

Satellite view shows Opportunity Mars rover still hard at work 10 years on

July 18 2013, by Nancy Atkinson



This image taken by the High Resolution Imaging Science Experiment (HiRISE) camera on NASA's Mars Reconnaissance Orbiter on July 8, 2013, captures Opportunity traversing south (at the end of the white arrow) to new science targets and a winter haven at "Solander Point," another portion of the Endeavour rim. The relatively level ground between Cape York and Solander Point is called "Botany Bay." The image was taken 10 years after Opportunity was launched from Florida on July 7, 2013, EDT and PDT (July 8, Universal Time). Image credit: NASA/JPL-Caltech/Univ. of Arizona.

Ten years to the day after the Opportunity rover launched to Mars, the HiRISE camera on the Mars Reconnaissance Orbiter snapped this image

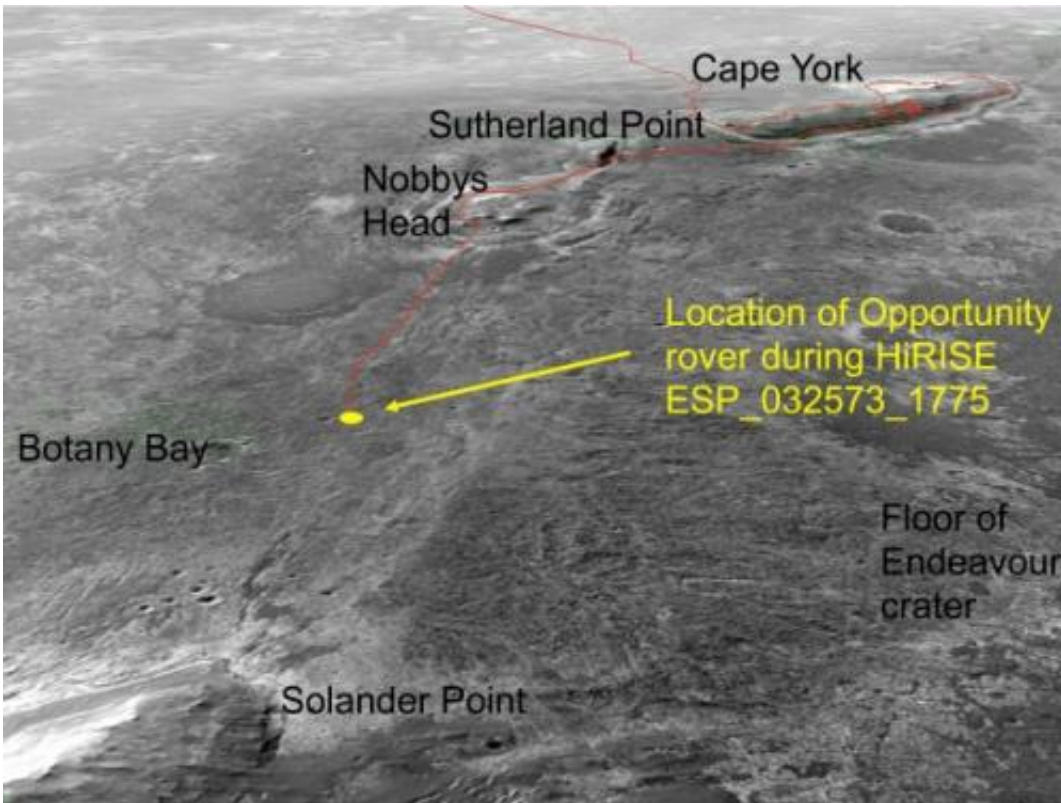
of the rover, still toiling away on the surface of Mars. The white dot in the image is Oppy, as the rover was crossing the level ground called "Botany Bay" on its way to a rise called "Solander Point." We're looking into whether there's a way to determine if the rover was actually moving at the time the image was taken.

This, of course, is not the first time HiRISE has found the various rovers on Mars' surface. Images from orbit help rover drivers find safe routes, as well as helping to identify enticing science targets for future investigation.

"The Opportunity team particularly appreciates the color image of Solander Point because it provides substantially more information on the terrains and traverse that Opportunity will be conducting over the next phase of our exploration of the rim of Endeavour crater," said Mars Science Laboratory Project Scientist Matt Golombek, from JPL.

Opportunity currently holds the US space program's all-time record for distance traversed on another planetary body at greater than 36 kilometers or 22 miles. The Lunar Reconnaissance Orbiter team recently confirmed that the Lunokhod 2 rover traveled 42 km (26 miles) on the Moon.

Opportunity was launched from on July 7, 2003, PDT and EDT (July 8, Universal Time). Opportunity has been on the western rim of 20-kilometer-diameter Endeavour Crater in Meridiani Planum for about two years investigating the 3 to 4 billion-year-old [sedimentary layers](#) of Cape York. Now the rover is traversing south to new science targets and a winter haven at Solander Point.



An oblique, northward-looking view based on stereo orbital imaging, shows the location of Opportunity on its journey from Cape York to Solander Point when HiRISE took the new color image. Endeavour Crater is about 14 miles (22 kilometers) in diameter. The distance from Cape York to Solander Point is about 1.2 miles (2 kilometers). The red line indicates the path the rover has driven. Credit: NASA/JPL-Caltech/Univ. of Arizona.

Keep on truckin'!

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