

21. Cape Royds

77°33'11''S, 166°10'07''E
West Coast of Ross Island,
McMurdo Sound

ANTARCTIC TREATY

visitor site guide



Key Features

- Historic hut and associated artefacts from British Antarctic (Nimrod) Expedition 1907-1909 led by Sir Ernest Shackleton (ASPAs 157)
- Views of the southernmost Adélie penguin colony (ASPAs 121)
- Views of Mt Erebus and the Transantarctic Mountains



Description

TOPOGRAPHY

Cape Royds is a strip of phonolitic, ice free land on the western most point of Ross Island. Mt Erebus is the dominant feature on the landscape, and is responsible for the volcanic geology of the Cape.

FAUNA

Confirmed breeders: Adélie penguin, South Polar Skua.

Regularly haul out: Weddell seal.

Seen near-shore: Antarctic petrel, Emperor penguin, Leopard seal, Snow petrel.

FLORA

The southernmost recorded green snow algae in the Ross Sea region occur near the penguin colony at Cape Royds. Crustose lichens, common only in a few sites in the region have been recorded in the area.

OTHER

Cape Royds is one of the principal areas of early human activity in Antarctica. The hut built by the British Antarctic Nimrod Expedition remains at Cape Royds as an important symbol of the heroic era of Antarctic Exploration. Numerous artefacts are distributed around the Cape.

Visitor Impact

KNOWN IMPACTS

Disturbance to the penguin colony, disturbance to historic artefacts, cumulative effects of human presence in and around the hut, tracking and ground compaction.

POTENTIAL IMPACTS

Disturbance to sensitive flora and fauna communities, damage to hut and associated artefacts, fire, importation of non-native species, litter, disturbance to research, tracking and ground compaction, noise.

Landing Requirements

SHIPS*

Max pax on board: 200

Ships per day: 2

Comments: * A ship is defined as a vessel which carries more than 12 passengers.

VISITORS

Maximum number of visitors at any time, exclusive of expedition guides and leaders: 100

Comments: Entry into ASPAs 157 and 121 is prohibited except in accordance with a permit which must be carried on site. Permits to enter ASPAs 121 will not be given for recreational visits; visitors to ASPAs 157 must avoid ASPAs 121. The annual max. number of visitors into ASPAs 157 is 2000, the max. number of people in ASPAs 157 at any one time is 40, and the max. number of people inside the hut at any one time

21. Cape Royds

77°33'11''S, 166°10'07''E
West Coast of Ross Island,
McMurdo Sound

ANTARCTIC TREATY

visitor site guide



is 8 people (inclusive of guides and expedition leaders). All visits to ASPA 157 must be accompanied by an experienced guide. Consult the ASPA Management Plans and permits for further information.

Visitor Area

LANDING AREA

Access by foot or small boat should be made from Backdoor Bay (taking care to avoid the marine extent of ASPA 121) following the walking route depicted in map 2. Helicopters should land at the primary landing pad (166°10'22.9E, 77°33'03.5S, see map 2), 250m northeast of the northern point of Pony Lake. Over flight of ASPA 121 is prohibited for single engine helicopters below 750m (2,500') and for dual engine helicopters below 1,000m (3,300'). Minimum horizontal approach to ASPA 121 is 500m (1,600') for single and 750m (2,500') for dual engine helicopters.

CLOSED AREA

ASPAs are closed except to permit holders. Permit holders must be careful to adhere to the requirements and visitor numbers specified in the management plans.

GUIDED WALKING AREA

Visitors entering the hut must be accompanied by a guide. Particular care should be taken when guiding passengers along the preferred walking routes to the areas suitable for viewing penguins, to the helicopter landing site and to Backdoor Bay to avoid skua nesting sites and vegetation and to ensure visitors stay on the preferred walking routes.

Visitor code of conduct

BEHAVIOUR ASHORE

- No plant or animal materials, food products or chemicals are to be taken into the area, nothing is to be taken from the area, and use of combustion style lanterns, naked flames is prohibited, as is smoking.
- Do not approach wildlife closer than 5m (or viewing distance consistent with your national programme's code of conduct), increase the distance if the animal is disturbed, and take particular care around nesting birds.
- All visitors to the hut must sign the log book.
- All waste including human waste must be removed from the area.
- Clean boots and remove any wet clothing before entering the hut and leave packs and bags outside.
- Keep noise to a minimum.
- Take care not to tread on any artefacts obscured by snow.
- Do not touch, move or sit on anything in the hut.
- Do not leave preferred walking routes.

CAUTIONARY NOTES

Be aware of the ASPA boundaries, especially the boundary between the ASPAs and the marine extent of ASPA 121



21. Cape Royds

77°33'11''S, 166°10'07''E
West Coast of Ross Island,
McMurdo Sound

ANTARCTIC TREATY

visitor site guide



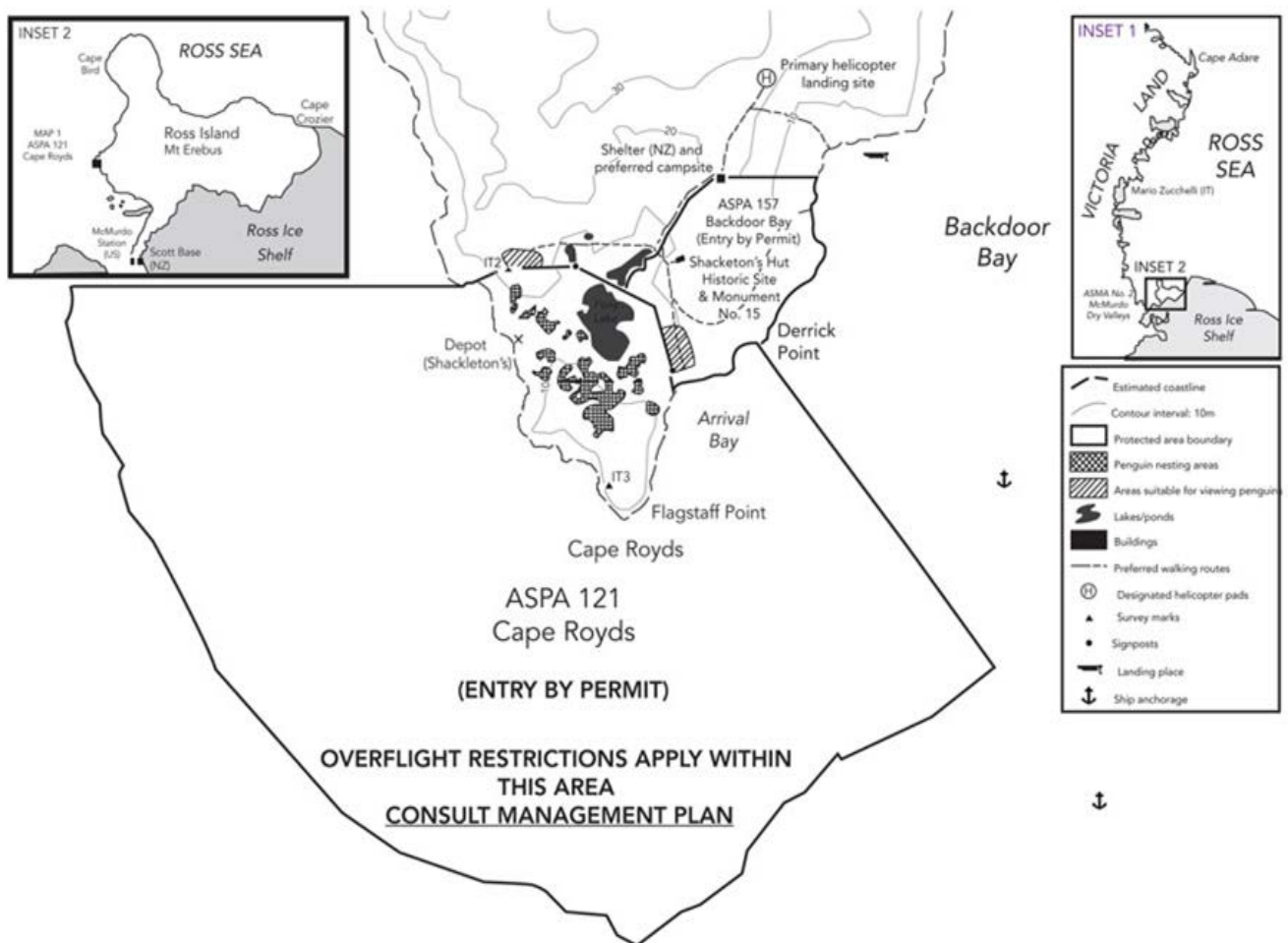
Crustose Lichens



Inside Shackleton's Hut



Adelie Penguin Colony



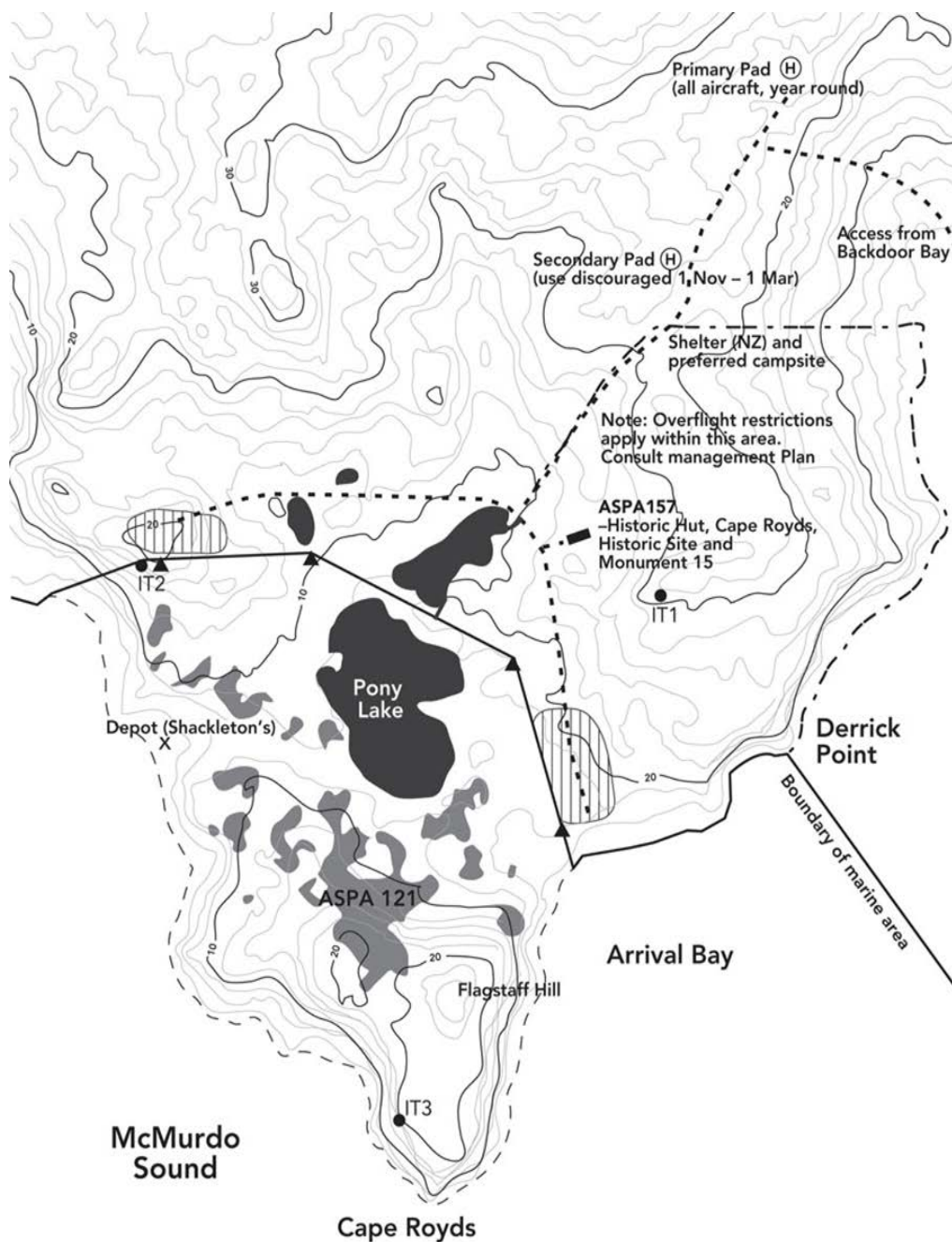
Map 1: ASPA No. 121 Cape Royds, Ross Island Boundaries and topography

21. Cape Royds

77°33'11''S, 166°10'07''E
West Coast of Ross Island,
McMurdo Sound

ANTARCTIC TREATY

visitor site guide



Map 2

- Lakes/ponds
- Penguin nesting areas (1990)
- ▨ Areas suitable for viewing penguins
- Buildings
- Survey marks
- ▲ Signposts

- (H) Designated helicopter pads
- - - Estimated position of coastline
- - - ASP A157 boundary
- - - ASP A121 Boundary
- - - Preferred walking routes

0 meters 50

Contour interval: 2m

Projection: Lambert conformal conic
Spheroid: WGS 1984

Source: Cape Royds Management plan