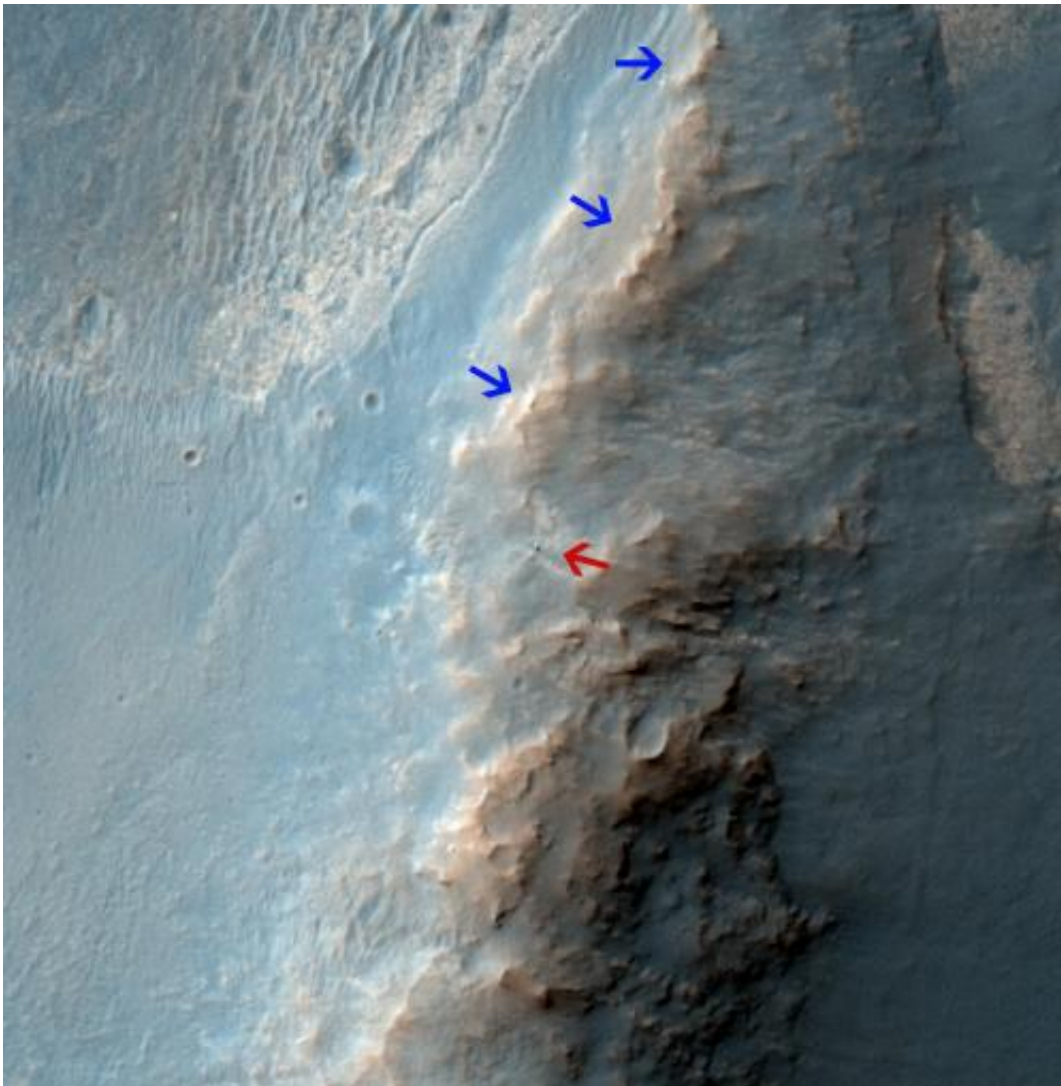


Image: NASA Mars orbiter views Opportunity rover on ridge

February 20 2014



Credit: NASA/JPL-Caltech/Univ. of Arizona

(Phys.org) —A new image from a telescopic camera orbiting Mars shows NASA's Mars Exploration Rover Opportunity at work on "Murray Ridge," without any new impact craters nearby.

The Feb. 14 view from the High Resolution Imaging Science Experiment (HiRISE) camera on NASA's Mars Reconnaissance Orbiter is above. Rover tracks from Opportunity, as well as the rover itself, are visible.

A rock, dubbed "Pinnacle Island," appeared in January 2014 next to Opportunity where it had been absent a few days earlier. After that, researchers using HiRISE planned this observation to check the remote possibility that a fresh impact by an object from space might have excavated a crater near Opportunity and thrown this rock to its new location. No fresh impact site is seen in the image. Meanwhile, observations by the rover solved the Pinnacle Island mystery by finding where the rock had been struck, broken and moved by a rover wheel.

Murray Ridge is part of the western rim of Endeavour Crater, an impact scar that is billions of years old and about 14 miles (22 kilometers) in diameter.

Provided by JPL/NASA

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