

VOLCANOS

Island of Hawai'i, Hawai'i, USA, Earth

The island of Hawai'i rises 9 kilometers above the ocean floor although only 4 kilometers are visible above sea level. The island is probably the largest mountain on Earth and consists of five shield volcanos with broad gentle slopes. Hawai'i is the largest and youngest of some 110 volcanos that form the Hawai'i-Emperor underwater volcanic chain. This chain of islands stretches 6000 kilometers from the center of the Pacific basin to the eastern shore of Russia. The oldest known volcano in the chain dates back nearly 80 million years. These volcanos formed over a hot spot rising from deep within the Earth. A new volcano is already beginning to form off the southeast coast of Hawai'i.

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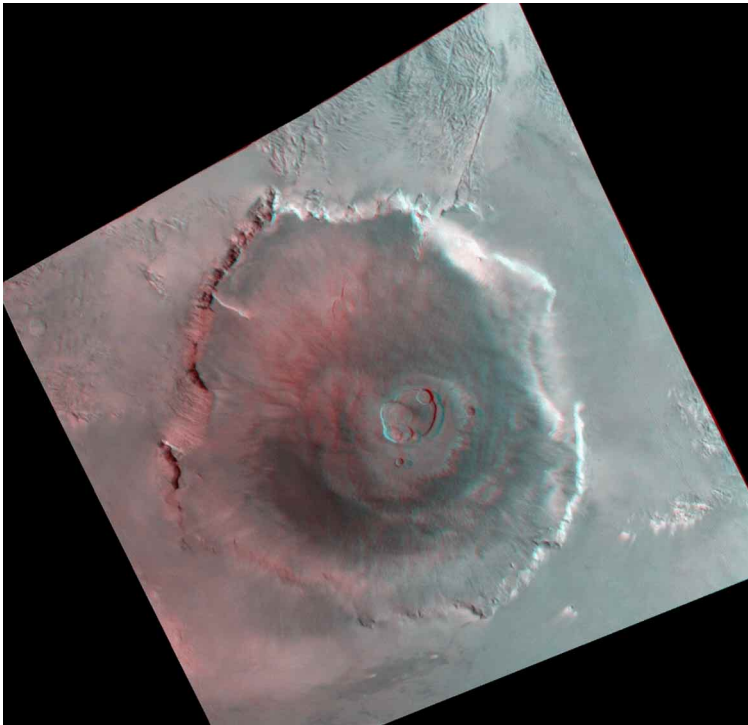


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Olympus Mons, Tharsis Montes, Mars

Olympus Mons is the largest of the more than 12 large volcanos in the Tharsis Montes region on Mars. At 600 kilometers across and 21 kilometers high, Olympus Mons is probably the largest volcano in the solar system. In contrast, the largest volcano on Earth, Mauna Loa, is 120 kilometers across and 9 kilometers high. Olympus Mons is a classic broad shield volcano with gentle slopes. The general features of Olympus Mons resemble those of the great Hawai'ian volcanos. Some of the lava flows on Olympus Mons probably formed in the last 200 million years and are among the youngest features on Mars.

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