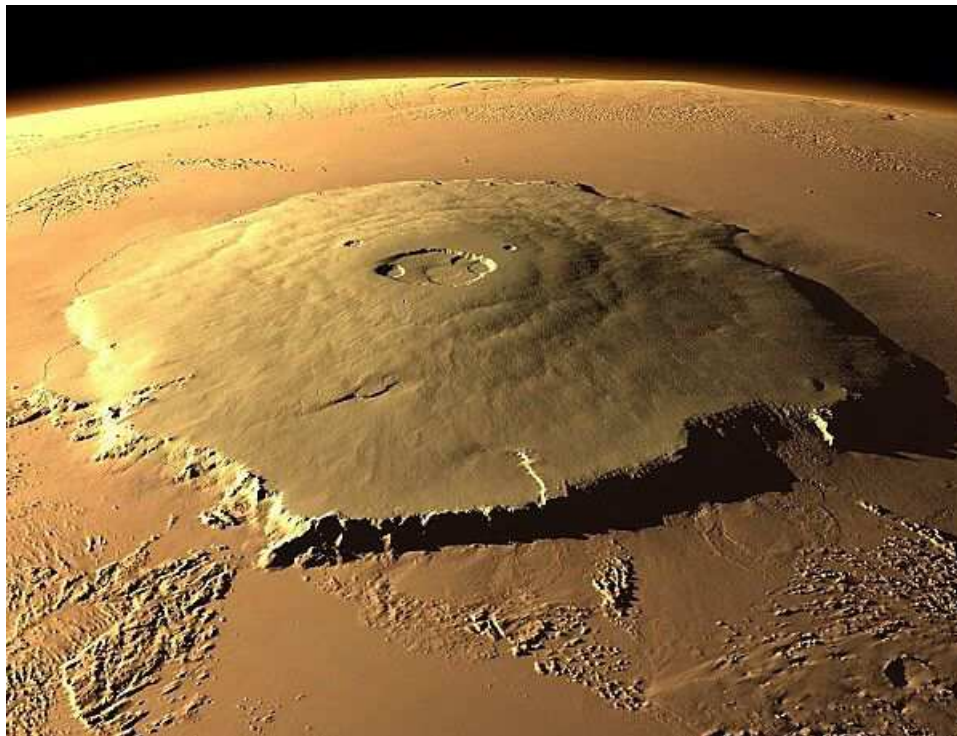


**Olympus Mons** ( Latin for Mount Olympus) is an enormous shield volcano on the planet Mars. The volcano has a height of over 13.6 mi or 72,000 ft as measured by the Mars Orbiter Laser Altimeter (MOLA). Olympus Mons is about two and a half times Mount Everest's height above sea level.

Height Comparison of Olympus Mons  
With Mauna Kea and Mount Everest



It is one of the largest volcanoes, the tallest planetary mountain, and the second tallest mountain currently discovered in the Solar System, comparable to Rheasilvia on Vesta. It is often cited as the largest volcano in the Solar System. However, by some metrics, other volcanoes are considerably larger. Alba Mons, northeast of Olympus Mons, has roughly 19 times the surface area, but is only about one third the height. Pele, the largest known volcano on Io, is also much larger, at roughly 4 times the surface area, but is considerably flatter. Additionally, Tharsis Rise, a large volcanic structure on Mars of which Olympus Mons is a part, has been interpreted as an enormous spreading volcano. If this is confirmed, Tharsis would be by far the largest volcano in the Solar System. Olympus Mons is the youngest of the large volcanoes on Mars, having formed during Mars's Hesperian Period with eruptions continuing well into the Amazonian.



It had been known to astronomers since the late 19th century as the albedo feature Nix Olympica (Latin for "Olympic Snow"). Its mountainous nature was suspected well before space probes confirmed its identity as a mountain.



Two impact craters on Olympus Mons have been assigned provisional names by the International Astronomical Union. The craters are notable for being two of several suspected source areas for shergottites, the most abundant class of Martian meteorites.

