

ANTARCTICA

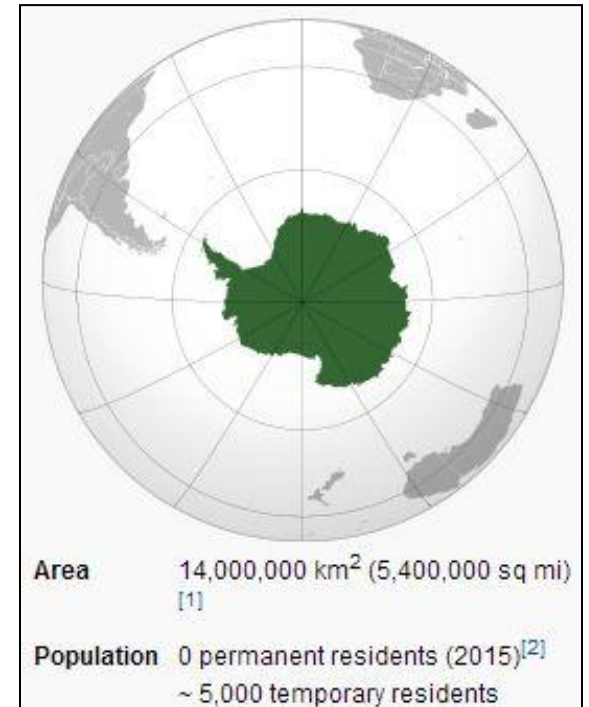
It is the coldest, driest, remotest, windiest, and highest elevated continent. There are no trees, rivers, or cities, and there is very little life.

An ice sheet covers everything but 2.4% of its 14 million square kilometers. It holds 90% of the world's ice.

There are no land mammals, but there are lots of penguins, whales, seals, krill, and fish.

The people who travel to or live in Antarctica fall into two main groups, those who live and work on scientific research stations or bases, and tourists. **No-one** lives in Antarctica indefinitely in the way that they do in the rest of the world. It has no commercial industries, no towns or cities, no permanent residents.

- Antarctica is the southernmost continent on Earth.
- The South Pole is found in Antarctica.
- Antarctica is surrounded by the Southern Ocean.
- Antarctica is bigger than Europe and almost double the size of Australia.
- Most of Antarctica is covered in ice over 1.6 kilometers thick (1 mile).
- Because it experiences such little rain, Antarctica is considered a desert.
- The coldest recorded temperature on Earth occurred in 1983 at Vostok Station, Antarctica, measuring a rather chilly $-89.2\text{ }^{\circ}\text{C}$ ($-128.6\text{ }^{\circ}\text{F}$).
- Well known animals that live in Antarctica include penguins and seals.
- The name 'Antarctica' comes from a Greek word meaning 'opposite to the north'.
- Around 90% of the ice on Earth is found in Antarctica.
- Sea levels would rise around 60m (200ft) if all the ice in Antarctica were to melt



Fun Facts about Antarctica:

Landforms of Antarctica

Antarctica is divided in two by the Transantarctic Mountains close to the neck between the Ross Sea and the Weddell Sea. The portion west of the Weddell Sea and east of the Ross Sea is called West Antarctica and the remainder East Antarctica, because they roughly correspond to the Western and Eastern Hemispheres relative to the Greenwich meridian.

Climate of Antarctica

The winter season ranges from May to the end of August while summer extends from December to February. The inland plateau is known as polar desert. Not too much moisture is found in the air which is why people are likely to suffer from dehydration while working on ice.

Plants grow in Antarctica

Because of the extreme cold climate in this continent, plants generally do not grow in abundance. Antarctica does not offer some essential elements to its plants such as the inadequate amount of sunlight, poor soil quality, lack of moisture, and above all, consistent freezing temperatures. As a result plants grow in limited region. In this continent, some 25 species of liverworts and 100 species of mosses grow each year. The flora of Antarctica primarily consists of bryophytes. However, they grow only for few weeks or perhaps for few days in summer.

Does Antarctica Have a Flag?

Prior to 2002 Antarctica had no official flag. The members of the Antarctic Treaty System officially adopted a flag and emblem in 2002, which is now the official symbol of the continent. Whitney Smith and Graham Bartram have designed flags they would like Antarctica to use.



Antarctic Treaty Flag



Whitney Smith Design



Graham Bartram Design