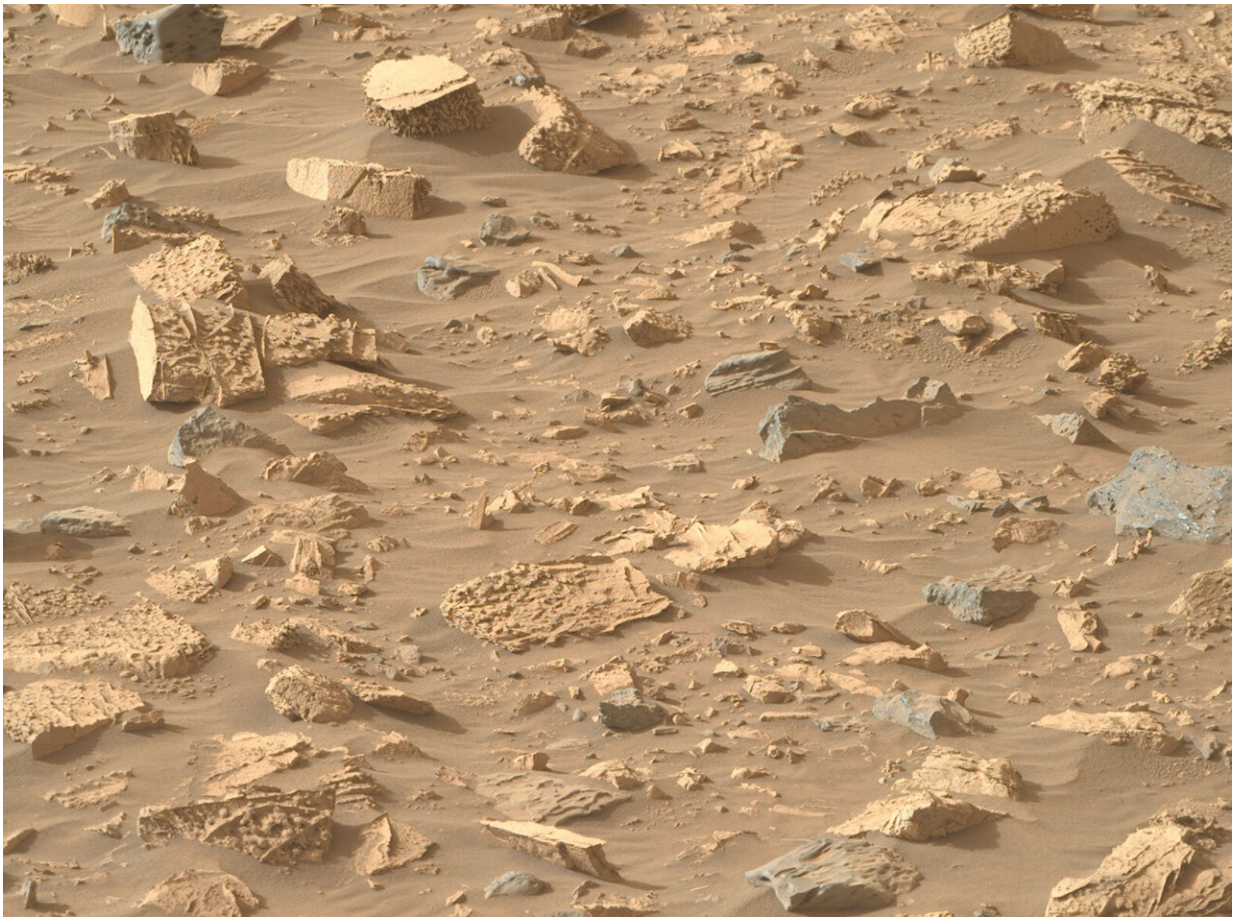


# Perseverance finds 'popcorn'-like rocks on planet Mars

June 18 2024, by Athanasios Klidas

---



Mars Perseverance Sol 1175—Right Mastcam-Z Camera: A jumbled field of light toned rocks with unusual 'popcorn'-like textures and abundant mineral veins. NASA's Mars Perseverance rover acquired this image using its Right Mastcam-Z camera. Mastcam-Z is a pair of cameras located high on the rover's mast. This image was acquired on June 10, 2024 (Sol 1175) at the local mean solar time of 14:04:57. Credit: NASA/JPL-Caltech/ASU

After months of driving, Perseverance has finally arrived at "Bright Angel," discovering oddly textured rock unlike any the rover has seen before. The team now plans to drive up the slope to uncover the origin of this rock sequence and its relationship to the margin unit.

Having completed a survey of the intriguing and diverse boulders at "Mount Washburn," the [rover](#) headed north, parking just in front of an exposure of layered light toned rock. This provided the team with a first close-up look of the rocks that make up the "Bright Angel" exposure, so Perseverance stopped to acquire images, before driving west to a larger and more accessible outcrop where the rover will conduct detailed exploration.

Perseverance arrived at the base of this outcrop on sol 1175, and [geologists](#) on the science team were mesmerized by the strange textures of the light toned rocks found there. These rocks are filled with sharp ridges that resemble the mineral veins found at the base of the fan, but there appears to be more of them here.

Additionally, some rocks are densely packed with small spheres, and they jokingly referred to this as a "popcorn"-like texture. Together, these features suggest that groundwater flowed through these rocks after they were laid down. Next, Perseverance will gradually ascend up the [rock](#) exposure, taking measurements as it goes.

Over the weekend, the abrasion tool will be used to take a close-up look and acquire detailed chemical information using the instruments on the rover's arm. With this [data](#) in hand, the team will decide whether or not to sample. Once the exploration at "Bright Angel" is complete, it will drive south back across Neretva Vallis and explore a site called "Serpentine Rapids."

Provided by NASA

Citation: Perseverance finds 'popcorn'-like rocks on planet Mars (2024, June 18) retrieved 19 June 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2024-06-perseverance-popcorn-planet-mars.html>

This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.