

Aldabra Atoll in the Indian Ocean

It is one of the largest raised coral reefs in the world. It consists of coral islands ringing a shallow lagoon, which is known for the hundreds of endemic species—including the Aldabra giant tortoise.

Located some 400km to the Northwest of Madagascar, Aldabra is one of the coralline outer islands of Seychelles. The image of the remote atoll was taken on 24 June, 2022. Tides flow in and out of the lagoon through channels between the large perimeter islands. The highest point is a mere 8m above sea level.

Aldabra Atoll was designated a UNESCO World Heritage site in 1982 and a Ramsar site in 2009.



It contains a variety of habitats that have spurred the evolution of specially-suited flora and fauna. The atoll's varied habitats support many species, including the largest breeding population of frigate birds in the Indian Ocean and one of only two oceanic flamingo populations in the world.

Seven different types of wetlands, including shallow marine waters and seagrass beds, exist at Aldabra. Mangrove forests line much of the lagoon-facing sides of the large islands. They provide nesting sites for wading birds, as well as feeding grounds for turtles, sharks, and other marine species.



On land, the mostly herbivorous Aldabra giant tortoise sits atop the terrestrial food chain. The population is estimated to exceed 100,000. Males can weigh up to 250 kilograms and measure 1.2 meters in length.