

Science Focus

MEANING OF LIFE NOT INCLUDED

How to start
STARGAZING AT HOME

Discovering the
SEASONS OF THE HUMAN BODY

Finding answers to
VACCINE SAFETY MYTHS

MYSTERIES OF THE UNIVERSE

Why are monster black holes at the heart of every galaxy?

Why is there something rather than nothing?

Where is two thirds of the Universe?

Why haven't we seen alien life?

What is dark matter?

Does time exist?



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Health

Michael Mosley on how to lower your blood pressure

Dinosaurs

How they came to rule the planet

Food

Restaurant puts 'no-kill' meat on the menu



EYE OPENER

Ice planet

NOACHIS TERRA, MARS

Below the familiar dusty red surface of Mars lies a landscape perhaps even more alien. In addition to Mars's two polar ice caps, which we can sometimes see through a garden telescope, it is thought that around one-third of the planet is covered in subsurface ice. The blue-coloured ice is visible in this image as it had become exposed on a cliff face in the Noachis Terra region, near the Hellas Planitia crater.

Scientists are studying this Martian ice in the hope of revealing more about the Red Planet's ancient climate, but it could also hold the key to future crewed missions. Water is crucial to the success of such missions, not only for drinking, but also for making rocket fuel. This would reduce payload weight, as future astronauts could make fuel on Mars for the return voyage back to Earth.

The honeycomb-like pattern seen here is likely caused by the cooling and contraction of the ice, creating thin cracks that develop and coalesce over time.

NASA/JPL

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