

LEVEL

7

Upper
Intermediate

Compass
Readers

Nonfiction 7-9

The Amazing Galapagos Islands

Written by Anne MacLachlan



Free Download

★ Contents ★

	The Galapagos Islands	4
	People Find the Galapagos	14
	Charles Darwin	16
	Animals and Plants of the Galapagos	20
	Visiting the Galapagos	28
	Glossary	31
	Index	32

The Galapagos Islands

About six hundred miles off the coast of Ecuador are some very unusual islands. They have an unusual location. They are right on the **equator**. They have an unusual climate because of the cold ocean **currents** and the way they were formed.





They have unusual animals living on them. Some of these animals don't live anywhere else in the world. This makes these islands very special.



Did You Know?

Scientists think that Galapagos tortoises can live up to two hundred years. Lonesome George died in the summer of 2012 at the age of about 100.

The islands are home to tortoises that can live up to two hundred years. The only penguins on the equator live here. The islands also have birds with bright blue feet and iguanas that can swim.

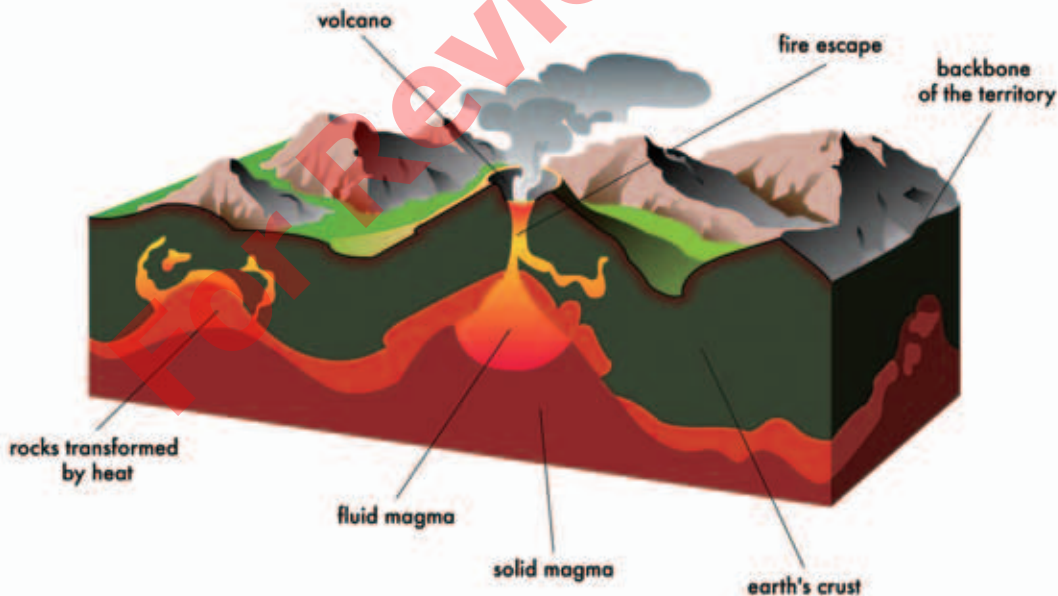
Islands can be formed in several ways. Sometimes they are created when rising seas separate hills and mountains from the mainland. Sometimes the opposite happens. Over time, oceans and lakes grow smaller. The high land that was previously underwater comes out of the water.

The Galapagos Islands are actually the very tops of underwater volcanoes that have risen above the surface of the ocean.



Sometimes underwater volcanoes on the ocean floor put out lava. This lava hardens and creates layers of land. More and more layers are added over many centuries, and over time the hardened lava rises to the surface of the water. The volcanoes continue to grow and the islands continue to expand as the melted rock meets the cool ocean. This is how the Galapagos Islands were formed. They are volcanic islands.

Volcanoes allow hot, melted rock, or lava, to rise from inside the earth. As this lava cools, it forms more land around the volcano.





A [marine](#) iguana rests on cooled volcanic rock on the shores of the Galapagos Islands.

Volcanoes off the coast of Ecuador began far below the ocean's surface. Slowly, over millions of years, the lava rock grew into lava mountains.