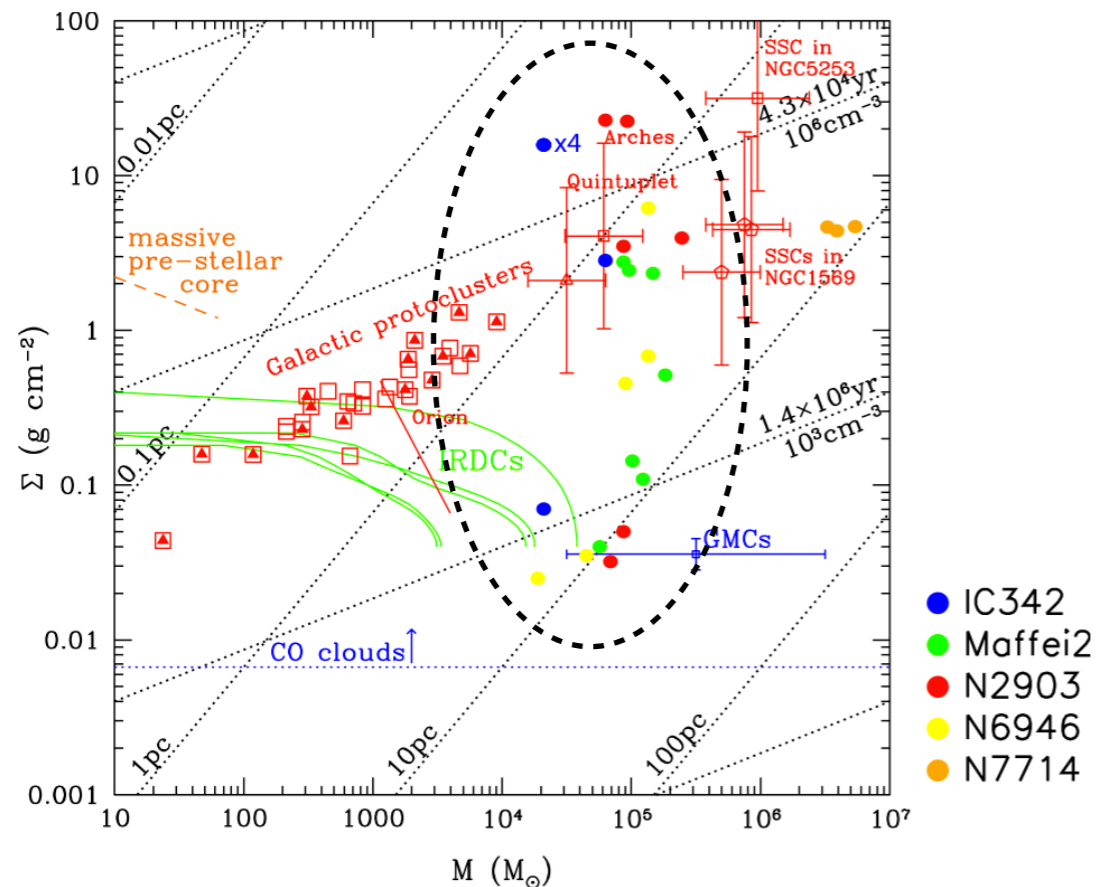


Embedded Star Cluster Formation Near Galactic Centers

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How do super star clusters form near the centers of galaxies?



Probe the youngest SSCs ($A_K \sim 3$) and their HII regions using [Nell] at $12.8 \mu\text{m}$: (1) very bright, (2) extinction free, (3) insensitive to densities, (4) high spatial resolution, (5) recovers point sources and extended features. COMICS offers unique capabilities.

(a) Successfully resolved compact sources, with star cluster masses 3 to $11 \times 10^4 M_\odot$; (b) detected extended features (associated with massive stars and missing in radio and NIR) detected for the first time; (c) MIR followup spectroscopy, constrain ages of clusters and densities of HII regions.

