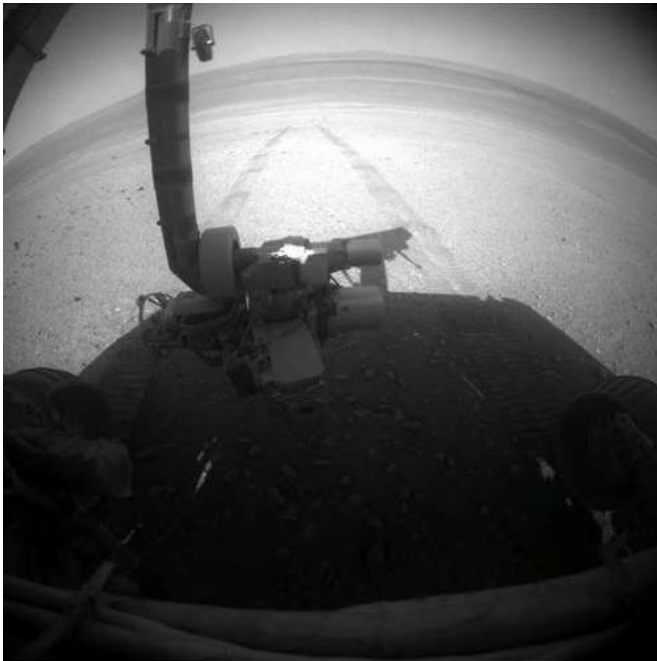


# Opportunity rover tops 35 kilometers of driving

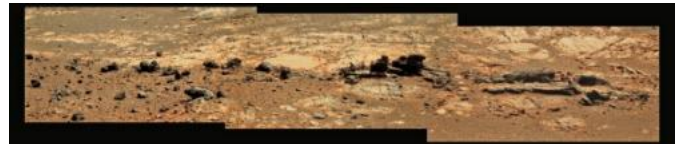
3 September 2012, by Nancy Atkinson



The Opportunity Mars rover looks back at the tracks left along the rim of Endeavour Crater. Credit: NASA/JPL-Caltech

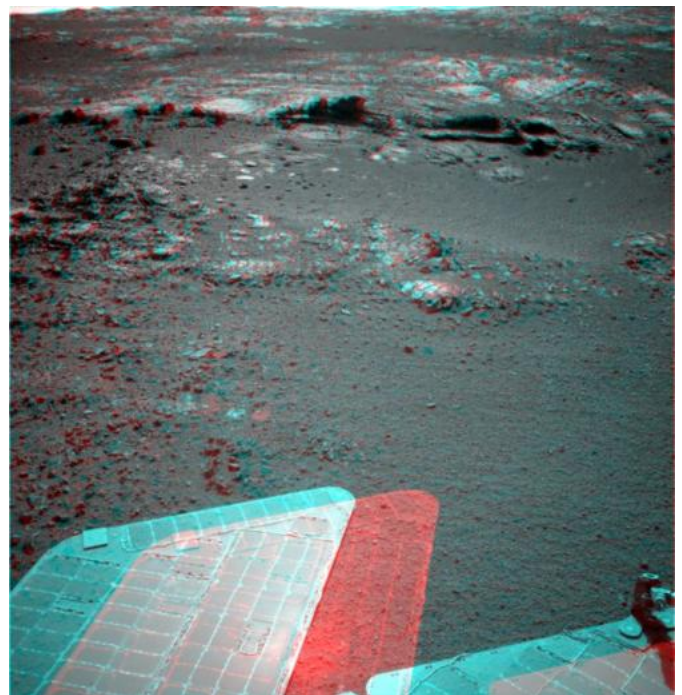
Meanwhile, back in Meridiani Planum ... the Opportunity rover keeps on trucking, and has now exceeded over 35 kilometers (21.75 miles) of driving on its odometer! Quite an accomplishment for the Energizer Bunny of Mars rovers, now operating for 3,057 Martian sols. As the MER team says, "Not bad for a vehicle designed for only about 1 kilometer (.6 miles) of distance and 90 sols (days) of lifetime."

Oppy is now moving south along the inboard edge of Cape York on the rim of Endeavour Crater surveying exposed outcrop in search of phyllosilicate [clay minerals](#) that have been detected from orbit. These outcrops are quite interesting and attention-grabbing; here's a look in color from Stuart Atkinson:



Credit: NASA/JPL

and in 3-D:



Credit: NASA/JPL

Wow!

As Stu writes in his Road to Endeavour [blog](#), "What are those rocks made of? How did this feature form? What do the different colours and textures

mean? These are all questions which the MER team will be hoping to answer over the next few days, I'm sure. I think we'll see Oppy driving closer to this outcrop and studying it in a lot of detail."

The MER team reports that on Sol 3055 (Aug. 27, 2012), the Rock Abrasion Tool (RAT) on the end of the robotic arm was imaged (top image) to re-confirm the available bit for future grinding and the [Alpha Particle X-ray Spectrometer](#) (APXS) collected a measurement of atmospheric argon.

Opportunity's [solar array](#) energy production is good, producing about 568 watt-hours.

So, even though the Curiosity rover is grabbing the headlines, don't forget that Opportunity is still keepin' on, working hard on Mars.

**More information:**

[marsrover.nasa.gov/mission/status.html#opportunity](http://marsrover.nasa.gov/mission/status.html#opportunity)

Source: [Universe Today](#)

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