

A Fading Impact Crater

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This cluster of craters formed quite recently from a weak impactor that broke apart in Mars' thin atmosphere before smashing into the surface. It was discovered by the MRO Context Camera (CTX) Team, who found a dark spot in a CTX image taken in August 2008 that was not present in earlier Mars Odyssey Mission THEMIS images from July 2005. HiRISE examined the feature in October 2008 and verified that the dark spot was impact ejecta excavated from beneath the bright surface.

The HIRISE camera onboard the Mars Reconnaissance Orbiter is the most powerful one of its kind ever sent to another planet. Its high resolution allows us to see Mars like never before, and helps other missions choose a safe spot to land for future exploration. Thousands of images are available online at: uahirise.org.