



Shapes and Spots on a Polar Sand Dune

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This image shows numerous dark shapes and bright spots on a sand dune in the northern polar regions of Mars. The bright spots are carbon dioxide frost. On Mars, the main atmospheric component is carbon dioxide, which circulates seasonally between the atmosphere and the polar regions. One of the reasons that permit this process is the fact that temperatures on Mars are much colder than on Earth, which allows carbon dioxide frost to condense on the surface in winter.