

Dust devils are the most apparent active phenomenon on Mars : they are responsible for loading the atmosphere with dust, with important climatological implications. Dust devils may also be responsible for removing settled dust from the MER solar panels.

We can observe dust devils here in Arizona. I report the first thermal imaging of a desert dust devil, a technique which may provide early warning of dust devil activity and insight into the driving energy source (hot air near the ground vs sunlight absorbed by levitated dust).

Additionally, we report a survey of NTSB air accident reports which indicate around a hundred incidents attributable to dust devils in the last decade or so, including several fatalities. These data also suggest a possible propensity for dust devils at high elevations, consistent with a heat engine model.