

Sandy streets over the Atlantic

February 10 2012, by Jason Major



Dust from the Sahara blows past the Cape Verde islands on Feb. 9, 2012. Credit: EOSnap/Chelys SRRS (Satellite Rapid Response System)

Thick dust from the Sahara blowing over the ocean off the western coast

of Africa encounters the islands of Cape Verde, forming a wake of swirling “vortex streets” visible by satellite.

These swirls are also known as [von Karman vortices](#). When wind encounters the island, the disturbance in the flow propagates downwind in the form of a double row of vortices, which alternate their direction of rotation.

Such effects can be seen anywhere a liquid — including air — flows around a solid body. They are named after engineer and fluid dynamicist Theodore von Kármán.

In the image above, the dust and sand is thick enough to nearly block out some of the islands entirely. See the full scale version here on the Chelys “EOSnap” Earth Snapshot [site](#).

Source: [Universe Today](#)

Citation: Sandy streets over the Atlantic (2012, February 10) retrieved 26 April 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2012-02-sandy-streets-atlantic.html>

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