



## Don Juan Pond Antarctica

In a valley in one of the most extreme environments on Earth lies the world's saltiest body of water. It rarely snows and never rains in the McMurdo Dry Valleys of Antarctica. Winter temperatures can drop to  $-50^{\circ}$  Celsius, and the few ponds and lakes are capped by ice that is several meters thick.

Then there's Don Juan Pond. The ankle-deep pond in Upper Wright Valley is so salty that its calcium chloride-rich waters rarely freeze. With a salinity level of over 40 percent, Don Juan is significantly saltier than the Dead Sea and the Great Salt Lake.

The Earth Observing-1 satellite captured this image in January 2014. The ellipse-shaped lake is situated at the bottom of a basin between the Dais plateau and the Asgard Range to the south. It has a slightly darker hue than the salt-encrusted lake bottom around it.