



Ephemeral Lake Frome Australia

The interior of Australia is full of ephemeral lakes. These basins pass most of their time as salt pans, but occasional heavy rains can fill them with water.

The Earth Observing-1 satellite captured this image in April 2010 after water had flowed into Lake Frome, which stands at the southern end of an arc of salt pans. When it fills, the waters usually come from precipitation in the hills and other salt pans upstream. The land to the east has a slightly higher elevation and consists of a network of dry river channels. Inside the salt pan, the land surface is uneven. Areas shaped like sloppy teardrops rise above the surrounding plain. Water on the surface appears in shades of dull green. And throughout much of Lake Frome, water makes its presence known not through standing water but through mud or wet salts. Darker surfaces show where water has seeped through typically dry sediments.