

ANTARCTICA



HISTORY

Though writings of the ancient Greeks cryptically refer to a massive southern region of the world, the discovery of the "White Continent" is generally attributed to Edward Bransfield, a British naval officer. Bransfield discovered the northwestern coast of the Antarctic Peninsula on 30 January 1820 and called it Trinity Land. However, the land mass was first touched in the 1840s by a party of Norwegians, and it was the Norwegian Roald Amundsen who, on 14 December 1911, first reached the South Pole. (Robert Scott, an Englishman, reached the Pole just weeks after Amundsen. He never returned.) Not until 1956 did the first tourists - a group of Chileans - make trips to Antarctica.

HISTORY

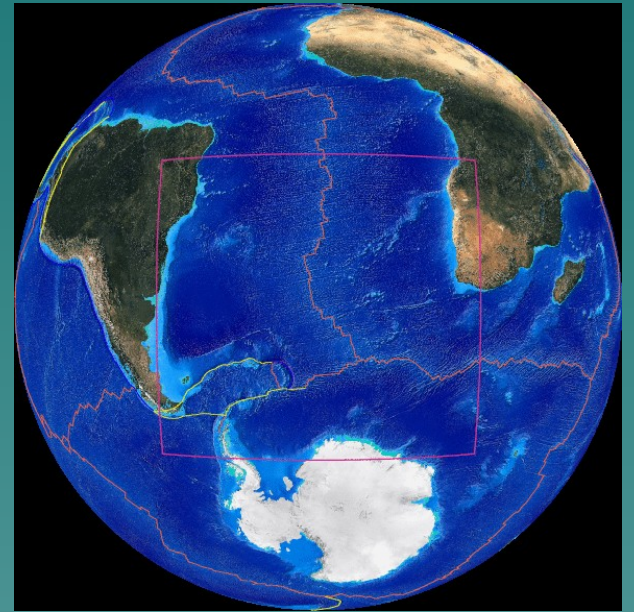
Since Antarctica's discovery, some 26 nations, including Russia, the U.S., Norway, China, Great Britain, Chile, Argentina, Poland, Australia, South Africa, Belgium, France, Japan and New Zealand, have laid claim to various sections of it. Today the continent is effectively a shared territory, and the occupying countries have agreed to cooperate in protecting Antarctica's many environmental treasures and its pristine beauty.



*Roald
Amundsen*

GEOGRAPHY FACTS

Antarctica is the coldest, windiest, highest and driest continent. During summer, more solar radiation reaches the surface at the South Pole than is received at the Equator in an equivalent period. The continent is mostly uninhabitable. Its ice comprises 90 percent of all the world's ice, and it is 70 percent of all the



GEOGRAPHY FACTS

LOCATION: continent mostly south of the Antarctic Circle

AREA: 14,2 milion sq km

COASTLINE: 17,968 km

CLIMATE: severe low temperatures vary with latitude, elevation, and distance from the ocean; East Antarctica is colder than West Antarctica because of its higher elevation



GEOGRAPHY FACTS

TERRAIN: About 98% thick continental ice sheet and 2% barren rock, with average elevations between 2,000 and 4,000 meters; mountain ranges up to about 5,000 meters

NATURAL RESOURCES: None presently exploited. Iron ore, chromium, copper, gold, nickel, platinum and other minerals, and coal and hydrocarbons have been found in small, uncommercial quantities

INTERNATIONAL DISPUTES

Antarctic Treaty defers claims; sections (some overlapping) are claimed by **Argentina, Australia, Chile, France** (Adelie Land), **New Zealand** (Ross Dependency), **Norway** (Queen Maud Land) and **United Kingdom**. The United States and most other nations do not recognize the territorial claims of other nations and have made no claims themselves (the U.S. reserves the right to do so).

Antarctic Region



Antarctica is shared territory, and the occupying countries are Argentina, Australia, Chile, France (Adelie Land), New Zealand (Ross Dependency), Norway (Queen Maud Land) and United Kingdom

PEOPLE

Antarctica has no indigenous inhabitants, but there are seasonally staffed research stations. Approximately 29 nations, all signatories to the Antarctic Treaty, send personnel to perform seasonal (summer) and year-round research on the continent and in its surrounding oceans. The number of people doing and supporting science on the continent and its nearby islands south of 60° S latitude (the region covered by the Antarctic Treaty) varies from approximately 4,000 in summer to 1,000 in winter. In addition, approximately 1,000 people are present on ships within the treaty region, including ship's cre and scientists doing

Research station on Antarctica



ANIMALS and PLANTS

There is very little plant life on Antarctica. It consists of small amounts of lichen and moss, and some floating plants in the inland seas. Apart from a few insects, all of the animal life feeds from the ocean. The largest animal living entirely on the land of Antarctica is a mite. It is just big enough to be seen without a microscope. It manages to stay alive by producing chemicals very similar to the anti-freeze that we put in our cars in winter! The ocean is full of nutrients. Warm water rising brings the nutrients up to the surface. Those nutrients along with krill, a small shrimp-like animal are the keys to the



ANIMALS

The most frequent animals on Antarctica are: fish, birds and mammals. More than 80% of birds in the Antarctic region are penguins



ANIMALS



Gannet Penguin



ANIMALS



South Albatross
Skua

ANIMALS



Weddell Seal



ANIMALS



Antarctic Fur Seal

Did you know?

- Antarctica is actually a desert, receiving about the same precipitation (less than 2 inches a year), as the Sahara Desert.
- Dogs have been banned from Antarctica to protect the seal population.
- If Antarctica were to melt, the sea level would rise over 80 meters.
- The world's record low temperature of -128.5° F was recorded in Antarctica.
- The coasts of Antarctica are some of the windiest places in the world, with gusts reaching nearly 200 miles per hour.
- Antarctica represents about 9 percent of Earth's continental crust and has been in a near-polar position for more than 100 million years.

Did you know?

- The Adelie penguin was named after Jules-Sébastien-César Dumont d'Urville's wife. D'Urville was the first man to set foot in Antarctica.
- The temperature in Antarctica once dropped 65° F in 12 minutes.
- Because of the extremely cold temperatures and low absolute humidity, dry skin and cracked lips are continual problems in Antarctica. Visitors must drink frequently to replace the water they exhale with every breath.
- The Land of the Midnight Sun exists in the south, too: during the summer, the interior of Antarctica enjoys almost continuous daylight.
- As sea ice gets older it becomes considerably stronger. In first-year sea ice, most of the salts remain in tiny pockets that prevent a more rigid crystalline ice structure from forming. As the ice ages, the salts slowly leach out, leaving a much



LITERATURE

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The End of presentation!

Boštjan Kop

