



Seychelles

Joined the Commonwealth 1976 - visited by the Queen in 1972



Seychelles is an island nation in the western Indian Ocean

Pop: (2013) 93,000

Capital: Victoria

Area: 455 sq km

The Seychelles is an archipelago of around 115 islands spread across 1.3m sq km of ocean. 41 of these islands, the largest of which is Mahé, are granite peaks whilst the others are low lying, scattered coral islands. The tropical climate is tempered by the south-east trades though the north-west monsoon brings much needed fresh water on which the islands rely.

90% of the land is forested. The granite islands are covered in luxuriant tropical trees whereas the low lying islands feature coconut palms and the celebrated giant coco de mer palm unique to the Seychelles and which can live for up to 1,000 years. Fruit bats, flying foxes and skinks are common and there are over 3,000 species of insects. Four of the islands are designated bird sanctuaries, home to rare birds such as the bare-legged scops owl and the paradise flycatcher. Aptly named Bird Island is inhabited by millions of fairy terns.

An increasingly popular destination for weddings and honeymoons, Seychelles is heavily dependent on tourism. To diversify, there have been recent attempts to encourage farming, tuna fishing and manufacturing.



Conservation has helped save the giant tortoise from extinction

