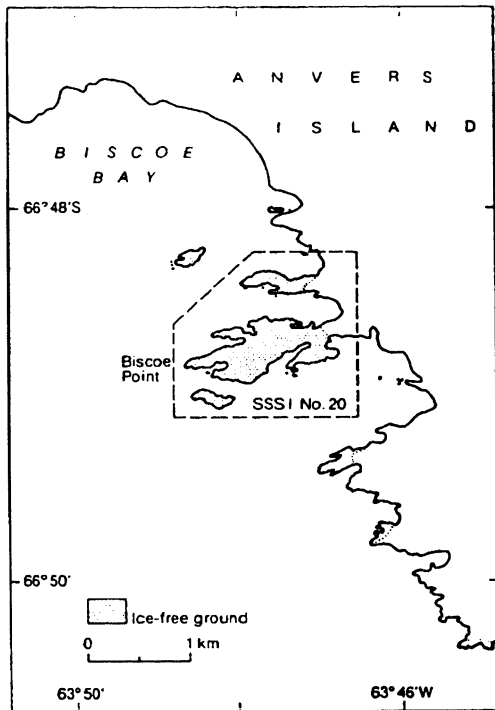


Antarctic Specially Protected Areas No. 139 (Site of Special Scientific Interest No. 20)

Biscoe Point, Anvers Island

i. *Description of Site.* Biscoe Point (lat 64°49'S, long 63°49'W) is situated on the south-east side of Biscoe Bay on the south side of Anvers Island in the Palmer Archipelago off the mid-west coast of the Antarctic Peninsula. The Site includes the rocky promontory ending in Biscoe Point, the smaller headland immediately to the north and the small islet off the south-west of Biscoe Point. A narrow area of land between the two promontories is included, as is the inshore marine environment within the Site boundaries, which are shown on the attached map.



ASPA 139
Map A*

ii. *Reason for designation.* This Site contains a large (approximately 5,000 m) but discontinuous stand of the two native vascular plants, Antarctic hair grass (*Deschampsia antarctica*) and, less commonly, Antarctic pearlwort (*Colobanthus quitensis*). A relatively well developed loam occurs beneath closed swards of the grass and contains a rich biota, including the apterous midge *Belgica antarctica*. Long-term research programmes could be jeopardized by interference from nearby Palmer Station and from tourist ships.

iii. *Outline of research.* Several plant community studies are in progress. Most of the available surfaces support the two Antarctic vascular plants which form several communities, particularly on the north facing slope. Some communities are dominated by the vascular plants, particularly the grass; in others the co-dominants or subordinate taxa are mosses or lichens. The discontinuous vascular plant stand occurs on more or less flat, mesic terrain with fine mineral soil. It contains large (up to 20 m²) patches of dead vascular plants which appear to be produced by

environmental fluctuations, such as dessication, flooding and frost during some summers.

iv. *Date of expiry of designation.* 31 December 1995.

v. *Access points.* None specified.

vi. *Pedestrian and vehicular routes.* Vehicles should not enter the Site and helicopters landings should be made outside the Site. Boat landings are permitted at any point. Tourists and other casual visitors should not enter the Site.

vii. *Other kinds of scientific investigations which would not cause harmful interference.* Besides the botanical studies outlined above, the Site offers excellent opportunities for research on invertebrate fauna and pedology. The littoral and sublittoral, particularly of the cove between the two promontories, could be used for comparative studies with the more perturbed marine environment associated with Palmer Station in Arthur Harbour.

viii. *Scientific sampling.* Sampling the biota and soils should be the minimum required for the research programme, and should not cause undue disturbance to the environment particularly the closed stands of vascular plants.

ix. *Other restraints.* Any long-term experiments left in situ should be checked regularly for maintenance, and all artefacts removed when they are no longer required. No refuse should be deposited within the Site, or at sea beyond the Site in a manner which may allow it to be washed ashore within the Site.