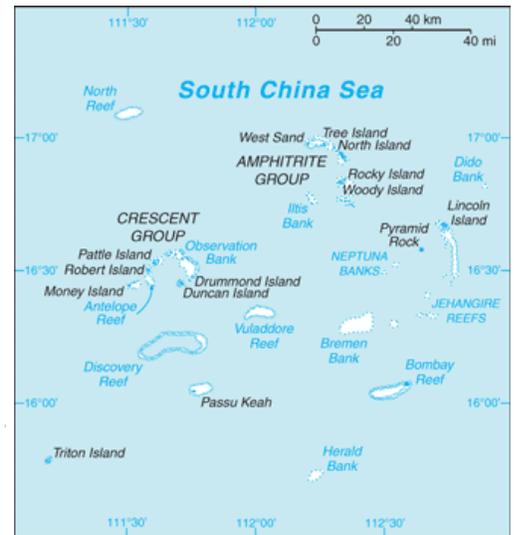


# The World Factbook



## 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**

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**Population:**

no indigenous inhabitants

*note:* there are scattered Chinese garrisons

## **Government :: Paracel Islands**

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### **Country name:**

**conventional long form:** none

**conventional short form:** Paracel Islands

## **Economy :: Paracel Islands**

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### **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**

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### **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**

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### **Military - note:**

occupied by China

## **Transnational Issues :: Paracel Islands**

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### **Disputes - international:**

occupied by China, also claimed by Taiwan and Vietnam