

Discovering the Weddell Sea



Weddell Sea

The Weddell Sea is a unique expanse of water with huge icebergs, menacing ice floes and giant ice shelves. Navigating safe passage across the sea still remains a challenge, with the final obstacle being the 200-metre thick Filchner-Ronne ice shelf on the Antarctic coastline.



Living there

No one is allowed to live in Antarctica permanently. There are now 66 scientific bases, of which only 37 are occupied all year round. There are around 4,000 people there through the summer months and around 1,000 over winter.



Tourism

At 64°49'31"S 63°29'40"W Port Lockroy has been 'a home for explorers, whalers, scientists, and sailors who have made vital contributions to Antarctic history'. It is now the UK's most southerly public Post Office. You can learn more at www.ukaht.org/discover/port-lockroy/



Climate change

Antarctica experienced record high temperatures in 2020 due to climate change. Temperatures went over 20°C for the time with a record 20.75°C on 9 February 2020 on the Antarctic Peninsula.



Global governance

The 1961 international ATS (Antarctic Treaty System) agreed a set of rules enshrining scientific investigation and cooperation, mutual station and aircraft inspections and a ban on military activities, nuclear explosions, and radioactive waste.



Marine life

Krill are shrimp-like crustaceans which form part of the foundation of the Antarctic marine food web. Krill eat small ocean plants like phytoplankton and are in turn eaten by whales, seals, ice fish and penguins. They are an essential trophic level in Antarctica.

Access online resources, digital interactives and an online Antarctic collectors album at www.rgs.org/dws. Visit www.rgs.org/schools for other resources and follow us on Twitter @RGS_IBGschools.

