

News & Comments

A New Huge Eye-Shaped Crater is Discovered on Mars

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NASA's European Space Agency has released another image that will certainly induce pareidolia, the phenomenon in which recognizable shapes in inanimate objects can be seen. Mars Express sent back this image of an eerily shaped crater that looks eerily similar to a human eye - or perhaps a human vein - to Earth. However, some of the characteristics of the crater were shaped by water that once flowed over the surface of Mars.

Aonia Terra is a region on the southern hemisphere of Mars that contains a crater measuring 30 km (18.6 miles) in diameter. It is far from the biggest or most impressive crater studied by Mars Express; it's just a short distance away from Lowell Crater, measuring more than 200 km across.

In the early Solar System, a violent period known as the Late Heavy Bombardment was responsible for many of the craters such as Lowell.

Earth was also bombarded during its formation, (which provided us with water and organic compounds), but the evidence was erased due to atmospheric processes and earthquakes. While on Mars, a barren and geologically quieter planet, the evidence remains, giving us a better understanding of turbulent times.

Aonia Terra can reveal hints about Martian composition. The new image hints toward the complex surface composition. Interestingly, scientists believe that the channels must have been filled with lava, something which explains why the channels appear to be partly filled with a dark material, raised in some places, then the surroundings. The different colours in the photograph depict a variety of materials from which the area is made which suggests that the land was gradually worn away by water, wind, or ice.

KEYWORDS

Aonia Terra, Crater, ESA, Mars, Mars Express, Planet, Solar System

