



Additional chart coverage may be found in CATP2, Catalog of Nautical Charts.

**SECTOR 8**—CHART INFORMATION

## SECTOR 8

### ISLANDS IN THE WEST INDIAN OCEAN—THE SEYCHELLES ISLANDS TO THE CHAGOS ARCHIPELAGO

**Plan.**—This sector sets forth a description of several groups of islands lying in the W portion of the Indian Ocean between India and Madagascar. These several groups are the Seychelles Islands, the Amirante Islands, Alphonse Island, the Agalega Islands, Saya de Malha Bank, and the Chagos Archipelago.

#### General Remarks

**8.1** The Seychelles Islands rise from Seychelles Bank, an extensive coral reef contained within an area between 3° 40'S and 6° 35'S, and 53° 56'E and 57° 10'E. A vessel must pass over some portion of the bank to reach the islands.

A vessel found that a nearly continuous rim of relatively shallow water extends from Bird Island to the W extremity of Seychelles Bank, and then for a considerable distance around its S side. It is possible many dangerous shoals may exist on this rim besides those known, and vessels are advised not to cross Seychelles Bank N of latitude of 5° S, except by described routes.

Caution and vigilance of more than ordinary intensity are demanded of the navigator traversing Seychelles Bank; soundings should be taken continuously.

**Areas to be Avoided.**—Two IMO-adopted Areas to be Avoided have been established within the Seychelles group, E and W of Mahe Island, and may best be seen on the chart. Vessels greater than 200 grt should avoid entering the Seychelles Bank area, which includes the waters between the Areas to be Avoided and the approach routes to Port Victoria, as the area has not been surveyed to modern standards, and uncharted dangers may exist. Vessels should navigate with caution.

Vessels should note that the charted boundaries of the Port Victoria approach routes are not affected by the Areas to be Avoided, although they overlap in several locations.

**Note.**—Vessels proceeding to Port Victoria are required, as far as practicable, to stay within the N and S approach limits as indicated on the area chart.

The N approach is made from a position about 16 miles E of Bird Island at the N end of Seychelles Bank.

The S approach is made from a position 26 miles SSW of Police Point (4° 48'S., 55° 31'E.), the SW extremity of Mahe Island, at the S end of Seychelles Bank.

The Amirante Islands rise from a bank of coral and sand whose N extremity lies between 4° 51'S and 6° 17'S, and 52° 50'E and 53° 24'E.

The Amirante Islands are flat and are formed of coral; none attain a height greater than 6.1m, but they are usually visible up to 10 to 14 miles, depending on the height of the palms on each islet.

There are several islets and a number of coral reefs on the bank which dry. Depths over the bank are generally deeper S of D'Arros Island (5° 25'S., 53° 18'E.) than N of it. There is a lip

along both the E and W edges of the bank with depths which vary from 10.1 to 35m and are usually about 19.8m.

All of the islets are flat, sandy, and fringed with coral reefs. South Island of the African Islands; Sand Cay, 6 miles NW of Poivre Island; and Etoile Cay and Boudeuse Cay on the SW side of the bank are bare. Coconut trees up to 24m tall grow on the other islands; they are visible at a distance up to 14 miles.

Vessels are advised not to navigate over Amirante Bank, as soundings give little or no warning of the approach to the islands. The currents on the bank are strong and uncertain in direction. The anchorages, when obtainable, are usually insecure.

Saya de Malha Bank is an extensive bank which has a distinct division between its N and S part; the S part is much larger. The two parts, which are steep-to, lie between 8° 16'S and 11° 46'S, and 59° 37'E and 62° 30'E.

The bottom appears to be coral when in depths of less than 60m and fine sand in greater depths.

Poydenot Rock is covered with 8m, and a depth of 7m is charted in a position 90 miles NW of Poydenot Rock. Charting is incomplete and lesser depths than those shown on the chart could exist; extreme care should be taken when in transit in the vicinity of this bank.

#### Seychelles Islands

**8.2 Bird Island** (3° 43'S., 55° 12'E.), the farthest N of the Seychelles Islands, is a flat island of coral and sand which hardly exceeds 2m in height. Clusters of casuarina trees and coconut palms rise in the interior while its shore is generally bordered by thick brush, except at the N end, from which a sand spit extends for about 0.2 mile. There is an airstrip on the SE side of the island which provides daily communications with Mahe.

Bar Silhouette, a shoal with a depth of 7.3m, is located 4 miles S of Bird Island.

**Denis Island** (3° 48'S., 55° 40'E.) is a low flat island marked by a light. It has been reported (1991) that the light may be obscured by trees.

A shallow bank, with depths less than 10m, extends 2.5 miles N of the island; depths from 4.5 to 5.5m lie up to 1.8 miles from the NW through N to NE of the island. More coral heads than charted are likely to exist on the bank and a ship should exercise extreme caution when navigating within 3 miles N of Denis Island.

Anchorage may be taken W of Denis Island in depths of 35 to 40m, sand and coral.

Surf breaks heavily on the E and S shores of the island during the Southeast Trade Winds.

**Bar de l'Est** (3° 47'S., 55° 50'E.) is a shoal with general depths of 13 to 18m; a coral head, with a depth of 8.5m, is located on the E side of the bar.

## Mahe Island

**8.3 Mahe Island** (4° 40'S., 55° 28'E.), the largest of the Seychelles Islands, is mountainous and generally wooded; on clear days its summit can be seen about 50 miles. Mahe Island is traversed by a range of hills and mountains that are separated by many deep ravines with sheer cliffs; the summits of the range are conspicuous.

**Morne Seychellois** (4° 39'S., 55° 26'E.) rises to a height of 913m; it is comprised of four peaks. During the Southeast Monsoon, the summit of this mountain is nearly always obscured by clouds.

**Trois Freres** (4° 38'S., 55° 26'E.), 767m high, rises 0.5 mile N of Morne Seychellois; it dominates the city of Victoria.

Mount Simpson is the most prominent of several peaks in the range extending WNW from Morne Seychellois; it may be identified by a distinctive thumb-shaped rock on its summit.

Morne Blanc, 0.7 mile SSW of Morne Seychellois, is steep with remarkable cliffs about its upper part and a rounded summit; it rises to a height of 666m.

**Mount Harrison** (4° 41'S., 55° 29'E.) rises to a height of 688m, 3.2 miles SE of Morne Seychellois. A radio tower, marked by obstruction lights, can be seen at a great distance by a vessel coming from the SW.

**Mount Sebert** (4° 41'S., 55° 30'E.), 550m high, is located about 1.8 miles E of Mount Harrison; Cascade Valley is formed between these peaks.

Castle Peak, 2.5 miles SE of Mount Harrison, is conspicuous; it has three summits. The middle peak of Castle Peak is bare rock, broad, and flat with a distinctive thumb-shaped rock on its S side.

**8.4 Mahe Island—Southwest side.**—The SW side of Mahe Island is indented by several small bays fronted by steep-to reefs; anchorage can generally be taken outside the reefs by vessels with local knowledge.

**Pointe Lazare** (4° 46'S., 55° 28'E.) is the S extremity of Lazare Headland. Two conspicuous conical hills are located on the headland; the outer hill is 148m high and the inner hill is 210m high.

Boileau Bay is entered between Lazare Headland and Therese Island. Chauve Souris, a rocky islet, lies 0.2 mile NW of the N extremity of Lazare Headland; it shows conspicuously white against the mainland. Isle Vache, 54m high, is located 0.3 mile offshore, 3.5 miles NNW of Isle Vache; it shows white from seaward.

Trois Dames, a rock with a depth less than 1.8m, lies nearly 1 mile NW of Isle Vache; the sea breaks heavily over it.

Vessels with local knowledge can anchor in several places in Boileau Bay, but the preferred anchorages are in Anse la Mouche, on the N side of Lazare Headland, and in Anse Boileau, 1.7 miles NNE of the headland; the former anchorage is well-protected from the swell.

A prohibited area about 0.6 mile long extends about 0.6 mile offshore, close NW of Anse Boileau; its seaward corners are marked by special buoys.

Ternay Pass leads between **Conception Island** (4° 40'S., 55° 22'E.) and Ternay Peninsula, 0.7 mile NE. A strong current sets through the pass; its direction is invariably N during the Southeast Monsoon.

**Pilot Patches** (4° 42'S., 55° 20'E.) are three coral patches with a least charted depth of 18m; in good weather, the bottom can be distinctly seen. A fishery raft is anchored 3 miles W of the patches.

**Stork Patch** (4° 43'S., 55° 25'E.), comprised of coral, has a least depth of 5.5m; it lies in the approach to Boileau Bay, 2.7 miles SW of Isle Vache. The sea does not always break over this patch, but the swell increases near it. An isolated patch, with a depth of 18.3m, lies 0.7 mile WNW of Stork Patch.

**8.5 Mahe Island—Northwest side.—Cape Ternay** (4° 38'S., 55° 22'E.) is the NW extremity of Mahe Island; it is marked by a light. The cape is steep-to, and a cross stands near its extremity.

Baie Ternay, formed on the E side of Cape Ternay, is well-sheltered, but its head is filled by a steep-to reef which does not show in any way.

North Islet, 0.5 mile W of North Point, is 15.5m high; it is easily seen when clear of the land. Patches of 5.5m lie 0.2 mile W and 2.5 miles WSW, respectively, of North Islet.

**Requin Bank** (4° 34'S., 55° 22'E.), formed of coral with a depth of 19.6m, lies 4 miles W of North Islet. A fishery raft marked by a red flag is moored on the bank; similar rafts are moored 4 miles W and 7.2 miles SW of the bank.

From April to November, the Southeast Trade Winds often blow with considerable force from the hills that encircle North West Bay.

**8.6 Mahe Island—East side.—Police Point** (4° 48'S., 55° 31'E.), the S extremity of Mahe Island, has a rounded summit, 65m high, covered with coconut palms; it is steep-to except off its W side, where there is a rock with a depth less than 1.8m. A light exhibited from a height of 62m marks the point.

**Capucin Rock** (4° 49'S., 55° 31'E.), awash, lies 0.5 mile SSW of the light on Police Point; the sea breaks heavily over it.

**Pointe du Sud** (4° 48'S., 55° 32'E.), 1 mile E of Police Point, is high and nearly steep-to; a rock, 0.9m high, lies close S of the point.

**Pointe Capucins** (4° 47'S., 55° 32'E.) is located 1 mile N of Pointe du Sud; Anse Marie-Louise indents the coast between Pointe Capucins and Cap Lascars.

Anse Royale indents the shore between Cap Lascars and Sel Point, about 2.5 miles N. A conspicuous white church stands on the shore of the bay at its head.

**South East Island** (4° 41'S., 55° 32'E.), 63m high, is joined to the mainland at its SW extremity. An international airport has been built fronting the coast W of South East Island.

**8.7 Mahe Island—Northeast side.**—From South East Island the coast trends in a general NW direction to North Point. It is fronted by numerous islands and rocks, and is the location of Port Victoria.

**Recif Island** (4° 35'S., 55° 46'E.) is 48m high and has a distinctive white rock shaped like a building on its summit. Submerged rocks extend 0.5 mile SE and SW from the S extremity of the island, and a rock, 4.6m high, is located 0.5 mile SE of that point. Depths of less than 5.5m extend 0.2 mile N and W of the island. An 18.3m patch and a 16.5m patch lie 1.2 miles NW and 1 mile W, respectively, of Recif Island.

**Caution.**— Between Recif Island and Saint Anne Island the bottom is very uneven, and eddies and ripples are frequently encountered.

**Rat Island** (4° 40'S., 55° 32'E.) lies close offshore, 0.3 mile NNE of South East Island. Tortue Rock lies about 0.3 mile E of Rat Island; the sea usually breaks on the rock, but in calm weather it is sometimes scarcely visible at HW.

**Cerf Island** (4° 38'S., 55° 30'E.), 3.7 miles NW of South East Island, is the farthest S of the principal islands fronting Port Victoria; it rises to a height of 107m. Long Island, Round Island, and Moyenne Island lie 0.3 mile NE, 0.4 mile N, and 0.6 mile NNE, respectively, of Cerf Island. All four of these islands lie on a large coral reef, covered with sand, which dries in patches and on which there are numerous coral heads.

**Saint Anne Island** (4° 36'S., 55° 30'E.), the farthest N and largest of the islands fronting Port Victoria, lies 0.4 mile NNW of Moyenne Island. It is separated from the coral reef surrounding Moyenne Island by Saint Anne Channel.

It was reported (1990) that the light structure on Sainte Anne Island was obscured by foliage and not visible in daylight.

A pipeline extends N from the W side of Cerf Island to the SW extremity of Saint Anne Island, and SSW from Cerf Island to Brillant Point on Mahe Island. Anchorage is prohibited in the vicinity of the pipelines.

**Caution.**—Sainte Anne Channel, as well as Sainte Anne Island, Cerf Island, and other small islands, are now part of a national park. The boundary of the national park is marked by buoys and is best seen on the chart.

**Harrison Rock** (Ile Seche) (4° 38'S., 55° 32'E.), 8m high, lies a little over 1 mile E of Long Island; it is the highest and largest of several rocks enclosed by a 10m curve.

A dumping ground lies with its center about 0.8 mile SE of Harrison Rock.

**Beacon Island** (4° 37'S., 55° 31'E.), 31m high, lies 1 mile NNW of Harrison Rock, in the approach to Saint Anne Channel. It is fringed by a shallow bank, except on its SW side. An isolated patch, with a depth of 4.4m, lies about 0.3 mile SW of Harrison Rock.

## Victoria (4° 37'S., 55° 27'E.)

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**8.8** Port Victoria is located on the NE side of Mahe Island. The port consists of an outer harbor, an inner harbor, and a town which is the capital and the seat of government.

The port authority is the Seychelles Department of Transport and Marine Services Division, which is represented by a port director and a harbormaster. The Port Office and Customs Office are situated at the NW end of the quay at the New Port Area.

**Depths—Limitations.**— The N entrance is the most important channel to Victoria Harbor; it is marked by lights, beacons, and buoys. Saint Anne Channel is not considered safe for vessels drawing more than 2.5m, due to an extensive reef at its W end. Cerf Passage is navigable by vessels drawing up to 4.5m. The depths over the shoal heads and patches in Cerf Passage are 3.6 to 5.4m; none of these dangers are marked. A vessel should not attempt passage unless the light is favorable.

Extensive dredging and landfill operations are being conducted in Victoria Harbor. The area immediately N of Long Pier has been filled and the area NE of the filled area has been dredged to 7.5m. The area 0.3 mile SW of Victoria Light, on the NW side of the channel, was dredged to a depth of 12.5m. The reef area 0.3 mile SSW of Victoria Light and the same distance NE of the wharf, has been dredged to a depth of 13m.

The inner harbor has been dredged to a depth of 10.7m within an area of 0.2 mile diameter.

In the New Port Area, Berth No. 1, at the NW end of the quay, is normally used by tankers and vessels discharging bulk cement, it will accommodate tankers up to 174m in length. Berth No. 2 will accommodate vessels up to 244m in length; quarter ramp ro-ro vessels can berth at the quay. The maximum draft permitted at the berths is 10.2m.

**Pilotage.**—Pilotage is compulsory for any vessel of or exceeding 150 grt to either the outer or inner harbor. The pilot will embark 0.6 mile WNW of the N extremity of Saint Anne Island, on the approach range line. The vessel's ETA should be sent 24 hours in advance and the vessel should call "Harbor Control" on VHF channel 16, 2 hours before arrival. Movement in the inner harbor is permitted in daylight only.

**Regulations.**—Vessels must give 12 hours notice at the Port Office prior to departure.

No vessel may call at any of the Seychelles Islands unless Government permission has been obtained at Victoria.

**Signals.**—The signal tower is situated in the New Port Area; the berth to be taken by incoming vessels will normally be indicated by signal.

**Anchorage.**—The master should always contact the harbormaster for anchorage instructions.

These anchorages are open N and a swell is sometimes felt. Southeast trades seldom blow hard, but during the Northwest Monsoon, heavy gusts come off the high land.

The most convenient anchorage in the inner harbor is in depths of 16 to 18m, opposite the large warehouse on the head of Long Pier.

**Directions.**— From a position at the S end of the outer harbor 1.1 miles NE of Victoria Light, follow a 249° range line which leads to the seaward end of the inner harbor entrance channel. An alternate approach to reach the inner harbor from the anchorages is to follow a 264° range line. For more information see the General Remarks topic at the beginning of this sector.

## Seychelles Islands (continued)

**8.9 Anse Etoile** (4° 35'S., 55° 27'E.) is formed between Pointe Conan, 0.7 mile N of Port Victoria, and North East Point (4° 35'S., 55° 28'E.), 1.5 miles NNE. An aero light is exhibited from a metal framework tower, 3m high, on the summit of North East Point. Seven orange and white radio masts, 46 to 91m high, stand on the coastal reef within 0.2 mile of a building situated 0.4 mile SSE of the N entrance point of Anse Etoile. Each of the radio masts is marked by obstruction lights. An overhead structure, supported by gantries 9m high, extends W from the building to the shore. The structure and building are marked by lights.

Boats should keep clear of the area under the masts. There is a boat passage under the structure, with a vertical clearance of 9m, 0.2 mile W of the building.

**Caution.—Brisans Rocks** (4° 32'S., 55° 29'E.) is comprised of above and below-water rocks; the rock farthest NW is 6m high. There are several patches, with depths of 14m, in the vicinity of the rocks.

In the area between Brisans Rocks and Mamelie Island, 4 miles NE, there is a bank of sand with rock pinnacles; more pinnacles than charted may exist and soundings give no warning of the proximity of the dangers.

**Silhouette Island** (4° 30'S., 55° 14'E.) lies about 11.8 miles WNW of Mahe Island; it is mountainous and is primarily covered with coconut palms. Mon Plaisir rises to a height of 752m on the W side of the island. The S side of the island presents long shelving faces of rock, descending from a considerable elevation to the water's edge; the entire coast is moderately steep-to.

There is anchorage, for vessels with local knowledge, N of **Haddon Point** (4° 29'S., 55° 15'E.), the E extremity of the island, off a steep-to reef, which dries, about 1.8m. Anchorage may also be taken off Grande Barbe, on the SW side of the island.

Hope Knoll, a 29m patch, lies 5.7 miles WSW of Silhouette Island.

**North Island** (4° 23'S., 55° 15'E.), when seen from the N, has a bare and desolate appearance, with only a few trees showing near its summit.

**8.10 Praslin Island** (4° 20'S., 55° 44'E.) has a range of hills extending along its whole length that rises to a height of 384m near its center. The lower parts of this range of hills are covered with trees. The SW, S, and NE sides of the island are fringed by reefs, which extend up to 1.3 miles offshore.

**Millers Point** (4° 17'S., 55° 41'E.) is the NW extremity of Praslin Island; vessels should proceed with extreme caution in the vicinity of this point. Les Parisiennes, three small above-water rocks, lie 1 mile S of Millers Point.

Chevalier Bay is formed between Millers Point and Chevalier Point, about 1 mile E. Depths of 14.6m in the entrance of the bay shoal gradually to a sandy beach at its head.

**Adriens Shoal** (4° 16'S., 55° 40'E.), whose position is doubtful, has a depth of 6.5m; it lies about 1.3 miles N of Millers Point. Anchorage may be taken in the bay during the SE monsoon; it can be approached from the N.

**8.11 Round Island** (4° 21'S., 55° 47'E.), 76m high, lies off the fringing reef, 0.5 mile off the SE extremity of Praslin Island. There is no safe anchorage S of Praslin Island during the months of May to November, when the SE trades are at their strongest, but at other times anchorage may be taken in 23m with the summit of Round Island bearing 025°, distant 0.5 mile.

**Curieuse Bay** (4° 18'S., 55° 43'E.) is formed between the NE shore of Praslin Island and the S shore of Curieuse Island. There is a safe navigable channel 0.4 mile wide that may be approached from the E. In the passage between the islands depths are uneven and depths of less than 7m extend up to 0.2 mile from the shore on both sides of the passage.

Zanguilles Point projects from the coast of Praslin Island opposite the S extremity of Curieuse Island; Saint Pierre Islet lies 0.8 mile ENE of Zanguilles Point. Foul ground extends 0.1 mile NW of Saint Pierre islet.

Vessels of moderate draft may anchor in Curieuse Bay in a charted depth of 27m, with Saint Pierre Islet bearing 088°, distant 2.3 miles. Vessels should approach the anchorage from the E on a course of 265°, taking care to clear the foul ground extending NW from Saint Pierre Islet.

## Seychelles Islands—Off-lyings Islets and Dangers

**8.12 Mamelie Island** (4° 29'S., 55° 32'E.), marked by a light, lies in the N approach route to Port Victoria in a position 13 miles SW of Praslin Island; a dangerous rock lies 0.2 mile W of the light. A wreck, with a depth of 1.2m, lies 1.2 miles SW of Mamelie Island. There are other shoal patches in the vicinity of the wreck which may best be seen on the area chart.

Madge Rocks, which cover at HW, lie 5.2 miles NNE of Mamelie Island. The summit of Saint Anne Island (4° 36'S., 55° 31'E.), bearing less than 195° and open W of Mamelie Island, leads W of Madge Rocks.

**Trompeuse Rocks** (4° 23'S., 55° 36'E.), 2.7 miles ENE of Madge Rocks, are 1.8m high. There is a rock, awash, 0.3 mile NW of the main group. An isolated patch, with a depth of 20.1m, lies 5.5 miles W of Trompeuse Rocks.

Cousine Island, 77m high, lies 3 miles NE of Trompeuse Rocks; the intervening channel is reported to be foul and unsafe to transit.

North Cousin, an island 66m high, lies about 1.5 miles NE of Cousine Island and about the same distance SW of Les Parisiennes. The area between North Cousin and Whale Rocks, 2 miles N, is fouled by numerous shoal patches; these patches may best be seen on the area chart.

Whale Rocks, 1.5 miles W of Millers Point, are two rocky heads that uncover at half tide.

Booby Island, 28m high, lies 2 miles N of Millers Point. Aride Island, 135m high, lies 2.7 miles NNW of Booby Island; it is surrounded by foul ground.

**8.13 La Digue** (4° 21'S., 55° 50'E.), located with its N extremity 2.5 miles E of Pointe La Farine, the E extremity of Praslin Island, is flat along its W coast, with a ridge on its E side rising to a height of 326m. Its W side is fringed by a reef extending 0.2 mile offshore.

**Caution.**—A submarine power cable extends W to the E shore of Praslin Island.

Les Roches Canales lie nearly in the middle of the channel between Praslin Island and La Digue; they uncover 1.2m.

An isolated patch, with a depth of 5.8m, lies 0.3 mile WNW of the NW extremity of La Digue and Ave Maria Rock (4° 19'S., 55° 49'E.), 17.4m high, lies 1.5 miles NNW of the same point. There are other dangers in this area which may be seen on the area chart.

**Caiman Rock** (4° 24'S., 55° 46'E.) lies in a position 4 miles WSW of the W extremity of La Digue. Shark Rock, above water, lies 0.5 mile S of Caiman Rock. There are several charted depths of 9.1m or less within a 1 mile radius of Caiman Rock.

The S extremity of La Digue, bearing 068° and in line with the S extremity of Marianne Island, leads about 0.4 mile S of Shark Rock.

**Marianne Island** (4° 21'S., 55° 55'E.), lying 4 miles E of La Digue, is 130m high; it is steep-to except on its W side. An isolated bank, with a depth of 37m, lies 8 miles E of Marianne Island.

Felicite Island is 228m high, its S extremity lies 2 miles W of the N extremity of Marianne Island. Albatross Rocks, above and below-water, lie on a foul area about 0.4 mile NNW of Felicite Island.

**Grand Soeur** (4° 17'S., 55° 52'E.), 113m high, lies 1.2 miles N of Felicite Island. Petite Soeur lies close W of Grand Soeur. A spit, with a least charted depth of 2.1m, extends 0.7 mile NNW from Petite Soeur.

**Renommee Rock** (4° 27'S., 55° 51'E.), 4.5 miles S of La Digue, is 0.3m high; it covers at half tide. Chimney Rocks, 6.1m high, lie 1.5 miles ESE of Renommee Rock. There is a charted depth of 4m located 0.5 mile SSW of Chimney Rocks.

**8.14 Frigate Island** (4° 35'S., 55° 57'E.), 122m high, lying 7.5 miles SSE of Chimney Rocks, is the farthest E of the Seychelles group. The E and NE sides of the island are fringed by reefs which break.

**Caution.**—Pyramid Rock lies close off the E extremity of Frigate Island, and a dangerous rock lies 0.4 mile SSE of Pyramid Rock. Noddy Rock, awash at HW, breaks heavily; it lies about 0.6 mile NNW of Frigate Island.

**L'Ilot** (4° 36'S., 55° 54'E.), 24m high, lies 2 miles WSW of Frigate Island; a submerged reef extends 0.3 mile W from the islet. An isolated depth of 10.1m lies 2 miles NNW of L'Ilot, and a depth of 12m lies about 0.2 mile farther NNW. Barracouta Rock, which breaks, has a depth of less than 1.8m.

There is good anchorage for vessels, with local knowledge, off NE and SE sides of Frigate Island; the SE side is preferred during the Northwest Monsoon.

**Topaze Bank** (4° 41'S., 56° 20'E.), on the SE side of Seychelles Bank, is reported to lie between 8 and 28 miles E of Frigate Island; it has a least depth of 12.8m.

**Zoroaster Shoal** (5° 00'S., 56° 40'E.) has a depth of 12.8m. In the vicinity of this shoal there are several patches, with depths of 16.5m; their positions may best be seen on the chart. La Junon, a bank with a depth of 18.3m, lies 27 miles SE of Zoroaster Shoal; a depth of 16.5m lies 8 miles SW of the charted 18.3m depth.

**Gilberte Bank** (5° 07'S., 55° 40'E.), with a depth of 11m, lies 22 miles SSE of Mahe Island.

**Platte Island** (5° 52'S., 55° 24'E.) is separated from the S side of Seychelles Bank. The island is low and wooded, and is visible at a distance from 10 to 12 miles. Barrier reefs, over which the sea breaks heavily, extend 3 miles N, about 0.5 mile E, and 1.5 miles S of the island. Within the barrier reefs, the lagoon is quite smooth, and landing is safe and easy. Numerous 2.7m coral heads lie within 2 miles W of the island. There are two intricate passages through the reef on the NW side, available for small vessels with local knowledge only.

La Perle Reef lies about 10 miles SW of Platte Island. Depths of less than 4m can exist on this reef where breakers have been observed.

**8.15 Le Constant Bank** (6° 17'S., 56° 18'E.) has a least charted depth of 20.1m; it is an extension of Seychelles Bank.

**Coetiyy Island** (7° 06'S., 56° 16'E.), forms part of the Republic of Seychelles. Vessels passing S of the island should not approach closer than 6 miles.

Vessels can anchor anywhere off the W side of Coetiyy Island. Excellent shelter from the Southeast Trade Winds is available in the large bay indenting that shore of the island. The most convenient position is off the settlement.

**Fortune Bank** (7° 12'S., 56° 59'E.) extends about 30 miles E and 25 miles SSE, with general depths of less than 31m.

**Andromache Shoal** (3° 51'S., 54° 50'E.) has a least charted depth of 9.1m. Vigilant Shoal, 8 miles WSW of Andromache Shoal, has a least depth of 11m; the two shoals apparently lie on the same ridge.

**Swan Shoal** (3° 59'S., 54° 34'E.) has a least known depth of 5.5m, although lesser depths have been reported over this shoal.

Dupont Shoal, with a depth of 6.4m, lies 17 miles SSW of Swan Shoal.

**Roberts Bank** (4° 22'S., 54° 12'E.) has a least charted depth of 15.5m. The W side of the bank is steep-to; the 200m line lies 1.5 miles NW of the bank and a charted depth of 443m lies adjacent to its N end.

Hermes Bank, with a depth of 12.8m, lies 10 miles SSW of Roberts Bank and Owen Bank (4° 40'S., 54° 00'E.), with a charted depth of 14.6m, lies 10 miles farther SSW. Owen Bank is the farthest SW of Seychelles Bank.

From Owen Bank, Seychelles Bank trends in a general ESE for about 95 miles to a position about 28 miles SSW of Mahe Island, the entrance to the S approach to that island. Seychelles Bank is steep-to in this sector, with many depths less than 18.3m. In the entrance to the S approach there are reported depths of 33m and a 22m depth is reported to lie close E of the entrance. These shoal patches may be seen on the area chart.

## Amirante Islands

**8.16 The African Islands** (4° 53'S., 53° 24'E.), located on Seychelles Bank, are very dangerous to make when bearing more than 180°. In the daytime, they may be seen at distances of 8 miles, but at night they may be invisible even to a vessel on the E portion of the reef from which the islands rise.

The African Islands are comprised of North Island and South Island. North Island is marked by a light.

In the Southeast Trade Winds, the swell breaks violently on the SE side of the bank surrounding the islands and the sea is often rough at its N extremity because of currents.

Anchorage may be taken in 14m, 0.8 mile W of North Island Lighthouse; the anchorage is sheltered from the SE swell. There is also anchorage 1 mile NW of South Island, in a depth of 10m; this anchorage is preferred.

**Lady Denison Pender Shoal** (4° 49'S., 53° 20'E.) has a charted depth of 14.6m.

**Remire Reef** (5° 05'S., 53° 21'E.) dries in patches at LW and extends about 3.5 miles SSW.

**Remire Island** (5° 07'S., 53° 19'E.) lies 1.5 miles W of the S extremity of Remire Reef. The trees on Remire Island are 15.2m high to their tops and are usually visible up to 12 miles distant. Anchorage has been taken in 14m, about 0.2 mile N of

the island with its E extremity bearing 137° and its W extremity bearing 186°.

**Caution.**—Navigation in the area between the African Islands and Remire Island should be avoided except during daylight and in good weather; the bottom is foul in places throughout the entire area. In favorable conditions the bottom may be plainly seen in depths of 22m.

The area between Remire Island and D'Arros Island, 28 miles S, is similarly encumbered.

**8.17 D'Arros Island** (5° 25'S., 53° 18'E.) is of the usual coral type, flat, and nowhere more than 3m high; the tops of the trees are about 27m high. The island lies on a detached reef and a shallow spit extends 0.5 mile NE from it. The most convenient anchorage is 0.3 mile N of D'Arros Island in a depth of about 45m, sand and coral, sheltered from the SE trades winds. Vessels in this area should always anchor for the night weather and sea permitting, otherwise, an offing from the bank should be made.

The tidal currents set with considerable strength through the channel between the reef and the spit extending NE from D'Arros Island. Unless the sun is in a favorable position, the edges of the reef are difficult to make out, and vessels proceeding through the channel must exercise more than ordinary caution.

**Saint Joseph Island** (5° 26'S., 53° 21'E.) is the largest and farthest E of a group of eight islets located on a coral atoll; the tops of the trees on the island are about 24m high. Bertaut Reef, about 14 miles SSW of Saint Joseph Island, has a small sand cay on its S part; the reef is steep-to and the sea breaks heavily over its edge.

**Poivre Islands** (5° 46'S., 53° 19'E.) are near the E edge of Amirante Bank. A settlement stands on the NE side of the N island amid a clump of trees.

At the anchorage W of the N island, the tidal currents set NNE, N, and NNW from 3 hours before HW to 3 hours after HW, at a velocity of 0.25 to 1 knot; the set is between S and W at other times, at a maximum velocity of 0.5 knot. There is a short period of SW between tides.

The best anchorage lies off the W end of Poivre Islands in about 22m, well sheltered from the wind and swell. Anchorage can also be taken about 0.2 mile off the reef facing the settlement in 22 to 37m, but the sea in this area may get rough when the wind is opposed to the tide.

**Marie Louise Island** (6° 11'S., 53° 09'E.) is low and sandy, and is covered with palm and casuarina trees. There is a coral reef on the E side of the island which breaks.

**Boudeuse Cay** (6° 06'S., 52° 50'E.) is the farthest SW danger on Amirante Bank. The cay is 4.6m high and sandy; there is a depth of 8.2m, 1.5 miles E of it.

Etoile Cay, 4.6m high, lies 18 miles NE of Boudeuse Cay; it lies on a coral knoll about 1 mile in extent.

**8.18 Ile Desroches** (5° 41'S., 53° 41'E.), which is part of the Republic of Seychelles, lies on the S edge of a reef of the atoll character; a light is situated on the NE end of the island. The island is fringed by a drying reef which extends 1 mile offshore from the NE extremity and 0.5 mile from the SW extremity. The island is low and is covered with coconut palms and tall hardwood trees. On the N side of the island, a white cross

stands about 2 miles WSW of the lighthouse. A deep channel, about 1 mile wide, leads into the lagoon from seaward. The least depth in the channel is 18.3m, and it crosses the atoll in a position about 7 miles NW of Ile Desroches. A vessel of moderate size can proceed through the channel; the drying reef shows on radar.

Anchorage may be obtained in 22 to 24m, about 0.7 mile NW of the settlement. During the Southeast Trade Winds, this is an excellent anchorage; a slight swell may be experienced.

**8.19 Ile Alphonse** (7° 01'S., 52° 43'E.) is separated from Bijoutier Island and Saint Francois Island by a deep channel. The reef surrounding the latter two islands is about 8 miles long. Ile Alphonse is inhabited and forms part of the Republic of Seychelles.

The tidal current in the channel S of Ile Alphonse sets between W and SW on the falling tide and between E and NE on the rising tide; at neaps the current attains rates from 0.5 to 2.5 knots. There is no SW current and a vessel swings to the new tidal current in about 5 minutes. Small tide rips pass through the channel once every hour; a heavy tide rip marks the change of the current.

Bijoutier Island is located 3.2 miles S of Ile Alphonse, on the W side of the S reef; it is covered with coconut palms. Saint Francois Island is located on the reef, 5.2 miles S of Bijoutier Island; it is a mere ridge, covered with coconut palms. Both islands are visible at a distance of about 12 miles.

**Agalega Islands** (10° 24'S., 56° 38'E.), two in number, when approached from the SE or NW, appear as one small island. North Island is about 7.6m high and South Island is about 4.5m high. They are covered with coconut palm and casuarina trees, which are visible at distances up to 15 miles. Agalega Islands are fringed by a reef which is steep-to; there are boat passages through the reefs.

The main settlement of the dependency is at Port Sainte Rita, on the NE side of South Island. The islands are a dependency of Mauritius.

## Chagos Archipelago

**8.20** The Chagos Archipelago consists of a number of islands, banks, and reefs lying between 4° 44'S and 7° 39'S, and 70° 50'E and 72° 47'E.

**Caution.**—It is said that the deeper parts of the banks within the Chagos Archipelago may be crossed when there is not much swell. However, the uncertainty regarding the depths over areas that have been only partially examined, the changeable character of coral reefs, and the unexpected manner in which the sea sometimes breaks all emphasize the advisability of avoiding the banks. Moreover, it is possible to proceed from island to island without crossing over any of the banks.

**8.21 Speakers Bank** (4° 55'S., 72° 20'E.), the farthest N of banks in the archipelago, extends 24 miles SSW from its N extremity; it is steep-to. The bottom of the bank consists of coral, sand, and some rock.

The depths at the edge of the bank are from 5.5 to 14.5m; they increase to a depth of 42m near the center of the bank. Near its SW edge, where the depths are least, the sea breaks

heavily over it during the Southeast Trade Winds; the area should be avoided.

**Colvocoresses Reef** (4° 54'S., 72° 37'E.), with a least charted depth of 9m, lies 8 miles E of the E extremity of Speakers Reef; it has not been closely examined. A SE current of 1.5 knots has been observed on the reef in January.

**Blenheim Reef** (5° 12'S., 72° 28'E.) is steep-to; it covers nearly everywhere at HW except at its S extremity. The lagoon of the reef is encumbered with rock.

**8.22 Salomon Islands** (5° 22'S., 72° 13'E.) lie on an atoll reef, which encloses a lagoon. The entrance to the lagoon is through a passage on the NW side of the atoll. A least depth of 5.8m may be carried through it, but the bar is impassable during the Northwest Monsoon.

**Tides—Curr ents.**—The tidal currents at the anchorage outside the lagoon entrance set between NNE and E at a velocity of about 0.5 knot when the tide is rising, and between NW and W while it is falling, at a velocity of 0.5 to 1.25 knots. There is no period of SW current; each current was at its greatest strength at the beginning of its course, gradually slackening. The current on the bar sets with considerable strength, sometimes attaining a velocity of 2.5 knots on the rising tide shortly after springs. The tidal currents are not felt at the anchorage off Ile Takamaka.

**Anchorage.**—During the Southeast Trade Winds, anchorage may be found outside the entrance of the lagoon in 18m.

Small vessels with local knowledge visiting the atoll find anchorage off the settlement on the E side of Ile Boddam.

**8.23 Peros Banhos** (5° 20'S., 71° 51'E.), which comprises a group of islets, is the largest of the Chagos Archipelago and are atoll-shaped. These islets are all low, the highest is only 3.7m high, but the coconut palms rise to about 30m and have been seen at distances up to 15 miles.

**Tides—Curr ents.**—At the anchorage off Ile du Coin, the tidal current sets NW, while the tide is rising, attaining a maximum velocity of about 0.5 knot; it is scarcely felt during the falling tide. At the anchorage off Ile Fouquet, the currents are barely appreciable during either tides. At the entrances to the lagoon, the tidal current sets between NNW and W, while the tide is falling, at a velocity of from 0.75 to 1 knot, or more at springs; the other current is less strong, and sets toward the SE quadrant at a velocity of about 0.5 knot, while the tide is rising. These observations were made during the Southeast Trade Winds, and the result may be very different in other seasons.

**Depths—Limitations.**—The existence of a shoal, with a depth of 2.7m, lies about 1.5 miles E of Ile Anglaise.

**Anchorage.**—Peros Banhos Atoll, being so open and having wide entrances to the lagoon, possesses no completely sheltered anchorage. The quietest anchorage is off Ile Fouquet, 1.7 miles E of Ile du Coin.

The usual anchorage during the Southeast Trade Winds is off the E side of the N end of Ile du Coin in 22m, with the N extremity of the islet bearing 274° and the E extremity bearing 128°; this position is moderately well sheltered from this wind, and is reported to be also sheltered from the Northwest Monsoon.

During the Northwest Monsoon, the anchorage off Ile Diamant is preferred; the best berth is in depths from 26 to 31m, with the center of the islet bearing 310°, distant 0.5 mile.

**Caution.**—These islets undergo considerable alteration; one monsoon washes away portions of them and the next monsoon piles up new land masses.

Several clear, deep channels between the various islands lead into the lagoon. Moresby Channel, between the Moresby Island on the E and Ile Diamant on the W, is convenient for vessels approaching from the NW, particularly during the season of NW winds. The depths are 10.9m or more over a width of nearly 0.8 mile. Passe de l'Ile Poule, between Ile Poule on the S and Petite Soeur on the N, leads into the lagoon from the W and has depths of 14.6m or more over a width of 0.7 mile.

A channel between Ile Fouquet and Ile Vache Marine, about 2.3 miles NNE, leads WNW into the lagoon toward Ile du Coin. It is noteworthy that tide rips may be experienced in any of the entrances of the lagoon; a slight disturbance sometimes experienced on the bar between Ile Fouquet and Ile Vache Marine is due to the outgoing tidal current setting against the wind and swell.

**Benares Shoals** (5° 15'S., 71° 40'E.), an isolated patch with a least charted depth of 4.5m, lies 5.5 miles W of Ile Diamant, off the NW extremity of Peros Banhos.

**Victory Bank** (5° 32'S., 72° 14'E.) lies about 18 miles SE of Peros Banhos and rises steeply from great depths; there are depths of 5.5m around the edge of the reef and depths up to 33m in the interior.

**8.24 Great Chagos Bank** (6° 13'S., 72° 05'E.), which occupies the central part of Chagos Archipelago, consists of a submerged atoll supporting several islands on the N and W sides. The bank extends about 60 miles in a N and S direction, and about 90 miles from E to W. A narrow coral ridge around the edges of the bank has a least depth of 5.5m; within the ridge the depths increase to 88m. A shoal of 1m depth was reported in position 6° 17'S, 72° 15'E; its position is doubtful. There are known to be a number of uncharted shoals on the bank.

Vessels should not cross Great Chagos Bank when there is much swell, and then only in case of necessity; if necessary to cross it, the passage should be made in daytime.

**Caution.**—The profiles of the islands beaches change considerable at each monsoon.

**8.25 Nelsons Island** (5° 41'S., 72° 02'E.), an uninhabited island, lies on the N edge of Great Chagos Bank. A deep channel close E of Nelsons Island leads to an anchorage in depths from 29 to 31m, inside the outer ridge of Great Chagos Bank.

**Three Brothers** (6° 09'S., 71° 31'E.), comprised of three islands, lie on the W side of Great Chagos Bank. Reefs fringe these islands and a bank, with a least depth of 7.5m, extends 11 miles ESE from the farthest E of these islands. A rocky islet lies between the middle and E island.

Close SW of Three Brothers, a break in the coral ridge forms a deep channel, with a least width of 1.5 miles; some shoals, with a least depth of 5.5m, lie on the S side of the channel.



**Eagle Islands** (6° 12'S., 71° 19'E.) are located on the edge of the bank 10 miles WSW of Three Brothers. The N island is covered with tall coconut palms; a reef extends 0.5 mile SW from this island.

The S island, nearly 2 miles SSW from the N island, is low and covered with trees. Anchorage may be obtained between the two islands in depths from 7 to 16m, sand and coral, but care must be taken to keep on the bank of soundings, which is only about 1 mile broad.

**Danger Island** (6° 23'S., 71° 16'E.) lies on the W extremity of Great Chagos Bank in a position 8.7 miles SSW of S Eagle Island. The sea breaks heavily round its coast, and a reef which extends 3 miles SSE from the island breaks in places. Good anchorage in a depth of 31m can be taken E of the island.

**8.26 Egmont Islands** (6° 39'S., 71° 23'E.), a group of six islands, lie on the SW edge of an elliptical atoll, 16 miles SSW of Danger Island.

**Anchorage.**—Anchorage can be taken just outside the entrance channel. The tidal currents at the anchorage are felt only slightly; they set NNW with a maximum velocity of 0.5 knot during the falling tide. The current during the rising tide is inappreciable. It should be noted that the above anchorage position plots inside the encircling reef.

**Caution.**—It was reported (1986) that all the islets except Ile des Rats, the farthest NW, were connected by sand banks which dry at LW, breakers were observed along the SW side of the bank. The lagoon can be entered by way of a shallow channel through the N portion of the encircling reef.

Pitt Bank lies SSE to SW of the Egmont Islands, centered in approximate position 7° 04'S, 71° 20'E. Vessels are advised not to cross over Pitt Bank, especially at night. Pitt Bank extends 35 miles SE and is steep-to on all sides. A buoy, marked by a radar reflector, is moored on the NW side of the bank.

**Wight Bank** (7° 25'S, 72° 31'E) has a least charted depth of 8.5m. It is possible that lesser depths than those charted exist on Wight Bank; mariners should navigate in this vicinity with caution.

**Ganges Bank** (7° 23'S., 70° 58'E.) is small, about 3.8 miles in distant from SE to NW, and steep-to. A least depth of 12m is charted in its SW side, but there may be less water. A buoy, fitted with a radar reflector, is moored on Ganges Bank.

**Centurion Bank** (7° 39'S., 70° 50'E.), with a least charted depth of 11m, is the farthest SW of the Chagos Archipelago. This bank is steep-to on all sides, but heavy rollers have been observed to break over its NE end. A buoy is moored on the W side of the bank.

## Diego Garcia (7° 21'S., 72° 28'E.)

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**8.27** Diego Garcia is the farthest S of the islands of the Chagos Archipelago. It lies on an atoll, which is steep-to on its seaward side, and forms a natural harbor in an extensive lagoon which is entered from the NW side.

Diego Garcia is part of the British Indian Ocean Territory and is the site of a U.S. Communications Relay Station for military traffic that is run jointly with the British.

**Winds—Weather.**—Because of the strength of the Southeast Trade Winds, a fresh to strong (force 5 to 6) breeze may be experienced at the anchorage.

Additional information concerning winds and weather can be obtained from the Naval Meteorological and Oceanographic Command (NMOC) website, as follows:

[http://www.cnmoc.navy.mil/nmosw/thh\\_nc/diegogar/text/frame.htm](http://www.cnmoc.navy.mil/nmosw/thh_nc/diegogar/text/frame.htm)

Rain falls on most days, but is often limited to a short shower; droughts, however, sometimes last for a month. Frequent rain squalls occur at night.

Earthquake shocks are felt at times.

**Tides—Currents.**—The tidal range at springs is 0.2m at MLW to 1.9m at MHW.

In the approaches to the Main Pass, there is an E flow of about 1.5 knots about 2 hours before HW, and on the falling tide a W flow of about 1 knot. Rates of up to 4 and 2 knots, respectively, have been reported; the effect of this flow may be felt up to 8 miles seaward.

In the Entrance Channel, the tidal current sets SE on a rising tide and NW on the falling tide, with spring rates of 1.5 and 1.25 knots, respectively. In 1985, an outbound vessel experienced a sudden heavy E set about 0.3 mile before the sea buoys. The effect of the tidal current is barely perceptible 2 miles within the entrance.

When arriving, it is recommended that a long approach to the Entrance Channel be planned, in order to assess the effect of the set before entering the channel. The tidal current is reported to be unpredictable.

**Depths—Limitations.**—The Entrance Channel, formed between Spur Reef and West Island, is the recommended passage for entering the lagoon. A fairway, marked by buoys, and which has been dredged and swept to a depth of 13.7m over a width of 210m, leads to the turning basin SE of Eclipse Point.

There is a deep draft wharf about 2 miles SSE of Eclipse Point that has a minimum depth alongside of 13m. The L-shaped Supply and POL Pier, about 0.8 mile SE of the deep-water wharf, has a minimum depth alongside of 13m. A channel leading to the wharf off Point Marianne has been swept to a depth of 11m. The limits of the fairway and the turning basin may best be seen on the chart.

**Aspect.**—From a short distance Diego Garcia appears to be covered with a bright green vegetation, fringed by a white sandy beach. The principal trees are coconut palms, which are 34m high in places; there are several clumps of casuarina trees on both islands. The general height of the land is from 0.9 to 1.5m. The land is subject to alteration, being carried away at one part and raised at another by the seasonal monsoons. Eclipse Point is sparsely covered with trees, interspersed with buildings, and is easily identified. West Islet, Middle Islet, and East Islet, lying on the reefs in the entrance to the lagoon, may be clearly distinguished at a distance of 5 miles. A radio tower stands 0.2 mile SSW of Eclipse Point, and a conspicuous tank is situated 0.5 mile SSW of the point; a radio tower, situated 0.3 mile NNE was not easily seen until within 8 miles from the island. There is a control tower situated at the root of the

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causeway, about 3 miles SSE of Eclipse Point, but it was reported to be surrounded by taller buildings and was not seen.

**Pilotage.**—Diego Garcia is a daylight port, although vessels may be taken in at night through prior arrangement with Diego Garcia Port Control. Pilots are compulsory on the vessel's initial visit for both entry and departure. The boarding ground is located 2 miles NW of the channel entrance.

**Regulations.**—Vessels wishing to call at Diego Garcia should notify their intention at least 24 hours in advance to the Island Commander if on charter to the U.S. Government, otherwise vessels should contact the British Representative.

Permits to land at Diego Garcia should be obtained from the Commissioner, British Indian Ocean Territory, Mahe, Seychelles. Crews of vessels on charter to the U.S. Government are granted local permits on arrival.

**Signals.**—The port control tower is manned 24 hours a day and may be contacted on VHF channel 16.

**Anchorage.**—During the Northwest Monsoon, from the beginning or middle of December until the beginning or end of April, vessels should anchor on the W side of the lagoon under the lee of the land. Eclipse Bay, S of Eclipse Point, affords the smoothest water during the monsoon, being protected by the point and the reef connecting it with West Islet.

A vessel can anchor about 1 mile E of Point Marianne in 16 to 18m, broken coral, good holding ground.

**Caution.**—A depth of 29m is located 0.7 mile off the SE extremity Diego Garcia. A depth of 18m is charted 1 mile SSW of the S extremity of the island; its position is approximate.