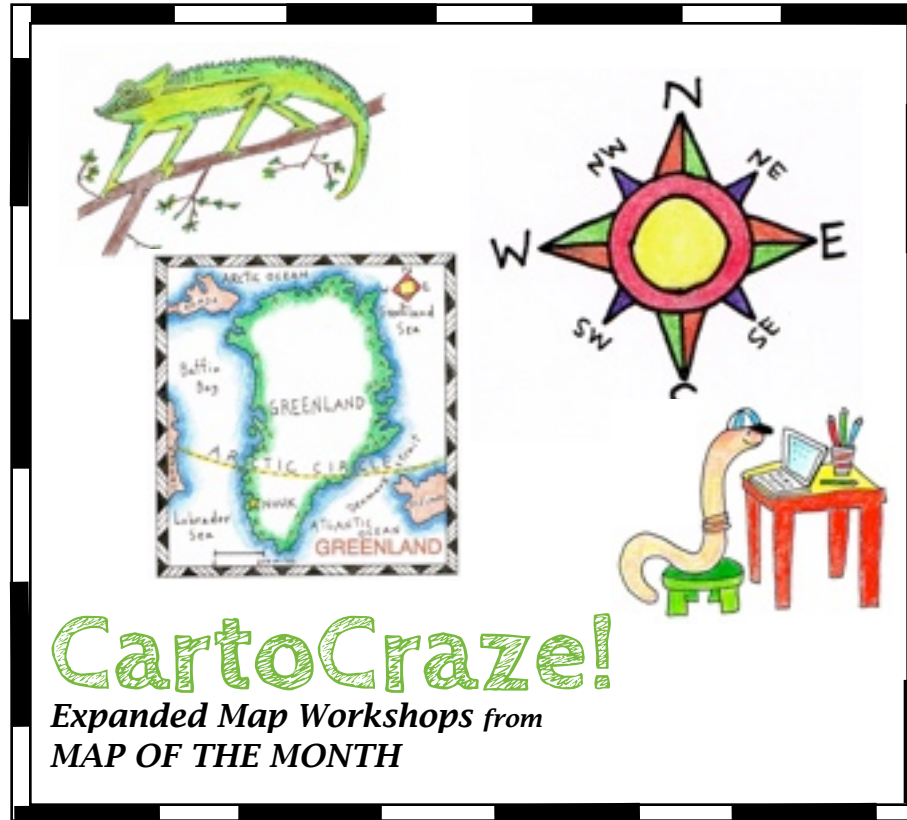


# PATAGONIAN DESERT



**CartoCraze!**

*Expanded Map Workshops from  
MAP OF THE MONTH*

**CartoCraze!**

**Expanded Map Workshops**

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# DESERT

The surface of a desert can be formed of sand, ice, small stones or large rocks.

The definition of a desert is that it receives less than 10 inches of precipitation a year: that precipitation can be either rain or snow.

Deserts are the driest places on Earth. Even though we tend to think of deserts as torrid sand covered locations, these geographic areas can also be bitterly cold.

Humans have always found it challenging to live in desert environments, and have lived at the outer edges of many deserts where agriculture and raising of animals is possible. Often people who live in arid areas are forced to be nomads, moving from place to place to take advantage of seasonal weather. A surprising number of plants and animals have adapted to the harsh inhospitable conditions of both hot and cold deserts.

# DESERT TERMS AND THEIR DEFINITIONS

These terms and their definitions will help you to understand some of the aspect of desert areas.

**DESERT** A region that receives very low amounts of precipitation.

**HOT DESERT** A region with very high temperatures, a great deal of evaporation of moisture, and often high winds, conditions that are inhospitable for life.

## COLD DESERTS

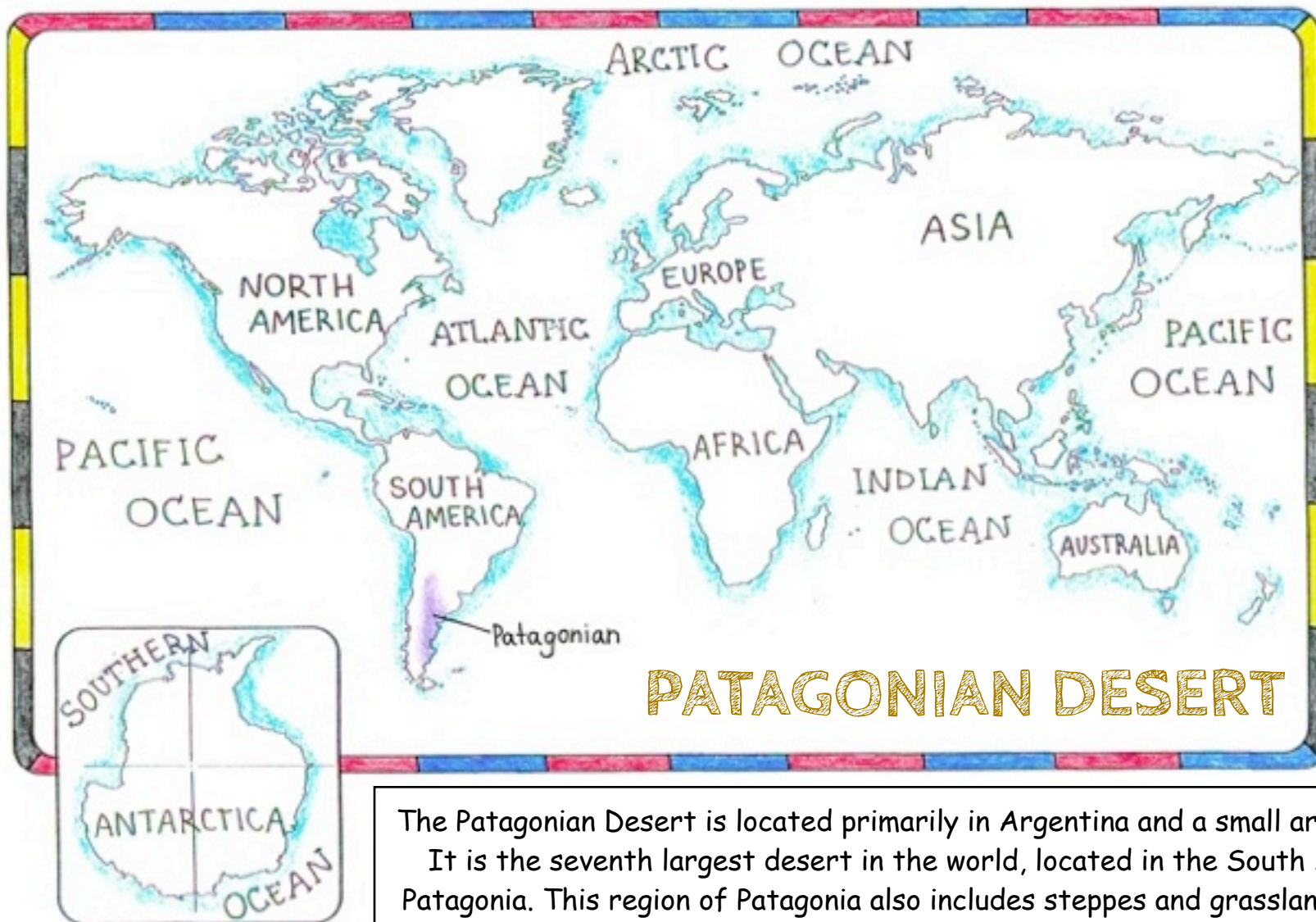
1. A **COLD DESERT** region is often separated from the ocean or body of water by a mountain range which blocks weather systems that produce moisture. The area beyond the mountain range remains very dry. Often this is called a "Rain Shadow" and can affect cold as well as hot deserts.
2. A **POLAR DESERT** has moisture carried away by high winds and there are snow dunes instead of sand dunes.

**SAND** Small dry particles of minerals and rock that are part of many hot deserts which form dunes.

**DUNE** Masses of sand or snow that are moved and shaped by weather, wind and gravity.

The following presentation is an introduction to the **PATAGONIAN DESERT**, one of Earth's great deserts, with some information about mapping, geography, people and animals of its surrounding area.



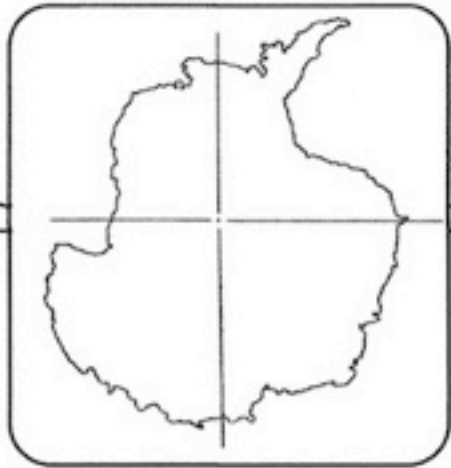
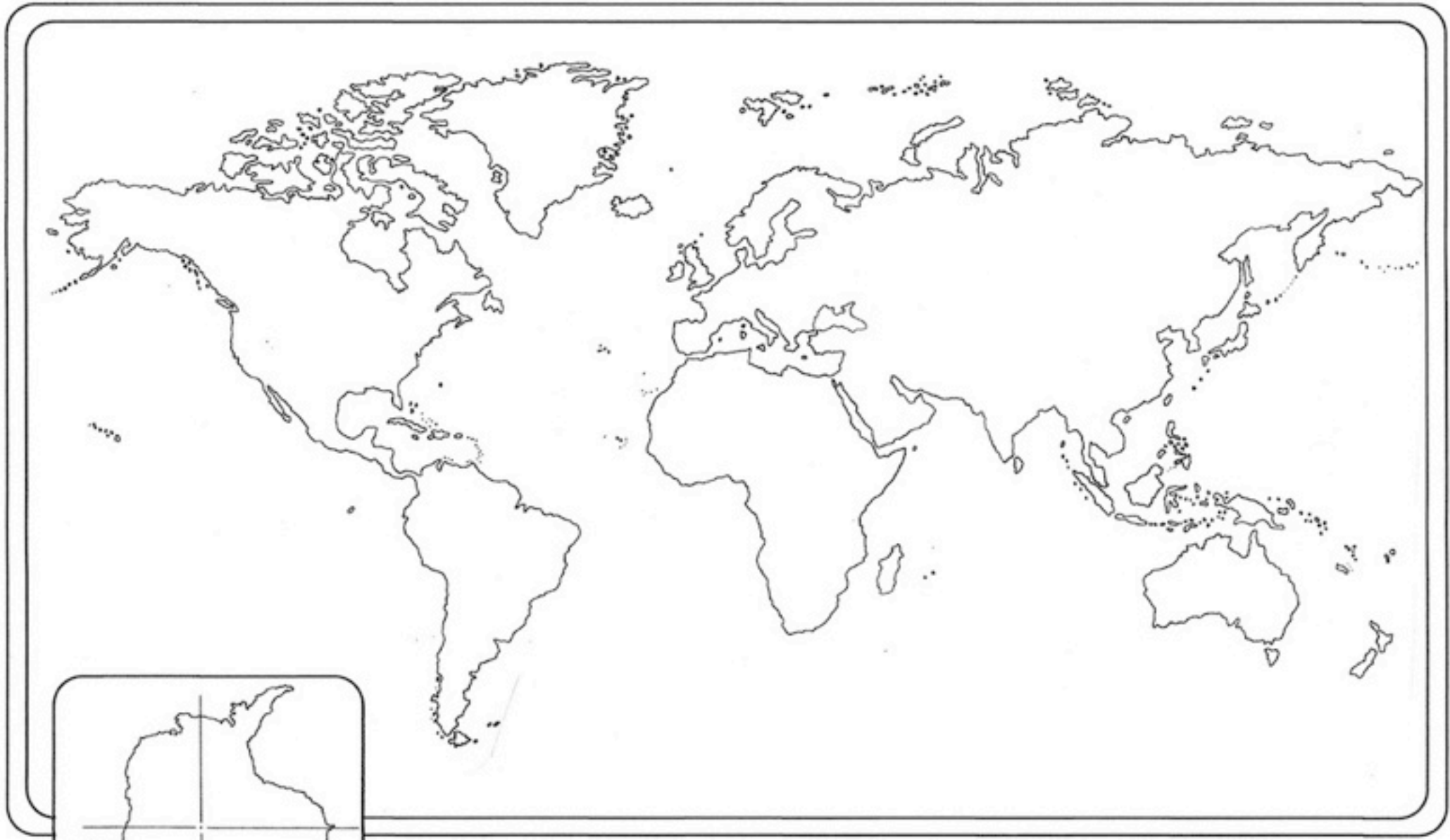


## PATAGONIAN DESERT

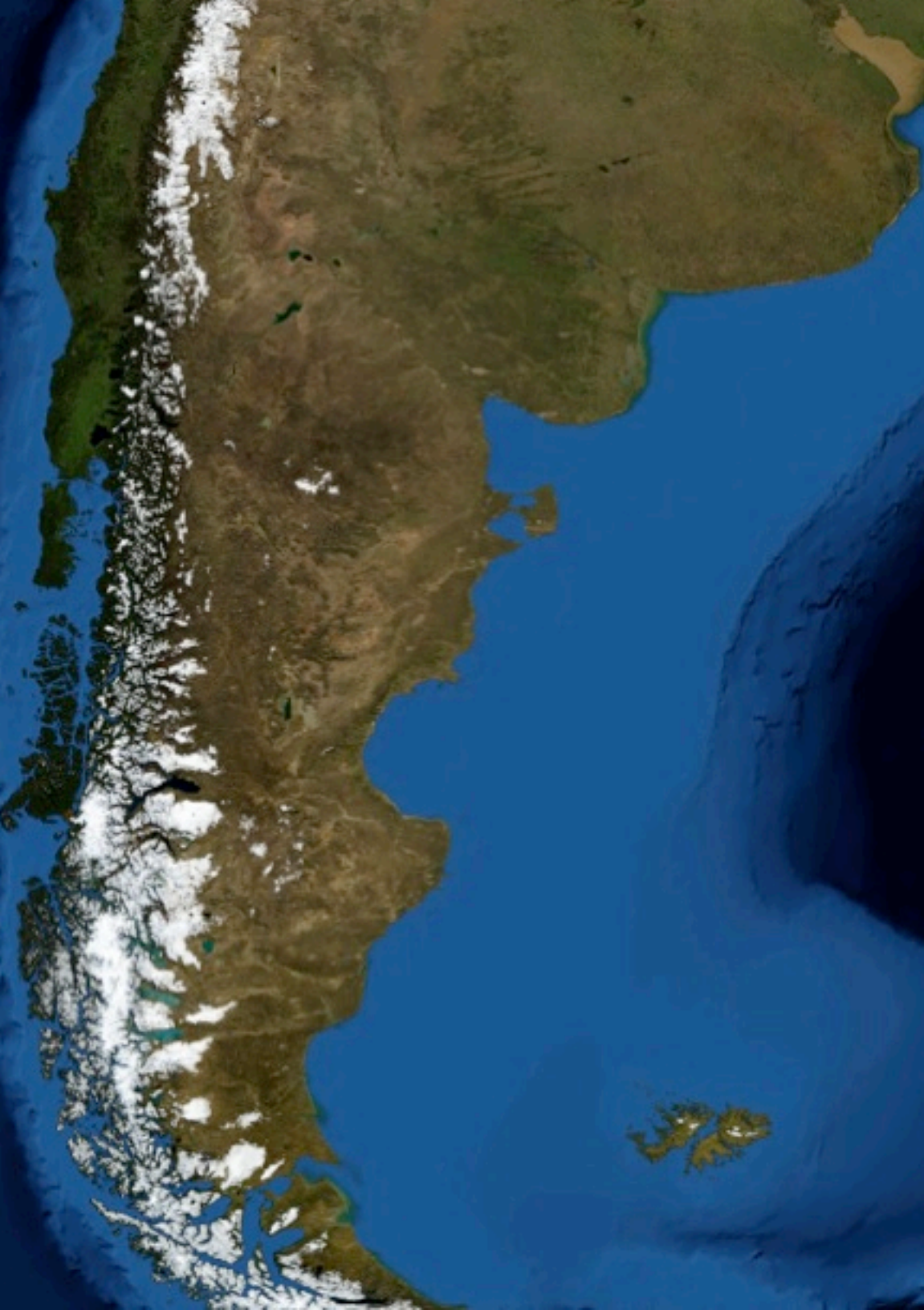
The Patagonian Desert is located primarily in Argentina and a small area in the country of Chile. It is the seventh largest desert in the world, located in the South American area known as Patagonia. This region of Patagonia also includes steppes and grasslands, as well as desert land.

The Patagonian Desert is high on a tableland or plateau between the Andes Mountains and the Atlantic Ocean. The only vegetation is shrubs and grasses. The Patagonian Desert is very windswept, with low visibility in the south due to large amounts of dust that blow towards the Atlantic Ocean.

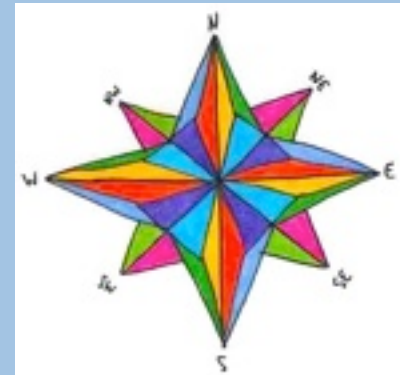
The Patagonian Desert is a very cold desert because the Andes Mountains in the west block the warmer moist Pacific air from reaching the desert. There is also a cold current that passes by the eastern coastline moving cold water from the Antarctic area: this also contributes to lower temperatures in this desert.



DESERTS



# Seen From The Sky!

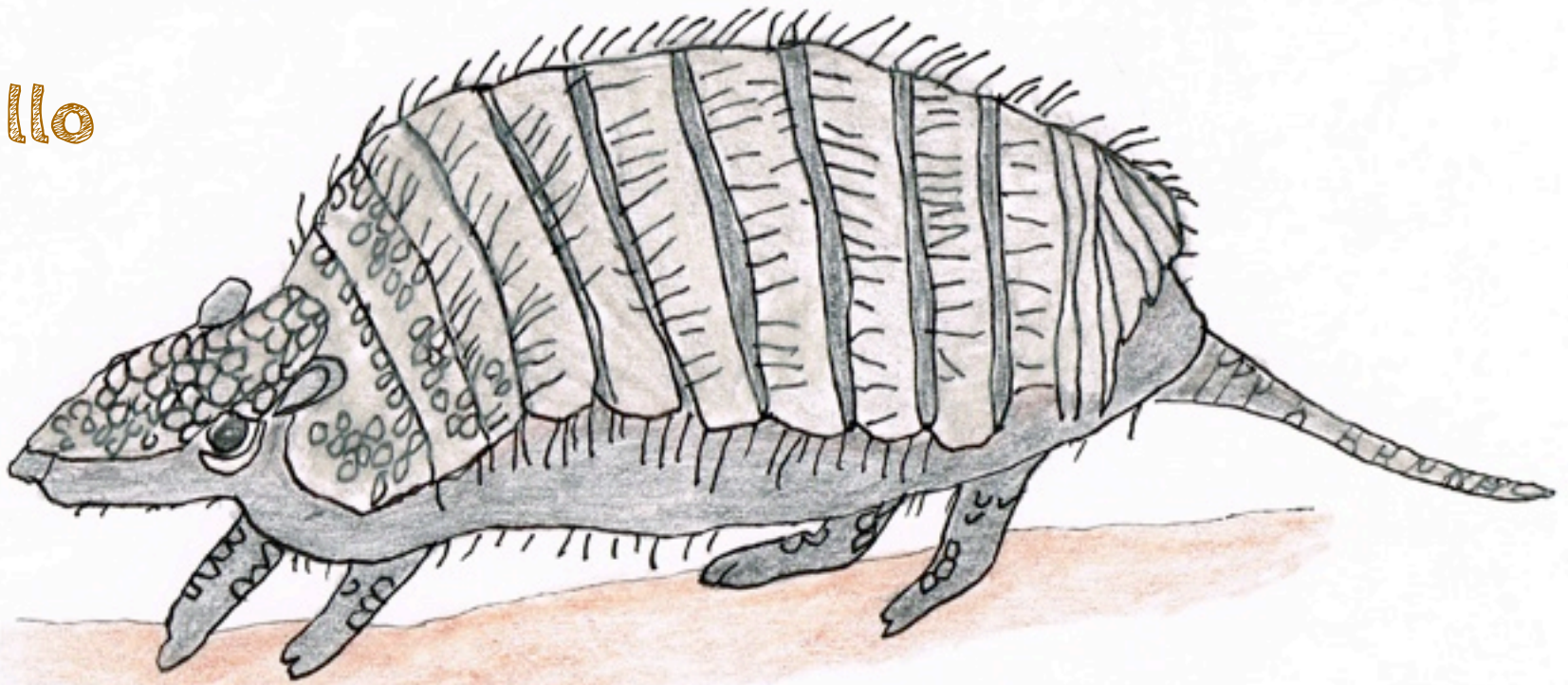


This is a satellite photo of  
the Patagonian Desert  
region!

See how the snow-capped Andes  
Mountains border the region  
in the west.

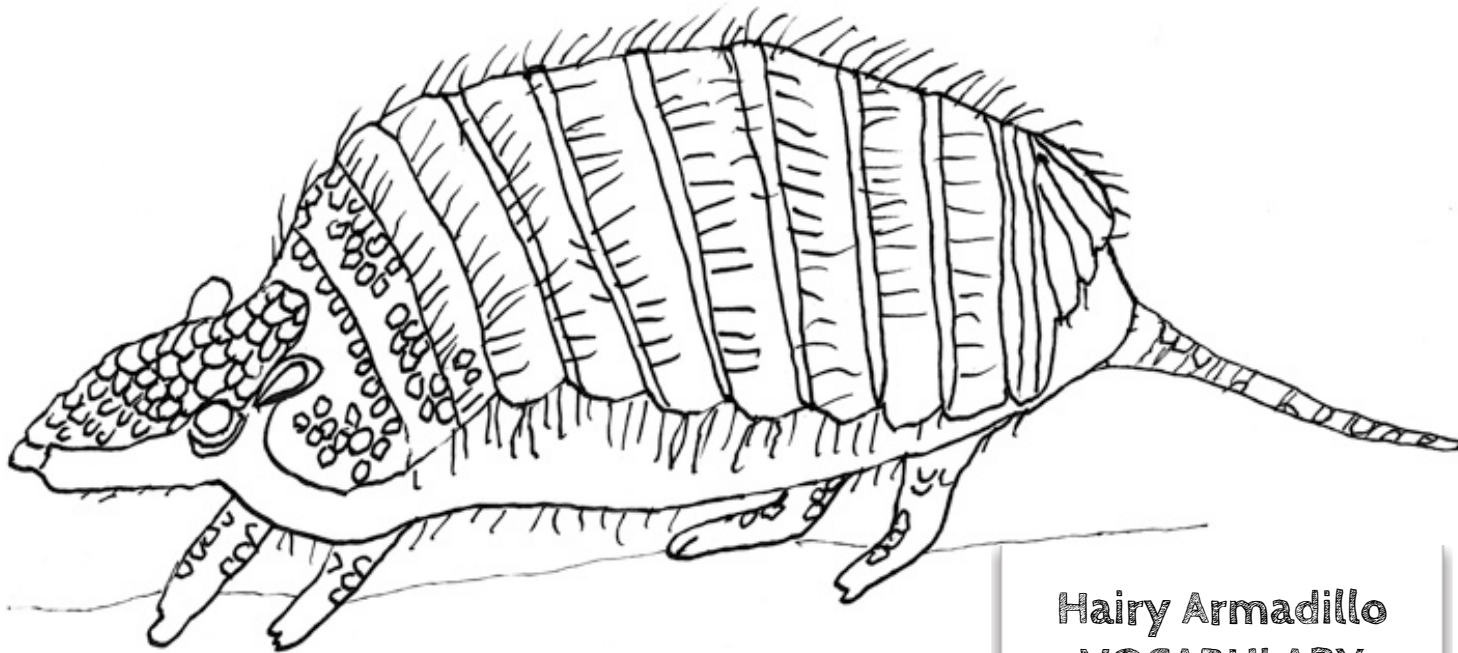
The Atlantic Ocean is in the east  
along the indented coastline  
of the tip of South America.

# Hairy Armadillo



The hairy armadillo is found in the Patagonian desert of South America. Researchers believe that these creatures have inhabited this desert for over 60 million years! Like other Armadillos, they possess bony plates that offer them protection. This armor acts as a defense mechanism when they curl up into it to avoid predators. They will sometimes choose to outrun attackers, and are able to seek refuge in thorny vegetation, where they are protected by their shells.

Unlike the common armadillo, this species possesses a furry underbelly and has coarse hairs projecting through their plates. Although they live in the desert, hairy armadillos are skilled swimmers, and can swim both deep underwater, and float at the waters surface. They are able to hold their breath for up to 6 minutes, and also make themselves buoyant enough to float by gulping air into their intestines. This species eats mostly insects and grubs that they dig for with their sharp claws. Digging also helps them create the burrows that act as their shelter in the Patagonian Steppe.



## Hairy Armadillo

### Hairy Armadillo VOCABULARY

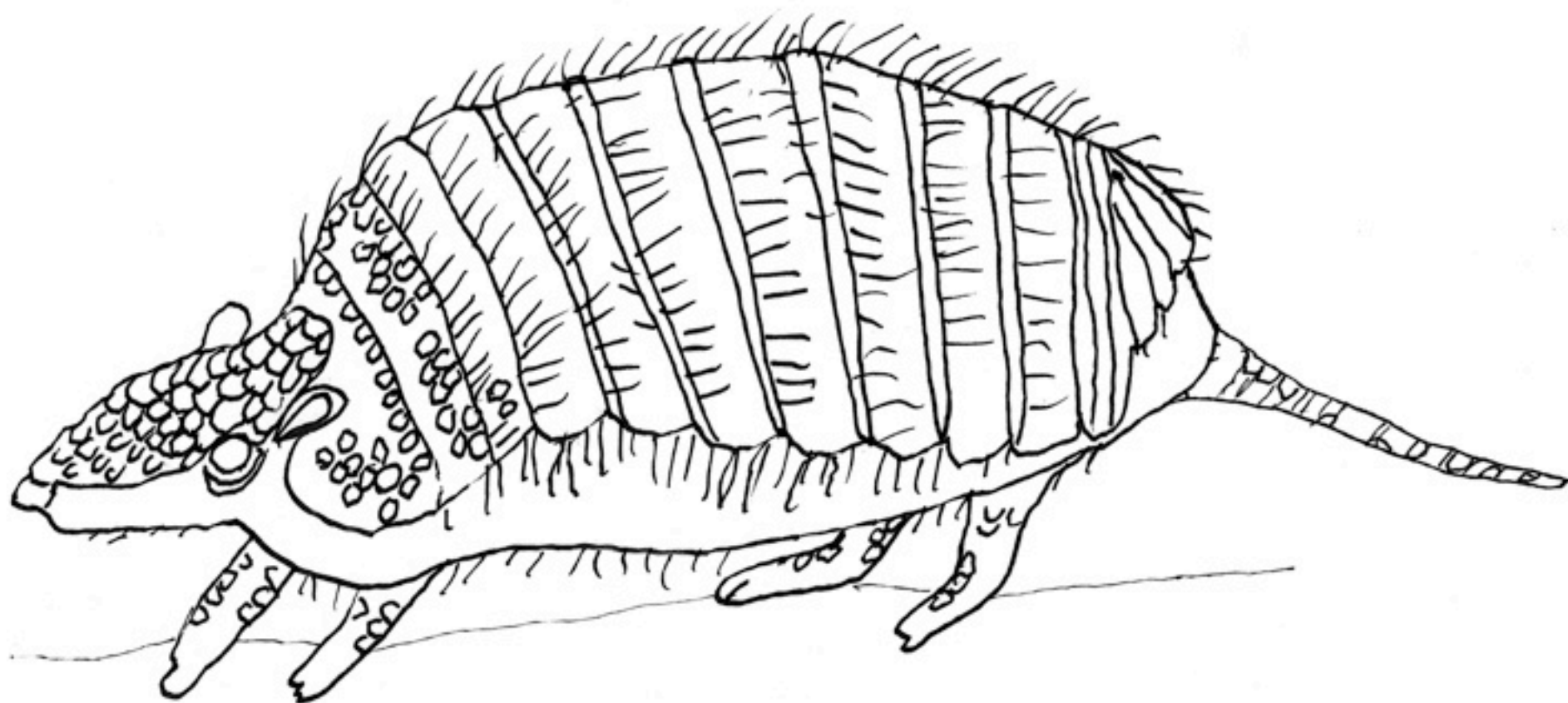
armor  
fur  
shell  
claws  
digging  
burrows  
swimming  
protection  
plates  
coarse hairs  
underbelly  
shoveling  
tenacious  
graceless  
pesty

### Hairy Armadillo

#### SPELLING

hairy  
protective  
overlapping  
scales  
defense  
recedes  
tactic  
digging  
claws  
burrows  
hunted  
diet  
resilient  
scurry  
tenacious  
mechanism  
underside  
buoyant  
delicate  
instrument





Hairy Armadillo



The Monte Desert in Argentina is near the Patagonian Desert, and there are really no clear boundaries between them.

## NEIGHBORS!

Both deserts have similar topography and climate. Unlike political divisions between states and countries, the only thing that distinguishes these deserts is slightly different flora or fauna, or different positioning between other geographic features.

The Patagonian Desert has a limited amount of plant life, mostly scrubby shrubs and grasses.

The Monte Desert's flora is a little more diverse and includes some small cacti as well.

The Monte Desert has land forms that had been eroded into strange shapes, like those shown at left. The geographic term for this kind of wind and water eroded topography is **BADLANDS!** Do some research and define this kind of land! What parts of the USA have similar landforms?



# AROUND THE CAPE!

A CAPE is a piece of land that juts out into a body of water, usually a sea or ocean. Sometimes this piece of land frames one side of a smaller body of water.

CAPE HORN is a famous CAPE that is at the southern tip of South America, south of the PATAGONIAN DESERT. The photo at right gives a view of it from a distance.



## TO DO!

**CAPE**s often have intriguing names and histories!

You may want to locate these on a map and describe their unique features!

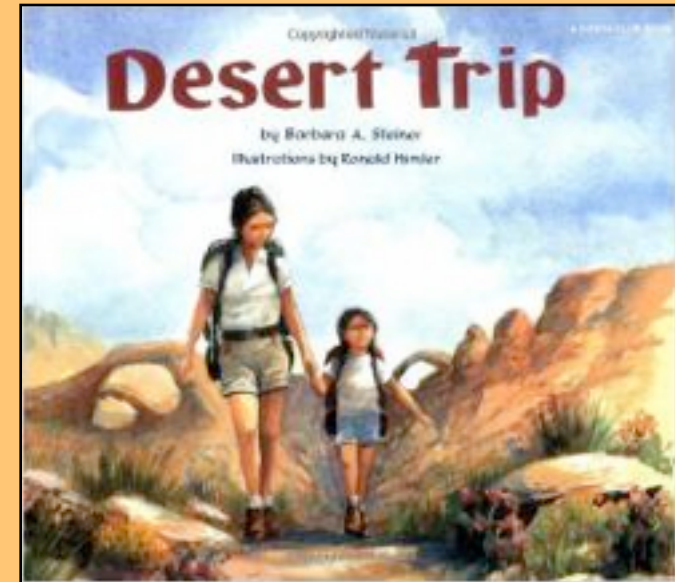
- CAPE HORN** (Chile)
- CAPE WRATH** (Scotland)
- CAPE FEAR** (North Carolina)
- CAPE CANAVERAL** (Florida)
- CAPE FAREWELL** (Greenland)

**CAPE COD** (Massachusetts)





# DESERT READING!



A girl and her mother plan a walking trip through the southwestern desert of the United States.

Lloyd Alexander

The Golden Dream of Carlo Chuchio

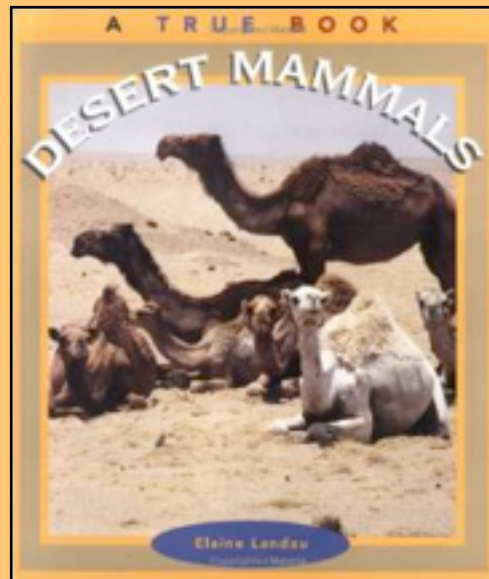
BY THE AUTHOR OF THE CHRONICLES OF PRYDAIN

## The Golden Dream of Carlo Chuchio

by Lloyd Alexander

The young adventurer Carlo Chuchio encounters many curious people while seeking hidden treasure on the Road of Golden Dreams in the desert.

With Baksheesh, the world's worst camel-puller, Carlo leads a caravan through the realm of Keshavar and risks his life for a prize that may not even exist.



## DESERT MAMMALS

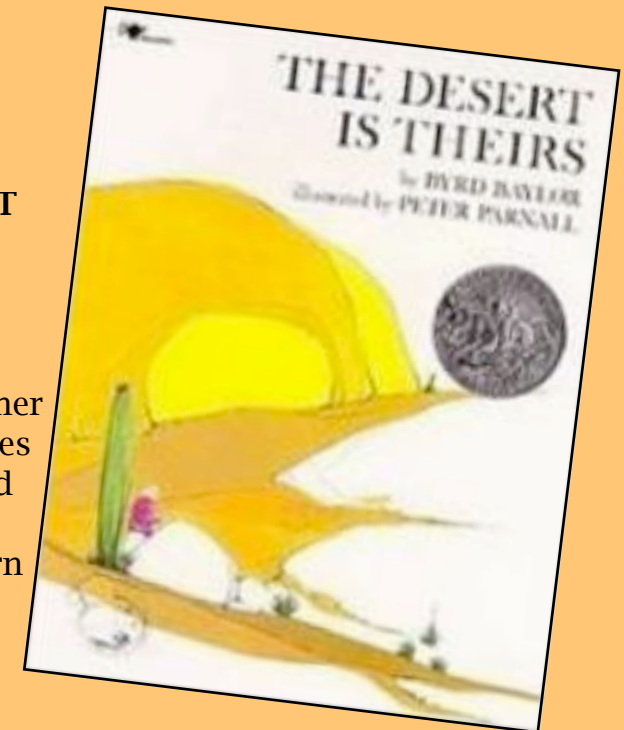
by Elaine Landau

Students can learn more about all the animals that thrive in desert environments.

## THE DESERT IS THEIRS

by Byrd Baylor

A prize-winner that describes the flora and fauna of the southwestern American desert.



# MAP of the MONTH

## WHAT'S HAPPENING IN THE RAINFOREST?

The tropical rainforests of South America are moist and warm, with little changes in the seasons. The high trees form a canopy where many animals, insects, trees and other plants have perfect living conditions. Together, in this system, all living things depend on each other for survival.

Recently, tropical rainforests have been shrinking in size, due to human developments and overcutting of forest wood. Once the forest is cut, it is hard to grow anything because the soil is very poor. Without the trees, the land becomes dry and hot. The animals and plants lose their ability to help each other live.

Today environmentalists are working very hard to preserve these precious areas and their inhabitants. Hopefully, land can be set aside for parks and wildlife refuges. People are trying to find resources within the rainforest and prevent it from being destroyed.

There are many other rainforest areas throughout the world. Try to learn more about how the animals and plants live together in these unique environments. Here are a few drawings of animals of the South American rainforest.



## SOUTH AMERICA

Welcome to South America! South America is the fourth largest continent and is located in the western hemisphere. The Atlantic Ocean is to the east of the continent, the Pacific is to the west.

South America has many prominent geographic features. The Amazon, the second largest river in the world, is located in the north. It has over 700 tributaries, or smaller rivers, that branch out from it. This large area of waterways is called the Amazon Basin.

There are also many mountains in South America. The Andes Mountain range stretches along the western coast of South America for about 5,000 miles. The peaks are very high in places and there are many volcanoes. In the northern area are the more rounded hills of the Guiana Highlands. To the east are the Brazilian Highlands which cover over 2,000 miles along the coast and extend into the interior of the continent.

Another highland area is known as Patagonia. It is located in the south, to the east of the Andes, on the long, narrow tip of the continent. It is a cool, dry plateau, with many lakes that were formed by glaciers thousands of years ago.

South America's long shape spans a large area. It is joined to the North American continent by the country of Panama. In the south, it is close to the continent of Antarctica. The southernmost tip of South America is called Cape Horn. In the age of exploration, navigators were forced to travel around Cape Horn to reach the Pacific Ocean. In the twentieth century, a canal was built through a narrow ridge of land in Panama so ships could avoid the long passage around the continent.



### Map Activities

1. Label the oceans, seas and rivers. Color them blue.
2. Fill in the names of the countries and their capitals.
3. Mark some other major cities.
4. Lightly draw in the Andes.
5. Draw in the lines for the Equator and the Tropic of Capricorn.
6. With a green pencil, lightly shade in the areas which represent the rainforest. You may need to refer to a recent book or magazine.
7. With a light brown pencil, shade in the dry area called Patagonia.
8. Label Cape Horn.

**EARTH WORM ASKS:**  
WHEN IT'S SUMMER IN NEW YORK CITY WHY IS IT WINTER IN BUENOS AIRES?

### CLIMATES

South America's size, location and topography cause it to have four climates. Climate refers to weather conditions in a region over a period of time. The northern area near the equator has very warm temperatures. At the other extreme, the southern tip is near the frigid South Pole. The highland areas of the Andes Mountains are much drier and colder than the lowlands that form the Amazon River Basin.

1. **TROPICAL climate:**
  - Similar temperatures all year long
  - Rainforest regions, much rainfall
  - Savannah regions, around rainforest edges, are grassy areas with dry seasons
2. **TEMPERATE climate:**
  - Seasonal changes, cooler winters
  - South of Tropic of Capricorn, includes the Andes in this latitude
3. **ARID climate:**
  - dry, desert-like
  - east of the Andes in Patagonia, coastal Peru, northeast Brazil
4. **COLD climate:**
  - in very high Andes, lower tip of the continent

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