

Guantanamo Bay, Not Just a Military Base

When you think of Guantanamo Bay, you don't think of scientific ecological research. Guantanamo Bay is a Naval Base. There is a lot of scientific research that takes place on the military base. It began when the base was started in 1903. The reason for the research is the biodiversity. Some species of cactus are found on the base. They may be extinct outside of the base perimeter. There are advantages of studying organisms on the military base. The land has been preserved on the base. The base provides an important refuge. It is a protected area for habitats of many organisms. One species studied is the red land crab. This particular crab is host to a fly, *Drosophila endobranhia*. This fly was discovered in 1966. It was never seen again. However, it was found in the red land crab. The Naval Base at Guantanamo Bay provides a place to study the diversity of plants and animals of Cuba.

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