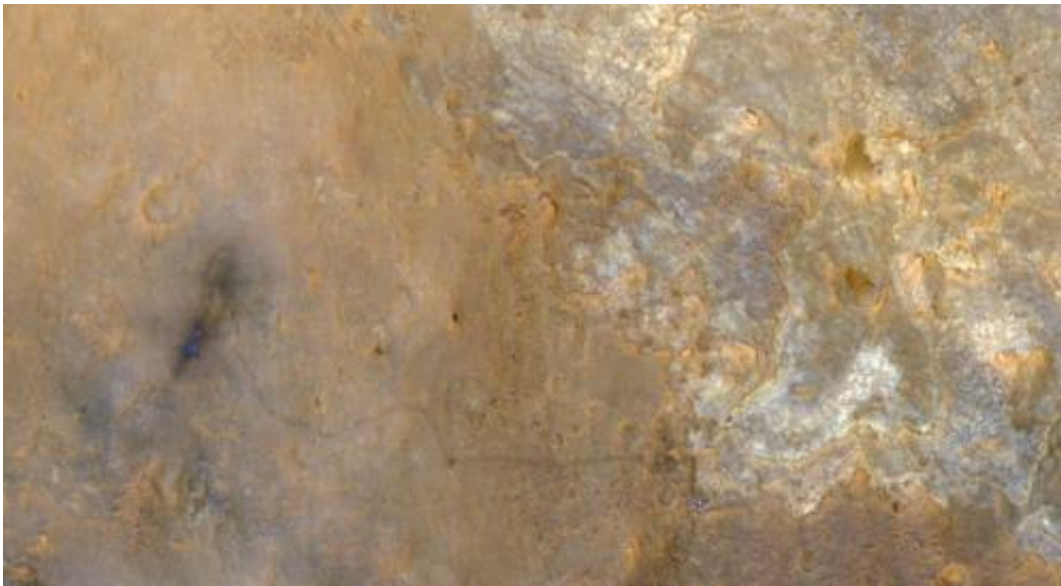


Curiosity Mars Rover Gleams in View from Orbiter

July 25 2013



NASA's Mars Science Laboratory rover Curiosity appears as a bluish dot near the lower right corner of this enhanced-color view from the High Resolution Imaging Science Experiment (HiRISE) camera on NASA's Mars Reconnaissance Orbiter. The rover's tracks are visible extending from the landing site, "Bradbury Landing," in the left half of the scene. Two bright, relatively blue spots surrounded by darker patches are where the Mars Science Laboratory spacecraft's landing jets cleared away reddish surface dust at the landing site. North is toward the top. For scale, the two parallel lines of the wheel tracks are about 10 feet (3 meters) apart. Credit: NASA/JPL-Caltech/Univ. of Arizona

An image from NASA's Mars Reconnaissance Orbiter released today shows NASA's Curiosity Mars rover and the wheel tracks from its

landing site to the "Glenelg" area where the rover worked for the first half of 2013.

The orbiter's High Resolution Imaging Science Experiment (HiRISE) camera captured the scene on June 27, 2013, with the orbiter rolled for an eastward-looking angle rather than straight downward. The afternoon sun illuminated the scene from the western sky, so the lighting was nearly behind the camera. This geometry hides shadows and reveals subtle color variations.

Curiosity that day was examining an outcrop called "Shaler," the rover mission's final science target in the Glenelg area before commencing a many-month trek southwestward to an entry point for the lower layers of Mount Sharp. The rover appears as a bright blue spot in the enhanced coloring of the image.

The image shows two scour marks at the Bradbury Landing site where the Mars Science Laboratory mission's sky crane landing system placed Curiosity onto the ground on Aug. 6, 2012, EDT and Universal Time (Aug. 5, PDT). The scour marks are where the landing system's rockets cleared away reddish surface dust. Visible tracks commencing at the landing site show the path the rover traveled eastward to Glenelg.

HiRISE is operated by the University of Arizona, Tucson. The instrument was built by Ball Aerospace & Technologies Corp., Boulder, Colo. NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory, a division of the California Institute of Technology, Pasadena, manages the Mars Reconnaissance Orbiter Project and Mars Science Laboratory Project for NASA's Science Mission Directorate, Washington.

Provided by NASA

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