



Australia-Oceania :: Ashmore and Cartier Islands (territory of Australia)

Introduction :: Ashmore and Cartier Islands

Background:

These uninhabited islands came under Australian authority in 1931; formal administration began two years later. Ashmore Reef supports a rich and diverse avian and marine habitat; in 1983, it became a National Nature Reserve. Cartier Island, a former bombing range, became a marine reserve in 2000.

Geography :: Ashmore and Cartier Islands

Location:

Southeastern Asia, islands in the Indian Ocean, midway between northwestern Australia and Timor island

Geographic coordinates:

12 14 S, 123 05 E

Map references:

Oceania

Area:

total: 5 sq km

country comparison to the world: 247

land: 5 sq km

water: 0 sq km

note: includes Ashmore Reef (West, Middle, and East Islets) and Cartier Island

Area - comparative:

about eight times the size of The Mall in Washington, DC

Land boundaries:

0 km

Coastline:

74.1 km

Maritime claims:

territorial sea: 12 nm

contiguous zone: 12 nm

exclusive fishing zone: 200 nm

continental shelf: 200 m depth or to the depth of exploitation

Climate:

tropical

Terrain:

low with sand and coral

Elevation extremes:

lowest point: Indian Ocean 0 m

highest point: unnamed location 3 m

Natural resources:

fish

Land use:

arable land: 0%

permanent crops: 0%

other: 100% (all grass and sand) (2011)

Natural hazards:

surrounded by shoals and reefs that can pose maritime hazards

Environment - current issues:

illegal killing of protected wildlife by traditional Indonesian fisherman, as well as fishing by non-traditional Indonesian vessels, are ongoing problems

Geography - note:

Ashmore Reef National Nature Reserve established in August 1983; Cartier Island Marine Reserve established in 2000

People and Society :: Ashmore and Cartier Islands

Population:

no indigenous inhabitants

note: Indonesian fishermen are allowed access to the lagoon and fresh water at Ashmore Reef's West Island; access to East and Middle Islands is by permit only

Government :: Ashmore and Cartier Islands

Country name:

conventional long form: Territory of Ashmore and Cartier Islands

conventional short form: Ashmore and Cartier Islands

Dependency status:

territory of Australia; administered from Canberra by the Department of Regional Australia, Local Government, Arts and Sport

Legal system:

the laws of the Commonwealth of Australia and the laws of the Northern Territory 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 :: Ashmore and Cartier Islands

Economy - overview:

no economic activity

Transportation :: Ashmore and Cartier Islands

Ports and terminals:

none; offshore anchorage only

Military :: Ashmore and Cartier Islands

Military - note:

defense is the responsibility of Australia; periodic visits by the Royal Australian Navy and Royal Australian Air Force

Transnational Issues :: Ashmore and Cartier Islands

Disputes - international:

Australia has closed parts of the Ashmore and Cartier reserve to Indonesian traditional fishing; Indonesian groups challenge Australia's claim to Ashmore Reef