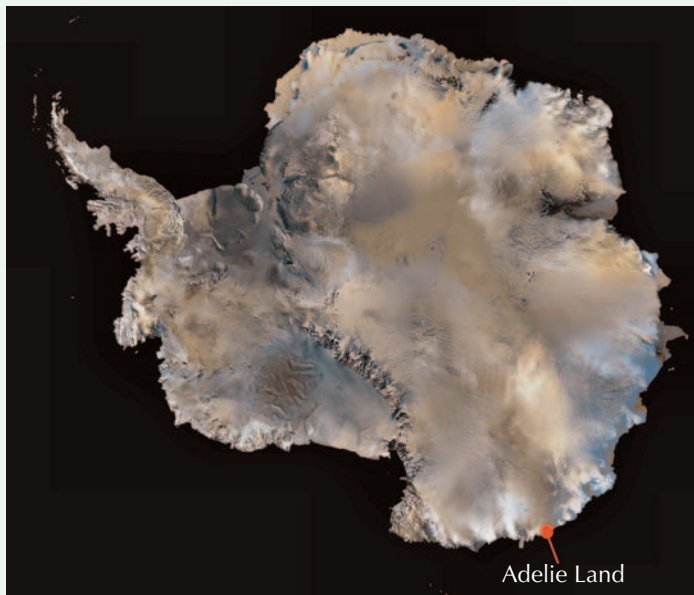


# Chapter 1

## AN INTRODUCTION TO ECOLOGY

### IN THE NEWS

Emperor penguins in Adelie Land, Antarctica, have been declining in numbers for the last 50 years. They are now about half as abundant as they were in the 1960s. Ecologists are interested in why this drop in number is occurring. Is it part of a long-term cycle? Is global warming somehow producing this decline? Is a disease killing the adults? Where are other colonies of emperor penguins? Are other penguin species or other Antarctic species also declining? Like all scientists, ecologists begin with observations—in this case annual counts of penguins in one colony for 50 years. Next, ecologists suggest ideas to explain the observations and look for additional data to see if these ideas are correct. In this book we will discuss how to analyze ecological problems of this type.



*Map of Antarctica showing the location of Adelie Land*

