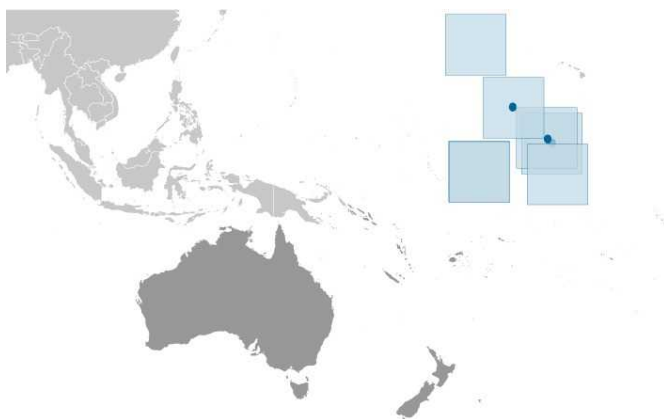
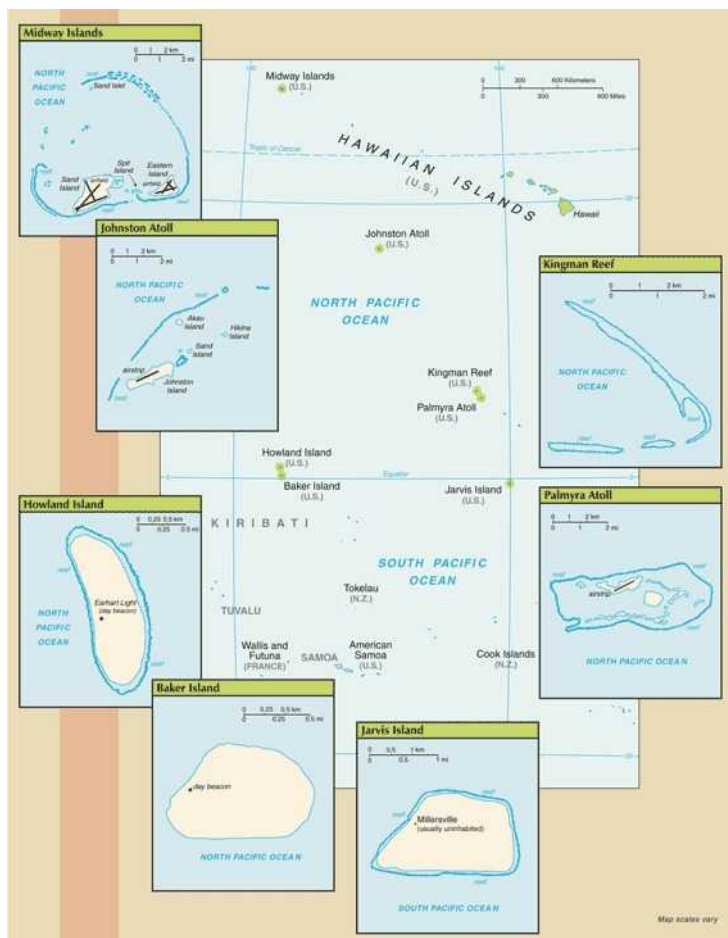




# United States Pacific Island Wildlife Refuges



<b>Background</b>	<p>All of the following US Pacific Island territories except Midway Atoll constitute the Pacific Remote Islands National Wildlife Refuge (NWR) Complex and as such are managed by the Fish and Wildlife Service of the US Department of the Interior. Midway Atoll NWR has been included in a Refuge Complex with the Hawaiian Islands NWR and also designated as part of Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument. These remote refuges are the most widespread collection of marine- and terrestrial-life protected areas on the planet under a single country's jurisdiction. They sustain many endemic species including corals, fish, shellfish, marine mammals, seabirds, water birds, land birds, insects, and vegetation not found elsewhere.</p> <p>Baker Island: The US took possession of the island in 1857. US and British companies mined its guano deposits during the second half of the 19th century. In 1935, a short-lived attempt at colonization began but was disrupted by World War II, and the island was thereafter abandoned. Baker Island was declared a National Wildlife Refuge in 1974.</p> <p>Howland Island: The US discovered the island early in the 19th century and officially claimed it in 1857. Both US and British companies mined guano on the island until about 1890. Earhart Light, a day beacon near the middle of the west coast, was partially destroyed during World War II but subsequently rebuilt; it is named in memory of famed aviatrix Amelia EARHART. The US Department of the Interior administers the island as a National Wildlife Refuge.</p> <p>Jarvis Island: First discovered by the British in 1821, the uninhabited island was annexed by the US in 1858 but abandoned in 1879 after tons of guano deposits were removed for use in producing fertilizer. The UK annexed the island in 1889 but never carried out plans for further exploitation. The US occupied and reclaimed the island in 1935. Abandoned after World War II, the island is currently a National Wildlife Refuge administered by the US Department of the Interior.</p> <p>Johnston Atoll: Both the US and the Kingdom of Hawaii annexed Johnston Atoll in 1858, but it was the US that mined the guano deposits until the late 1880s. Johnston Atoll was designated a wildlife refuge in 1926. The US Navy took over the atoll in 1934, and the US Air Force assumed control in 1948. The site was used for high-altitude nuclear tests in the 1950s and 1960s, and until 2000, the atoll was maintained as a storage and disposal site for chemical weapons. Cleanup and closure of the weapons facility ended in 2005.</p> <p>Kingman Reef: The US annexed Kingman Reef in 1922. Its sheltered lagoon served as a way station for flying boats on Hawaii-to-American Samoa flights during the late 1930s. There are no terrestrial plants on the reef, which is frequently awash, but it does support abundant and diverse marine fauna and flora. In 2001, the waters surrounding the reef out to 12 nm were designated a US National Wildlife Refuge.</p> <p>Midway Islands: The US took formal possession of the Midway Islands in 1867. The laying of the trans-Pacific cable, which passed through the islands, brought the first residents in 1903. Between 1935 and 1947, Midway was used as a refueling stop for trans-Pacific flights. The US naval victory over a Japanese fleet off Midway in 1942 was one of the turning points of World War II. The islands continued to serve as a naval station until 1993. Today the islands are a US National Wildlife Refuge. The refuge was open to the public from 1996 to 2002 and again from 2008 to 2012, but it is now closed.</p> <p>Palmyra Atoll: The Kingdom of Hawaii claimed the atoll in 1862, and the US included it among the Hawaiian Islands when it annexed the archipelago in 1898. The Hawaii Statehood Act of 1959 did not include Palmyra Atoll, which is now partly privately owned by the Nature Conservancy and partly US Government-owned and administered as a nature preserve. The lagoons and surrounding waters within the 12-nautical-mile US territorial seas were transferred to the US Fish and Wildlife Service and were designated a National Wildlife Refuge in 2001.</p>
<b>Area</b>	<p>land: 6,959.41 sq km (emergent land - 22.41 sq km; submerged - 6,937 sq km)</p> <p>Baker Island: total - 129.1 sq km; emergent land - 2.1 sq km; submerged - 127 sq km</p> <p>Howland Island: total - 138.6 sq km; emergent land - 2.6 sq km; submerged - 136 sq km</p> <p>Jarvis Island: total - 152 sq km; emergent land - 5 sq km; submerged - 147 sq km</p> <p>Johnston Atoll: total - 276.6 sq km; emergent land - 2.6 sq km; submerged - 274 sq km</p> <p>Kingman Reef: total - 1,958.01 sq km; emergent land - 0.01 sq km; submerged - 1,958 sq km</p> <p>Midway Islands: total - 2,355.2 sq km; emergent land - 6.2 sq km; submerged - 2,349 sq km</p> <p>Palmyra Atoll: total - 1,949.9 sq km; emergent land - 3.9 sq km; submerged - 1,946 sq km</p>
<b>Climate</b>	<p>Baker, Howland, and Jarvis Islands: equatorial; scant rainfall, constant wind, burning sun;</p> <p>Johnston Atoll and Kingman Reef: tropical, but generally dry; consistent northeast trade winds with little seasonal temperature variation;</p> <p>Midway Islands: subtropical with cool, moist winters (December to February) and warm, dry summers (May to October); moderated by prevailing easterly winds; most of the 107 cm of annual rainfall occurs during the winter;</p> <p>Palmyra Atoll: equatorial, hot; located within the low pressure area of the Intertropical Convergence Zone (ITCZ) where the northeast and southeast trade winds meet, it is extremely wet with between 400-500 cm of rainfall each year</p>
<b>Natural resources</b>	terrestrial and aquatic wildlife
<b>Population</b>	total: no indigenous inhabitants