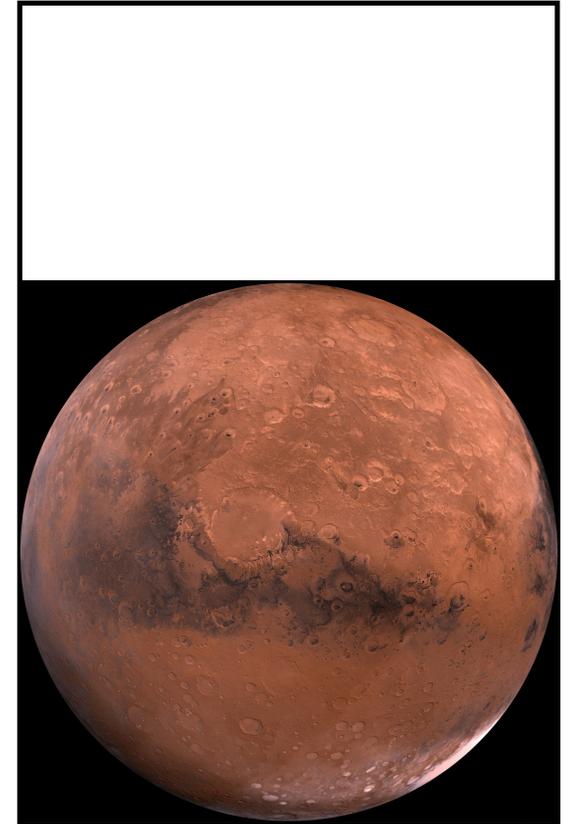


Conclusion

Scientists will likely continue to focus their efforts on exploring Mars for years to come. As people think more about the possibility of life on other planets, they look to Mars due to the likelihood that it held water and life at some point in the past. Who knows what new discoveries and mysteries may become clear in future missions!

MARS



<https://www.publicdomainpictures.net/pictures/90000/velka/mars.jpg>

By: _____

Introduction

Mars fascinates scientists because it holds important clues about life that once lived there. This unique planet is about half the size of Earth, and has a similar length of day and seasonal weather changes. The surface of Mars appears red, which has gained it the nickname 'the Red Planet'. It has two moons, which scientists believe to be captured asteroids. Despite all that scientists have already learned about Mars, they are eager to explore and discover even more about this planet.

Exploring Mars



A rover explores Mars

<https://images-assets.nasa.gov/image/PIA04413/PIA04413-medium.jpg>

NASA has sent several rovers to Mars, the only planet inhabited entirely by robots. In 1971, the Mariner 9 spacecraft was launched, and it successfully reached Mars, orbited around the planet, and photographed and mapped the entire surface of the planet. Later, the spacecrafts Viking 1 and Viking 2 were launched. They successfully landed on Mars in 1976, explored the surface, and collected and tested soil samples. More recently, scientists sent rovers called Spirit and Opportunity to Mars, where they used more advanced equipment to study rocks and look for signs of water. Over the years, these missions and many others have helped scientists learn more about the Red Planet!

Why is Mars Important?

Scientists are particularly interested in Mars because it shows promising signs that it once held life. Learning more about life on Mars may help scientists understand where or how humans might be able to live on another planet, so they continue to explore and study it. During the many missions to Mars, scientists have found rocks and landscape features that appear to have been formed or impacted by water, which led to the idea that Mars may once have had rivers or lakes. It has also been discovered that Mars' may have once had a magnetic field similar to Earth's, which would have shielded any life on the planet from harmful radiation. Scientists study the weather and climate of Mars, because this information might help them understand what the planet was like in the past. Together, these findings bring scientists closer to understanding whether Mars could have once supported life.



Could humans someday live on Mars?

<https://images-assets.nasa.gov/image/Moon%20to%20Mars%20Infrastructure/Moon%20to%20Mars%20Infrastructure-medium.jpg>