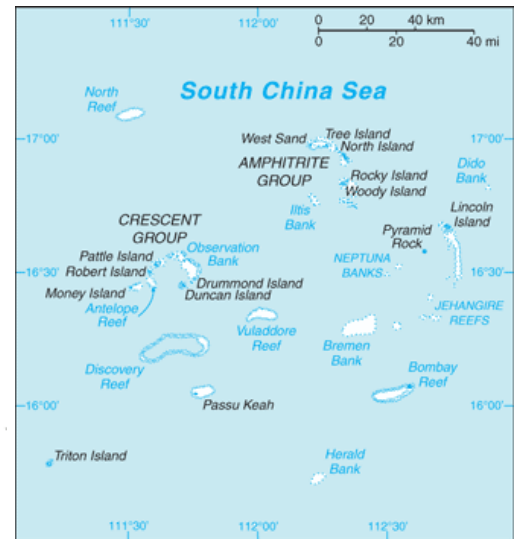


The World Factbook



East & Southeast Asia :: Paracel Islands

Introduction :: Paracel Islands

Background:

The Paracel Islands are surrounded by productive fishing grounds and by potential oil and gas reserves. In 1932, French Indochina annexed the islands and set up a weather station on Pattle Island; maintenance was continued by its successor, Vietnam. China has occupied all the Paracel Islands since 1974, when its troops seized a South Vietnamese garrison occupying the western islands. China built a military installation on Woody Island with an airfield and artificial harbor. The islands also are claimed by Taiwan and Vietnam.

Geography :: Paracel Islands

Location:

Southeastern Asia, group of small islands and reefs in the South China Sea, about one-third of the way from central Vietnam to the northern Philippines

Geographic coordinates:

16 30 N, 112 00 E

Map references:

Southeast Asia

Area:

total: ca. 7.75 sq km

land: ca. 7.75 sq km

water: 0 sq km

Area - comparative:

NA

Land boundaries:

0 km

Coastline:

518 km

Maritime claims:

NA

Climate:

tropical

Terrain:

mostly low and flat

Elevation extremes:

lowest point: South China Sea 0 m

highest point: unnamed location on Rocky Island 14 m

Natural resources:

none

Land use:

arable land: 0%

permanent crops: 0%

other: 100% (2011)

Irrigated land:

0 sq km (2011)

Natural hazards:

typhoons

Environment - current issues:

NA

Geography - note:

composed of 130 small coral islands and reefs divided into the northeast Amphitrite Group and the western Crescent Group

People and Society :: Paracel Islands

Population:

no indigenous inhabitants

note: there are scattered Chinese garrisons

Government :: Paracel Islands

Country name:

conventional long form: none

conventional short form: Paracel Islands

Economy :: Paracel Islands

Economy - overview:

The islands have the potential for oil and gas development. Waters around the islands support commercial fishing, but the islands themselves are not populated on a permanent basis.

Transportation :: Paracel Islands

Airports:

1 (2013)

country comparison to the world: 230

Airports - with paved runways:

total: 1

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

Ports and terminals:

small Chinese port facilities on Woody Island and Duncan Island

Military :: Paracel Islands

Military - note:

occupied by China

Transnational Issues :: Paracel Islands

Disputes - international:

occupied by China, also claimed by Taiwan and Vietnam