



Antarctica :: Heard Island and McDonald Islands
(territory of Australia)

Introduction :: Heard Island and McDonald Islands

Background:

The United Kingdom transferred these uninhabited, barren, sub-Antarctic islands to Australia in 1947. Populated by large numbers of seal and bird species, the islands have been designated a nature preserve.

Geography :: Heard Island and McDonald Islands

Location:

islands in the Indian Ocean, about two-thirds of the way from Madagascar to Antarctica

Geographic coordinates:

53 06 S, 72 31 E

Map references:

Antarctic Region

Area:

total: 412 sq km

country comparison to the world: 203

land: 412 sq km

water: 0 sq km

Area - comparative:

slightly more than two times the size of Washington, DC

Land boundaries:

0 km

Coastline:

101.9 km

Maritime claims:

territorial sea: 12 nm

exclusive fishing zone: 200 nm

Climate:

antarctic

Terrain:

Heard Island - 80% ice-covered, bleak and mountainous, dominated by a large massif (Big Ben) and an active volcano (Mawson Peak); McDonald Islands - small and rocky

Elevation extremes:

lowest point: Indian Ocean 0 m

highest point: Mawson Peak on Big Ben volcano 2,745 m

Natural resources:

fish

Land use:

arable land: 0%

permanent crops: 0%

other: 100% (2011)

Irrigated land:

0 sq km (2011)

Natural hazards:

Mawson Peak, an active volcano, is on Heard Island

Environment - current issues:

NA

Geography - note:

Mawson Peak on Heard Island is the highest Australian mountain (at 2,745 meters, it is taller than Mt. Kosciuszko in Australia proper), and one of only two active volcanoes located in Australian territory, the other being McDonald Island; in 1992, McDonald Island broke its dormancy and began erupting; it has erupted several times since, most recently in 2005

People and Society :: Heard Island and McDonald Islands

Population:

uninhabited

Government :: Heard Island and McDonald Islands

Country name:

conventional long form: Territory of Heard Island and McDonald Islands

conventional short form: Heard Island and McDonald Islands

abbreviation: HIMI

Dependency status:

territory of Australia; administered from Canberra by the Department of Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities (Australian Antarctic Division)

Legal system:

the laws of Australia, where applicable, apply

Diplomatic representation in the US:

none (territory of Australia)

Diplomatic representation from the US:

none (territory of Australia)

Flag description:

the flag of Australia is used

Economy :: Heard Island and McDonald Islands

Economy - overview:

The islands have no indigenous economic activity, but the Australian Government allows limited fishing in the surrounding waters. Visits to Heard Island typically focus on terrestrial and marine research and infrequent private expeditions.

Communications :: Heard Island and McDonald Islands

Internet country code:

.hm

Internet hosts:

102 (2012)

country comparison to the world: 208

Transportation :: Heard Island and McDonald Islands

Ports and terminals:

none; offshore anchorage only

Military :: Heard Island and McDonald Islands

Military - note:

defense is the responsibility of Australia; Australia conducts fisheries patrols

Transnational Issues :: Heard Island and McDonald Islands

Disputes - international:

none