

UNITED STATES COAST PILOT CORRECTIONS

COAST PILOT 7 38 Ed 2006 Change No. 25
LAST NM 40/06

Page 633—Paragraphs 50 to 53; read:

Chart 83157

Palmyra Atoll (5°53'N., 162°05'W.), about 780 miles SSW of the island of Hawaii, is an atoll which consists of many small islets lying on a barrier reef enclosing three distinct lagoons. The reef surrounding the atoll is 5 miles long, E to W, and 2 miles at its widest part. Shoal water extends 1.8 miles E from the SE end of the reef and the same distance from the NW and SW ends. The islets are low, about 6 feet high, and covered with coconut and other trees reaching heights of 98 feet and visible 12 to 15 miles. Palmyra Atoll is a National Wildlife Refuge (see National Wildlife Refuges, this chapter.)

Prominent features

A group of four radio towers stand as a good landmark on the SW part of the atoll.

Channels

A dredged entrance channel leads through the SW side of the atoll to West Lagoon; it is the only entrance to the atoll. In 1966, a depth of 26 feet was reported in the channel. Depths in the lagoon vary from 10 to 174 feet. Reefs and shoals within the lagoon are shown on the chart. A pier along the NE edge of West Lagoon is reported to be in poor condition with depths of 21 to 30 feet alongside.

Anchorage

The atoll should be approached from the W. Anchorage may be had on the bank between 2 and 2.5 miles from the NW end of the atoll in about 5°53'00"N., 162°08'55"W., sand and coral. It is not advisable to anchor between sunset and sunrise. In 1988, a 2-knot current setting S was observed during a NW fresh at the anchorage.

Caution

An explosive dumping area is situated with its center about 15 miles WSW of Palmyra Atoll.

Tides/Currents

Strong and variable currents can be expected in the vicinity of the atoll. Caution is advised if approaching the atoll from the SW as dangerous tide rips have been reported 5 miles SW of the atoll. The tidal rise at Palmyra Atoll is about 2 feet MHHW and 0 feet at MLW.

Weather

Palmyra Atoll has unfavorable weather and is the only island/atoll in its latitude where fresh W winds occur. A tropical front, a result of the Northeast and Southeast Trades converging, hovers in the vicinity of the atoll. Northeast Trades prevail, with an average velocity of 10 to 12 knots. There are frequent squalls of short duration and occasional winds up to 22 knots; typhoons are infrequent. Rainfall is heavy and humidity high, ranging from 100 to 180 inches annually.

Rain occurs almost daily and heavy squalls come up suddenly from the SW, but there are no severe storms.

Chart 83153

Kingman Reef (6°25'N., 162°26'W.) is located about 33 miles NNW of Palmyra Atoll. The reef, a U.S. possession, is a Defensive Sea Area and Airspace Reservation and is closed to the public. The airspace entry control has been suspended but is subject to immediate reinstatement without notice.

The reef is triangular in shape with its apex to the N and is about 9 miles long E-W and 5 miles N-S. A small islet, 3 feet high, lies on the E side of the reef. The reef dries on its NE, E, and SE edges; the remainder of the atoll is contained within the ridge with depths of 10 to 20 fathoms. Breaks in the reef are on the N and S sides. Outside the ridge the bottom slopes steeply to over 100 fathoms.

The reef has been reported to be difficult to identify, both visually and by radar. The reef has been sighted at 7 miles.

Kingman Reef is within the belt traversed by the equatorial countercurrent which in this area sets E at rate of 1.3 to 1.8 knots.

Chart 83116

Jarvis Island (0°22'S., 160°00'W.), an island of sand and coral formation, is located about 460 miles SSE of Palmyra Atoll. The island is 1.8 miles long E-W and about 1 mile wide; it rises to a height of 20 feet. A narrow fringing reef, which dries in places and has breakers along the S shore, encircles the island. There are two breaks in the reef on the W side. A daybeacon is near the middle of the W shore.

A shoal with a least depth of 2 fathoms extends about 0.6 mile from the E side of the island. The depths drop rapidly outside the shoal area. The highest ground lies on the W end of the island. Low shrubs cover most of the island, however, it has been observed without much vegetation.

Jarvis Island has been reported to lie 1 mile NE (1991), 1.6 miles E (1992), and 1.3 miles ENE (1996) of its charted position.

Jarvis Island is a U.S. possession and a National Wildlife Refuge. It is under the jurisdiction of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (see National Wildlife Refuges, this chapter.)

Baker Island (0°12'N., 176°29'W.) is nearly flat but rises to an elevation of 20 feet at its SW end. At this point there is a steep, sandy beach which extends some distance N; elsewhere, the island is fringed by a coral reef. An extensive shoal with depths of 3 to 7 fathoms extends about 0.8 mile from the island on the N and E sides. The surf breaks heavily on the E side and the SW extremity of the island.

Baker Island is a National Wildlife Refuge and under the jurisdiction of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (see National Wildlife Refuges, this chapter.)

Anchorage

There is no sheltered anchorage. Vessels lie off the island and discharge to landing craft. The fringing coral reef surrounding Baker Island makes landing difficult. The S point of the island can be used for landing when winds are from the NE. A daybeacon is near the middle of the W shore. Tangent bearings of the island are unreliable.

Weather

The W side of the island is leeward of prevailing wind conditions. Winds from the E predominate throughout the year. From December to May, the prevailing winds are sometimes interrupted by W winds and bad weather.

Howland Island (0°48'N., 176°37'W.), about 38 miles NNW of Baker Island, is a low, flat island devoid of vegetation other than a few stunted trees. It is ringed by a relatively flat coral reef almost completely exposed at low water extending out to about 0.1 mile, except on the W side where the reef averages about 80 yards in width. Outside this reef is a coral shelf extending about 0.3 to 0.5 mile on the N, E, and S sides, and about 0.1 mile on the W side. The depths on this shelf vary between 2 and 15 fathoms.

A broad, sandy, and in some places, gravelly beach slopes upward at a slight angle on the W side of the island. On the windward or E side, there is practically no beach and the island rises abruptly from the reef to an average height of 12 feet, with the highest point about 18 feet in the N part. Amelia Earhart Daybeacon is situated near the center of the W side of the island.

Howland Island is a National Wildlife Refuge and under the jurisdiction of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (see National Wildlife Refuges, this chapter.)

Anchorage

In 1966, a vessel anchored 0.4 mile from the N end of the island in 30 fathoms, with the E tangent of the island bearing 144°, the W tangent bearing 185°, and the daybeacon bearing 167.5°. In 1967, a vessel anchored about 0.3 mile NNE of the N end of the island in 13 fathoms, with the E tangent of the island bearing 153°, the W tangent bearing 213°, and the daybeacon bearing 176°, distance 1 mile.

Weather

Winds from the E predominate throughout the year. From December to May, the prevailing winds are sometimes interrupted by W winds and bad weather.

Chart 81664

Wake Island (19°17'N., 166° 37'E.) lies in the Pacific Ocean on the direct route from Hawaii to Hong Kong. It is a U.S. possession with an area of only 3 square miles, consisting of three islands about 21 feet high. The islands form all but the NW side of an atoll enclosing a shallow lagoon. The higher parts of the islands are covered with fairly heavy growth of scrub brush. The entire island group is surrounded by a shallow reef interspersed with coral pinnacles. There is no natural freshwater.

Wake Island is administered by the Department of the Interior and activities on the island are managed by the US Army under a US Air Force permit. The restrictions imposed upon the entry into the Wake Island Naval Defensive Sea Area have been suspended, except for the entry of foreign flag vessels and foreign nationals. The restrictions may be re-established without notice at any time.

Prominent Features

A conspicuous concrete structure with storage tanks in the

background is situated near the W end of Wake Island. A prominent tower stands on Peale Island. An aero light is shown from an abandoned control tower situated 0.6 mile NW of Peacock Point, the SE extremity of Wake Island. It was reported that a ship obtained radar contact with Wake Island from a distance of 35 miles. The complete outline of the island was observed from a distance of 25 miles.

Channels

On the seaward side, between Wake Island and Wilkes Island, there is a channel leading to a boat basin at the W extremity of Wake Island. In 1970, the channel and boat basin had controlling depths of 12 feet.

The boat basin can accommodate three small-craft, which may serve as tugs or cargo lighters. Ships should radio their ETA 48 hours in advance. An unloading wharf is situated on the SW side of the basin and a boat landing is at the head of the basin. Two mooring buoys are just outside the boat basin entrance channel. Cargo is discharged at the moorings. Sea conditions often permit a vessel to lie offshore and discharge dry cargo; this reported to be the safest and best method for large vessels. Oil is discharged through a floating hose which is floated out on barrels and connected to a fuel jetty at the E entrance point of the boat channel.

Anchorage

The depths drop off sharply outside the atoll reef making it unsuitable for anchorage. The lagoon itself is inaccessible. The mooring facility outside the boat basin is available to all vessels having permission to call at Wake Island, but is considered hazardous. The use of an anchor is not recommended when using the mooring buoys. Vessels should not attempt to secure at the mooring buoys in an onshore or S wind. If secured to one buoy when the wind shifts to blow onshore, slip the mooring and leave the area. Any vessels moored to only one buoy must have engines on standby. Vessels should be secured to the mooring buoys with the bow headed ESE. Small-craft usually assist in mooring operations with the best times being at either high water or low water slack.

Tides/Currents

A SSW current of 0.5 to 1 knot has been observed in the vicinity of Wake Island. There have been occasions when the currents are erratic and onshore sets have been observed. Vessels should carefully note the set and the drift of the tidal currents before attempting to moor. The tidal currents in the vicinity of the mooring buoys have been observed to set parallel to the shore at a rate of about 0.8 knot. The tidal range is from 2 to 4 feet.

Weather

Winds from the E and NE prevail throughout the year, with average velocities of 10 to 13 knots. Gales occur on an average of 10 days a year. By reason of its position, the atoll is subject to typhoons and tropical storms; thunderstorms seldom occur.

At Wake Island, the influence of the higher latitude is noticeable and the means vary between a low of 77°F in January and February and a high of 82°F in September. In August the mean maximum reaches 88°F. Extremes above

95°F are rare.

The annual average rainfall is only 37 inches, showing a great decrease in precipitation from that occurring in the lower latitudes. The monthly totals range from a January average of 1 inch in the dry season to 7 inches in August.

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