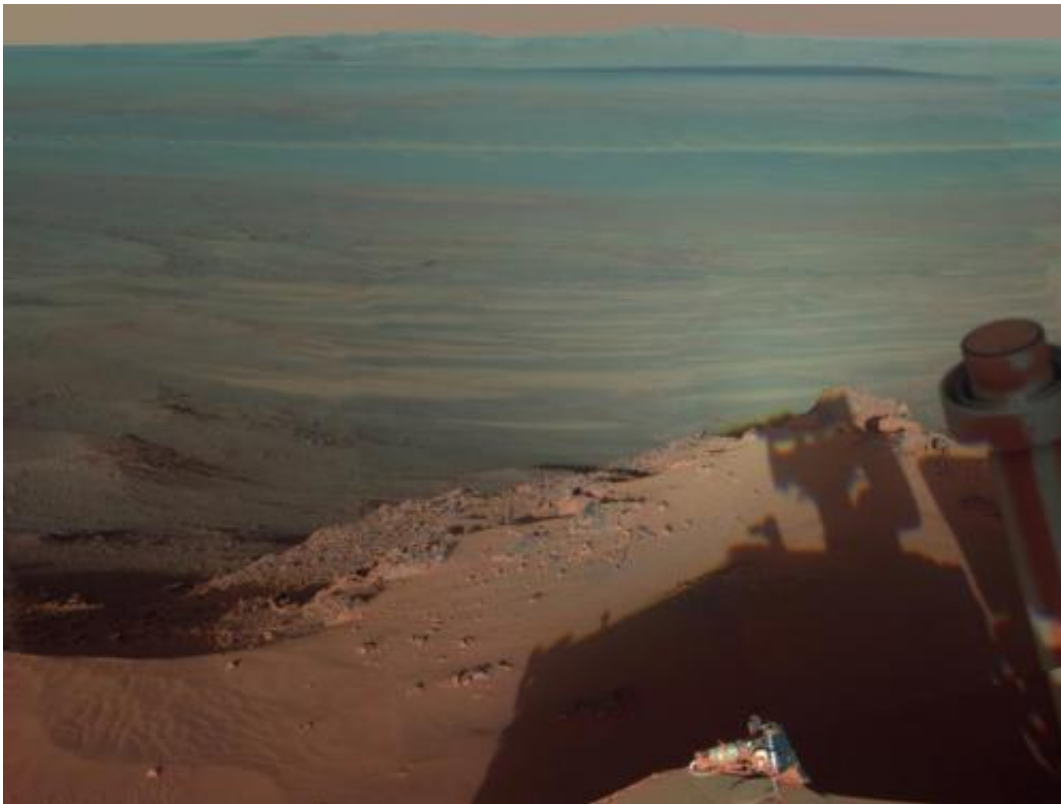


# Dark shadows on Mars: Scene from durable NASA rover

May 23 2012, By Guy Webster

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NASA's Mars Rover Opportunity catches its own late-afternoon shadow in this dramatically lit view eastward across Endeavour Crater on Mars. The rover used the panoramic camera (Pancam) between about 4:30 and 5:00 p.m. local Mars time to record images taken through different filters and combined into this mosaic view. Credit: NASA/JPL-Caltech/Cornell/Arizona State Univ.

(Phys.org) -- Like a tourist waiting for just the right lighting to snap a

favorite shot during a stay at the Grand Canyon, NASA's Mars Exploration Rover Opportunity has used a low sun angle for a memorable view of a large Martian crater.

The resulting view catches a shadow of the rover in the foreground and the giant basin in the distance. Opportunity is perched on the western rim of Endeavour Crater looking eastward. The crater spans about 14 miles (22 kilometers) in diameter. Opportunity has been studying the edge of Endeavour Crater since arriving there in August 2011.

The scene is presented in false color to emphasize differences in materials such as dark dunes on the crater floor. This gives portions of the image an aqua tint.

Opportunity took most of the component images on March 9, 2012, while the solar-powered rover was spending several weeks at one location to preserve energy during the [Martian winter](#). It has since resumed driving and is currently investigating a patch of windblown [Martian dust](#) near its winter haven.

Opportunity and its rover twin, Spirit, completed their three-month prime missions on Mars in April 2004. Both rovers continued for years of bonus, extended missions. Both have made important discoveries about wet environments on ancient Mars that may have been favorable for supporting microbial life. Spirit stopped communicating in 2010. Since landing in the Meridiani region of Mars in January 2004, Opportunity has driven 21.4 miles (34.4 kilometers).

Provided by JPL/NASA

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