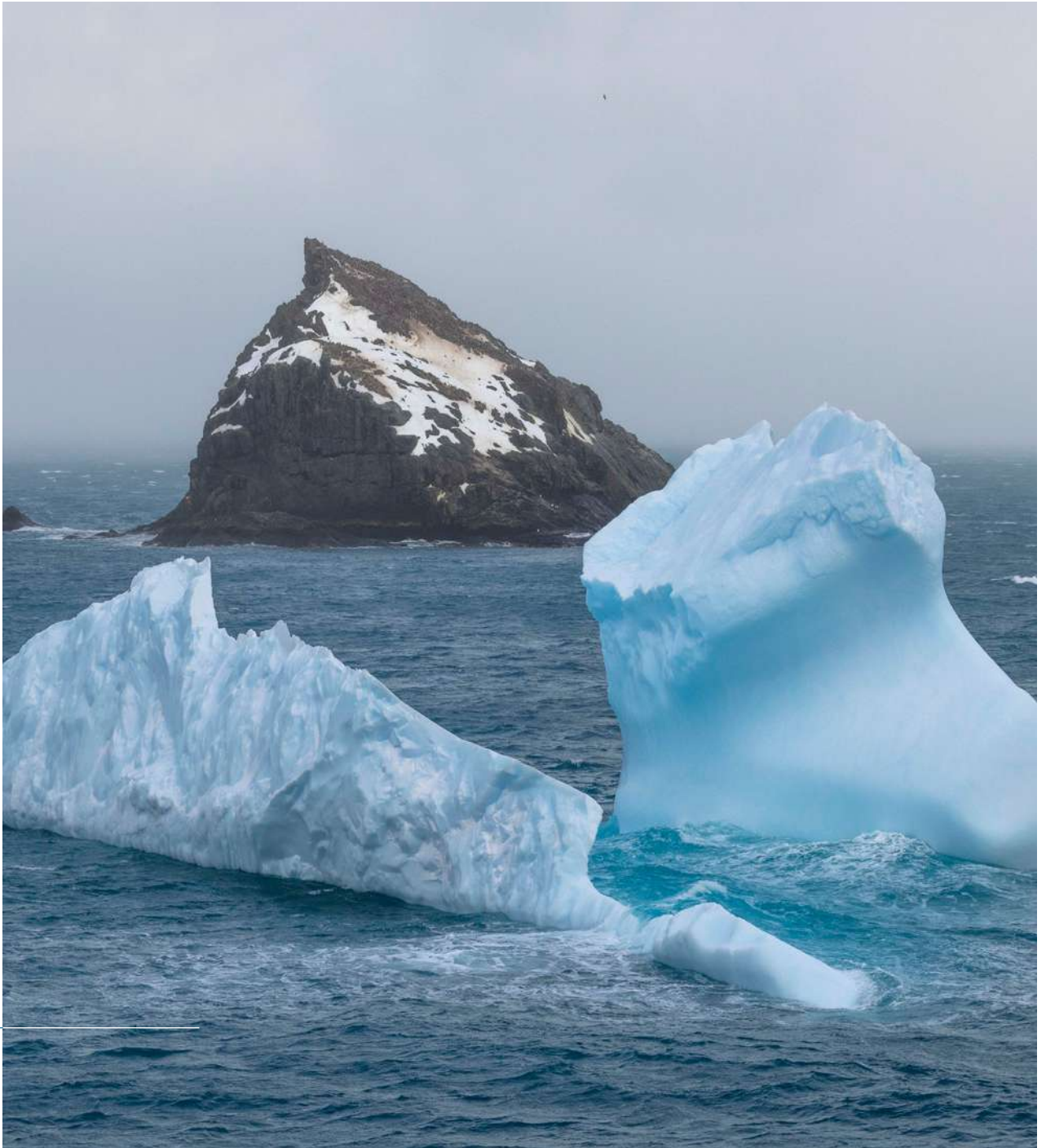


South Georgia and Antarctic Odyssey

Aboard *Greg Mortimer* | 20 November – 9 December 2024





South Georgia and
Antarctic Odyssey

20 November – 9 December 2024

Ushuaia

DAY 1 | Wednesday 20 November 2024

Latitude:
54° 48.28' S
Longitude:
68° 17.59' W

Course:
108°
Speed:
Alongside

Wind Speed:
14 knots SW
Barometer:
1000 hPa

Air Temp:
4°C

Our morning was spent leisurely in Ushuaia before we made our way to the optional catamaran cruise in the afternoon. Many of us enjoyed sailing through the Beagle Channel towards the city's iconic Les Eclaireurs Lighthouse, where we observed local wildlife against panoramic views of the surrounding mountain range.

Upon our arrival at the wharf, members of the Expedition Team greeted us and accompanied us on foot along the pier to the ship. After a brief walk, we found ourselves standing in front of the *Greg Mortimer*. First, we met Assistant Expedition Leader, Mario, plus three future leaders, followed by Onboard Expedition Manager, Justine, and Photographer, Adrian, who checked us off and took a memorable photo for the photo board.

On board, welcome refreshments awaited us in the Elephant Island Bar, then our hotel team helped us navigate the decks to our cabins and settle us into our 'home away from home' for the next 20 days.

Together we total 81 Expeditioners from Australia (34), Canada (11), Japan (1), New Zealand (4), Singapore (1), UK (7), USA (23), along with 84 crew from all around the globe.

Our 22 Expedition Team have a variety of specialities, including polar exploration, marine mammals, mountaineering, skiing, glaciology, geology, history, ornithology, photography, medicine, and kayaking.





Drake Passage

DAY 2 | Thursday 21 November 2024

Latitude:
56° 19.4' S
Longitude:
65° 59.4' W
Course:
170°
Speed:
12.1 knots

Wind Speed:
18 knots NE
Barometer:
1019 hPa
Air Temp:
8°C

Our day started with the mandatory IAATO and biosecurity briefings, where we learned about the precautions we take in order to travel safely and responsibly in Antarctica. We also got to try on our gear, ranging from Muck Boots to lifejackets to dry suits. The kayak and snowshoe groups met for orientation sessions to help prepare for the next couple of weeks of activities.

Even though there was a lot happening inside the ship, there was also a whole world unfolding outside. Seabirds dipped and twisted among the rolling waves of the Southern Ocean. It was mesmerising, and I'm sure more than one of us envied the way those birds surfed

the waters. Now and then, whale blows were spotted in the distance – the perfect introduction to the wild world awaiting us down south.

With perfect timing, Linda presented her lecture on seabirds, which told us all about the very same species gliding past us.

Our last event before dinner was the Captain's Welcome, where we were introduced to our wonderful Captain Alex and his amazing team. There is a sense of anticipation on board; a shared understanding that we are on a journey to somewhere remote and largely unknown.



Drake Passage | Smith Island

DAY 3 | Friday 22 November 2024

Latitude:
60° 42.8' S
Longitude:
63° 25.9' W

Course:
161°
Speed:
11.6 knots

Wind Speed:
18 knots NNE
Barometer:
1014 hPa

Air Temp:
3°C

After a delicious breakfast, Jay delighted us with his lecture 'Introduction to Antarctica', where he presented a general glimpse to the remote area that we will spend the next couple of days exploring.

Shortly after, Adrian presented a very interesting and informative talk about adventure photography focused on polar regions. He shared very useful tips and techniques related to light, composition and more, to get the most out of our pictures.

After lunch, Linda and Meli invited us out on deck to run a cloud and eBird survey, two of our Citizen Science core projects. Right after the Citizen Science surveys, Kelsey presented the *Belgica* expedition story.

During the afternoon around four o'clock we sighted the first iceberg ahead from the ship. As a special surprise, when we started to get closer to it, we noticed some spots in the ice surface, and shortly after the first penguins appeared before our eyes. A group of chinstrap were waiting for us on top of the iceberg.

As we enjoyed our first icy Antarctic encounter out on deck, it wasn't long before we reached our goal for the afternoon. Around 5.30pm, Greg announced that Smith Island had come into view. The island is isolated from the South Shetland group by major faults running through the Boyd Strait, parallel to the island's southeastern margin. It is known as the 'Misty Island' due to the dense fog that often surrounds it.





Lecointre | Cuverville Island

DAY 4 | Saturday 23 November 2024

Latitude:
64° 16.9' S

Longitude:
62° 05.9' W

Course:
Various curious

Speed:
5.4 knots

Wind Speed:
5 knots SE

Barometer:
1002 hPa

Air Temp:
-1°C

We are warmly awakened by Greg's good morning announcement, telling us to get some breakfast and get ready for our first outing, which will be a Zodiac exploration of Lecointre. We sailor-gripped our way onto the Zodiacs for the first time and are met with towering icebergs, crevassed snowfields, and glacial faces we can barely comprehend. We were welcomed to Antarctica by humpback whales fluking, chinstrap penguins porpoising, and sunshine highlighting the blue hues of old ice.

As we enjoyed lunch and a siesta, Captain Alex navigated us to Cuverville Island for the afternoon. We were once again met with perfect conditions, which meant we got to

make a landing! Our Zodiac drivers manoeuvred us through the labyrinth of ice and we saw breathtaking views of gentoo colonies unfold before us, as far as we could see. Once we were ashore we realised the 'glamorous' gentoos with their white eyeshadow and orange lipstick were buying time. Keeping busy 'waiting and mating' for the snow to melt and the rock to appear so they can find the perfect pebbles to build their nests, impress their partners, and nurture their young. We noticed a brown skua patrolling the area. They are also buying time, also waiting for eggs, for a very different reason. To enjoy a tasty meal.







Lemaire Channel | Neumayer | Port Lockroy & Jougla Point

DAY 5 | Sunday 24 November 2024

Latitude:
65° 07.3' S
Longitude:
63° 51.6' W

Course:
218°
Speed:
5.3 knots

Wind Speed:
19 knots W
Barometer:
998 hPa

Air Temp:
-3°C

Today, nearly 40 brave souls took the icy leap into Antarctic waters, with one particularly bold jumper opting to go 'au naturel,' proving that courage (or madness) knows no bounds! The laughter and cheers rivalled the splashes, and the sight of grinning, shivering faces climbing back onto the ship was unforgettable. Afterwards, the sauna and spa became the most popular spots on board as we warmed up over lunch, preparing ourselves for an action-packed afternoon.

Our next stop was Port Lockroy and Jougla Point, where we experienced the thrill of our first-ever sea ice landing. Stepping onto the frozen ocean surface from a Zodiac was exhilarating, made even better by the incredible wildlife

around us. A bustling gentoo penguin colony greeted us, their antics delighting everyone, alongside some cormorants and a few lounging Weddell seals.

Port Lockroy, the historic British post office, added a unique touch to the day as many of us mailed postcards from the southernmost mailbox in the world—sure to impress friends back home.

Back on board, our evening began with a lively recap. Linda shared fascinating (and amusing) insights into penguin mating habits—let's just say these birds keep busy! Elle captivated us with the story of how Weddell seals bring new life into the Antarctic ice.







Wilhelmina Bay | Spring Point

DAY 6 | Monday 25 November 2024

Latitude:
64° 35.0' S
Longitude:
62° 15.7' W

Course:
Various
Speed:
9.8 knots

Wind Speed:
26 knots SSW
Barometer:
1007 hPa

Air Temp:
-1°C

There was a deliberate plan behind the ship's course today; we were going to get the ship stuck in the ice. But it wasn't an accident—this was part of our adventure, a carefully orchestrated manoeuvre to create the perfect conditions for an ice landing.

Once the ship had lodged firmly in the ice, we all quickly bundled into our gear and were ready for the experience. The moment we set foot on the ice; it felt like we were stepping into a different era. The wind whipped around us, crisp and biting, but the beauty of the landscape was undeniable. Huge icebergs loomed in the distance, their jagged peaks towering like the remnants of a forgotten world. We were joined by the local wildlife—Adélie and gentoo penguins; they waddled over, curiously inspecting

us with their comical gait and piercing eyes. A few brave souls even managed to snap some photos with penguins in the background, their tuxedo-like black and white feathers contrasting against the bright expanse of snow.

After spending some time admiring the penguins, the real fun began. Inspired by the legendary Shackleton expedition, we were encouraged to reenact one of the most heroic feats of early Antarctic exploration; we posed at the bow off the ship, pretending to man-haul it across the ice as Shackleton's men had done in 1915 after the *Endurance* sank. Everyone was very much aware of the significance of this moment.







Deception Island and Fort Point, South Shetland Islands

DAY 7 | Tuesday 26 November 2024

Latitude:
62° 59.6' S
Longitude:
60° 32.5' W

Course:
Various course
Speed:
10.0 knots

Wind Speed:
17 knots W
Barometer:
1011 hPa

Air Temp:
-2°C

During the night the Captain navigated the ship smoothly through the Bransfield Strait and when morning came, we woke up at Deception Island in the South Shetland Islands. It was an early but beautiful start to the day; the sun was shining as we navigated through the narrow entrance known as Neptune's Bellows and entered the caldera of Deception Island.

After this early rise, the ship sailed quietly further northeast, while most of us had an after-breakfast nap. And while we enjoyed an early lunch, we arrived at our next destination, Fort Point on Greenwich Island. The rugged cliffs and rocky outcrops were a striking sight against the icy expanse of the glaciers. Lichen and moss clung tenaciously to the stones, adding splashes of green and

orange in an otherwise black-and-white world. Gentoo and chinstrap penguins in the hundreds showed us their courtship rituals, stone-stealing and caring for the eggs. And in the distance, the majestic site of a blue whale and orcas slicing through the waves added to this magical scene.

After an exhilarating landing at Fort Point, the ship set sail to Elephant Island. A great time for our historian, Kelsey, to transport us back in time to the Heroic Age of exploration. While we enjoyed a very tasty crepe suzette, Kelsey started her storytelling recounting the incredible heroic tale of Sir Ernest Shackleton and his men. The story of their determination and resilience against seemingly insurmountable odds captivated many of us.







Point Wild – Elephant Island | At Sea

DAY 8 | Wednesday 27 November 2024

Latitude:
61° 11.0' S
Longitude:
54° 38.2' W

Course:
042°
Speed:
9.3 knots

Wind Speed:
20 knots W
Barometer:
1007 hPa

Air Temp:
0°C

The ship was accompanied by a pod of whales this morning as Expeditioners slowly awoke to another exciting and special day on board *Greg Mortimer*.

We were fast approaching Point Wild on Elephant Island, and by the end of breakfast Captain Alex and the bridge officers were skilfully manoeuvring the ship into anchor by Point Wild. There was swell and ice in the bay, and along with some gusty wind the place looked wild indeed! It was decided that a controlled trip across the bay in the Zodiacs could take place, one Zodiac of brave Expeditioners at a time.

The first group of eight set off on a Zodiac with an

audience watching from decks 6 and 7. The boats looked small as they crossed the rocky point, and passengers returned very exhilarated, and very wet!

In the afternoon we settled into the routine and rhythm of life on board again during sea days, as we start our journey to South Georgia.

There was a packed audience in the library for Linda's phytoplankton workshop, with a sample of plankton from Cuverville Island.

It was amazing to see how much life there is in a drop of water. Then Elle entertained and informed us with her lecture introducing marine mammals of the Antarctic.





Scotia Sea

DAY 9 | Thursday 28 November 2024

Latitude:
58° 32.0' S
Longitude:
48° 01.1' W

Course:
053°
Speed:
14.3 knots

Wind Speed:
35 knots WSW
Barometer:
1006 hPa

Air Temp:
0°C

Today we were in blue water experiencing the vastness of the frigid Southern Ocean, with waves of 4.5 metres. The *Greg Mortimer's X-Bow* (backward-sloping bow) proved its worth slicing through the water with a gentle swaying motion, helped by the fact we were in following seas. The sky was a canvas of swirling grey clouds, with seabirds riding the air currents. Due to the cold bite of a 25-knot southwesterly wind most folks happily stayed indoors.

A film by David Attenborough introduced us to South Georgia's unique and wonderful beauty, gently emphasising the need for environmental protocols to preserve the wildlife and habitat. What better time to clean and prepare everything?

Linda led a group of hardy folks onto the deck for a bird survey that counted over sixty prion species, two light-mantled albatross, 60 Wilson's storm petrels, a hardy brown skua and a white-chinned petrel.

Meli then gave a fascinating presentation on the geology of South Georgia that had lots of cool facts. The Southern Andes once joined South Georgia, whose predominant rock type is sedimentary, specifically the Cumberland Bay formation.

The bridge tours gave us a chance to experience the ship's nerve centre and watch the bridge officers at work.



At Sea, Peggotty Bluff

DAY 10 | Friday 29 November 2024

Latitude:
55° 16.9' S
Longitude:
040° 00.3' W

Course:
053°
Speed:
13.6 knots

Wind Speed:
23 knots W
Barometer:
1012 hPa

Air Temp:
-1°C

Elle talked us through the migratory lifecycle of a young humpback and what drives these whales to migrate north to their breeding grounds and back south to these rich feeding waters. She talked about how our contributions to Citizen Science through projects like Happywhale are leading to tangible efforts to assist and protect cetaceans and marine mammals, and hopefully help to revive the vast numbers of whales that once roamed these abundant waters.

After lunch, Adrian delivered a photography workshop, which covered the tips and tricks of photographing South Georgia. He described some of the details that would help

us focus (pardon the pun!!) on creating the photographs that we really want to produce to do South Georgia justice... or at least try to!

Just after 3.30pm, Greg announced over the PA system that we could now pick out tussac grass and fur seals among the distinct darkness of the landmass appearing on the horizon below the low clouds. It was our first glimpse of greenery in over a week and as such, the windswept and barren land seemed fertile.





Salisbury Plain | Possession Bay | Antarctic Bay

DAY 11 | Saturday 30 November 2024

Latitude:

54° 03.0' S

Longitude:

037° 19.0' W

Course:

273°

Speed:

0 knots

Wind Speed:

4 knots W

Barometer:

1011 hPa

Air Temp:

1°C

There are very few places left in the world where one can perceive the purity of nature, and today we were extremely lucky to visit one of the largest king penguin colonies in the world. Its colours, its sounds, and its smells were almost surreal. The abundance of life on the beaches was immeasurable, with thousands of fur seals preparing for their breeding season, as well as the elegant king and queen penguins.

After a magical morning, the *Greg Mortimer* began its reposition towards Possession Bay to pick up Michael, Paula, Mike and Tarn, who yesterday began their journey in Peggotty Bluff. Unfortunately, the bad weather did not allow

them to continue advancing and therefore the decision was made to pick them up on a very windy afternoon.

The *Greg Mortimer* continued its journey in search of somewhere sheltered from the wind to carry out an activity, but South Georgia showed us how inclement it can also be. The winds increased as the afternoon progressed, and finally the decision was made to do a ship exploration in Antarctic Bay. An excellent occasion to celebrate this great day full of life and new sensations with delicious drinks. Once again, welcome to South Georgia. May the magic of this peculiar place envelop us all. Let's go for more...





Hercules Bay | Fortuna Bay | Shackleton Walk

DAY 12 | Sunday 1 December 2024

Latitude:
54° 07.5' S
Longitude:
036° 40.3' W

Course:
192°
Speed:
At anchor

Wind Speed:
13 knots SW
Barometer:
1010 hPa

Air Temp:
4°C

The day began bright and early at 5.30am in the stunning Hercules Bay. We embarked on a Zodiac exploration and were thrilled to spot our first macaroni penguins! Their signature golden crests made them unmistakable. Adding to the ambiance, the calls of fur seals and elephant seals echoed across the bay, creating a natural symphony that brought the scene to life.

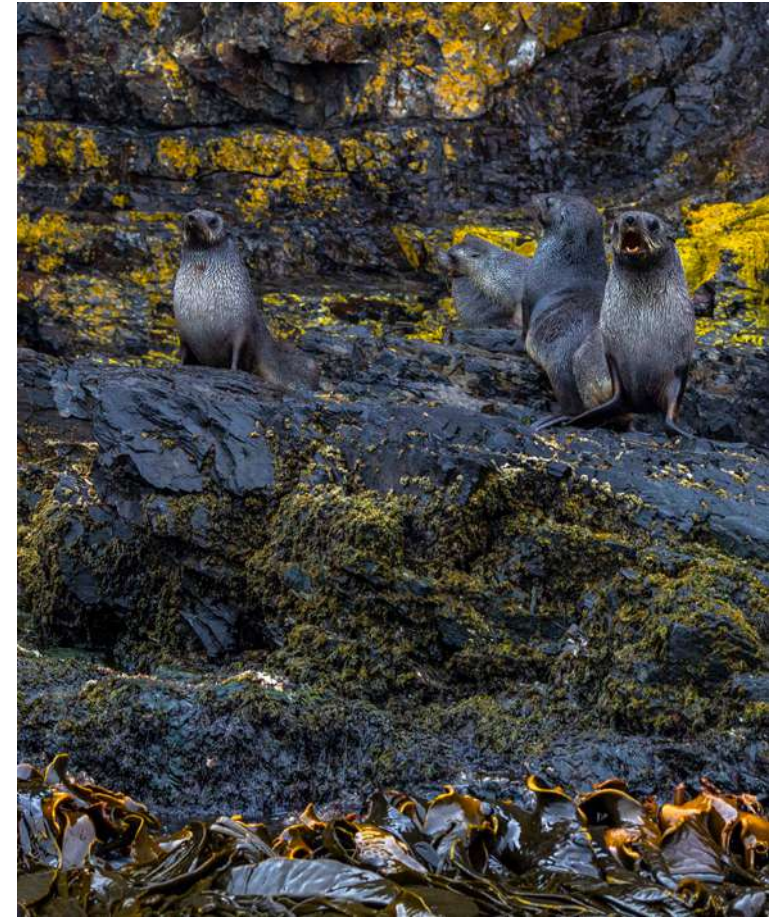
After this magical start, we returned to the ship for a hearty breakfast and set sail towards Fortuna Bay. Here, we prepared for another adventure: a landing that promised breathtaking views. Although the wind began to pick up strength, we successfully made it to shore. A walk along

the beach led us to a panoramic viewpoint overlooking a colony of king penguins. The perspective was simply incredible—one of those moments that remind you how special South Georgia truly is.

Back on the ship for lunch, the excitement for our next adventure was palpable. Many of us geared up to complete the final stretch of the legendary Shackleton Crossing, trekking from Fortuna Bay to Stromness. The weather was as dynamic as the island itself, gifting us with bright blue skies, bursts of sunshine, gusty winds, and occasional rain showers. It was an exhilarating experience, walking in the footsteps of history while surrounded by such raw, untamed beauty.







Grytviken | St. Andrews Bay

DAY 13 | Monday 2 December 2024

Latitude:
54° 13.6' S
Longitude:
036° 30.9' W

Course:
67°

Speed:
8.2 knots

Wind Speed:
22 knots NW
Barometer:
1000 hPa

Air Temp:
3°C

Once a bustling hub for the whaling industry, Grytviken was founded in 1904 and quickly became one of the largest whaling stations in the world. The old factory, its rusting machinery still standing, is a sombre reminder of a once-thriving industry. The whaling boats, now worn with age, lie abandoned, a silent testament to the island's history.

After exploring Grytviken, we boarded the *Greg Mortimer* again and started heading towards St. Andrews Bay. A treacherous river, swollen with glacial meltwater, separated us from the viewpoint overlooking the king penguin colony. Some Expeditioners hesitated, but a brave few, driven by the allure of the world's largest king penguin colony, decided to cross.

The water surged, but with help from Linda and the Expedition Team, we managed to make it across. Damp but exhilarated, we ascended a steep hill, and as we reached the top, the breathtaking scene unfolded before our eyes: thousands of king penguins, their distinctive yellow and black feathers shimmering through the Antarctic snow drift.

On the shore below, the beach was a riot of activity. We could see massive elephant seals, their bodies heaving as they roared in the throes of rutting season. The males, with their imposing, swollen necks, bellowed defiantly as they fought for dominance, their fierce battles creating a spectacle of raw power and primal instinct.







Right Whale Bay | At Sea

DAY 14 | Tuesday 3 December 2024

Latitude:
54° 0.0' S
Longitude:
037° 40.7' W

Course:
149°
Speed:
At anchor

Wind Speed:
9 knots SSE
Barometer:
994 hPa

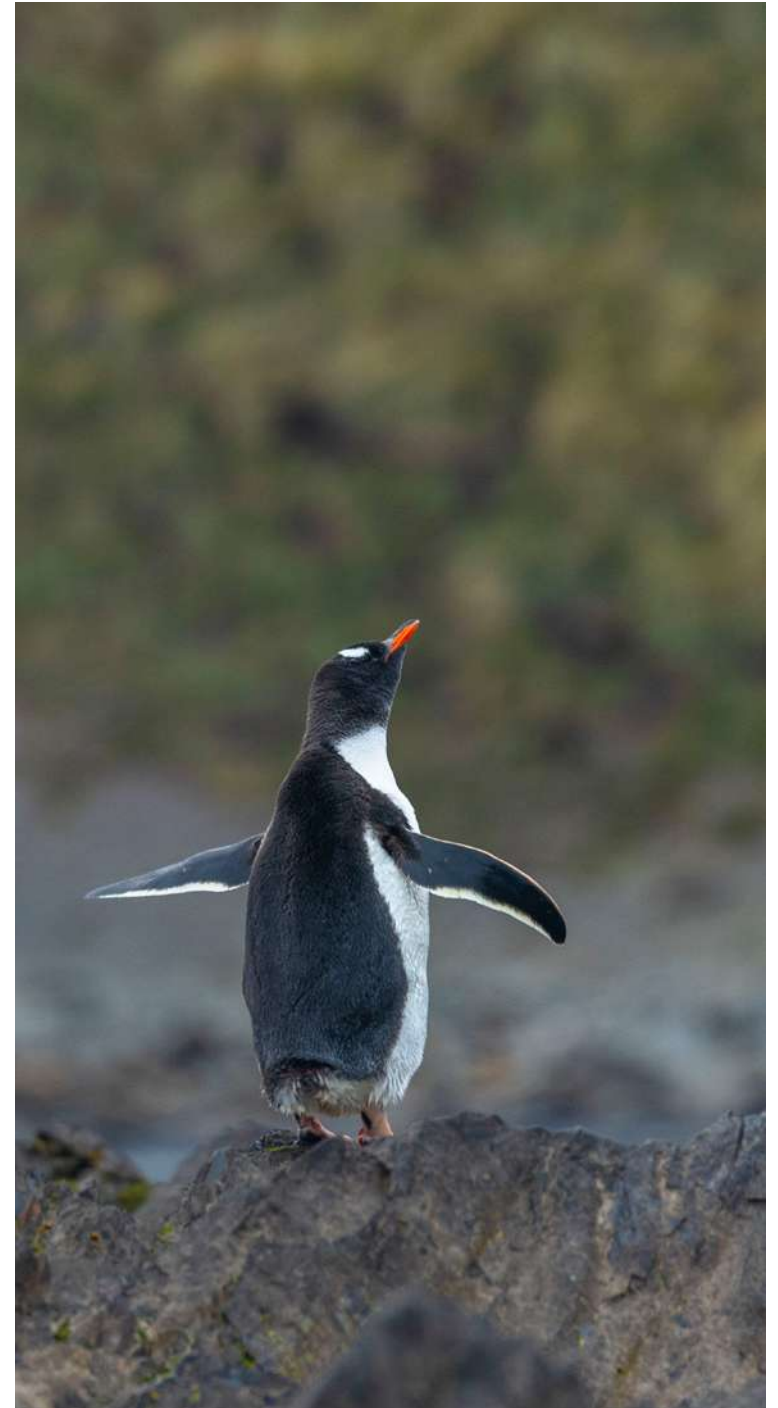
Air Temp:
1°C

This morning we woke to Greg's familiar voice, announcing our arrival in Right Whale Bay. Excitement buzzed through the ship as we prepared for a morning of Zodiac exploration and kayaking. The bay offered more than two hours of adventure, covering nearly 10 nautical miles. Among the highlights was the incredible kelp forest ecosystem we navigated through, where seals and penguins swam playfully around the kayakers and Zodiacs. We enjoyed stunning views of a king penguin colony and both elephant and fur seals along the way. Back on board, we warmed up with hot chocolate—just what we needed before lunch.

The morning's serenity was soon replaced by an afternoon of strong winds that funnelled into the bays. With gusts reaching up to 80 knots, Zodiac explorations were out of the question.

Leaving the sheltered coastline of South Georgia behind, we entered open waters with three- to six-metre waves. In the middle of the afternoon, Greg updated us on the weather situation. A 'cyclone' event up north was creating a swath of challenging conditions, which we would carefully navigate as we crossed towards the Falklands.





At Sea

DAY 15 | Wednesday 4 December 2024

Latitude:
52° 43.7' S
Longitude:
043° 22.5' W

Course:
x 265°
Speed:
12.9 knots

Wind Speed:
34 knots SSW
Barometer:
998 hPa

Air Temp:
1°C

This morning, we found ourselves on the first full sea day crossing towards the Falkland Islands, and luckily, the calmer seas allowed us to rest after our intense journey around South Georgia.

After a revitalising breakfast, Kelsey and Elle offered a very interesting and informative talk about whaling history and the future.

Shortly after, Bill Lee gave an amazing presentation on coding and AI, sharing his background at IBM and relating some areas to visual arts and music.

After lunch, Linda conducted an eBird survey out on deck, where plenty of diverse types of seabirds were sighted. During the afternoon, our amazing galley team offered a tasty teatime with some delicious cherries Jubilee.

Right after, we had some fun with Mario and the team, we played the Polar Bluff game where Nacho, Jay and Meli were giving different definitions of the same word, and the teams had to guess who was telling the truth and who was bluffing.



At Sea

DAY 16 | Thursday 5 December 2024

Latitude:
52° 14.0' S
Longitude:
051° 00.0' W

Course:
278°
Speed:
10.5 knots

Wind Speed:
32 knots S
Barometer:
1011 hPa

Air Temp:
-1°C

Most of us started the day early, around 3am, due to the swell increasing to six metres at times during the early morning. Rolling us back and forth and not in a way that was rocking us back to sleep, more in a way that felt like we were airborne at times and needed the 'bed belt' Greg had mentioned from his days on Russian icebreakers.

We downed some coffee and seasickness medication and headed to the E-Team lecture from Linda, Antoine and Melina, prepping us to enjoy our stop to the town of Stanley in the Falklands. Groups E & F had their turn at visiting the bridge and were fighting the urge to press buttons. They listened to one of the officers explain the screens, knobs, and answer our questions.

After lunch Elle's, voice came over the PA system to invite us to an arts and crafts workshop. We had bid on a chart that she had painted the night before and looked forward to learning from her and testing our skills. Trying to capture our favourite images from the trip in watercolour was a nice distraction from the big waves and swell that continued throughout the day. Some of us did better than others and all of us appreciated Elle's beautiful work even more by the time we were done.

We headed to recap and once Greg had briefed us, Michael, a fellow Expeditioner, stepped up to the microphone to tell 'his version' of the Shackleton crossing. He had some wonderful videos and footage that he shared with us and answered questions from the crowd.



Stanley, Falkland Islands

DAY 17 | Friday 6 December 2024

Latitude:
51° 39.7' S
Longitude:
057° 44.7' W

Course:
258°
Speed:
4.2 knots

Wind Speed:
24 knots SW
Barometer:
1025 hPa

Air Temp:
3°C

Today began with Expeditioners eagerly disembarking at the small, windswept harbour of Stanley. The first stop was Gypsy Cove, a serene stretch of coastline known for its scenic beauty and wildlife. As we made our way down the path to the beach, we were treated to the sight of a colony of Magellanic penguins. The birds waddled along the shore, their black-and-white plumage stark against the golden sands.

After a peaceful morning with the penguins, the group set off on the coastal walk towards Stanley. The brisk wind and rugged terrain made the hike invigorating, with views of the rocky shore, gentle hills, and scattered wildflowers. As we approached the town, the first signs of civilisation came into view: colourful buildings and quaint streets, set against

the backdrop of the stunning, open landscape.

Upon reaching the town, we enjoyed a leisurely lunch, fresh seafood and warm, hearty dishes were served, offering a taste of the islands' flavours. Afterwards, we made our way to the Falkland Islands Museum, where we learned about the rich and complex history of the archipelago.

The afternoon allowed some free time, and many of us eagerly explored the local shops for Christmas gifts. Local handicrafts, Falkland wool garments, and handmade ornaments were among the treasures we found. However, as we made our way back to the ship, a sudden shift in the weather warned of an approaching snowstorm.





Saunders Island | West Point

DAY 18 | Saturday 7 December 2024

Latitude:
51° 17.6' S
Longitude:
060° 13.7' W

Course:
248°
Speed:
2.9 knots

Wind Speed:
22 knots SSE
Barometer:
1028 hPa

Air Temp:
3°C

We woke up to a calm morning at Saunders Island, a small northern island in West Falkland. Turquoise water and white sandy beaches greeted us as we drove toward the shore, and the beaches were bustling with locals: Magellanic penguins, steamer ducks and, of course, our old friends: gentoos.

From there, we spread out: some of us walked along the trail to see the rockhoppers and black-browed albatrosses, the sheep and the shags; others walked towards the southern side of the island. The kayakers paddled along the coast, following the bird cliffs and watching rockhoppers hop into the sea.

In the afternoon, we headed over to West Point for our last outing of the trip. We landed in a small bay and we

walked through rolling fields to the far side of the island. While wandering through the tussock grass, we got close-up views of nesting black-browed albatrosses and rockhoppers. The place was alive with birdcalls and the cries of chicks tucked underneath their parents. Above us, albatrosses wheeled in the sky and came in for landing, swooping down over our heads.

The afternoon ended with a beautiful garden tea party hosted by Kiki and Thies, who shared an impressive spread of cakes and biscuits. We walked around the labyrinth of their garden, decorated with small and thoughtful details, the smell of chamomile blooming in the air. It was an incredibly special way to end our visit to these windswept, far-flung islands.







Drake Passage | Beagle Channel

DAY 19 | Sunday 8 December 2024

Latitude:
52° 56.9' S
Longitude:
062° 48.1' W

Course:
215°
Speed:
12 knots

Wind Speed:
14 knots NW
Barometer:
1021 hPa

Air Temp:
-6°C

After breakfast, we finally had all our questions about the ship functioning and the engine room answered by chief engineer, Dimitar, and hotel director, Alex. We learned the intricacies of the water system on board (freshwater production and storage of the used water), how the engine hums with life and even how waste is carefully managed.

Later, we got the disembarkation briefing by Justine – a bittersweet reminder that the end of our voyage was drawing near. However, we had the chance to sight two pods of pilot whales through the morning, accompanied by fin whales blowing in the distance.

As the afternoon unfolded, land began to appear on the

horizon: the islands of the state, marking the first hints of South America, and then came the great island of Tierra del Fuego that we would be keeping on our starboard for the rest of the day. Our smooth sailing was bathed by bright sunshine and joined by the majestic giant petrels gliding in the wind and sweeping near the decks.

The day finished with our last amazing dinner on board, during which the whole hotel crew was presented, and Tony sang us a few last songs. Late at night, the last of us rejoined our staterooms after the party wrapped up at the bar, so we could finish packing. What a last day aboard this ship...

Ushuaia

DAY 20 | Monday 9 December 2024

Latitude:
54° 48.28' S
Longitude:
68° 17.59' W

Wind Speed:
10 knots NW
Barometer:
1000

Course:
108°
Speed:
Alongside

Air Temp:
9°

Aurora Expeditions thanks you for joining us aboard *Greg Mortimer* to Antarctica and South Georgia. We hope to see you on the high seas again some day!



BBQ



Polar Plunge









Snowshoeing Log

Snowshoe Guides: Tarn Pilkington, Mike Roberts, Paula Roberts, Bronwen Waters

23 November 2024, PM – Georges Point

It was an incredible afternoon for our first snowshoe in Antarctica. The sky was blue, the sun was out and we headed away in the Zodiacs away from the main landing site of Cuverville Island, to Georges Point. We had the site to ourselves, and the 10 snowshoers split into two groups. One group opted to head past the Gentoo penguin colonies, and then continue up further on the glacier to a viewpoint between two rock towers on the ridge. The other group spent the time wandering around the numerous colonies, placed on a gentle hill. It was very scenic with a view down to the bay and the stranded icebergs. We also watched the alpine climbers ascend Mount Tennant, becoming smaller and smaller on the horizon ridge line.

24 November 2024, PM – Port Lockroy & Jougla Point

This afternoon we first stopped in to visit the Port Lockroy Museum and shop, then we zipped around to nearby Jougla Point in a Zodiac, this time landing the Zodiac up onto some sea ice and alighting there. Today's snowshoe led us around gentoo penguin colonies, and over a gentle hill to gaze down into the Peltier Channel. We watched the penguins climb their steep penguin highway from the ocean edge up to their colonies. We wandered through a little snowy valley to meet the sea ice once again, which we crossed to get back to our Zodiac pick-up. Many Weddell seals were hauled out on the sea ice that we were walking across.



Number of Snowshoers: 10

Total Outings: 3

Snowshoers:

Henry Docherty

Marjorie Docherty

Rob Grant

Jenny Johnston

Roslyn Millar

Donald Ritter

Leslie Ritter

Mariah Ritter

Grace Ritter

Carolyn Wiseman







Shackleton Crossing Log

Guides: Tarn Pilkington, Paula Roberts, Mike Roberts, Bronwen Waters

23 November 2024, AM

We awoke to the magnificent area between Brabant Island and Lecointe Island named the Freud Passage. Glaciers poured from skyline into the sea and brash ice was everywhere on the horizon. After breakfast the crossers with Tarn and Paula went ashore on a small group of islands connected by sea ice. We called these Little Hunt Islands. Here we practiced snow shoeing, glacier travel and avalanche rescue skills. A new area for all of us to enjoy thanks to Greg's wish to re-explore areas he's been before.

23 November 2024, PM: Errera Channel – Ronge Island, ascent of Mt Tennant

Ronge Island was reached from the ship after lunch and we made steady progress across the glacier towards

our objective, Mt Tennant (750 metres). Snow conditions were wet and soft but we made good progress in good weather to the summit in under three hours. Fantastic views were enjoyed from the summit, allowing us to take in the Gerlache Strait from north to south. An amazing summit day and surely a highlight of our voyage.

24 November 2024, PM: Goudier Island – Port Lockroy – Jougla Point and Domier Island

The team travelled over water across to Domier Island with the objective of climbing Domier Peak. Cloud and wind made for a whiteout environment and a near-successful ascent. The team were called back to the ship and jumped onto the ship, which then repositioned to Damoy Point around the corner to the north.



Number of Crossers: 2
Number of Crossings: 2

Crossers:
James Van Boven
Michael Whaley

26 November 2024, PM: Greenwich Island – Fort Point

A beautiful day at Fort Point saw us climb up into the lower glacier for a training session with the sleds and a skill recap on the glacier hard ice. Jim fell deep into a crevasse but was swiftly extracted by Mike and Tarn.

28 November 2024 – Scotia Sea

The long journey across the Scotia Sea continued and the large ocean swells and wind firmly placed an understanding of the James Caird's journey to King Haakon Bay. The team erected the tents and started to pack gear for the upcoming crossing.

29 November 2024 – Scotia Sea

The last hours of open ocean passed quickly until we finally saw the west coast of South Georgia Island. The ship pulled into King

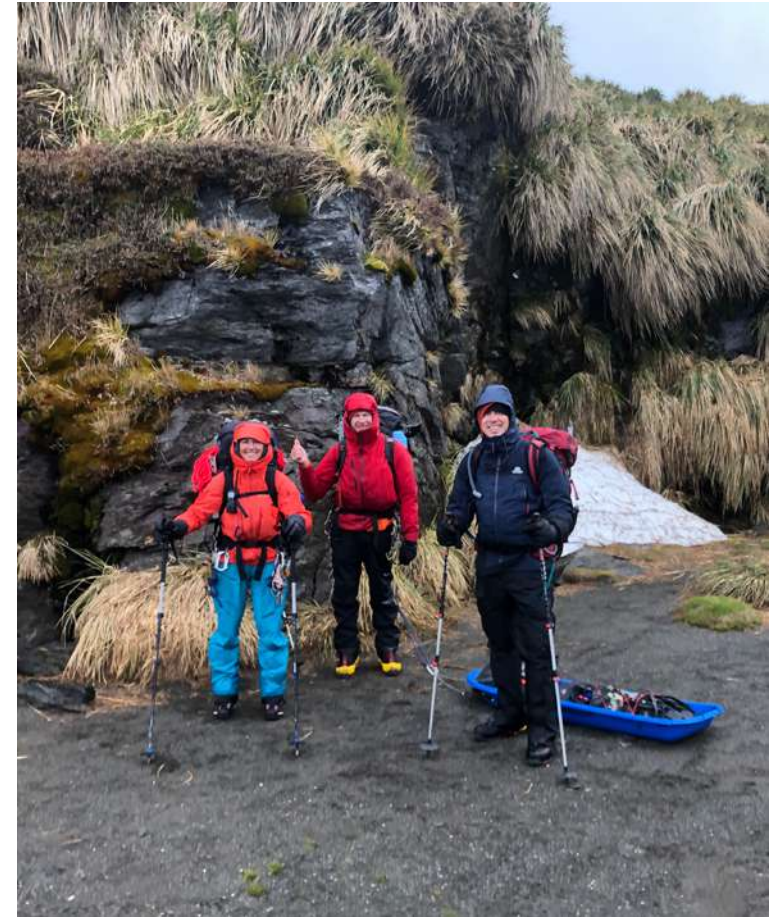
Haakon Bay and the crossing team of four found themselves at the beginning of their adventure. Rain fell and low cloud swirled above the bay. The bay was left behind and heavy packs and sleds were carried towards the Shackleton Glacier. It became a whiteout after 30 minutes, so compass and GPS navigation were required to get us to our first day's high point next to the Murray Snowfield. The tent was quickly erected and dinner was enjoyed in the mists surrounding the rocks and snow at GPS point 995.

30 November 2024 – Murray Snowfield - Possession Bay

We awoke to the sound of rain and cloud surrounding the tent. The forecast winds were again the main concern, as walking into a deteriorating forecast is an option that is always carefully considered. After breakfast and some more

deliberation over the weather forecast, it was decided to descend to Possession Bay for a pick-up by the ship, which had been at Salisbury Plain in the morning.







Kayaking Log

Kayak Guides: Peter Wainwright, Eduardo Larranaga, Pablo Passera

23 November 2024, AM – Freud Passage 6.3km

We used the Zodiac to tow the kayaks 3 kilometres into the sheltered waters of hunt island. We began with some coaching of a few paddle strokes and techniques, and discussed safety considerations when moving as a group and being aware of the hazards.

At the end of the lagoon there were 14 Weddell seals hauled out on the ice. We continued kayaking along the border of the brash ice, before diverting course straight into the brash to experience that unique feeling of paddling in Antarctica, and of having to time your paddle strokes to insert the blade between the chunks of ice. We passed two large icebergs and had our first experience of gentoo penguins swimming and feeding around us.

23 November 2024, PM – Cuverville Island 5.4km

With the help of the Zodiacs we towed the kayaks until we found a small bay, ideal to board our kayaks and begin exploring Cuverville Island. Cuverville is a small island that is home to a huge number of gentoo penguins, so the first thing we did was admire these charismatic birds from the calm of our kayaks. After enjoying and photographing how the penguins entered and left the water, we began a circumnavigation of the island. We paddled between beautiful pieces of ice, some very blue and with amazing shapes. During the tour we also observed several Weddell seals resting on an islet. At the end of the paddle, we all had the opportunity to land on Cuverville and stretch our legs alongside thousands of nesting gentoo penguins!

Number of Kayakers: 20

Total Paddle Outings:
11

Total Distance Paddled:
56.2km

Kayakers:

David Anderson
Diane Burnard
Rob (Robert) Cameron
Annabel Clare
TJ (Timothy) Clare
Sue (Susan) Ford

Brigitte Hanson
Hart (Hartwick) David
Hanson
Chris Hoy
Phoebe Hoy
Joran Laird
Phil (Phillip) McGowan

Linda McIntosh
Colleen Riphagen
Connie (Constance) Self
Margaret Sharp
Carla Wallace
Heather (Mary) Williams
Bob (Robert) Williams

Liam Wiseman
Carolyn Wiseman

24 November 2024, PM – Port Lockroy & Jougla Point 5.1km

With Nacho at the helm of our single Zodiac it was a lively ride into the wind – and the kayakers chose to misbehave, with a few capsizes that needed righting. Once straightened out we chugged our way further upwind into some moderate shelter before launching. As soon as we were in the kayakers we began warming up again and with our backs to the wind it was far more pleasant than the Zodiac ride into the wind. We made the decision to do a downwind run straight past the ship and into the shelter behind Goudier island. After some brief coaching on the stern rudder stroke, we began surfing our way down the increasingly large waves until all too soon we were in Port Lockroy. After checking out the penguins and Weddell seals we made a fast-ice landing from our kayakers and hopped into the Zodiac

for a quick stop-off at the ship to get changed and head back to the Museum and Post Office at Port Lockroy.

25 November 2024, PM – Brialmont Cove 6.2km

We successfully boarded the Zodiacs and headed off in the direction of Alcock Island. It was a blissful, crisp and sunny afternoon with glassy conditions and a rolling swell that rocked the icebergs all around us. The island was small enough to circumnavigate in a counter-clockwise direction, and we were amazed to see chinstrap penguins climbing up two steep and icy ramps on the east and north sides to a small colony on the summit. The swell was periodically breaking on some submerged rocks, causing 'boomers' that kept us on our toes and we had to weave around several larger bergs before loading back into the Zodiacs just as the wind started to pick up.

26 November 2024, PM – Fort Point, Greenwich Island 4km

Due to some moderate 20-knot winds and decent swell we decided to first head to the landing site already dressed for kayaking, to allow the wind to drop down and the conditions to improve. With winds from the southwest, the most shelter was on the east side of the 'Fort'. The group reboarded the Zodiac and then close to the shore we jumped into our kayakers, first exploring the Fort Point itself, and between some rock formations through channels with some breaking swell and choppy waters. Returning back to the shelter on the north shore, we paddled past the gentoo and chinstrap penguins and elephant seals lying around on the beach. Further along we passed under the tall and magnificent ice front of the Musala Glacier. We ended the paddle in a stunning and completely sheltered lagoon.

29 November 2024, PM – Peggotty Bluff 4.8km

We launched in the shelter of the Vincent Islands and immediately we were awestruck by the weird and wonderful creatures all around us: elephant seals, fur seals, king penguins, southern giant petrels, and cormorants, to name a few.

We began by paddling in the sheltered waters of the islands before heading upwind towards Peggotty Bluff itself, and from here we turned back downwind, heading towards the main landing site. By that time the wind was getting a bit more intense and the rain also, so we end the outing and reboarded the Zodiac.

30 November 2024, AM – Salisbury Plain 5.1km

We were able to launch our kayakers in the lee of Tern Island just a short distance offshore. Immediately we



were struck by the musky odour of the male fur seals. We had to battle into some headwinds to get further west into the next sheltered waters in the lee of Dot Island. Round the next corner was a constantly shifting mass of animal activity all along the beach: fur seals everywhere fighting to maintain their harem, huddles of king penguins coming and going, trying to avoid getting caught up in the brawls between the fur seals. Young, curious weaner elephant seals lazing around on the stone beach looking confused about what to do next. We literally just drifted for several kilometres down the length of the beach, enthralled by the scenes in front of us and the grace these animals displayed as they played, fed, and preened. It was a life-changing experience.

1 December 2024, AM – Hercules Bay 2.8km

We loaded our two Zodiacs with bleary eyes. But the eerie sounds of the dozens of fur seals and elephant

seals soon had us wide awake. We paddled under the steep tussac grass slopes, where the macaroni penguins had made their colony. Then returning back to the bay with the stunning waterfall, a plethora of young fur seals tussled and frolicked in the water around our kayaks, some even trying to climb on the back decks of the boats. We continued further below some dramatic vertical cliffs, where the water was a stunning deep blue and we could see the kelp fronds and stipes disappearing many fathoms down.

2 December 2024, AM – Grytviken 6.2km

We went paddling with just a small group of 3: Colleen, Rob, and Carla. Since the group was so small, we ventured a little further, leaving the confined and sheltered waters behind King Edward Point and out into the open sea. The swell off King Edward Point was quite impressive and we could feel and hear how the strong

waves hit the cliffs of the coast. The return to the ship was quite fun, since we had the big waves behind us and we could surf with the kayaks.

3 December 2024, AM – Right Whale Bay 5.2km

We used the kelp forests to help anchor the Zodiacs while launching in some moderate wind and swell. Fur seals kept popping up all around us, either them surprising us or vice versa.

As we kayaked towards the main beach we came across a beautiful waterfall. A substantial king penguin colony extended up the hillside from the back of the beach, and there were more adult male elephant seals now spread out over the flat rocks. At the north end of the bay we were able to get in a bit closer near a small rivermouth, and here we sat observing all the different animal behaviours on display.

7 December 2024, AM – Saunders Island (The Neck) 5.1km

It was unusually calm on the north side of Saunders Island. We launched just offshore of the rockhopper penguin rookery, and after watching them for a while, diving into or popping out of the water, we began paddling to the east along the rising cliffs. These beautiful sandstone cliffs provided numerous ledges and cavities for the shags to nest in. We paddled along, all the time admiring the albatrosses coming and going and their sheer mastery of flight. We passed a small rock island with two South American seal-lions basking in the sun. After several kilometres the tussac grass ended and so did the albatross colony, so we backtracked our route towards the beach.







Bird Sightings

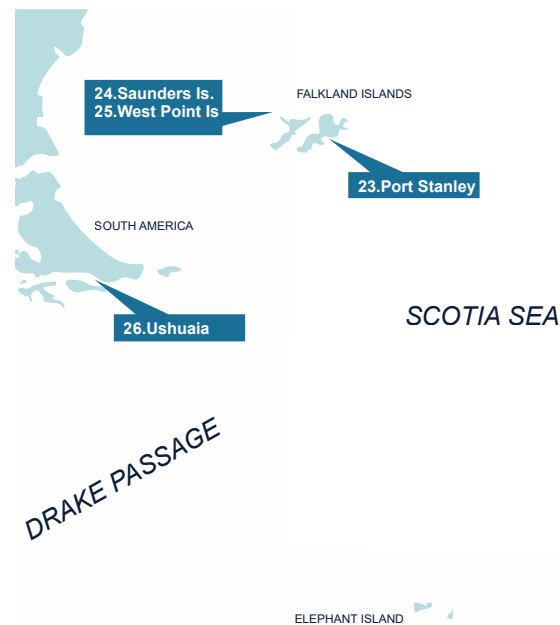
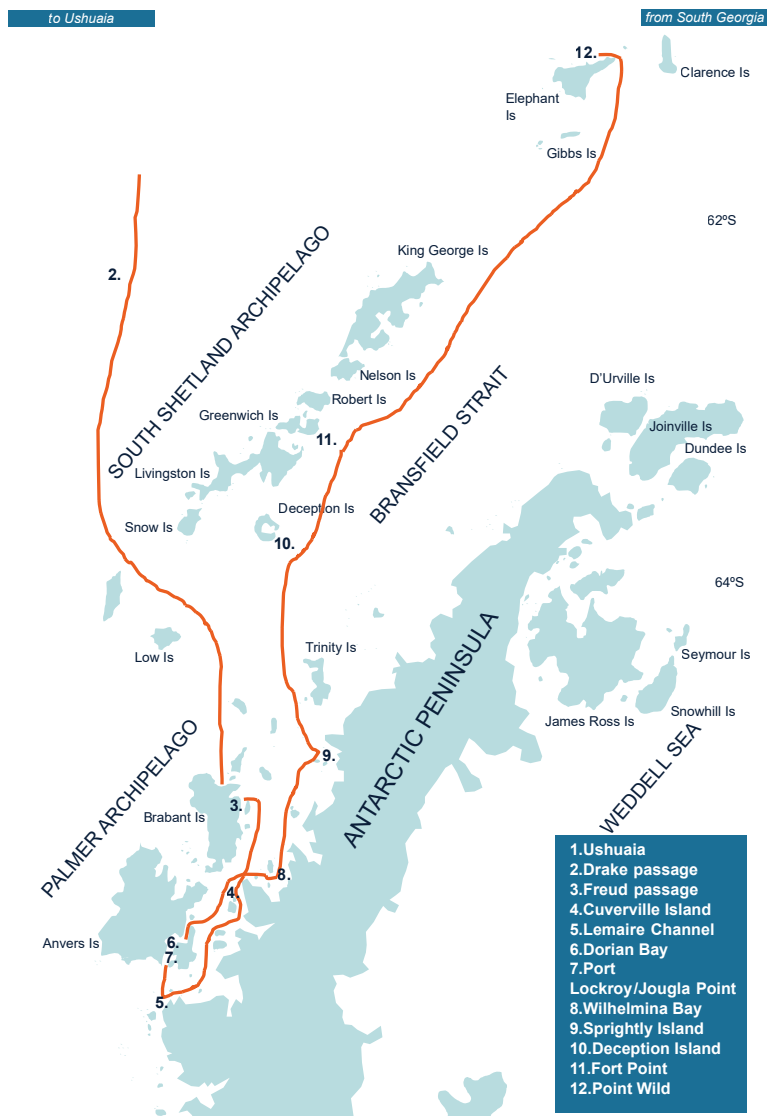
Bird Species	November-December																			
	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Gentoo Penguin				•	•	•	•			•	•	•	•	•					•	
Chinstrap Penguin			•	•		•	•	•												
Adelie Penguin				•		•	•					•								
King Penguin										•	•	•	•	•						•
Magellanic Penguin																		•		•
Southern Rockhopper Penguin																				•
Wandering Albatross			•	•						•					•	•				
Royal Albatross			•																	•
Black-browed Albatross	•	•	•							•					•	•	•	•	•	•
Grey-headed Albatross		•	•												•					•
Light-mantled Sooty Albatross		•	•						•	•		•			•	•				
Giant Petrel sp. (Northern and/or Southern)	•	•		•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Antarctic Petrel								•												
Cape Petrel		•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•		•			•						
Snow Petrel				•	•	•	•	•		•										
Antarctic Fulmar (Southern)	•	•	•	•	•			•	•	•										
Blue Petrel		•								•										
Prion sp. (probably mostly Antarctic)		•	•				•		•	•					•	•				
White-chinned Petrel			•						•	•					•	•				
Sooty Shearwater																•	•		•	•
Wilson's Storm-petrel		•	•	•		•	•	•	•	•		•		•	•	•				
Black-bellied Storm-petrel										•			•							

Bird Species

November-December

	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Diving Petrel sp.														●						
Imperial Cormorant (blue-eyed)	●			●		●	●			●	●	●		●				●		●
Cormorant sp. (unidentified)																	●			
Snowy Sheathbill					●		●	●			●	●	●					●	●	
Chilean Skua	●																			●
Skua (Brown and/or South Polar)			●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●			●	●	●	
Kelp Gull	●		●	●		●	●	●		●		●	●	●			●	●		
Tern (probably mostly Antarctic)				●	●	●	●						●							
South American Tern	●																●	●		
Dolphin Gull	●																	●		
Arctic Tern				●																
South Georgia Pintail										●	●	●	●							
Kelp Goose																	●	●		
Upland Goose																	●	●		
Falkland Steamer Duck																	●	●		
Crested Duck																	●			
Magellanic Oystercatcher																	●	●		
Blackish Oystercatcher																	●	●		
Two-banded Plover																	●			
Turkey Vulture																	●	●		
Striated Caracara (Johnny Rook)																	●	●		
Long-tailed Meadowlark																	●	●		
Dark-faced Ground Tyrant (Newsybird)																	●	●		
House Sparrow																	●			
White-bridled finch																	●			
Falklands Trush																	●	●		
White-rumped Sandpiper																	●			
Brown-hooded Gull																	●			
Sanderling																	●			

Map



South Georgia and Antarctic Odyssey

20 November – 9 December 2024



Our Expeditioners

David Anderson

Jane Barrett

Simon Barrett

Chris Biggar

Linda Blair

Annie Bonifant-Luisetti

Frank Broadbent

Diane Burnard

William Butterfield

Robert Cameron

Rick Capel

Annabel Clare

TJ Clare

Jane Dawes

Michael Dawes

Marjorie Docherty

Henry Docherty

Kevin Docherty

Dinah Docherty

Carol Dockley

Richard Doherty

Sue Ford

Yoshie Fuse

Robert Grant

Hartwick Hanson

Brigitte Hanson

Jen Hewett

Sue Hewett

Meryth Hilleborn-Seybold

Phoebe Hoy

Christopher Hoy

John Jamieson

Nicole Jeffery

Jordan Jeffery

Michael Jeffery

Brian Johnston

Jenny Johnston

Rahn Laird

Jean Lee

Bill Lee

May Leong

Kelvin Li

Richard Luisetti

Pauline Martin

Nancy Matthews

Phillip McGowen

Linda McIntosh

Ros Millar

Margaret Mortimer

Russell Phegan

Renata Phegan

Marlynn Pike

Tom Rackerby

Stephen Rennie

Colleen Riphagen

Don Ritter

Leslie Ritter

Mariah Ritter

Grace Ritter

Sasha Robinson

Grant Robinson

Jenn Roccanti

Kathy Ross

Ron Rubin

Robin Russell-Cook

Ann Russell-Cook

Connie Self

Bob Seybold

Marg Sharp

Patricia Slaughter

Ed Slaughter

Peter Thrupp

Vaal Thrupp

Dwight Ueda

James Van Boven

Carla Wallace

Michael Whaley

Heather Williams

Robert Williams

Liam Wiseman

Carolyn Wiseman

Expedition Team

Expedition Leader: Greg Mortimer
Expedition Leader: (future) Antoine Viot
Assistant Expedition Leader: Mario Placidi Spring
Assistant Expedition Leader: (future) Nicole Genoud
Onboard Expedition Manager: Justine Bornholdt
Onboard Expedition Manager: (future) Lelia Cataldi
Naturalist & Citizen Science Coordinator: Linda Steutel
Geologist/Glaciologist: Melina Pelzmajer
Historian: Kelsey Camacho
Expedition First Responder: Laura Boenish
Photography Guide: Adrian Wlodarczyk
Expedition Guide/Naturalist: Jean-Baptiste (Jay) Verniest
Marine Biologist: Elle Boone
Zodiac Master: Ignacio (Nacho) Marino
Onboard Expedition Assistant: Ari Benzo Ciria
Kayaking Master: Peter Wainwright
Kayaking Guide: Edu Larranaga Garcia
Kayak Guide: Pablo Passera
Alpine Guide: Tarn Pilkington
Alpine Guide: Mike Roberts
Alpine Guide: Bronwen Waters
Alpine Guide: Paula Roberts

Senior Officers & Heads of Department

Master: Alexandru Taraoi
Chief Officer: Andrey Zakalashnyuk
Safety Officer: Sergii Voina
Bosun: Bobby Payumo
Deck Cadet: Joao Varlos De Souza Lima Filho
Ship Doctor: Javier Martinez Rodriguez
Ship Doctor: Juan Nicolas Diaz Rodriguez
Chief Engineer: Dimitar Vasilev
First Engineer: Denys Odrynsky
Hotel Director: Alex Barkar
F&B Manager: Rajesh Murao
Chief Purser: Pia Blanca
Executive Chef: Edgar Mangalinao
Sous Chef: Edgra Angelo Xavier Pereira
Head Waiter: Neelam (James) Lopes
Hotel Controller: Christopher Santos
IT Officer: Gerry Dcunha
Receptionist: Joy Acelar
Receptionist: Jonathan Valdez
Head Stateroom: Roniel Garcia
Spa Manager: Venila Vythilingum
Able Seaman: Roberto Ixtan Mejia
Able Seaman: Nikola Georgiev
Able Seaman: Hardik Dipakbhai Rao
Able Seaman: Roberth Herman Presida
Able Seaman: Noel Refugia
Able Seaman: Joel Noble
Able Seaman: Francis Marvin Linga

Photography thanks to:

Adrian Wlodarczyk

Special Activity guides





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