

Where in the World?

JELLYFISH LAKE

Koror, Palau

There's a lake in the Pacific island chain of Palau where millions of boneless creatures bob in the water. Most are a small species called golden jellyfish.

Jellyfish Lake, also known as Ongeim'l Tketau (ohn-yay-yeem-ul kah-tow), is one of dozens of **marine lakes** in Palau. These bodies of water are fed by the sea and rain. They formed about 15,000 years ago, after the last **ice age** ended. During that period, **glaciers**, or enormous ice sheets, covered much of Earth's large landmasses. As the ice melted, sea levels rose. Water flowed through tiny holes in the rock of Palau's islands. It filled low spots, forming lakes. The seawater swept in young jellyfish.

Jellyfish Lake is Palau's only marine lake open to visitors. Although the golden jellyfish can give a mild sting, the lake is still a popular swimming spot. Tourists aren't allowed to touch or remove jellies. In 2016, the adult jellyfish population crashed to zero. Scientists think the lake became too warm after an extreme **drought**, a long period with little or no rain. Some young jellyfish remained, and by 2019, jellyfish numbers had recovered.

—Deborah Balthazar

What lives inside golden jellyfish?

Tiny plantlike organisms called algae live inside the jellies. During the day, the jellyfish stay in the sun, which provides algae with light to make food. The algae provide nutrients for the jellies.

What species of jellyfish live in the lake?

Most of the jellies in the lake are golden jellyfish. They live alongside moon jellyfish.

Where is Jellyfish Lake?

Jellyfish Lake is in Palau, a nation of hundreds of islands in the western Pacific Ocean. Five lakes in Palau have jellies.



Moon jellyfish
size: up to 15 inches

Golden jellyfish
size: up to 5.5 inches

How big is Jellyfish Lake?

LENGTH: 1,312 feet
DEPTH: 98 feet

WIDTH: 525 feet