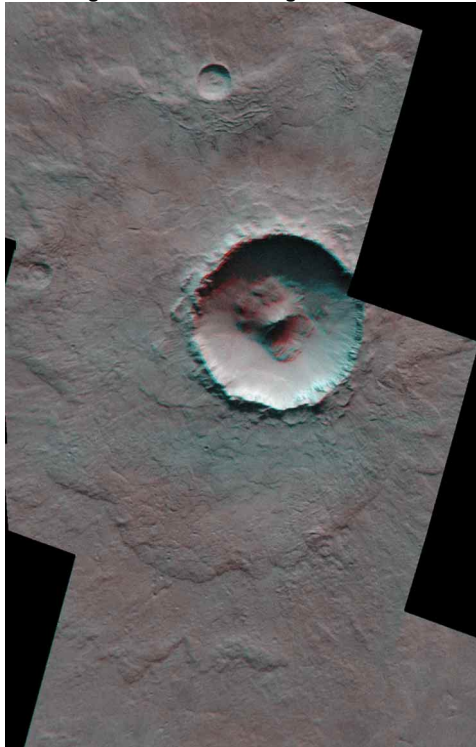


CRATERS

Meteor Crater, Arizona, USA, Earth

Meteor Crater is one of the youngest and best-preserved impact craters on Earth. The crater formed roughly 50,000 years ago when a 30-meter-wide meteor weighing 100,000 tons struck the Arizona desert. The resulting explosion created a 1.1-kilometer-wide, 200-meter-deep crater. Meteor Crater is a simple crater since it has no central peak or rim terraces. The heavily cratered history of the Moon indicates that Earth also had many impact events early in its history. The processes of erosion and plate tectonics have combined to erase nearly all Earth's craters. To date, only about 140 impact craters have been identified on Earth, and most of those are severely eroded or buried by later rock units.

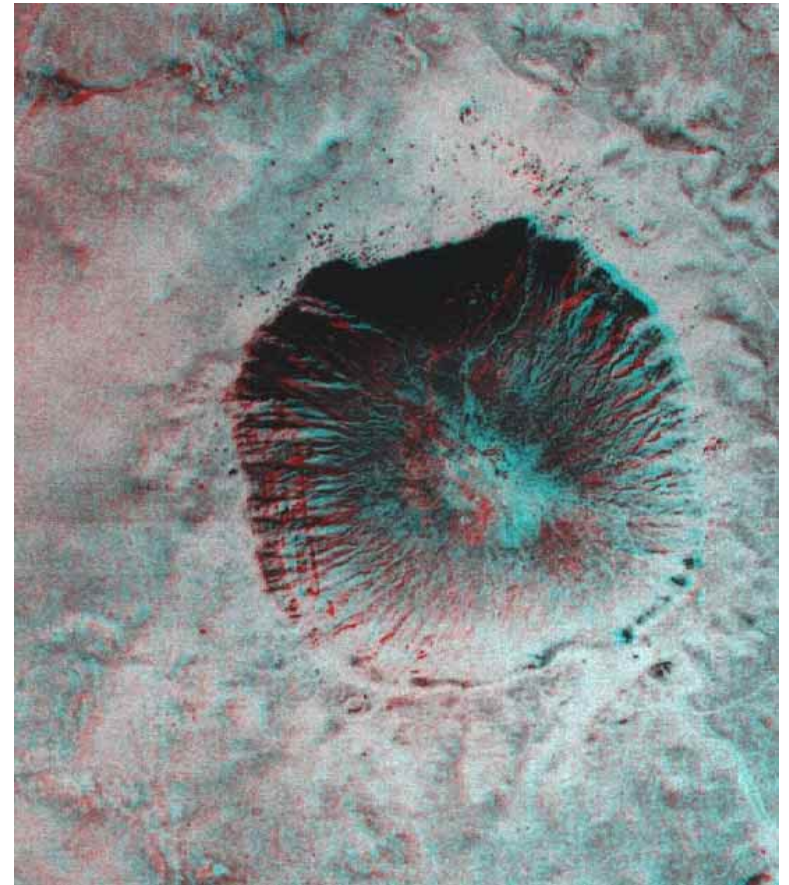
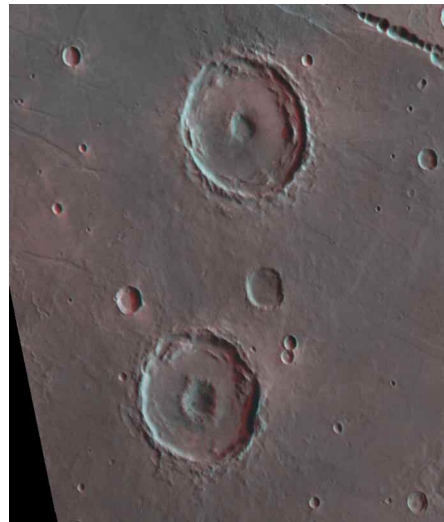
use 3-D glasses to view image



3-D Tour of the Solar System ©Lunar and Planetary Institute, 1997

Arandas, Acidalia Planitia, Mars

Arandas is an example of a martian crater with "fluidized" ejecta. It is a potential indicator of the presence of ground ice on Mars.



use 3-D glasses to view image

Pit Craters, Mars

These two large impact craters are examples of central pit craters. Both are approximately 52 kilometers across, and there is a 15-kilometer-wide pit in the center of each crater. Other craters of similar size on Mars have central peaks. Many pit craters are found on Mars.

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