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TOP 40 WEIRD GEOGRAPHIC FACTS

1. The Pacific Ocean is at the Panama Canal's *eastern* end.
2. More countries (15) border China than any other nation in the world.
3. The "Lower" Nile is in the north of Egypt, and the "Upper" Nile in the south.
4. Tribespeople (who had never seen snow) thought Mt. Kilimanjaro was topped with salt.
5. At any time, 10 to 15 volcanoes are erupting somewhere on earth.
6. There are no fish in the Dead Sea.
7. The Bay of Fundy recorded the greatest tide change in history: 21 metres.
8. The branches of divi-divi trees (on the ABC Islands) grow horizontally because of the strong winds.
9. Hawaii's climate is so varied that it offers 11 of the earth's 13 recognized climate zones. Only the Arctic and Saharan zones are missing.
10. The earth's magnetic north pole (where compass needles point) is in Canada, about 1300 kilometres away from the actual North Pole. It also drifts constantly, moving about 16 kilometres per year.
11. The Great Lakes contain one-fifth of the world's fresh water.
12. Antarctica has the highest average altitude of any continent.
13. The island of Borneo has more species of plants than the entire continent of Africa does.
14. China has only one time zone, though it spans six.
15. The iceberg that sank the Titanic came from Iceberg Alley, 400 kilometres southeast of Newfoundland.
16. Australia's Great Barrier Reef may be the largest living organism on earth.
17. Hawaii is the southernmost state in the United States, but Alaska extends farther west.
18. Kansas is 0.9997 flat, making it flatter than a pancake.
19. Lake Winnipeg is more than half the size of Switzerland.
20. Milan is closer to London than it is to the tip of Italy's boot.

21. On Isla Mujeres (off Cancun), there's a cave where divers can actually pet sharks; the water's natural mineral content makes the fish groggy and therefore unthreatening.
22. Rhode Island is only 59 kilometres wide and 77 kilometres long, but it has 640 kilometres of shoreline.
23. The Maldives constitute the flattest country on earth.
24. The meteor that helped kill off the dinosaurs probably hit the earth at the tip of the Yucatan Peninsula.
25. So much water is diverted from the Colorado River, that by the time it reaches its mouth at the Sea of Cortes, there's no water in it.
26. Because of the lack of oxygen at its 3810-metre altitude, La Paz is nearly fireproof.
27. Alberta's oil reserves are larger than those of Saudi Arabia.
28. No one knows how many islands are in the Pacific Ocean. Geographers guess there are at least 20 000, and there could be more than 30 000.
29. The Pacific Ocean is as large as all the continents put together—with room for another Asia.
30. New York City's Central Park is larger than the nation of Monaco.
31. Forty percent of the Netherlands lies below sea level.
32. If placed end to end, the Banaue rice terraces in the Philippines would stretch halfway around the world.
33. The Sahara Desert is growing. Its boundary is moving south at a rate of almost 50 kilometres per year.
34. In South Pacific hospitals, a significant number of injuries treated are coconut tree-related.
35. A surprising 40 percent of Australia lies within the tropics.
36. At the English Channel's narrowest point, only 34 kilometres separate Dover, England, from Cape Griz-Nez, France.
37. Usually there's enough snow on the Matterhorn to ski in summer.
38. Ninety-seven percent of the earth's water is salt water.
39. The world's largest rain forest (the Amazon), driest desert (the Atacama), and longest mountain range (the Andes) are all found in South America.
40. Because the earth spins, if you're in North America you're travelling right now at about 960 to 1440 km/h.