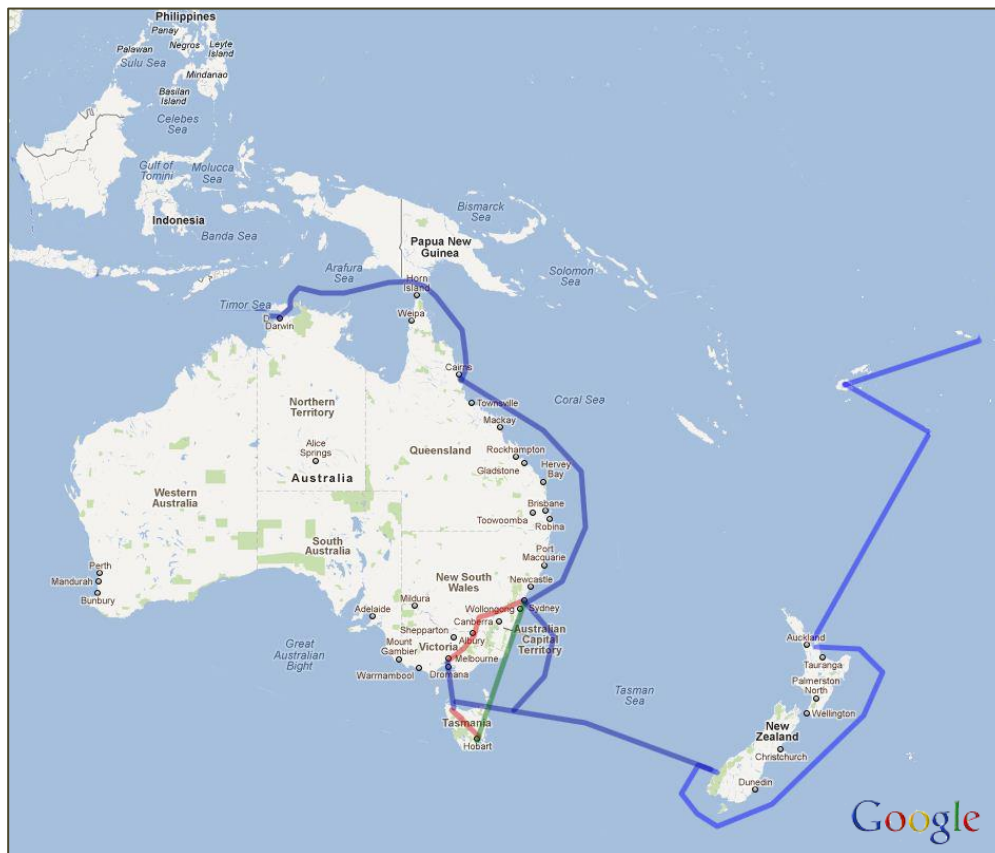




# Trekking the Planet

Discovering the Cultural and Natural Significance of the World



## Oceania and Australia – An Overview

- Darren and Sandy plan to spend about six weeks in Oceania and Australia. Above is a map of Oceania and the Australian continent which includes our route. See page 4 for our plans.
- Oceania is a region consisting of Australia, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea and the Polynesia, Melanesia and Micronesia Islands. This is an accepted grouping by the United Nations and International Olympic Committee. This module will review features of both Oceania and Australia.
- We have traveled approximately 4,312 miles (6,939 kilometers) from our starting point in California.

## People and Culture

- Oceania is comprised of 14 countries and 25 territories with an estimated population of 36 million people. Australia and New Zealand comprise 26 million of the inhabitants. The region's largest cities are found in these two countries.
- There are 28 official languages found in Oceania. Christianity is the dominant religion and traditional beliefs are also found on the islands.
- Popular sports include rugby, cricket and Australian Rules football. A competition, similar to the Olympics, is called the Pacific Games. This multi-sport event is held every four years and includes the countries in this region.
- Oceania was first settled about 2,000 years ago. Initial island migration moved from east to west. Australia's original inhabitants, known as aborigines, lived on the continent for up to 40,000 years before Europeans arrived.
- Europeans explored the Oceania region beginning in the 16th century. Some of the islands were discovered during Ferdinand Magellan's first around-the-world voyage. The British and French were most active in exploring and colonizing the region.

### Did you know?

- New Guinea, on which Papua New Guinea is located, is the second-largest island in the world
- Herman Melville (Moby Dick), and Robert Louis Stevenson (Treasure Island) were two famous writers that used the region as inspiration for their books
- In 1789 the mutiny on the Bounty took place at today's Pitcairn Island



*Sydney Opera House and Huli man from Papua New Guinea (source: [Wikipedia.org](http://Wikipedia.org))*



*One of the world's oldest cultures, Aborigines created art, using symbols, to tell stories (source: [Arboriginalartonline.com](http://Arboriginalartonline.com))*



Oceania map (source: [Wikipedia.org](http://Wikipedia.org))

## The Platypus

It looks like a duck with its bill and webbed feet, a beaver with its tail and an otter with its body and fur. The platypus, only found in Australia, is a mammal that weighs about 3 pounds (1.4 kilograms). It hunts for food underwater and eats insects, shellfish and worms. The Platypus is also one of two mammals that lay eggs.



sources: [National Geographic.com](http://National Geographic.com), [Olympic animalsanctuary.org](http://Olympic animalsanctuary.org)

## Nature and Environment

- A continent may be defined as a distinct continuous landmass or extended to include adjacent islands and fragments. Using these definitions, some geographers view Australia as a continent while others group the Pacific Islands into an Oceania designation, with the ocean being the 'continent' linking the nations together.
- The highest point in Oceania is Mt. Wilhelm in Papua New Guinea (14,794 feet (4,509 meters)).
- Besides Australia and New Zealand, Oceania is comprised of about 25,000 islands. These island types include volcanic islands and coral atolls. In total this region makes up 5% of earth's land.
- Australia is the world's smallest landmass continent and the only continent occupied by just one country. Its size is about the same as the United States without Alaska and Hawaii.
- Over 90% of Australia is flat and dry. Almost 75% of the country's land cannot support agriculture.
- There are many unique animals in Australia, such as the koala bear, emu, kookaburra and kangaroo. There are also over 1,500 different types of spiders, 4,000 species of ants and 350 types of termites in Australia.

## Our Plans

- We will be visiting the countries of Fiji, Tonga, New Zealand and Australia and the territory of American Samoa. Many of these places will be visited by ship on our way to Sydney, Australia.
- Once we arrive in Sydney we will spend almost a month in Australia, including time in Tasmania on our first trek.
- What things would you like to see us report on while we are in traveling in Oceania and Australia? Send us your questions via Twitter, Facebook or by email. We will include our answers in future emails.

## More Information

- <http://geography.about.com/library/faq/blqzoceania.htm>
- <http://www.australianhistory.org/australian-facts>
- [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/History\\_of\\_Oceania](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/History_of_Oceania)
- <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Continent>
- <http://www.worldatlas.com/webimage/countrys/au.htm>
- [http://www.pacificislandtravel.com/culture\\_gallery/novelists.html](http://www.pacificislandtravel.com/culture_gallery/novelists.html)
- <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Oceania>
- <http://www.essentialhumanities.net/his10.php>
- <http://www.embraceaustralia.com/fun-facts-about-australia-1411.htm>

## Aussie English

As we move closer to Australia here are some common Australian English terms:

- **Aussie** - Australian
- **Billabong** - Pond
- **Brekkie** - Breakfast
- **Chewie** - Chewing Gum
- **Fairy Floss** - Cotton
- **Give it a Burl** - Try it
- **Lollies** - Candy
- **Lolly Water** - Soda
- **See you in soup** - See you around
- **Sunnies** - Sunglasses

source: [Buzzle.com](http://Buzzle.com)

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