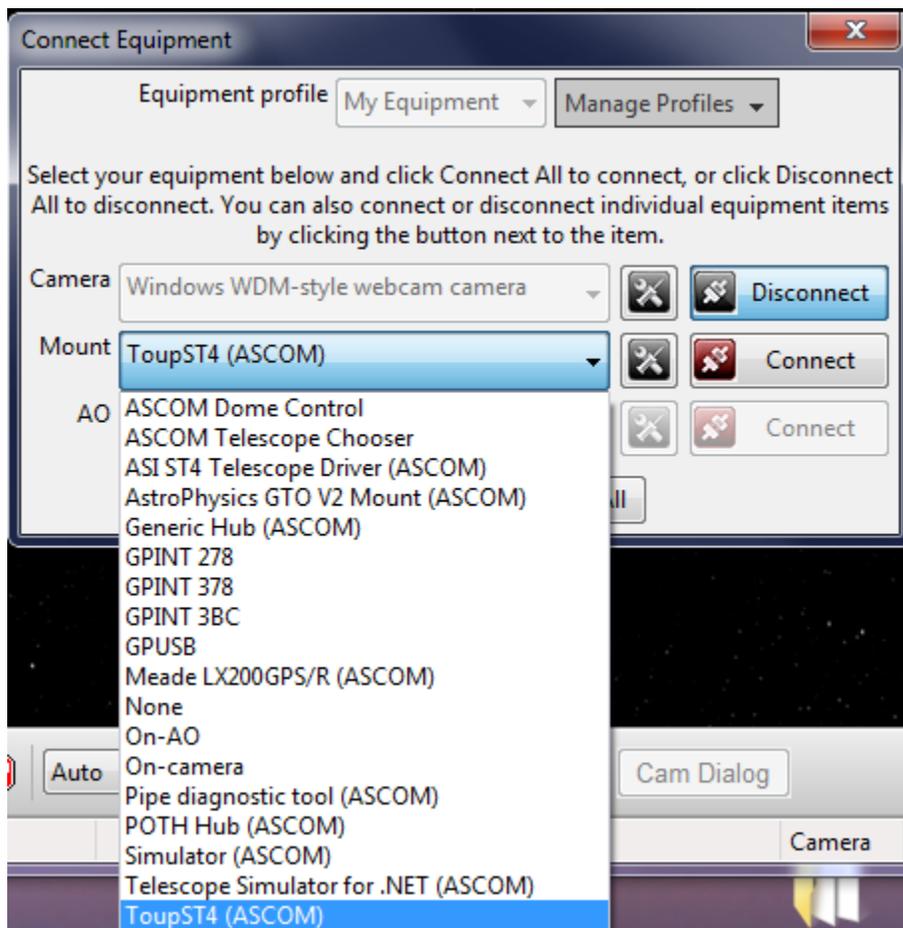
Step 3Choose **WDM-style webcam camera** from Camera Dropdown List.Step 4Left-Click on the **Connect** button on **Camera List**.Step 5The **Camera choice** window will pop-up. Select **MALLINCAM** and Click on **OK**.



Select **Resolution** (recommend **640x480**) and Click on **OK**

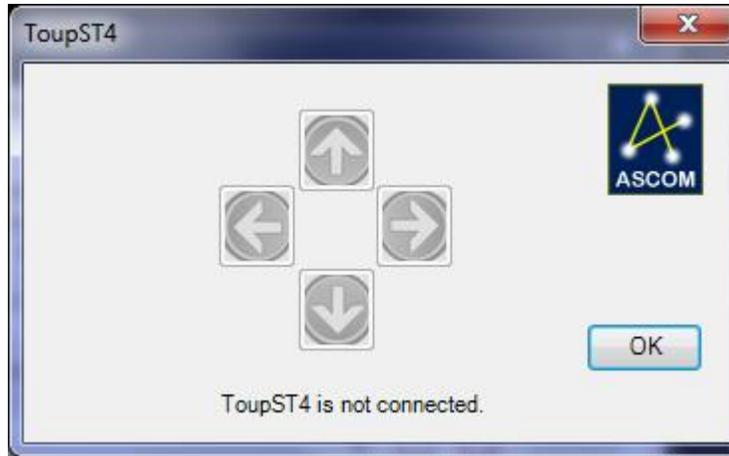


Choose **ToupST4 (ASCOM)** from the **Mount Dropdown List**

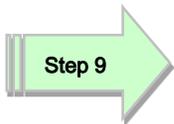




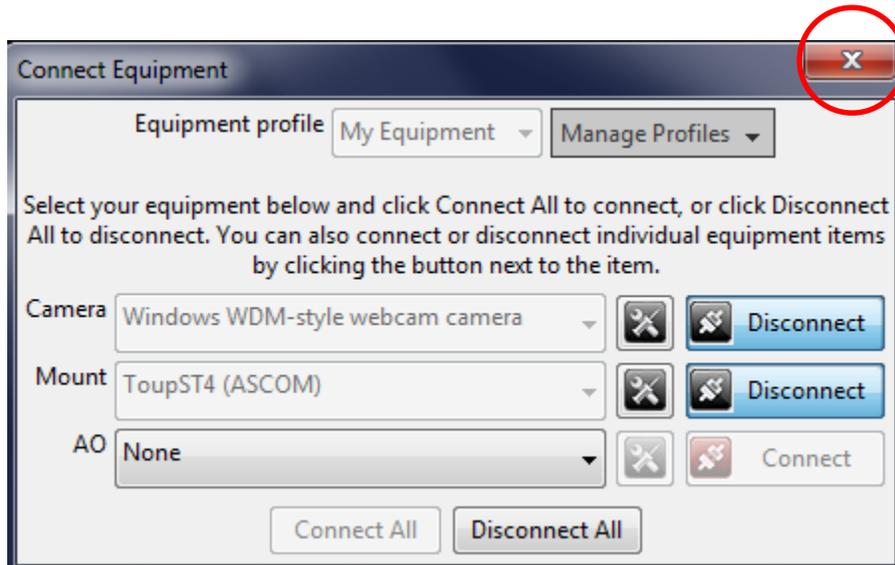
You can check to see if the **SkyRaider** can control your Mount by **Left Clicking** on the **Mount Setup Icon**  and use the **Arrow Buttons** to see if your mount moves.

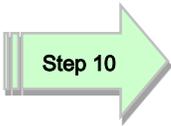


Left-Click on the **Mount Connect Button** activate the connection.

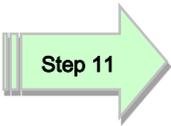
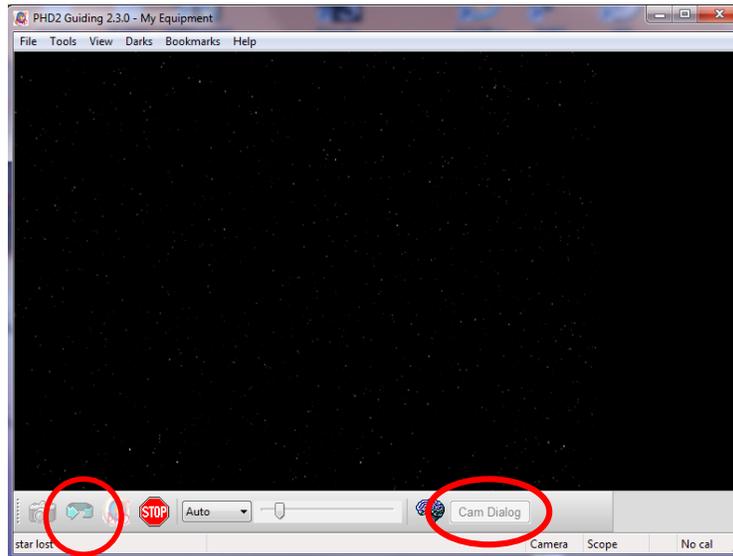


Click on **Red X** to close the **Connect Equipment** Window.

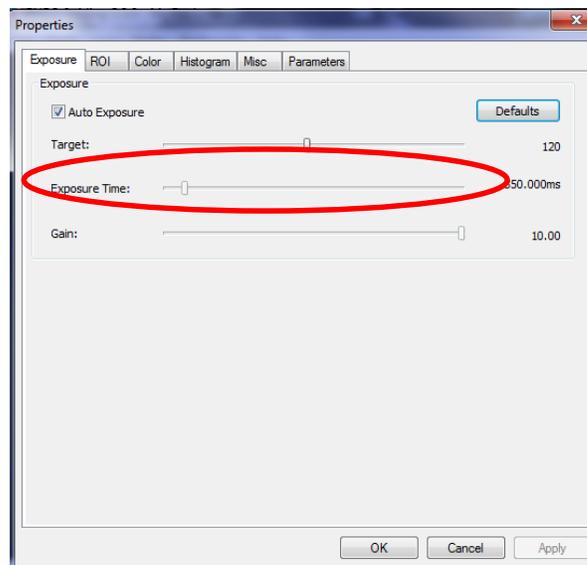




Left-Click on the **Looping Icon** to start the **SkyRaider** imaging.



Since **WDM** is only a **Video image** from the **SkyRaider**, you will need to set the PHD2 **Exposure Duration** to a value other than **AUTO** (say **1 second**). This will **NOT** control the actual exposure rate of the SkyRaider, but rather show what the **SkyRaider** has on its video image every **1 second**. **Left-Clicking** on the **Cam Dialog Box** (see image above) in PHD2 will open a window where you can adjust the parameters of the **SkyRaider Camera** (such as the actual **Exposure**, as the **Exposure control** in PHD2 does not control **WDM** driver's actual exposure, but rather just the **refresh rate**). It you can, set both the **Actual Exposure** and the PHD **exposure duration** to the same value (experiment).



If you see a rectangular Box in your Window, go to the **ROI Tab** in the **Cam Dialog Box**, and move and shrink the box to one side of your window so it doesn't affect the image.

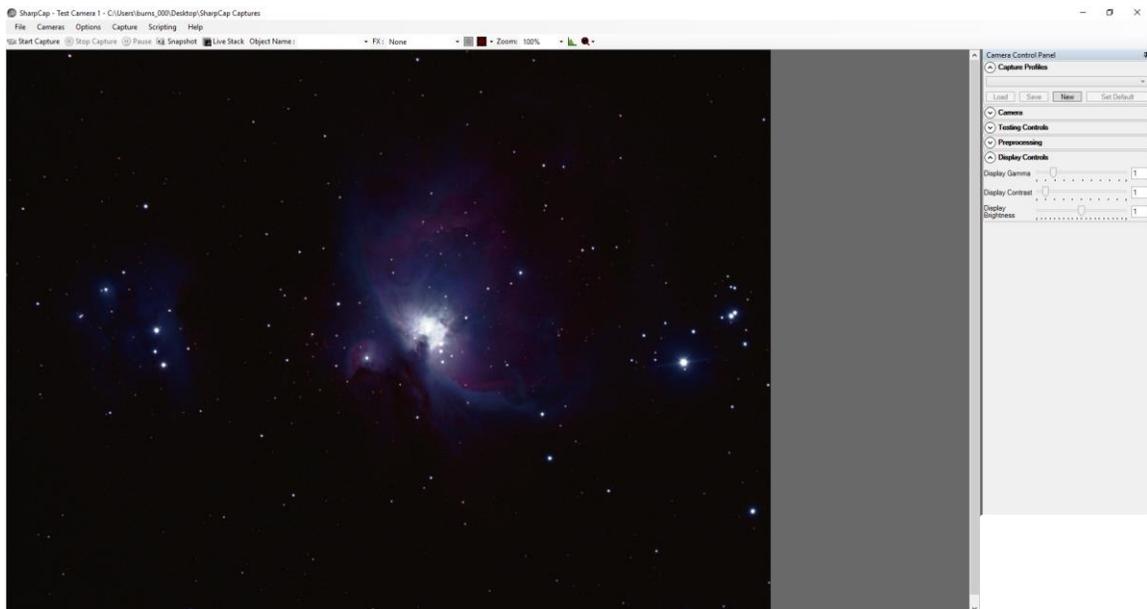
9. Appendix

Imaging in SharpCap

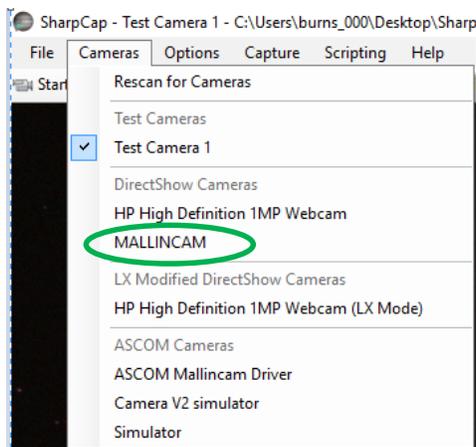
With the addition of the SkyRaider Direct Show Driver, you can control the SkyRaider with a variety of other pieces of Software such as SharpCap. Now this is the first generation of DirectShow/SharpCap driver interaction and as such, not all of the commands are perfect for user control.

SharpCap can be obtained at <http://www.sharpcap.co.uk/>

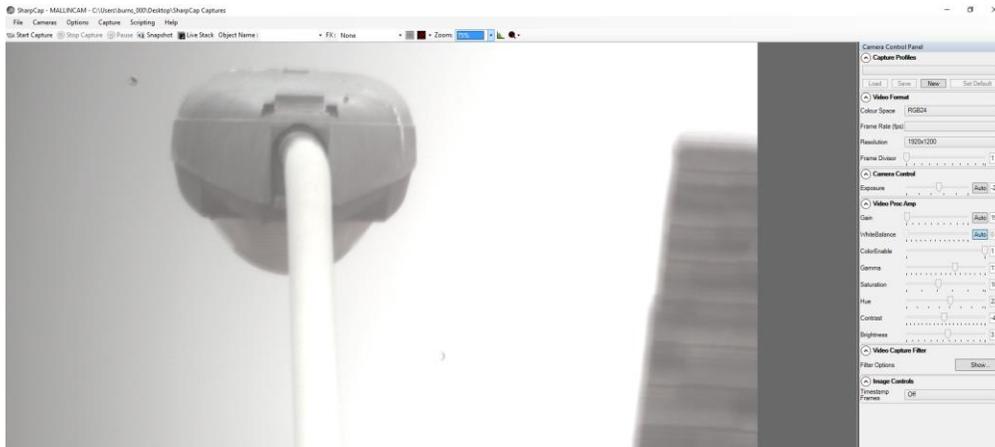
➔ Start SharpCap



➔ Chose **Cameras** from the Top Heading Tab, then in the **DirectShow Cameras**, pick **MALLINCAM**.



Once you have selected, the Mallincam Directshow Driver, SharpCap will display what the SkyRaider is imaging.



The controls on the right of the screen (**Exposure, Gain, Gamma, ...**) allow you to change the settings of the SkyRaider.

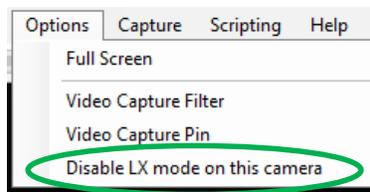
It takes a bit of practice to become familiar with the settings as these a more generic controls, the majority of the controls have their own scales (the exposure does not indicate seconds, but has an equivalent range from 0 seconds to 5 seconds). You will need to record those numbers to assist you.



Note

SharpCap recognizes that the DS2.3 Plus does have an **extended mode** for exposures that are over 5 seconds.

To turn on the **extended mode** (over 5 seconds), then enable the **LX Mode** in the **Options Tab** on the Top of the screen. This lets the exposure slider now provide exposures over 5 seconds (even though you don't actually see the time on the slider). **Disable LX mode** to return to 5 seconds max exposure

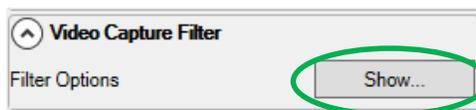


SharpCap will display the exposure you have set on the bottom of the sharpCap window after the first exposure is taken.

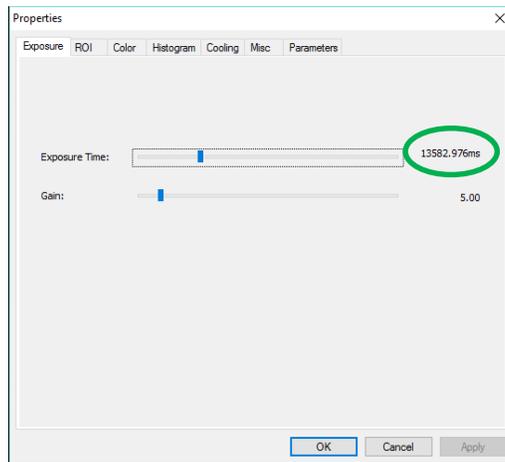


Note

SharpCap has the ability to Pop-Up the SkyRaider **Video Filter** (DirectShow control window). **Click** on the **Show Button** in the **Video Capture Control**



The Pop-Up Window gives you some familiarity with settings as it provides you with more comfortable units (exposure time in ms).

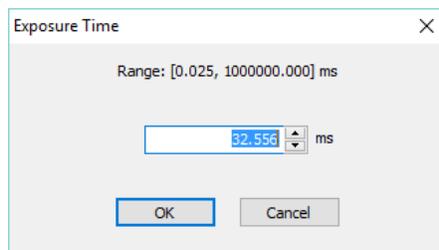


You can choose the **Exposure Tab** in the **Filter window** to slide the **Tab** to match the exposure time in **ms** (divide by 1000 to get seconds).



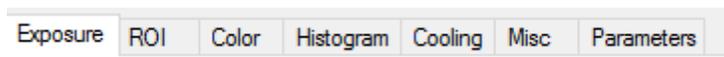
Note

You can also **Click** on the **Time setting** on the right of the **Slider** to Pop-Up a window that allows you to directly enter in the time in **ms**.



You can also control the **Gain** in the window.

The other Tabs in the Window will also you to adjust other settings in the SkyRaider Camera.

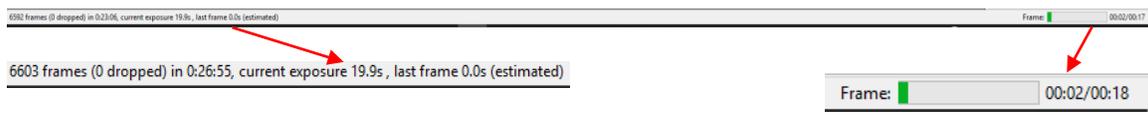


Once you are comfortable with the settings, **Click** on the **OK** Button in the Properties window to close it.



Note

SharpCap will start the imaging process and will, on the bottom of the window, display information about the exposure and remaining time. You can watch the green status bar move to the right as the exposure is being taken.



Note

Choosing the **Mallincam ASCOM Driver** from **Cameras Tab**.

Well, there are issues with the current Mallincam ASCOM driver and SharpCap, as you can receive multiple copies of the image (as seen by the triple street lamp image below, this is strange as there is no issue with the ASCOM Video driver in PHD or AstroToaster).

But the Controls are easier to use, and provide better scales.



We would expect that better drivers and better compatibilities will occur as both the SkyRaider and SharpCap get updated.

AstroToaster and MallinSky

AstroToaster is a freeware application for obtaining semi-live views of astronomical images using the SkyRaider camera. These instructions are just a quick guide to get you going, read the **AstroToaster User Guide**.

AstroToaster uses the **Deep Sky Stacker (DSS) Processing Engine**. It accomplishes what **DSSLive** does, but it uses the full capabilities of DeepSkyStacker. AstroToaster also has a Viewer with easy to use color and light enhancement tools to aid in fine tuning the image.

AstroToaster can be downloaded from: <http://www.astrotoaster.com/>

AstroToaster Work Flow

Images are sent by **MallincamSky** to a folder that **AstroToaster** is monitoring ⇒ AstroToaster will the **align** and **stack** those images producing an enhanced image ⇒ You can then **tweak** the final stack image to your standards.

All of this is done in real time.

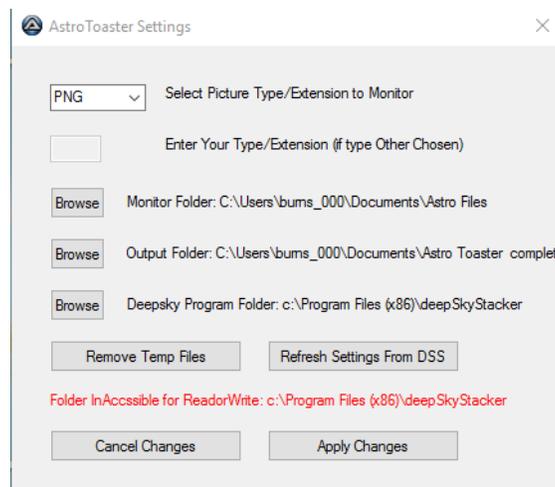


Start AstroToaster

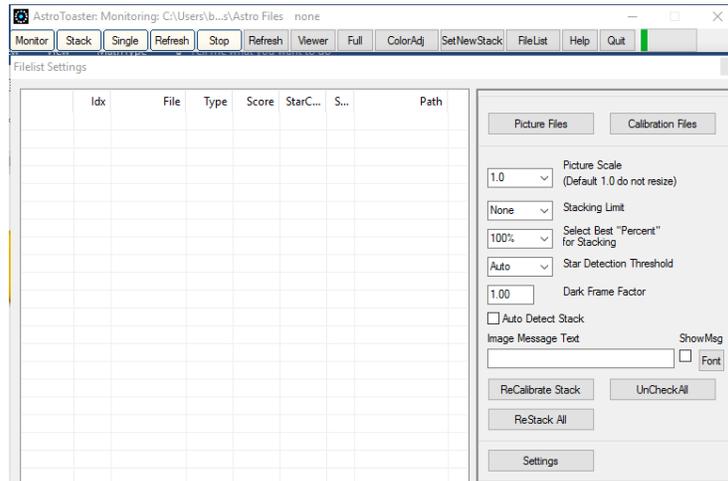


Note

When you run AstroToaster for the first time the **Settings Screen** will appear, you will need to select your **Monitoring Folder** (this is where MallincamSky will save the images), Output folder (can be the same as the Monitoring Folder), Verify that the Deepsky program folder is correct. You should also enter the Picture type/extension of the images produced by your camera (png, tiff).



The AstroToaster Main Screens will open up (A File Monitoring Window and most likely a View Window).



The **File List Monitoring Window** manages the image files, sent by MallincamSky, used by AstroToaster. If the **Monitor Button** is activated, then any new files appearing in the monitoring folder will automatically appear in the **FileList**.

AstroToaster uses color to aid in identifying the files.

- **Yellow** - are the images to be stacked.
- **Green** - is the stacked image.

There is a **check box** next to the files. All **checked** files will be combined into the current stacked final image.



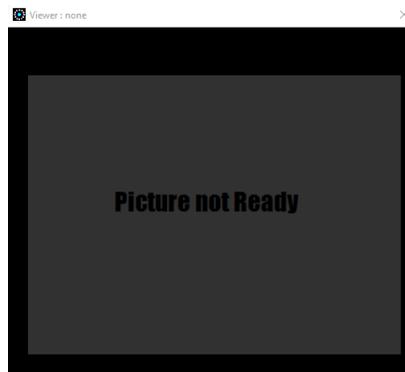
Note

If you **Click** on a File in the **FileList** it will appear in the **Viewer Window**.

Preparing AstroToaster



Click on the **View Tab** located on the Top of **AstroToaster** to activate the **View Window**.

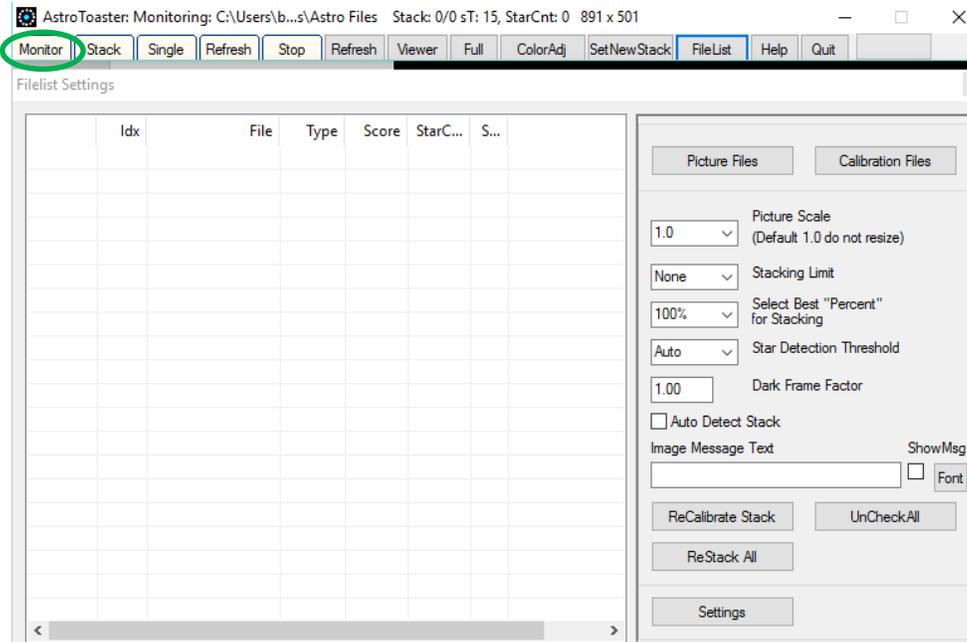


When no staking has taken place, **Picture not Ready** appears in the **Viewer Window**

The Folder where you told AstroToaster to Monitor will be empty (we have not told MallincamSky to Save images, yet).



Click on **Monitor** on AstroToaster Tab line, so it will see and analyze the file images as they are added to the Monitoring Folder.

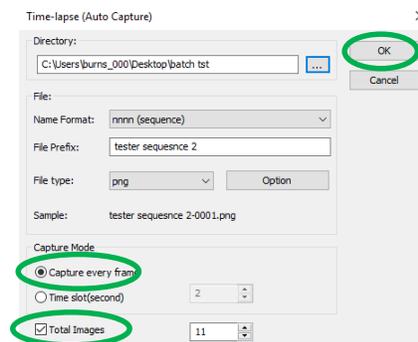


Tell MallinCamSky to Save images in to the Monitoring Folder of AstroToaster.

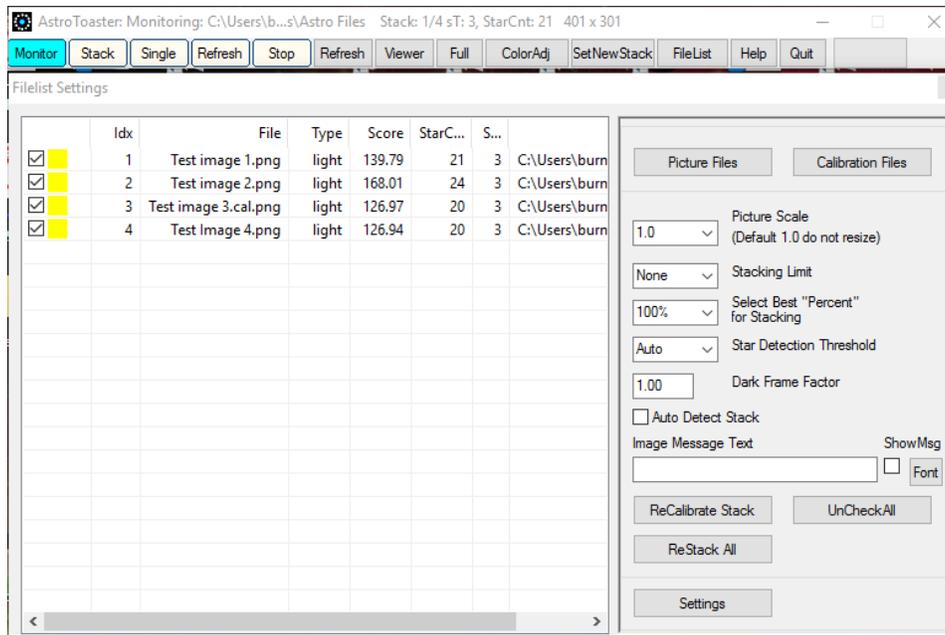
For example, **Use the Time Lapse (Auto Capture)** from the Capture Tab. Select **Capture every Frame** and enter in the **Total** Number of Frames you require. Choose the same folder that AstroToaster is monitoring, and a file format the you want (png, Tiff). It is recommended that you choose the **File naming** convention that includes **nnnn**.



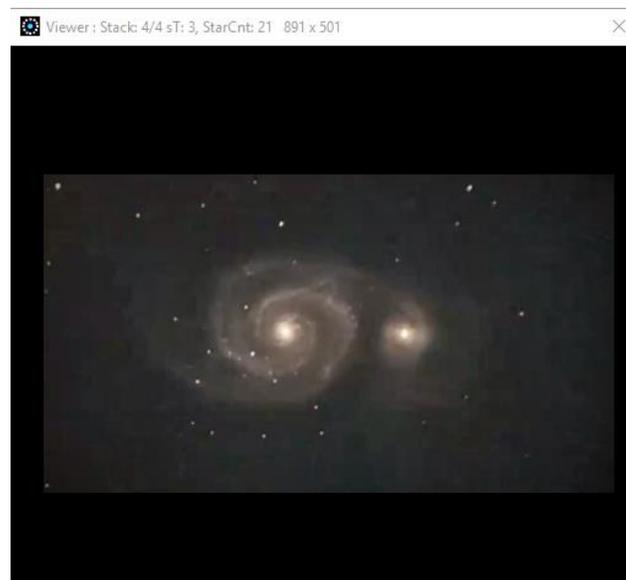
Once you are satisfied with your settings, **Click** on the **OK Button** to start sending those images to AstroToaster.



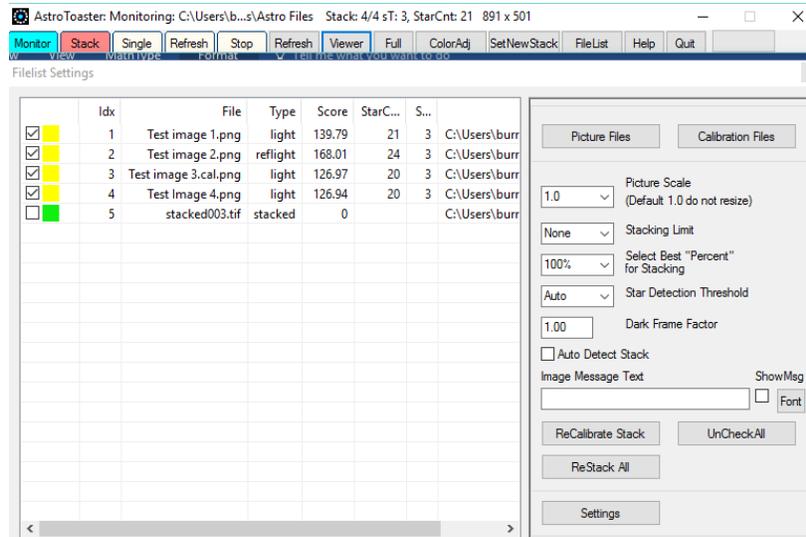
As MallincamSky sends the images to the **Monitoring Folder**, you will see them appear with **Yellow squares** besides their name



➔ **Click** on the **Stack Tab** on AstroToaster and **Viewer Tab** (if not activated) to activate the automatic Stack and watch the results appear in the Viewer in real time as each image is stacked.



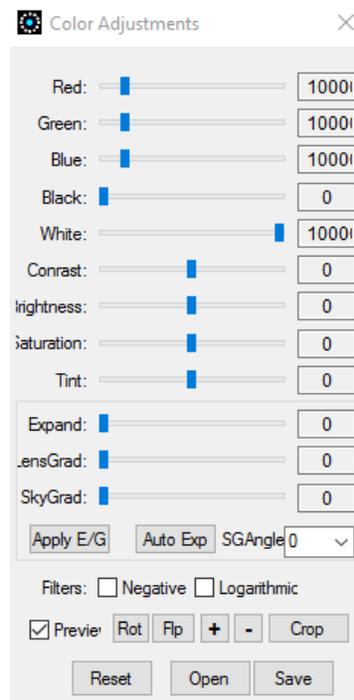
You will notice in the AstroToaster **FileList**, a file named **stacked###.tif** with a Green Square besides its name. This is the Stacked image that you are seeing in the AstroToaster **Viewer Window**.



Adjust the Image in AstroToaster



Click on **Color Adj Tab** to popup a window that will allow you to adjust the display parameters of your stacked image, as well as save the final image.



AstroLive and the SkyRaiderDS2.3 Plus

AstroLive is a software package to control your entire electronically-assisted or video astronomy setup. With AstroLive you can control your telescope mount and the ASCOM-based SkyRaider Camera.

AstroLive is the work of Kyle Goodwin and can be obtained at:

⇒ <http://astroprecisioninstruments.com/products/astro-live>

As of this writing, the Version of AstroLive is v1.4. This version did not have the SkyRaider series of camera in mind. But, the MALLINCAM ASCOM Driver does partly work with AstroLive. This allows you to do imaging, and you are able to adjust and save your images.

There is an update coming soon, that will allow you to control USB cameras such as the Mallincam SkyRaider series.

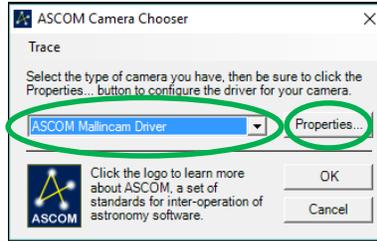
➔ Start AstroLive

You will be presented with the following Window



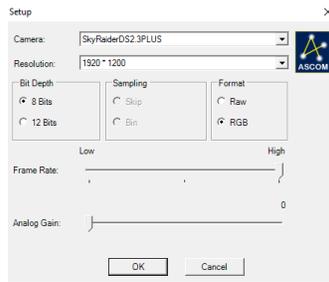
➔ Click on the Choose Still Button from the ASCOM Still Camera line

A popup window will appear.



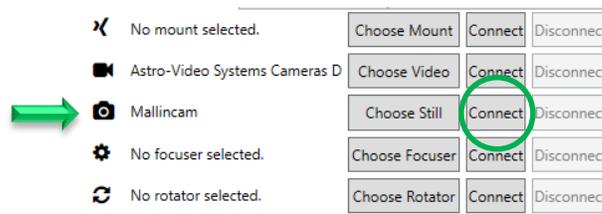
➡ From the Pull Down list select **ASCOM Mallincam Driver**.

➡ Click on the **Properties Box** to pop-up the SkyRaider **Setup Control Window**



➡ Make any adjustments you need, then **Click** on the **OK** Button, to Accept. You will be returned to the ASCOM Camera Chooser Window, **Click** on **OK** to return to the AstroLive Window.

➡ To activate the SkyRaider camera, **Click on the Connect Button** on the line now labelled **Mallincam**.



You will now be presented with a **live** connection to the SkyRaider camera. Have fun and experiment to see what you can do with AstroLive.



How Do I ...

How do I get rid of the Green Exposure Rectangle?

First remember the **Green Exposure Rectangle** is used for the auto-exposure process, but it can be annoying when you are imaging.

- The way to remove it from the Video Window is to **minimize** the **Exposure & Gain** control.



If you require the **Exposure & Gain** Control to be expanded (so you can adjust the exposure), but still do not want the **Green Rectangle** in the middle of your screen, try this.

- Chose **Fit to Window** from the **Zoom** Drop down Box (on the **Icon Tool Bar**). Now just drag the **Green Rectangle** (**Left-Click and Hold** technique) to the lower left of the window.
- Next grab one of the corners of the **Green Rectangle** and drag it to the matching corner of your **Video Window**. Next, grab the opposite corner of the **Green Rectangle** and drag it to the same location as the first corner. This will make a zero size rectangle.

How do I Select a part of the Image and Zoom in?

- Expand the **ROI** control (a **Blue Rectangle** should appear around you image). Using the **Left-Click Hold and Drag** technique, maneuver and size the **Blue Rectangle** so that it encloses the area you are interested in. **Left-Click** on **Apply** and watch the part of the image in **Blue Rectangle**, be the whole image in the **Video Window**.
- Now, **Left-Click** in the **Blue Rectangle**, and use the scroll wheel on your mouse to enlarge or reduce the image (you can also use the **Fit to Window** control on the **Icon Tool Bar**).
- **Left-Click** on **Defaults** to get back to Full screen.

How do I automatically save 1 image every 30 seconds?

- Choose the **Time-Lapse (Auto Capture)** from the **Capture Menu** on the **Top Menu Line**. Now determine your naming convention and location.
- Enter **30** in the **Time slot**
- Enter the total number of images you would like (or leave unchecked, and you will manually stop the process when you are ready).
- **Left-Click** on **OK**

At the bottom of the MallincamSky Window; a running count will be displayed.

- **Left-Click** on **Stop Time-lapse (Auto Capture)** to stop the process.

How do I adjust the brightness in my monochrome SkyRaider?

You will have noticed that the **Brightness** command in the **Color Adjustment** control is deactivated. You can use the **Gamma** command (moving it to the left will brighten the whole image, but the better control is the **Histogram** command in the **SideBar**.

By move the **Left Marker Line** or the **Right Marker Line** (or a combination of both) to the left will brighten up you image in a more controlled manner.

How do I Broadcast my image onto Night Skies Network (NSN)?

As a direct way is not yet available, you will need to use a third party software to assist you.

Obtain one of the following: **ManyCam**, **WebCam Max**, **SplitCam** (different opinions on which is the best, it becomes a personal preference). Each of these software programs will allow you to capture what is happening on your computer screen. The software packages also act as a webcam to NSN.

Therefore, whatever screen image these software packages are capturing, will display on NSN as a webcam image.

See **Setting up to Broadcast on Night Skies Network** in the **Appendix** for more detailed instructions.

Can I Use MallincamSky with One SkyRaider and Auto-Guide with another?

Yes, as long as you use **DirectShow**, **WDM** or **ASCOM** with the second **SkyRaider**.

**Note**

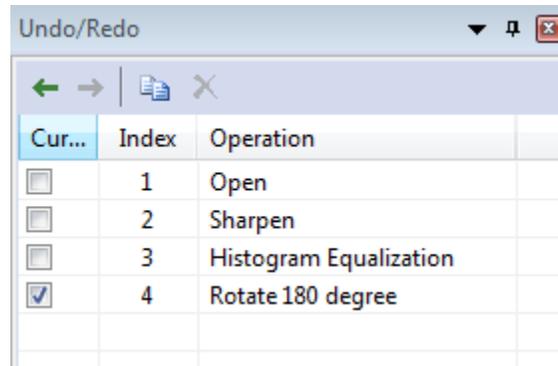
Remember if you are using **DirectShow** or **WDM**, the guiding software CANNOT control the exposure setting on the camera; look for a **Settings** or **Property Tab** button that pops up the **SkyRaider** exposure control window.

How Do I Pause the Video?

You can Pause or Resume the live video by either choose **Setup>Pause** from the **Top Menu Line**, or even easier, just press on the **pause key** on your keyboard.

How do I Undo an Operation?

On the **SideBar**, there is an **Undo/Redo Tab**; Just **Left-Click** on the Tab and the Tab will open with a list of all the operations you have performed on your Image (not Video, you cannot undo video operations such as contrast).



Just **Left-Click** on the location before the operation you would like to undo and **MallincamSky** will revert the image back to that step.

How do I make my ROI the whole Image Again?

Just **Left-Click** on the **Defaults Button** in the **SideBar's ROI** control. Note, by changing the **ROI**, the **Dark Fields** will be removed from the **SkyRaider**.

How do I Turn Off Dark Field correction?

Just **Left-Click** in the **Enable** box to remove the check mark in the **Dark Field** correction control on the **SideBar**. Place a check mark back in the **Enable** box to reactivate Dark Field correction.

How Do I take Another Dark Field?

You have to either disconnect the **SkyRaider**, or even easier just **Left-Click** on the **Video Window Title** and Choose **Close** to disconnect. Now **Left-Click** on the **SkyRaider** camera in the **Camera** control on the **SideBar** to reactivate it. Now you just retake your Dark Fields.

Note: If you change the **ROI**, then the **Dark Fields** will be removed from the **SkyRaider**.

My ROI Window is Black?

You must wait until the next exposure until the ROI Window gets filled.

First Aid for the SkyRaider Series

When I click on the SkyRaider camera from the Camera list, a message pops up saying Failed to Start: SkyRaider

There is an issue establishing fulltime communications with the camera. This can occur for a variety of reasons but the most common one is the cable is too long for the USB port on that specific computer to establish the correct timing protocol. This is more so with USB 2.0 devices.

Recommended solution: if you need to use a longer length of USB 2.0 cable for the DS2.3 Plus, then there are two options:

- Connect a **powered USB 2.0 hub** to the computer and connect the USB cable between the hub and the SkyRaider camera.
- Connect an active (not passive) USB 2.0 extension cable between the camera and the included USB 2.0 cable. Something along the lines of the Tripp-Lite USB 2.0 High Speed Active Extension Cable

When I try to connect I receive message "Catastrophic failure (Exception from HRESULT:0x8000FFF(E_UNEXPECTED))"

This message indicates that something has blocked or over written the driver. Installing another driver or even a major Windows update has played havoc with the original SkyRaider Drivers.

Recommended Solution: Uninstall the current driver through the **Control Panel** (or if you cannot find it in the **Control Panel** check out the **c:/PROGRAM FILES/MALLINCAM/MALLINCAMSKY** folder, there is a program called **uninst**. **Double-Click** on **uninst** to uninstall MallincamSky and its drivers).

Once uninstalled, reboot your computer, then reinstall MallincamSky again. This should fix the issue.

Dark Field Explanation

The following is the best explanation of what Dark Field is, and it comes from the work of **Simon Hanmer**.

Dark Frame vs Dark Field

Dark Frame Subtraction

First, take an image with the camera shutter closed or the camera/scope covered under the same conditions of exposure time and temperature as the light frames you are going to capture of your astronomical target. Many astronomers will take ten or more such dark frames and then combine them into a master dark frame, principally for statistical reasons: the more sub-frames, the better quality of master frame.

This will give you a single (master) frame of hot and warm pixels generated in the imaging chip, electronically and thermally, including amplifier glow.

Second, subtract the dark frame from each of the light frames in order to remove hot and warm pixels and amplifier glow. However, other noise will remain and needs to be removed with other manipulations and software.

Dark Field Correction

Dark Field correction is another matter entirely. It does not refer to a single image and the recommended/default 10 frames captured to perform the **Dark Field** correction are not used to generate a master frame – nor are they simply subtracted from the light frames.

Instead, the 10 frames are first used to perform a **running stacking**, analogous to the stacking procedure applied in both the SSI software and the new Universe/SSI software.

Running Stacking: the first frame in the series of 10 is recorded in the camera as is. Then the first and second frames in the series of 10 are combined to form a new frame that is also recorded. Then the third frame is combined with the preceding 2 frames to form yet another combined frame that is also recorded ... and so on until you end up with 10 frames in a series that represent 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9 and 10 combined frames, respectively.

Note that stacked and combined frame #10 represents information derived from all 10 frames.

But hold on ... we are not talking CCD imaging here – this is video. When a CCD chip is activated it cranks at full blast and requires effective cooling to prevent it from rapidly heating up beyond a user-determined temperature. But video chips work differently: they heat up slowly and progressively. This means that the first frame of the series of 10 was taken at a lower chip temperature than the final one. Therefore, each of the 10 frames records different levels of thermal noise. In other words, when stored in the camera, these 10 combined frames represent a library of information that the camera and software can now choose from and use to CORRECT (note: not « **subtract from** ») the light image that we want to display on our computer screen.

Now, how does this work in practice – and why is it called a **Dark Field** correction?

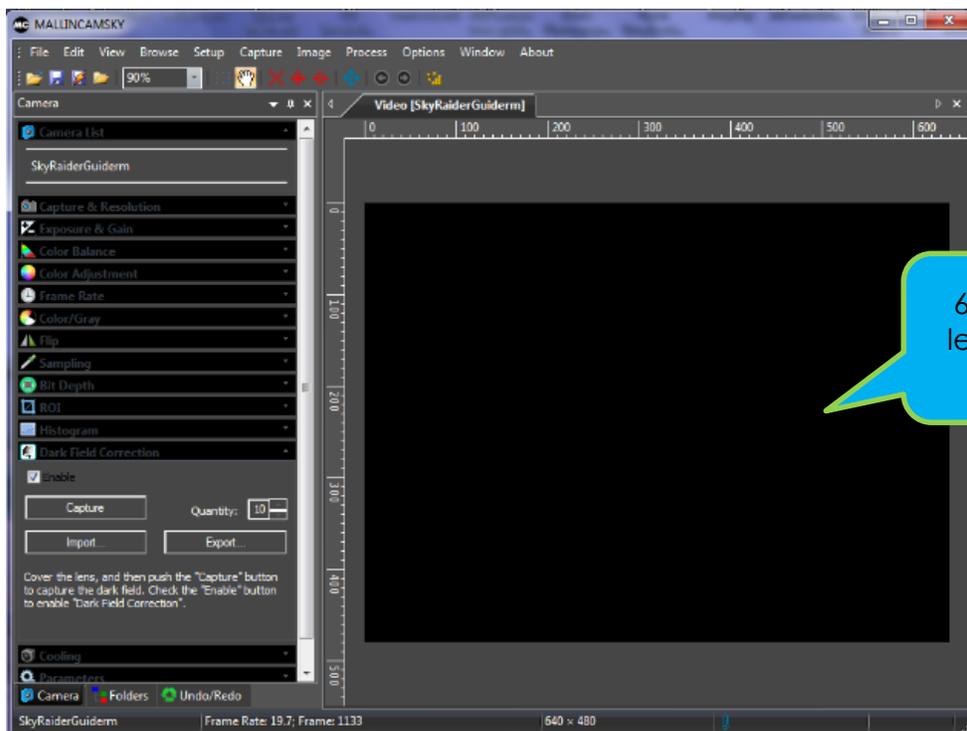
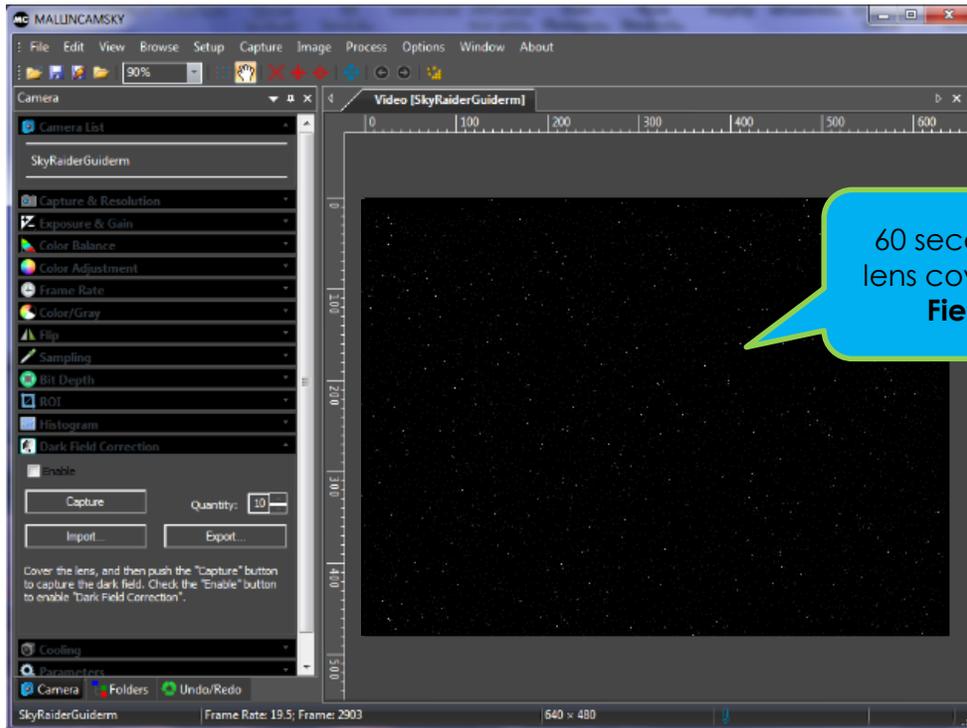
The **Dark Field** correction is prepared by the user at the beginning of an observing session by covering the camera or scope, pre-determining the exposure time and setting the software to automatically taking up to 10 images. We all know our equipment and the skies we observe under (or we certainly will with a bit of practice). We also have an idea of what range of filters we might use that night and the effect they have with respect to exposure times. Take this into account when selecting your exposure time for your 10 dark images.

But remember: this is NOT a **Dark Frame** subtraction – the exposures required for dark frame subtraction must be close to those used for the light frames of our astro-targets. Not so for **Dark Field** correction. The camera and software in the latter case are not looking for a single FRAME to subtract based on exposure time. They are looking at the 10 combined frames to see which one has the noise level that most closely matches the noise level in the light frame itself. In other words, they are looking for a noise FIELD. The point here is that camera and software will select the appropriate **Dark Field** for the correction, for both shorter and longer light frame exposure times from the same « **library** ».

In addition, unlike the single frame of a CCD dark frame, the images used for **Dark Field** correction are interlaced combinations of odd and even scan lines. Apparently this too factors into the fact that this correction removes ALL NOISE, not just hot and warm pixels.

The important point to retain here is that, because of the stacking and combining to form the library of images for the correction procedure, long light exposures do NOT require similarly long exposures for the **Dark Field** correction images. For example, a 2-minute light exposure using a narrow-band h-alpha filter may still only require the user to prepare ten 30 second dark images for the dark field correction. The precise numbers will vary with your equipment and conditions.

The two screen captures below demonstrate the difference that applying a Dark Field to an image can provide.



Setting up to Broadcast on Night Skies Network

Introduction

I found that when I first started connecting tonight Skies Network (NSN), things started happening too fast for me to keep track of everything at once. So, pre-planning was the most the most crucial step for me. I found that by doing test runs in the comfort of my house allowed me to develop my techniques that work for the equipment and software that I use. Below are the results and steps that I use to broadcast on NSN, feel free to follow them and/or made modification as you deem as necessary.



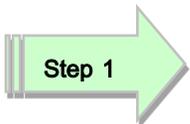
Computer real-estate will be your nemesis. So, depending upon the size of the monitor (laptop), then number of screens that you are using, then number of software programs that using are simultaneously are using, will dictate how you will manage your windows. I will describe how I have organized my windows under a variety of situations (1 computer, 1 computer with 2 monitors, which software packages am I using, and what am I trying to do this session). Remember, it's all about having fun, and **time** and **patience** are your best friends (not to mention all the guys and gals, and the Yahoo – MallinCam site:

<http://tech.groups.yahoo.com/group/mallincam/messages>

One of the most important decisions you will need to make with broadcasting the image of the SKYRAIDER is what Video capture software are you going to use. Some simple suggestions:

Currently MallincamSky is not capable of modifying the Video Image and having that Video Image be directly captured by NSN Flash. So if you want to use all the features of the MallincamSky software and broadcast those results, as well as save screen shots and videos of your images, then we need another program to capture MallincamSky's output and have the output from that program linked to NSN's Flash grabber.

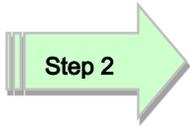
You currently have three choices for that other program: Splitcam, Manycam, WebcamMax. All three have about the same features, some of these have versions that will cost you, but all have a version that is free (reduced functions, advertisements, etc...). My current program of choice is Splitcam (I can live with the Advertisements). You will then use Manycam/Splitcam/Webcam Max along with MallincamSky Software to broadcast the images on NSN.



Plug in the SKYRAIDER camera into an USB port on your computer.



Always use the same port for your connected devices. I even mark on my laptop which USB port is for which device.

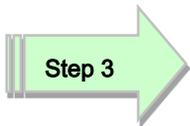


Start MallincamSky

Get the image of your object on the Image Window of MallincamSky, adjust the settings on the software for your planned object and size the window so you have room for other software on your monitor real-estate. If you have a dual Monitor system, move MallincamSky to the second monitor.



During your initial **NSN** experience, you will find it easier to even get the object of interest onto the MallincamSky Software window. This allows you to spend some time playing and adjusting the settings prior to connecting to NSN. As you become more comfortable, you will not worry about that and will adjust while connected to NSN (with the whole universe watching you live).



Start Manycam/Splitcam/WebcamMax



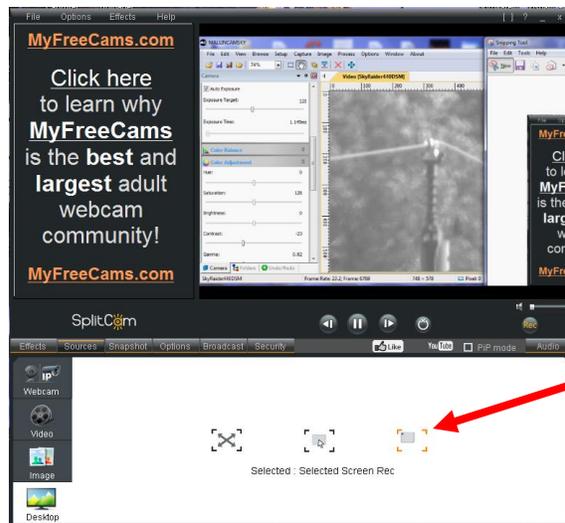
Size the Manycam/Splitcam/WebcamMax window so that is beside the MallincamSky Window and you can see both with little overlap. If you have a dual monitor system, you can slide both the MallincamSky Software Window and the Manycam/Splitcam/WebcamMax window to the second monitor.



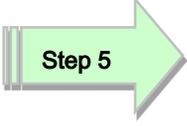
Have Manycam/ Splitcam/Webcam Max grab the window image



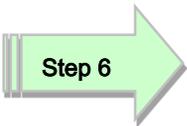
All of these packages have the ability to get a desktop image. Choose this option and overlay the sizing window on top of your **MallincamSky Software Image Window**. You may need to play with the sizes until you obtain the ideal combination of both the fit in your screen. You want to ensure that you get a good image of whatever the MallincamSky Software is looking at inside the Manycam/ Splitcam/ Webcam Max window.



This allows you to select the size and location of the desktop that you want on the SplitCam. Just slide and adjust the overlay on top of your MallincamSky's Software image.

Step 5**Adjust the Resolution and frames/second (fps) value on Manycam/Splitcam/WebcamMax**Note

This will be trial and error; it all depends upon resolution, bandwidth, and what over members on NSN experience from your broadcasted image. You will end up adjusting both on the Manycam/Splitcam/Webcam Max side as well and on the NSN side to get the best image. A helpful hint: I slide over the Manycam/Splitcam/Webcam Max window so that some of the text appears in the Manycam/Splitcam/Webcam Max window. Can the members on NSN read the words? If not, adjust. Remember, this may take a couple of sessions until you obtain the ideal resolutions for your particular setup. For me I have set both Manycam /Splitcam at 640 x 480 at 15 fps.

Step 6**Minimize the Manycam/Splitcam/WebcamMax software window**

Click on the little underscore on the top right side of the Manycam/Splitcam/Webcam Max window. This will eliminate the Manycam/Splitcam/Webcam Max window from your desktop (it should now appear on the bottom of your desktop monitor), but note that the software is still running and still has hold of your desktop (MallincamSky) Image location.

Note

Do not move the MallincamSky Window around your desktop when broadcasting, since Manycam /Splitcam/WebcamMax is just grabbing the real-estate location that currently your MallincamSky Software image is situated at. If you move the MallincamSky Software Window, then Manycam /Splitcam/ Webcam Max will still grab the desktop location, but may not grab the whole MallincamSky Video Image. Don't be afraid to practice moving the MallincamSky Software window when not broadcasting to learn how it affects the displayed Manycam/ Splitcam/ WebcamMax Window. If you need to, you can again use the Manycam/ Splitcam/ WebcamMax desktop select icon and select or change the location or size of the window for it to grab.

If you have a dual monitor, you can leave the Manycam/Splitcam/WebcamMax window open on the second monitor since real-estate will not be an issue in the situation. In fact with Splitcam, you have an option to view the displayed image in full screen mode by clicking on the "[]" symbol in the upper right side of the screen (the *escape key* returns you back to normal size).

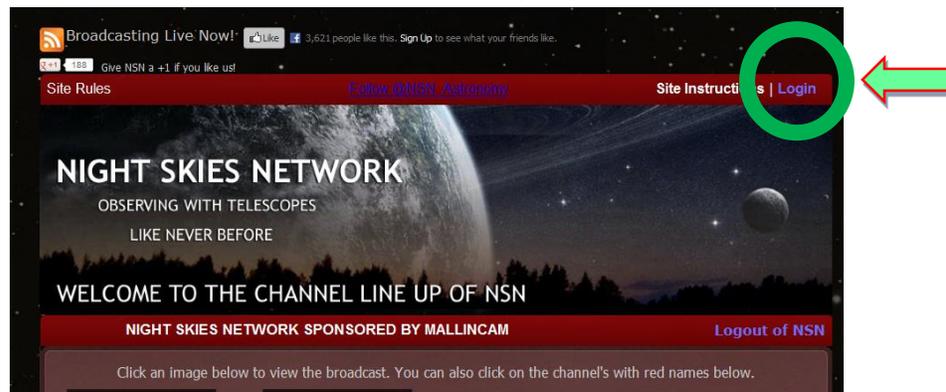
Step 7**Start your Web Browser of Choice**

You may have to play with a number of Browsers to see which one works well with your particular computer setup. I have had success with many browsers: *Chrome*, *Internet Explorer*, *Firefox*, and *Maxthon*.

Step 8

Log into Night Skies Network (NSN)

Have your Web Brower go to the location: <http://www.nightskiesnetwork.ca/> . Locate and click on the **BROADCASTERS AND MEMBERS SIGN IN** button. The next **Login** screen will ask you to enter your **username** and **password** . You will next be presented with the **Channel Line Up** screen for Night Skies network. Click on the **Login** selection on the upper right hand side of the screen.



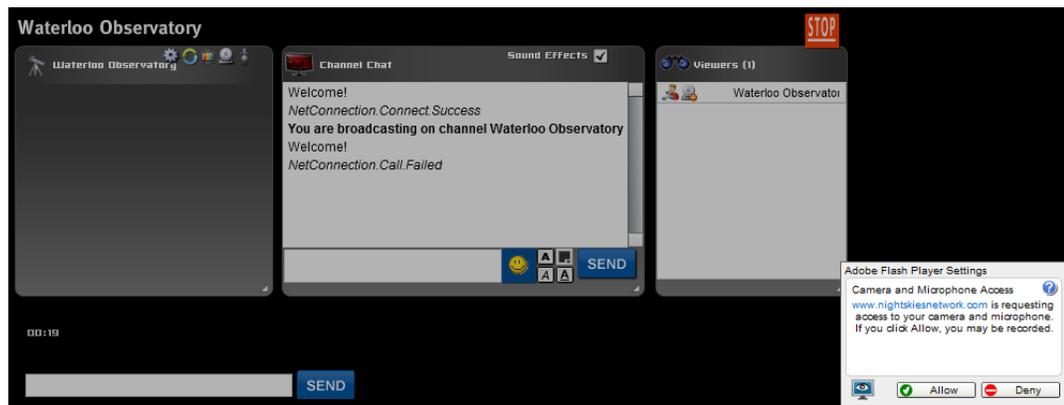
You will be presented with the **Channel Launch Sign In** screen for NSN. Again enter your **Username** and **Password** and click on **Publish Channel** button.



Step 9

Allow Adobe Flash to use your Manycam/Splitcam/WebcamMax

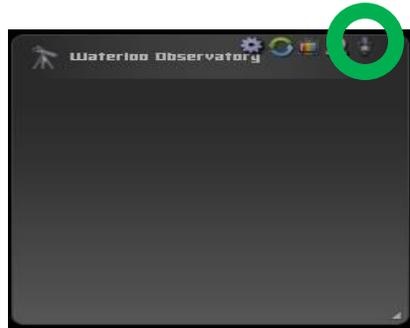
The **Adobe Flash Player Settings** window will pop up on your screen asking you for permission to use your camera and your microphone. Select **Allow**.



Step 10

Turn off your Microphone

Until you have your microphone figured out, it is best to initially turn it off. If you do not, the viewers on NSN may hear an extreme loud buzzing (feedback noise). Later on we will look at using the microphone, but until then I recommend **CLICKING** on the little **microphone symbol** on the upper right corner of the NSN video display window to disable the microphone.



Step 11

Set a message for the NSN observers

It is a good idea to display a message above the NSN display window, so that the other NSN views understand what you are doing. When initially setting up (which usually takes longer when you are learning), I usually type the message **“Setting Up the Camera”** then **CLICK** on the **SEND** button to have it displayed.



When you are up and running and everything is working as it should, you will change the message to indicate, what telescope, mount, and camera you are using. For that is the most frequently asked question from the NSN viewers.

Step 12

Select the Camera

Now is the time to activate the camera, or in our case have NSN driver point to our ManyCam/Splitcam/Webcam Max output.

- **RIGHT CLICK** inside the NSN Video window to bring up a **Settings Window**



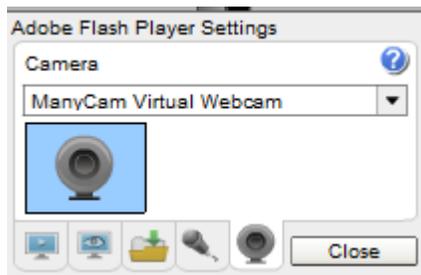
- **CLICK** on the **Settings** choice and you will be presented with the **Adobe Flash Player Settings Window**.



- **CLICK** on the **Camera Icon** and you will be presented with a **pull down menu** to select your camera.

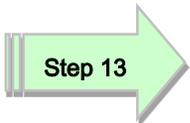


- **CLICK** on the **Pull Down** list to select your camera of choice.



- **CLICK** on **CLOSE** to Continue.

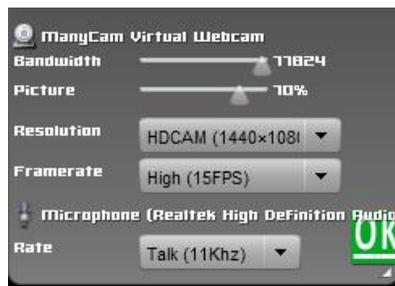
NSN will remember what camera you chose from the last visit. So usually you only have to go through this process whenever you want to change what camera device you would like the **NSN flash driver** to use.



Choose your Camera Settings

We will now select the settings for our camera. We have the option of changing: The **Bandwidth**, **Picture**, **Resolution**, **Framerate**, and even the **microphone rate** (when you are ready). The changes will **not be activated** until you **CLICK** on the Green **OK** symbol in the window.

- **LEFT CLICK** inside the NSN video Window to bring up the **Camera Settings Window**.



- **Use the sliders** for **Band Width** and **Picture** values. I usually have both of my sliders way on the right. Over time you will find the sweet spot for your system.
- Select your **Resolution** from the **Pull Down Menu**. Select a starting value of **(640 x 480)** for the system. Again, play with these to see what settings the NSN viewers say is the best.
- Select your **Frame Rate**. From its **Pull Down Menu**. I usually leave it at 15 fps, but I have used 30 fps at times. Again trial and error for your system.
- **CLICK** on the green **OK** symbol to accept these settings.

That's it, you are done. If everything is working well and the Window's gods are in a good mood, you should be broadcasting whatever object the **SkyRaider** is capturing. You should now enter another Message and **SEND** it out to indicate what system you are using and what object you are viewing.



There is a time delay on what you say (if you have your microphone activated) and do on your computer as compared to what others see (and hear) on the NSN broadcast.



You will freeze (and I don't mean like what Chris does when he broadcasts in winter till 3am), I mean from time to time your NSN connection will freeze for no apparent reason. It happens to us all. When this happens, you can simply terminate the Web browser program (Ctrl –Alt-Del). Then restart your browser and Log back into NSN. This usual is a very quick process. But, sometime we all have to restart our computer (this takes longer for we need to power down hardware and software) and reactivate everything before login back in. Don't worry, the NSN viewers sense what is happening and will keep the conversations going while waiting for you to come back on.

Don't be afraid to ask for advice by typing in on the Video chat window, as we are all learning and are willing to assist whenever we can.

When ready, try activating the microphone (click on the microphone symbol). Other will let you know if they can hear you, or if there is noise. Remember there are settings for the microphone in the camera settings window.



When you are finished with your session, you simply say your good nights to the crowd of NSN viewers to let them know that your session is ending. **CLICK** on the red **STOP** button on your NSN Window and NSN will shut down your channel and you can power down your system and call it an evening (It won't force the NSN viewers off the channel and some viewers will continue chatting long after you have gone to bed).



Focal Reducers

MFR-8

MFR 8 Mk II Kit. This focal reducer is made for the **SkyRaider** Series of cameras. Typically, it is a **MFR-5 II** without the rear (**MFR-6**) small part. The front lens has a high precision achromatic 25 mm double sided coated lens, and includes two 10 mm spacers and a 5 mm spacer offering a variety of variable focal reduction for just about all telescope type. This is an ideal combination for the SkyRaider Series of cameras. If a user already owns a **MFR-5** type focal reducer there is no need to purchase the **MFR-8 II Kit**.

The **MFR-8 Mk II Kit** will vary focal reduction from 0.55X down to about 0.4X. Test result did confirm reduction as low as 0.38X reduction when using the **SkyRaider-DS** using all supplied spacers.



The SkyRaiderDS2.3 Plus has a larger sensor than the other lines of SkyRaider cameras. Keep an eye on the Mallincam Site, as a 2-inch Focal Reducer is coming soon.

