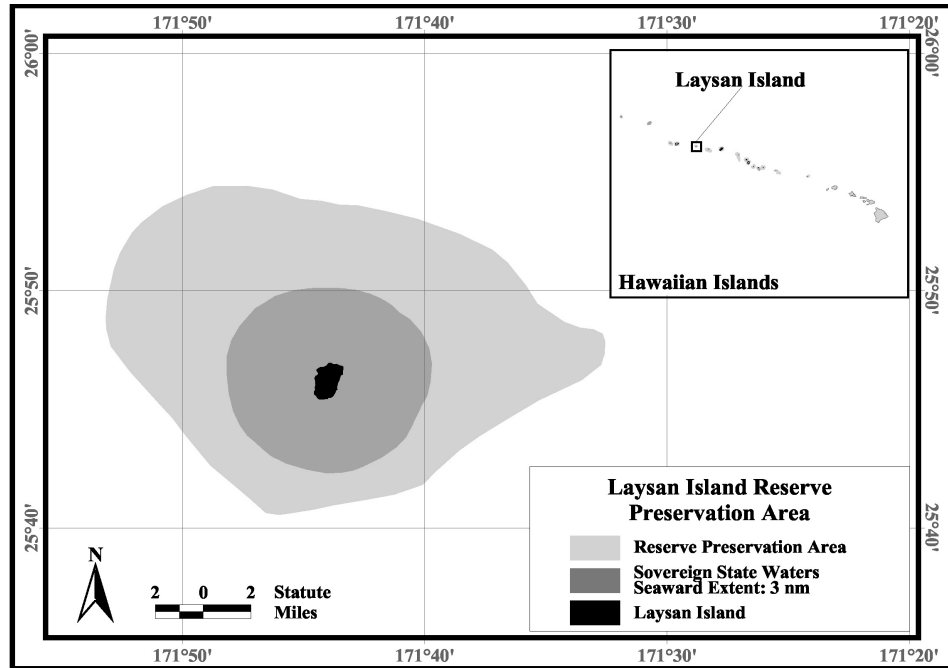


Laysan Island Reserve Preservation Area

MAP



This reserve preservation area is approximated using fathoms (fm), but shall be represented in future maps by the Secretary using straight-line boundaries in longitude and latitude coordinates to clearly encompass the reserve preservation area and to provide clarity and ease of identification.

RESERVE PRESERVATION AREA

The Reserve Preservation Area for Laysan Island includes the waters and submerged lands from the seaward boundary of Hawaii state waters out to a mean depth of 100 fathoms *provided that* bottomfishing, in accordance with other conservation measures described in the Executive Order, shall be allowed to continue seaward of a mean depth of 50 fathoms, unless and until the Secretary determines otherwise after adequate public review and comment.

ENVIRONMENT

Laysan Island, located approximately 1,418 km northwest of Honolulu, is the largest island in the Reserve with about 1,000 acres of land. Laysan is roughly rectangular in shape and about 3.6 sq km in area with a large saltwater lagoon occupying about one-fifth of the island's central depression. It is well vegetated (except for its sand dunes) and contains a hyper-saline lake, which is one of only five natural lakes in the State of Hawaii.

Laysan's coral reef habitat totals approximately 145,000 acres. The fringing reef surrounding the island varies from 100 to 500 m in width and is most extensive

at the northwest end of the island. Inside the reef is a narrow, shallow channel which nearly encircles the island except for the south and southeast sides.

Despite lacking much protection from the detrimental effects of waves, Laysan supports a surprisingly rich coral environment with good development along its leeward coasts. The small back reef, pass and moat near the island's western boat landing also help to diversify habitats and the number of coral species inhabiting them. Today, coral and reef growth appear to be healthy. Of interest is the fact that the table coral *Acropora* can be found off Laysan, which makes it the northernmost island or atoll in the Northwestern Hawaiian Islands chain that supports this particular species.

Laysan Island has the second largest breeding population of the endangered monk seal (currently numbering about 1/3 of its historic maximum). It is also a site of green sea turtle nesting and supports a very healthy reef fish abundance and diversity. Derelict fishing gear and other types of marine debris are, however, having a major impact on the reefs and associated fauna of the island. Over several years, efforts have been undertaken to lessen the threat of this growing problem.

The Hawaiian Islands National Wildlife Refuge is currently administered out to 10 fathoms at Laysan Island.