

Top Facts about the Southern Ocean

- 1.** The Southern Ocean is the world's fourth largest ocean. It stretches all the way round Antarctica, and has an area of 35,000,000 sq km.
- 2.** It is the only ocean that stretches all around the world.
- 3.** In winter over half the Southern Ocean is covered with ice and icebergs that break off the Antarctic ice sheet.
- 4.** The East Wind Drift is a current that flows anticlockwise around Antarctica close to the coast.
- 5.** Further out from the coast of Antarctica, the Antarctic circumpolar current flows in the opposite direction – clockwise from west to east.
- 6.** The circumpolar current carries more water than any other current in the world.
- 7.** Many penguins such as the Emperor, the world's largest penguin, live on the ice floes of the Southern Ocean.
- 8.** The 'Roaring Forties' is the band between 40° and 50° South latitude. Within this band strong westerly winds blow unobstructed around the world.
- 9.** The waves in the 'Roaring Forties' are the biggest in the world, sometimes higher than a ten-storey building.
- 10.** Sea ice forms in round pieces called pancake ice.
- 11.** The circumpolar current could fill the Great Lakes in North America in just 48 hours.