



Introducing Deserts

Major Deserts of the World

1/3rd of the world is covered in deserts



**Is New Mexico
in a Desert?**



Is New Mexico in a Desert?



Where are other Deserts?

- The largest hot desert on Earth is the Sahara in Africa.
- It covers 12 North African Countries



Where are other Deserts?

- The largest cold desert on Earth is Antarctica.



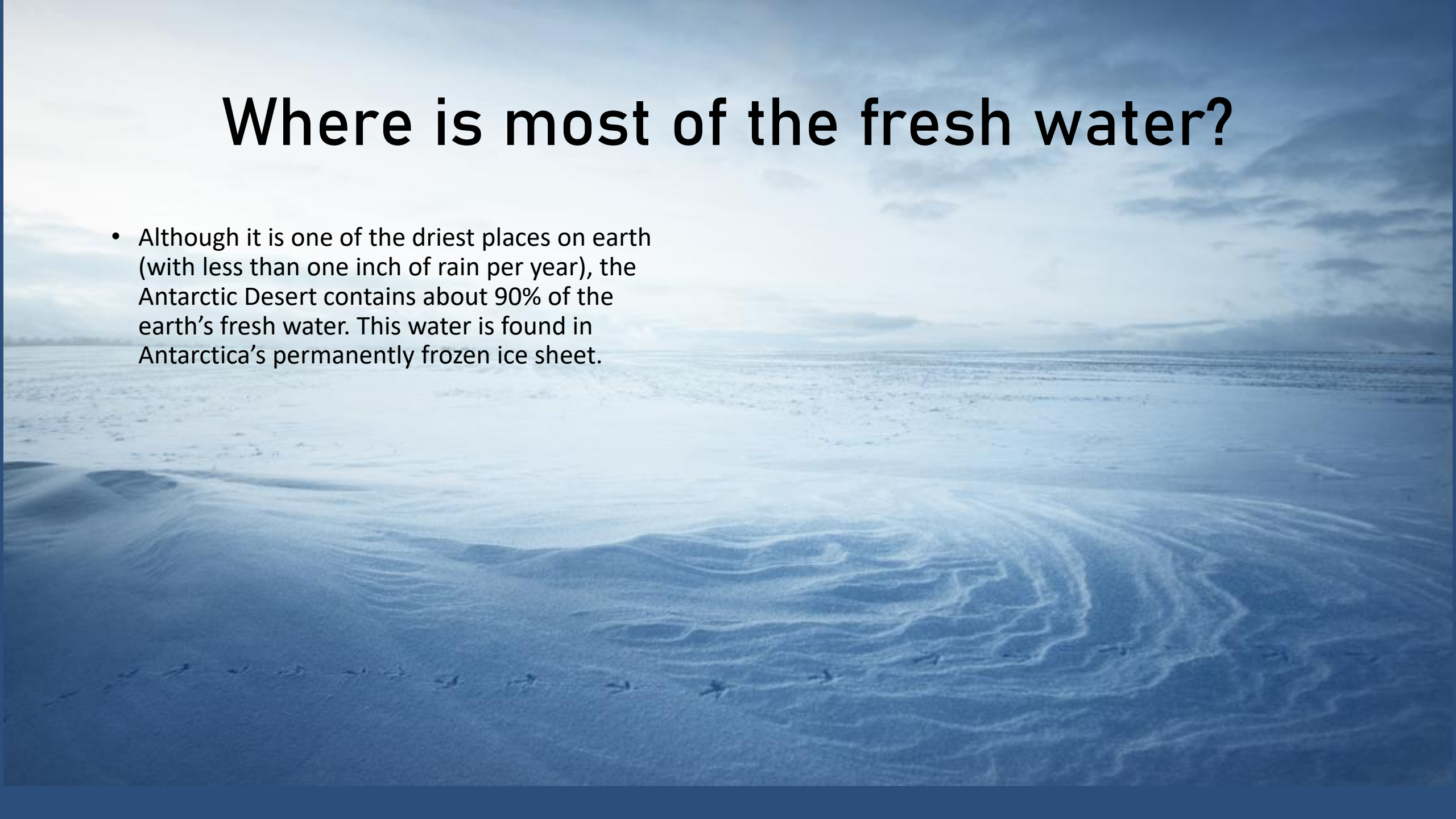
Largest Desert in the World



- The largest desert in the world is the Antarctic Desert. It covers an area of 13.8 square kilometers around the North Pole. The second-largest is the Arctic Desert which covers an area of 12.7 square kilometers around the North Pole. Polar deserts are a term used to describe many of the ice-free areas of the Arctic and Antarctic.

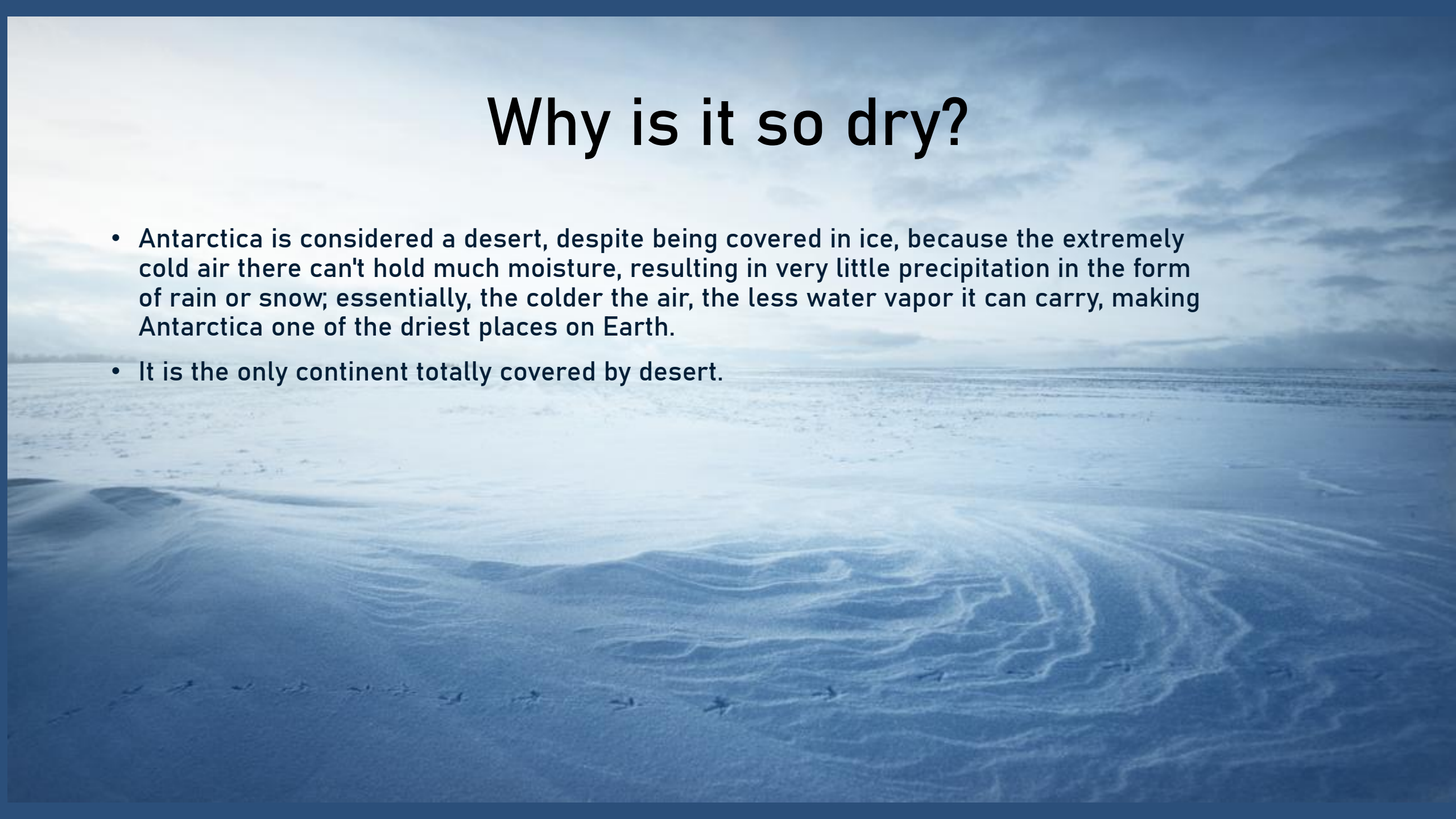
Where is most of the fresh water?

- Although it is one of the driest places on earth (with less than one inch of rain per year), the Antarctic Desert contains about 90% of the earth's fresh water. This water is found in Antarctica's permanently frozen ice sheet.



Why is it so dry?

- Antarctica is considered a desert, despite being covered in ice, because the extremely cold air there can't hold much moisture, resulting in very little precipitation in the form of rain or snow; essentially, the colder the air, the less water vapor it can carry, making Antarctica one of the driest places on Earth.
- It is the only continent totally covered by desert.



Land of the Midnight Sun

- During the Summer in the Arctic Desert, the sun doesn't set for 60 days. It just keeps hovering over the horizon. This means that even at midnight, you can see the sun. This has given the Arctic Desert the nickname "The Land of the Midnight Sun."



Second Largest Hot Desert

- Although it is considerably smaller than the Sahara, the Arabian Desert in the Middle East in Saudi Arabia is the second-largest hot desert on Earth.



What makes the desert different?

- Less than 40cm (16in) of rain falls on deserts on average each year.



One- Third

One-third of the Earth's surface is barren land or desert land.



The word "desert" means an abandoned place.



Sand Everywhere?

Sand is only present in about 20% of the world's deserts.



Driest Place in the World

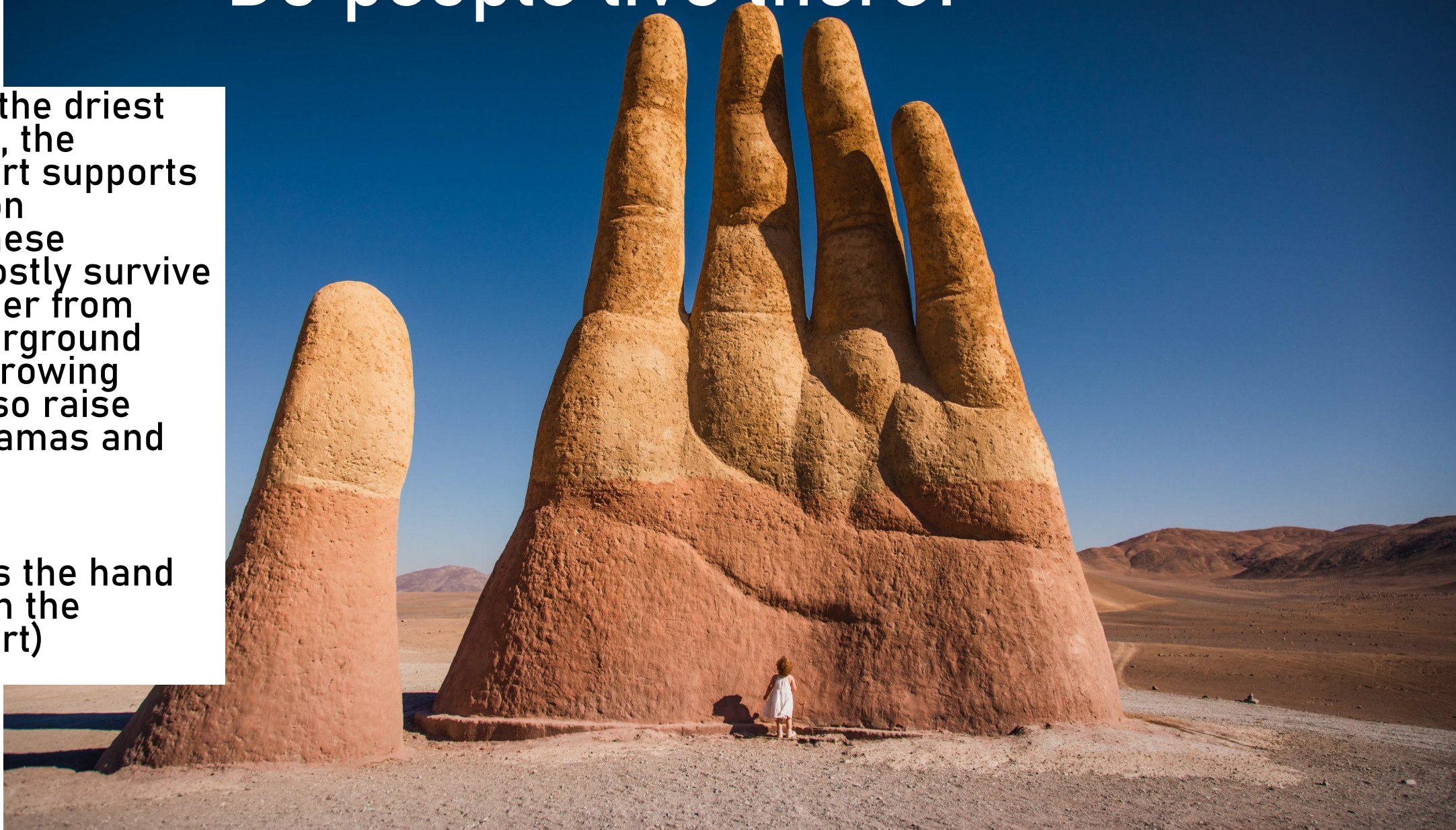
- The driest nonpolar desert in the world is the Atacama Desert in Chile. Parts of this desert have received no rainfall since records began. Scientists believe that parts of the Atacama have been in extreme desertification for over 40 million years.



Do people live there?

Despite being the driest place on earth, the Atacama Desert supports around 1 million inhabitants. These inhabitants mostly survive by tapping water from aquifers (underground streams) for growing crops. They also raise animals like llamas and alpacas

(Picture shows the hand of the desert in the Atacama Desert)







Gobi Desert

- The first dinosaur eggs were discovered in [Gobi Desert](#) in 1923. Gobi Desert is located in parts of northwestern China and southern Mongolia. It is the fifth-largest desert in the world. It was created in the shadow of the Himalayas as the tall mountains prevented rain from reaching Gobi.



Dinosaur Eggs

A large, brown, textured fossilized dinosaur egg cluster is the central focus, resting on a light-colored surface. The cluster consists of several rounded, overlapping eggs. In the background, a young child with dark hair, wearing a dark jacket over a light shirt, is looking towards the camera. The background is slightly out of focus, showing what appears to be an indoor setting with a tiled floor.

- Dinosaur eggs were first discovered in the Gobi Desert of Mongolia in 1923 by explorer Roy Chapman Andrews. Since then, the Gobi has become known as one of the world's largest dinosaur fossil reservoirs.

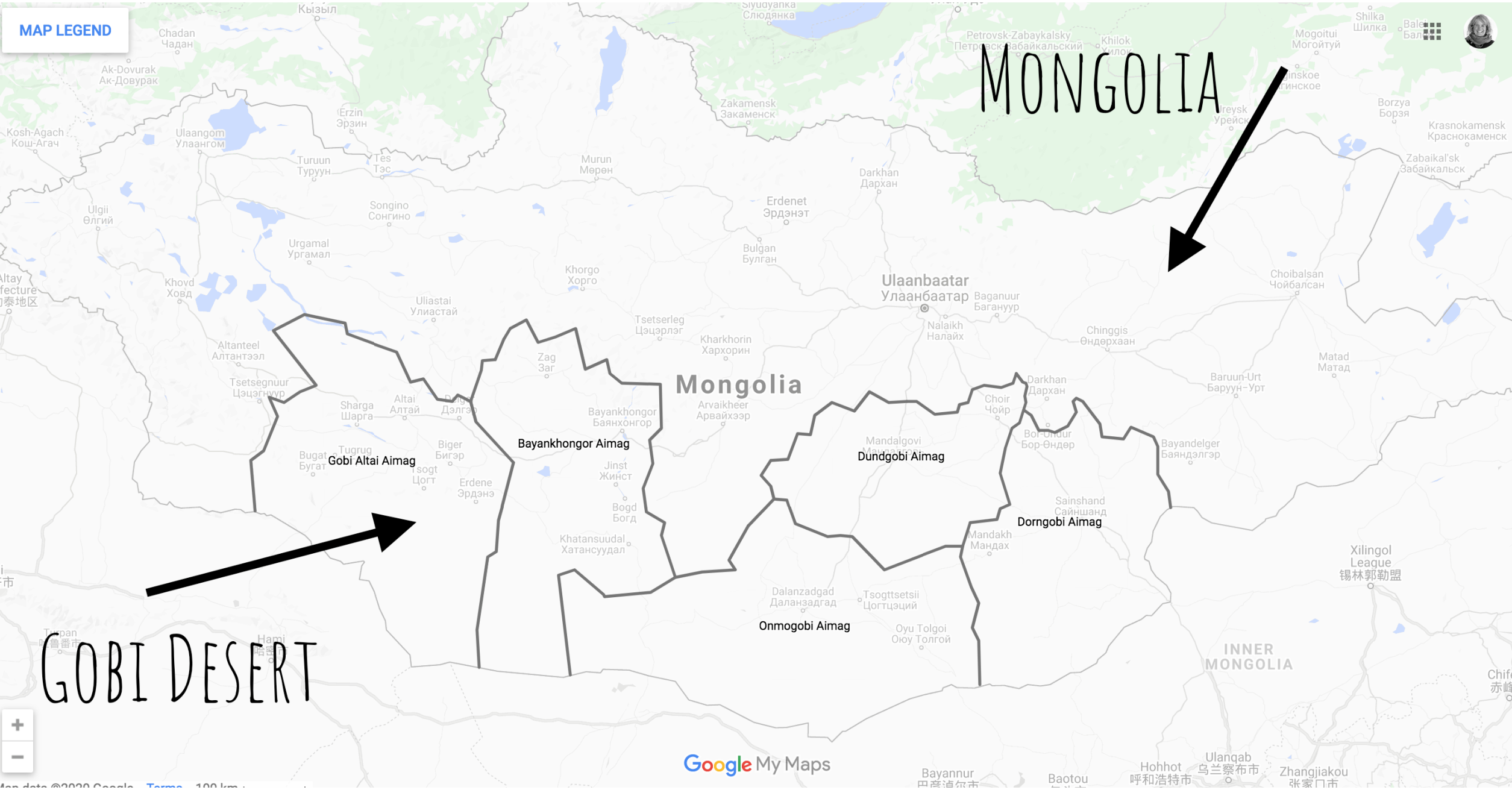
MAP LEGEND

MONGOLIA



Mongolia

GOBI DESERT





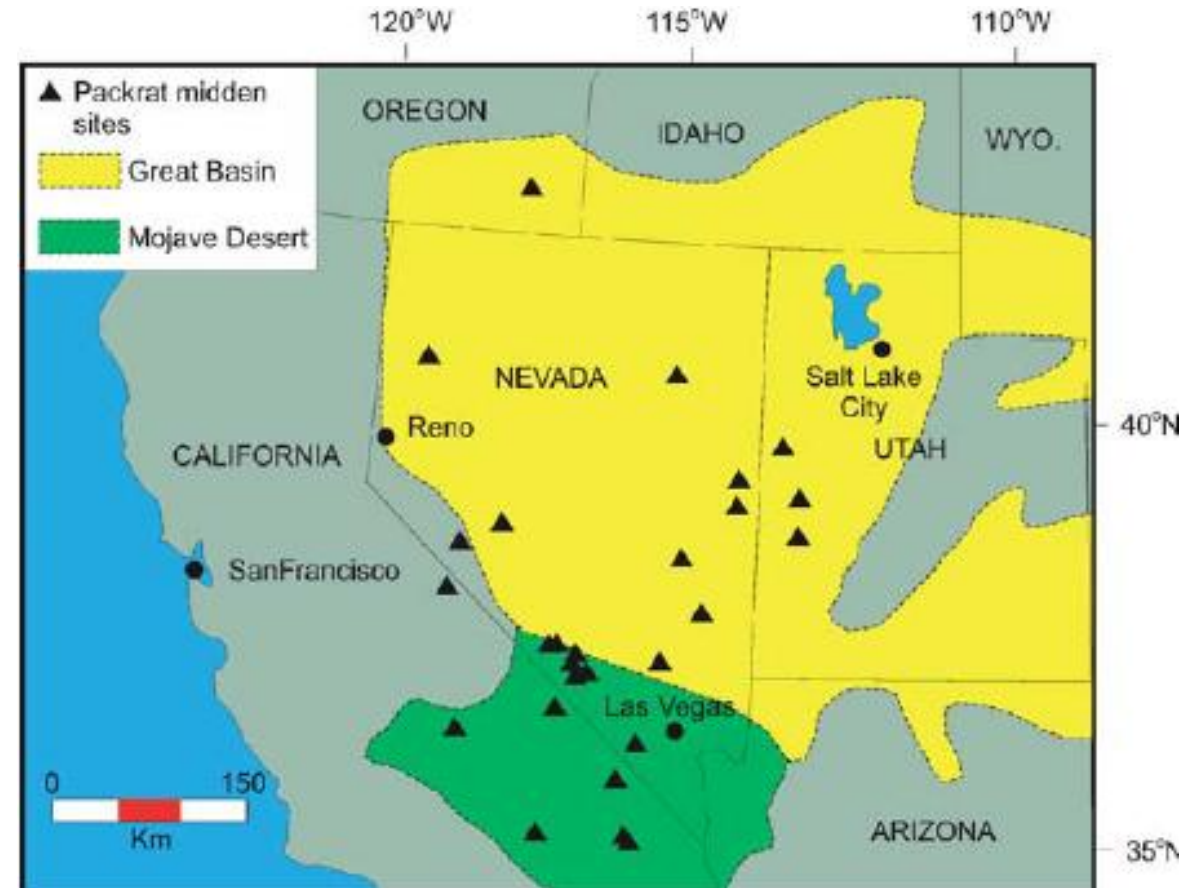
Tallest Sand Dunes

A large sand dune with a dark, shadowed side and a bright, sunlit side, set against a clear blue sky. The dune's surface shows distinct horizontal ridges and a smooth, wind-swept slope. The foreground is a flat, grassy plain.

- The Namib Desert has the tallest sand dunes in the world. Some of these sand dunes are up to 300 meters high. Besides being high, the sand dunes are also extremely spectacular and are a popular attraction for nature lovers.

Mohave Desert

- The [Mojave Desert](#) is the driest desert in the United States. It has an annual rainfall of around 5 inches. It is also home to the Death Valley – considered the hottest, driest and lowest place in North America.



- One of the most resilient desert animals is the tortoise. The desert tortoise is found in the Mojave Desert. An adult tortoise can tolerate temperatures in excess of 50°C and can survive without water for up to one year.



Kalahari Bushmen

- The Bushmen in the [Kalahari desert](#) (in Namibia, Africa) have adapted to the extreme lack of water. They use a specific root called “Bi!” which as a source of hydration. The Bi (also known as the milk root) is a bulb which has a milkfish liquid. People drink the liquid to keep themselves hydrated in the extreme temperatures.





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 +32
View gallery

Colourful: The women of the San tribe make their colourful beads from ostrich egg shells and make extra money by selling them to tourists



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View gallery

Useful: A woman carries a bi! bulb, which offer a useful source of drinkable, if extremely bitter, water - extremely handy during desert hunting expeditions



Deadly: San hunters kill springboks, giraffes and other animals using poison tipped arrows and were once in high demand as army trackers



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View gallery

That's how you do it! A San man squeezes the water from a bu! bulb during a hunt out in the wilds of the forbidding Kalahari desert

Largest Bird

- The largest desert bird is the Ostrich. Found in the deserts of Africa, Australia and Arabia, the ostrich is also the most dangerous desert bird. This may sound surprising given that ostriches are generally known to be gentle and shy. However, they can get aggressive especially when their eggs or young ones are threatened. Ostriches have a powerful kick. They also have 30 cm long claws which are thick and strong. These claws can easily disembowel an animal.



African Wild Dog

- The most ravenous predator in the desert is the [African wild dog](#). Found in the deserts of Africa, these animals hunt in packs of up to 40 animals. They mostly take down ostriches, foxes, wildebeest, warthogs, and antelopes. Although they rarely attack humans, they have been known to do so especially when extremely hungry. Surviving an African wild dog attack is almost impossible – they are swift, vicious and ravenous.



Sidewinder

- The Sidewinder is one of the most unique snakes in the desert. Found mostly in the Sahara desert, this horned viper is renowned for its legendary sideways movements. This movement is an adaptation to move fast over the desert sand.



Death Stalker Scorpions

- The deathstalker is the most venomous scorpion species in the world. This yellowish, translucent scorpion (which is also known as the Naqab desert scorpion and Palestinian Yellow scorpion) is found in the deserts of Naqab, Arabia, Sahara and numerous US deserts. The deathstalker almost exclusively hunts at night. Its sting is extremely painful, and the venom is toxic enough to kill a child, or elderly person.



Scarab Beetle

- The Scarab Beetle is perhaps the most unusual insect in the desert. Known to most people by its less-glamorous name, the dung beetle, this insect lives almost exclusively on animal waste. It is best known for rolling animal waste into round balls. These balls are what it feeds on. In some cases, they simply burrow a hole into a pile of dung and make it their home. This means that whenever they feel hungry, they simply munch away.



Videos to Learn More



- National Geographic Video Overview- <https://youtu.be/n4crvs-KTBw>
- Going Deeper- National Geographic- <https://youtu.be/E2RzuoQ1t7k?si=b-XY1sQyKstjG55R>
- Follow a host of remarkable animals surviving in the planet's hottest habitats as the deserts continue to get even hotter, drier and bigger.
- African Wild Dogs- BBC Video
https://youtu.be/h4SlAc2U1A4?si=m_5lc0zy20BF0J4h
- The Most Successful Hunter In Africa- African Wild Dogs-
<https://youtu.be/DAflT-GTMk4?si=9KKW8MVTmDMrINbc>

Videos to Learn More

- Short Video- Worlds Deadliest- Wild Dogs- National Geographic- <https://youtu.be/82kQTKWnKwg?si=TtirynKOaBEeKSGO>

- Use of Technology- Spy Pup- Video- Wild Dogs- <https://youtu.be/bfJUciAxyo?si=iK1BQZ0CNneAU70L>

- Sidewinder- Hunts Gecko- short video- https://youtu.be/5YR2eFq29_k?si=C3rOrDYn38Njrtk0

• Gliding at speeds of up to 18 mph, our starving sidewinder searches the desert for his next meal. With lizards like banded geckos on the menu, the sidewinder will stop at nothing to track down his feast.

- Dung Beetle-Short video <https://youtu.be/l1RHmSm36aE?si=dlXNP1Fo2GfLC02n>

- Another Short Dung Beetle- Holy Beetle- <https://youtu.be/ZRN-Lu-m-oY?si=J08qCTN8nTLtireG>

