

Casual Snapshots of Life on Two Planets

Written by Alex Baer

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Just when you think you've got the hang of things, the solar system or universe will show you something you've never seen before.

Case in point: What are those little black things on Mars -- where do they come from each spring, and where do they go when winter approaches?

Now, I know I've been running a fever -- it's early-voting-and-flu season here -- and been having trouble with gravity thanks to inner-ear plumbing, but black, spidery things on Mars?

Apparently so, and they've been showing up for their meager sunbathing rites for about a decade that we know about, at least.

Explanations appear to range from dark sand blasted up from thawing underground gases in springtime, on out to the possibility of photosynthetic forms of -- wait for it -- *life*.

This information on possible life forms is received well here, at Flu Central, where life already seems fairly surreal. The news provides a tantalizing, refreshing taste on the inner mind, tempered by the meds reigning in the warmish 102 -- the low threshold for fevered hallucinations.

Yes, the news from Mars provides a renewed opportunity to consider possibilities of life...

Just as we consider the same old news from Earth, and the possibilities of life under Barack or Willard, magnified via the one-liner fest winkingly dubbed a debate.

So, what's it to be down here? A Congress-blocked centrist with exceptional speaking skills that fail him in negotiations, and with whom I often disagree -- or is it to be yet another lying, waffling robber-baron from the lucky sperm club with whom I uniformly disagree and am

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repulsed?

Ask me again while my flu and fever are percolating away, just behind my clammy forehead and hot-coal eyes, and you'll hear me very calmly say, "I'll take Mars for a thousand, Alex."

<http://www.npr.org/blogs/kulwich/2012/10/02/162147810/are-those-spidery-black-things-on-mars-dangerous-yup>