

## Image: Blue on Mars

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Image Credit: NASA/JPL-Caltech/University of Arizona

This image shows part of the floor of Rabe Crater, a large impact crater in Mars' southern highlands.

Dark dunes--accumulations of wind blown sand--cover part of crater's floor, and contrast with the surrounding bright-colored outcrops.

The extreme close-up view reveals a thumbprint-like texture of smaller ridges and troughs covering the surfaces of the larger dunes. These

smaller ripples are also formed and shaped by blowing wind in the thin [atmosphere](#) of [Mars](#).

One puzzling question is why the dunes are dark compared with the relative bright layered material contained within the crater. The probable answer is that the source of the dark sand is not local to this crater; rather, this topographic depression has acted as a sand trap.

This image was originally released Oct. 24, 2007.

Provided by JPL/NASA

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