

Australia-Oceania :: Palmyra Atoll (territory of the US)

Introduction :: Palmyra Atoll

Background:

The Kingdom of Hawaii claimed the atoll in 1862, and the US included it among the Hawaiian Islands when it annexed the archipelago in 1898. The Hawaii Statehood Act of 1959 did not include Palmyra Atoll, which is now part privately owned by the Nature Conservancy and part US Government-owned and administered as a nature preserve. The lagoons and surrounding waters within the 12-nautical-mile US territorial seas were transferred to the US Fish and Wildlife Service and were designated a National Wildlife Refuge in January 2001.

Geography :: Palmyra Atoll

Location:

Oceania, atoll in the North Pacific Ocean, about half way between Hawaii and American Samoa

Geographic coordinates:

5 52 N, 162 04 W

Map references:

Oceania

Area:

total: 11.9 sq km

land: 11.9 sq km

water: 0 sq km

Area - comparative:

about 20 times the size of The Mall in Washington, DC

Land boundaries:

0 km

Coastline:

14.5 km

Maritime claims:

territorial sea: 12 nm

exclusive economic zone: 200 nm

Climate:

equatorial, hot, and very rainy

Terrain:

very low

Elevation extremes:

lowest point: Pacific Ocean 0 m

highest point: unnamed location 2 m

Natural resources:

terrestrial and aquatic wildlife

Land use:

arable land: 0%

permanent crops: 0%

other: 100% (forests and woodlands) (2011)

Natural hazards:

NA

Environment - current issues:

NA

Geography - note:

about 50 islets covered with dense vegetation, coconut trees, and balsa-like trees up to 30 meters tall

People and Society :: Palmyra Atoll

Population:

no indigenous inhabitants

note: 4 to 20 Nature Conservancy staff, US Fish and Wildlife staff (July 2008 est.)

Government :: Palmyra Atoll

Country name:

conventional long form: none

conventional short form: Palmyra Atoll

Dependency status:

incorporated territory of the US; privately owned, but administered from Washington, DC, by the Fish and Wildlife Service of the US Department of the Interior; the Office of Insular Affairs of the US Department of the Interior continues to administer nine excluded areas comprising certain tidal and submerged lands within the 12 nm territorial sea or within the lagoon

Legal system:

the laws of the US, where applicable, apply

Flag description:

the flag of the US is used

Transportation :: Palmyra Atoll

Airports - with unpaved runways:

total: 1

1,524 to 2,437 m: 1 (2013)

Ports and terminals:

West Lagoon

Military :: Palmyra Atoll

Military - note:

defense is the responsibility of the US

Transnational Issues :: Palmyra Atoll

Disputes - international:

none