

KNOWLEDGE ORGANISER

Antarctica



Location

Antarctica is located at the South Pole and is surrounded by the Southern Ocean.

Antarctica is the fifth largest continent based on its size, but it is the smallest in population.

It is the driest and oldest continent on earth.

Area

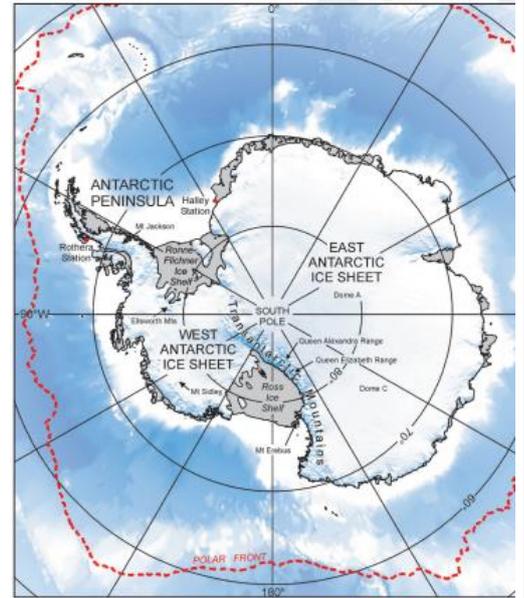
5,400,000 square miles.

Major Biomes

Icy desert.

Major outposts

No major cities, just a few scientific outposts.



Timeline of key events

1772-1774	Captain Cook crossed the Antarctic Circle.
1819-21	Captain Thaddeus Bellingshausen (Russian naval officer) circumnavigates the Antarctic.
Late 19 th century to after World War I	"The Heroic Age of Antarctic Exploration" - many were drawn to Antarctica and in just a few short years, Antarctica was where some of the bravest and most worthy of explorers met some of the harshest conditions ever endured. Some expeditions succeeded, others didn't.
1921	Captain John Davis, an American seal hunter, first lands on the continent of Antarctica.
1823	James Weddell, a British whaler, discovers the sea; it is named after him - The Weddell Sea.
1840s	British, French and American expeditions establish Antarctica as a continent.
1901	Captain Scott (British) leads the first Antarctic expedition to reach the South Pole - Ernest Shackleton is with him - it is unsuccessful.
1909	Douglas Mawson (Australian) reaches the South Magnetic Pole.
1911	Roald Amundsen (Norwegian) reaches the South Pole for the first time.
1912	Captain Scott reaches the South Pole - when he gets there he discovers Amundsen has beat him to it. Scott and his team die on the return journey.
1914	Ernest Shackleton (Irish) attempts to cross the continent on foot. His boat <i>The Endurance</i> , gets stuck in the ice and is eventually rescued in 1917.
1961	The Antarctic treaty comes into effect to ensure it is used peacefully, is not exploited or used for animal hunting or ruled by one group or country.

Key individuals of *The Endurance* expedition

Sir Ernest Shackleton	Expedition leader.
Frank Worsley	Captain of <i>The Endurance</i> .
Frank Hurley	Official photographer of the expedition - his photos are still seen today.
Percy Blackborow	Sometimes spelt Perce Blackborow or Blackborrow. He was a stowaway on <i>The Endurance</i> . Shackleton put him to good use as a steward.

Climate	Flora	Fauna
Cool summers High mountains - 2300m average Ice sheet covers 99% of the land Long cold winters Long dark nights (winter) South pole temperature: -62°C to - 55 °C	Very few plants as only 1% of land is not covered with ice. Rock has moss and lichen growing on it. Most flora is found on the islands. There are no trees!	Rich seas due to phytoplankton. Penguins, eg Emperor, Chinstrap Fur seals, elephant seals. Orcas, Minke whales
Extra information		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There were 60 dogs and 1 cat, called Mrs Chippy, on <i>The Endurance</i>. • In mid-winter (around 21 June) there are 2 weeks when night lasts for 24 hours. • In summer (around Christmas) there are 2 weeks when there is 24-hour sunlight. • Antarctica is the best place in the world to find meteorites. • The lowest ever recorded temperature was -89 ° C the average freezer in homes runs at -20 °C. 		

Key vocabulary

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • blubber - layer of fat under the skin of seals and penguins • crevasse - a deep crack in a glacier. • floe - a sheet of floating ice. • frostbite - a condition caused by extreme cold which destroys parts of the body, eg ears, fingers, toes, nose. • glacier - a river or large mass of ice formed by packed-down snow. • hazardous - extremely dangerous. • hull - the body or frame of a ship. • husky - a powerful dog used in the Antarctic (and Arctic) for pulling sledges. • latitude - the distance north or south of the earth's equator (0°) • longitude - the distance east or west of the Greenwich meridian line (0°) • pack ice - large pieces of floating ice wedged together. • rations - a person's individual allowance of food and other supplies when there are shortages. • scurvy - a disease common among polar explorers caused by a lack of Vitamin C. • sextant - an instrument used by sailors to calculate their position at sea. • stowaway - a person who hides on board a ship so that he/she can travel for free. • uncharted - not shown on any map. • whaler - a whale hunter or whaling ship.
