

Country and Map: Antarctica

Geography: This continent is found on the bottom of the globe surrounded by the Atlantic, Indian and Pacific Oceans. 600 miles south of South America. Surrounding the whole country is a floating sheet of ice. The South Pole which is the southern end of the earth's axis is located here. (Add info on magnets and magnet images)

Climate/weather: coldest, windiest continent with very little precipitation, If you measure it's rainfall (snowfall), it is as dry as the Sahara Desert. Lowest temp. -128 degrees F on July 1983 Because of the tilt of the earth, the sun rises and sets only once a year in Antarctica. This means that 6 mos. of the year, there is sunlight 24/7 and six mos. there is darkness.

Land types: world's largest cold desert. Covered with permafrost. 2% is barren rock and 98% is ice. 87% of world's ice is in this cont. Most of the land lies under a sheet of ice, 1 mile thick. The land below the ice sinks down thousands of feet below sea level. Active volcano: Mt. Erebus is the world's most southern volcano. There are also glaciers and ice cliffs.

Animals: Animals have to adapt to live in this cold climate. Some migrate like the whales coming in warmer weather to fish for krill. Other animals stay there year round. The Emperor penguin builds its nest on rocks and its fatty layer keeps it warm in the cold temps. The Weddell seals also have fatty layers and thick skin to protect them from the elements. Both of these animals are carnivores, eating other animals like fish and squid.

Government: There is no govt. 43 countries got together and wrote the Antarctic Treaty in 1991 which banned mining and oil exploration for 50 years around Antarctica so that scientists could use the cont. for research. There are 30 major research stations. This cont. does not belong to any country but seven countries have claimed portions of it.

Economics: There are no businesses located on the cont. but tourists visit by boat and fishing boats ply the waters surrounding the continent for fish and other sealife.

Extra: Polar explorers used to use dogsleds to cross the ice but now they are banned to protect the wildlife.