Once attributed to spirits, genies, or ghosts, dust devils are strong and long-lived whirlwinds that range from a few meters to more than 1,000 meters tall. They form around a vertical rotating column of air under fair conditions. The sun heats the ground, which can produce swirling updrafts of air called turbulence. These frequently develop in hot and dry deserts and are much smaller and less destructive than tornadoes.