



## 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

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### 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

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### 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

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### Economy - overview:

no economic activity

## Transportation :: Ashmore and Cartier Islands

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### Ports and terminals:

none; offshore anchorage only

## Military :: Ashmore and Cartier Islands

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### 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

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### 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