

Antarctica, The Falklands and South Georgia

30th Anniversary Cruise

Naturetrek Tour Report

20 January – 11 February 2016



Black-browed Albatross by Tim Melling



The King Penguin colony at St Andrew's Bay by Peter Dunn



Gentoo Penguins on Saunders's Island by Peter Dunn



Humpback Whale by Tim Melling

Report compiled by Simon Cook and Tim Melling
Images by Peter Dunn, Tim Melling & Martin Beaton



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	Dejan Nikolic	Serbia Asst.	Hotel Manager
	Chris Gossak	Austria	Head Chef
	Khabir Moraes	India Sous	Chef,
	Veronique Verhoeven	Belgium	Ship's Physician
	Little Mo	Wales	Ice Pilot

Oceanwide Expeditions:	Andrew Bishop	Tasmania	Expedition Leader
	Troels Jacobsen	Denmark Asst.	Expedition Leader

Expedition Guides:	Mick Brown	Ireland
	Johannes (Jo) Koch	Canada
	Mario Acquarone	Italy
	Marie-Anne Blanchet	France
	Simon Cook	Wales

Plus 105 Naturetrek wildlife enthusiasts.

Day 1

Thursday 21st January

Costanera Sur, Buenos Aires, Argentina

After an overnight flight from Heathrow we arrived in Buenos Aires where we were met by David and Paul. We boarded four coaches to reach our next airport, but en route we stopped for lunch at a wonderful wetland reserve called Costanera Sur. The water was filled with a bewildering variety of waterbirds: Coscoroba Swans, Southern Screamers, Silver Teals, Rosybills, White-tufted Grebes, Red-gartered Coots, Wattled Jacanas, Limpkins, Giant Wood Rail, Rufescent Tiger Heron and a tiny Stripe-backed Bittern. As we ate our lunch we were entertained by Rufous Horneros, Red-crested Cardinals, Monk Parakeets and Guira Cuckoos. All too soon it was time to leave for our next flight to Ushuaia; the most southerly city in the world. We arrived early evening, and some people managed to see our first Andean Condor en route to our hotel.

Day 2

Friday 22nd January

16:00 GPS position: 54°48.6' S, 068°17.9' W. Weather: 10°C, partly cloudy, wind SW

An early morning walk by the hotel gave us an opportunity to explore the Southern Beech woodland around our hotel and here we had some great views of the local specialties: Patagonian Sierra Finch, Chilean Swallow, Thorn-tailed Rayadito, Austral Thrush and three different species of caracara. Growing amongst the trees we found Dog Orchid (*Codonorchis lessonii*), Pale Maiden (*Olychnium filifolium*) and Yellow Violet (*Viola magellanica*).

After breakfast we got onto our coaches and headed into Tierra del Fuego National Park to explore the evergreen and deciduous woodlands of Southern Beech (*Nothofagus* spp). The woodland flora here is sparse but

shrubs included Pick Wood (*Maytenus magellanicum*), Winter's Bark (*Drimys winter*) and Berberis (*Berberis microphylla* and *B. ilicifolia*). Open areas contain extensive patches of Fachine (*Chiliodendron diffusum*). We also saw some impressive birds including Austral Parakeet, Ashy-headed Goose, Black-faced Ibis, Spectacled Duck, Black-necked Swan, Great Grebe, Flightless Steamer Duck and more Andean Condors! We then made our way to the quayside where our ship awaited.

Walking eagerly up the gangway for the first time, we were at last aboard Ortelius, our new travelling home. As soon as we had received our cabin keys and settled in, we began to explore the ship, enjoying the views of the town and its dramatic, mountainous, surroundings from the outside decks.

However, it wasn't long before we were gathered together - firstly in the lecture room and then in the bar for a variety of briefings and introductions from the safety officer, the expedition leader, the hotel manager and our captain. The expedition team also introduced themselves, followed by the leaders from Naturetrek. Before the first of many dinners on the ship we got the chance to try on our big, orange lifejackets and to have a look inside the big orange lifeboats. Once the formalities were over we were able to enjoy the sights of the majestic Beagle Channel, as we headed east. Birds in the Beagle Channel included our first Black-browed Albatrosses, Giant Petrels and Magellanic Penguins. After dinner quite a few huge South American Sea Lions could be seen on one of the larger islands, but the open sea was beckoning us!

Day 3

Saturday 23rd January

South Atlantic Ocean. 12:00 GPS position: 53° 39' S, 063° 39' W. Weather: 9°C, wind from N, Force 5

Behind us this morning was the south-eastern extremity of Tierra del Fuego, whilst off to the south were the jagged peaks of Staten Island. The sun was shining and the sea was calm as the ship headed in a north-easterly direction towards the Falkland Islands. Activities today centred around eating (no less than three times, plus cakes), a zodiac briefing, a boot and zodiac lifejacket handout, wildlife catch-up sessions, a voyage overview from Paul, a briefing and recap, and a superb presentation by Mick about the Falkland Islands. During the day the wind slowly increased in strength until the larger and larger waves began to make the ship pitch a little. Then it started to rain.

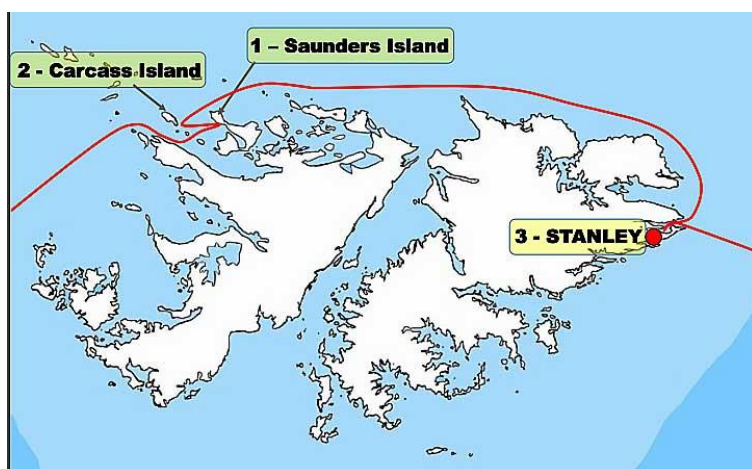
Wildlife, however, was excellent and the good conditions for much of the day encouraged many people to go down to the bow to see the many different birds. Amongst the very numerous and often very close were Black-browed Albatross, Southern Giant Petrel, Slender-billed Prion, Wilson's Storm Petrel, and a strange unidentified Storm Petrel which warrants further research. There were smaller numbers of White-chinned Petrel, Sooty Shearwater and Great Shearwater. None of these birds were seen feeding and very few were actually seen on the water. Being birds specially adapted to the open ocean they were, instead, flying in a continuous search for food.

Bird-wise, the icing on the cake came in the form of both Southern Royal and Northern Royal Albatrosses, Common Diving Petrel, Grey-backed Storm Petrel, Magellanic Penguin and Southern Rockhopper Penguin. Following yesterday evening's sea lions came a few South American Fur Seals and Peale's Dolphins. The increased motion after dinner put many of us to bed rather early, where we contemplated tomorrow's potential landings.

Day 4

Sunday 24th January

Saunders & Carcass Islands, the Falklands. 12:00 GPS position: 51° 18' S, 060° 15' W.
Weather: almost cloudless, 14°C, wind from W, force 5



Small waves, blue sky, sunshine, seals, dolphins, whale spouts and a plethora of birds – what a way to start the day. Best of all though was our first view of some of the many and dramatic, round-topped islands of the Falklands group – we had arrived! The ship was soon dropping its anchor, which enabled us to clamber aboard the zodiacs and head for the shore. Getting ashore was another matter, as the boats had to snuggle up against a rock shelf, whilst the waves tried to ground the boats on the rocks.

We had landed at a place called The Neck so it was a very short walk over to the other side, where the surf was huge. En route we found a single specimen of the rare Falkland Island Cudweed (*Gamochaeta affinis*) and a flowering specimen of the Coastal Nassauvia (*Nassauvia gandichaudii*). The upper slopes of the island contained Diddle-dee heath (*Empetrum rubrum*) and occasionally Tall Fern (*Blechnum magellanicum*) but this area was also heavily grazed.

For many of us the ultimate destination was the small colony of huge Black-browed Albatrosses. They were in a gully and virtually all of the large, mud, egg cup-shaped nests contained a fat-looking, grey, fluffy chick. They were several weeks old and one or two were fed by returning parents, which landed in a very ungainly manner. In between the landing area and the albatrosses was a variety of other very exciting birds; notably penguins. The Magellanics were nesting in burrows and had large, fat, fluffy chicks; the widespread Gentoos had large, fat, fluffy chicks; and the curious Rockhoppers also had large, fat, fluffy chicks. Perhaps even more exciting were the 29 majestic King Penguins, one of which was a small but still fat and fluffy chick perched atop the feet of a parent. There were also small numbers of Imperial Shags, some of which were collecting nesting material.

The natural treeless vegetation of the Falklands is dominated by grass and small shrubs, substantially cropped in places by the sheep. Here and there were outcrops of rock that were covered with a variety of often colourful lichens of *Xanthoria* and *Caloplaca*. In the edges of the cliff we saw our first specimen of Hebe (*Hebe elliptica*) and on the beach the attractive yellow flowering Sea Cabbage (*Senecio candicans*)

Carcass Island was not far away, but the ship was far away from the beach, due to the sea being very shallow. So, it was a longer ride than expected but a very exciting one, which terminated on a glorious, sandy beach. Time was limited so we made the most of the opportunities on offer. Here we found more of the natural Falkland island vegetation intact including Tussuck Grass (*Poa flabellata*) Christmas Bush (*Baccharis magellanicum*) and Marsh Daisy (*Aster vablii*). Much of Carcass is however dominated by introduced grasses of *Holcus lanatus* (Yorkshire Fog) and Common Bent (*Agrostis capillaris*)

Here there was also the chance to loop around the Gentoo colony, to potter along the beach, or to look for some of the avian specialities such as Falkland Flightless Steamer Duck. One of the first to be spotted was Ruddy-headed Goose – at least two groups were seen. Much smaller target birds soon revealed themselves: Austral Thrush, Black-chinned Siskin, Long-tailed Meadowlark, Blackish Cinclodes, Black-throated Finch and several obliging and very close Magellanic Snipe.

First prize went to those lucky enough to see the only endemic land bird in the Falkland Islands – Cobb's Wren. Several of these obliging, mouse-like birds were noted before it was time to return to the zodiacs. Leaving the beach was an adventure in itself, as we all had to brave the monstrous breaking waves that swept up the sand. It was a great way to end what had been a superb day. (Actually, the Sei Whales that were seen just as our briefing began was the real great end to the day!)

Day 5

Monday 25th January

Port Stanley and at sea. 12:00 GPS position: 51° 41' S, 057° 50' W. Weather: 12°C, sunny and windy with some rain, wind from W, force 5

Early morning found us cruising close to the coast not far from Port Stanley. In addition to the landscapes off to our starboard side there were thousands of Sooty Shearwaters to look at. In the distance was a huge white thing; some thought that it was our first giant iceberg, others thought that they were hallucinating. It was, in fact, the Norwegian Sun. A strange name, when one considers that things that size normally blot out the sun completely. However, soon afterwards we could see The Narrows, our way into the inner harbour and only a stone's-throw from Stanley too.

Before long we were ashore and off on our adventures – exploring historical landmarks, bird-walking, visiting Gypsy Cove or patronising the numerous gift emporia. Two of the ship's staff went with a group to the cove by bus. Despite wind and a little rain, Peale's Dolphin and a good variety of birdlife was noted, including Double-banded Plover and White-rumped Sandpiper. Tim led a bird walk out of the town where they found Sedge Wren, Magellanic Snipe, Long-tailed Meadowlark and Variable Hawk, plus a pod of Commerson's Dolphins. Others amongst the staff team, such as Troels, Jo and Mario, did a sterling job in the wind and amongst the waves shuttling us from ship to shore and back again. Marie-Anne was on hand to help with lifejackets and Andrew was supervising. Gypsy cove revealed a number of Falkland Island plants including Falklands Woolly Ragwort (*Senecio littoralis*) Scurvy Grass Sorrel (*Oxalis enneaphylla*) Balsam Bog (*Bolax gummifera*) and Almond Flower (*Luzuriaga marginata*).

Many of us had the chance to see a South American Sea Lion and a Black-crowned Night Heron on our way back to Ortelius. Because of the associations with the infamous conflict, Stanley meant different things to different members of our group. It was, however, a memorable and worthwhile visit. As soon as the boats had been hoisted aboard ship we headed away from the Falklands, having set course for Shag Rocks, close to South Georgia. The birdlife was, once more, impressive – at one point there were three large albatrosses together of three different species: Wandering, Southern Royal and Northern Royal, in addition to the ever-present Black-browed. We had not long come out from a fascinating lecture about these very birds - true ocean wanderers.

Day 6

Tuesday 26th January

Scotia Sea. 12:00 GPS position: 52° 30' S, 050° 49' W. Weather: overcast, 7°C, wind from W, force 5

Numerous impressive and, at times, very close Wandering Albatrosses greeted the early risers this morning. In fact, they were with us throughout the day so it was almost impossible to miss them. Also of interest were our first but afterwards very numerous Soft-plumaged Petrels. Although a spout was seen, the owner remained unseen but at least two Southern Bottlenose Whales were spotted. The wind and sea were still from astern so Ortelius was cracking along at nearly 12 knots.

During the course of the day there were various things to attend. Firstly, there was a mandatory biosecurity and behaviour briefing (during which some Hourglass Dolphins were seen!), secondly there were hoovering sessions (to remove seeds from Velcro and pockets prior to landing on South Georgia) and thirdly there was Mick, with his very illuminating talk, 'Air-breathing Feathered Fish' (aka Penguins).

Day 7

Wednesday 27th January

Scotia Sea & Shag Rocks. 12:00 GPS position: 53° 16' S, 044° 12' W. Weather: overcast with showers, sunny late evening, 6°C, wind from S, Force 3

Most of what was interesting today was outside the ship, but the lecture room and bar did have their attractions. Immediately after breakfast 'Bird Island Ian' (Hunter) gave a fascinating talk about his time on the wildlife-rich island from 1978-81. He said that he had only left due to the somewhat unwelcome visitors to South Georgia from southern South America. Andrew's official South Georgia video shortly afterwards was interrupted when a Southern Right Whale was spotted close to the ship. The captain appeared on the bridge and we proceeded to turn around; gaining close views of this rotund creature in the process. Jo performed next, with a rock-solid, professorial presentation about the geological history of South Georgia. Finally, after many hours waiting in the wings, it was Mario's turn and he described in some detail the history of whaling.

For much of the day there were few new birds to be seen but there was the, by-now, usual mix of albatrosses, petrels and shearwaters. Immediately prior to the first right whale an immature Grey-headed Albatross, and Fin, Sei and Humpback Whales were seen. Some lucky people also saw a pod of Killer Whales! Around lunchtime a further two right whales were observed, and then at 16.14, some of the people on the bridge were lucky enough to get views of a very close male Gray's Beaked Whale – sightings are extremely rare!

Shag Rocks and our first icebergs were spotted from a distance of 20 miles, and more right whales and another humpback were added to the tally. Arriving at the rocks at 19.00, the ship slowed and then turned to enable us to get out of the dining room to see these jagged, dramatic and shag-covered rocks. By now there were many more birds around - 2,000 or more White-chinned Petrels, for example. Amongst the many Antarctic Prions at least two Fairy Prions were picked out. With the nearby icebergs vying for our attention we watched in amazement at the concentration of feeding whales. At least fifty of them! There were both Humpback and Southern Right Whales, but many distant spouts belonged to unseen animals. Staff with 20 years' experience said that the number of right whales was unprecedented – one or two would normally be a 'one-in-a-season' sighting!

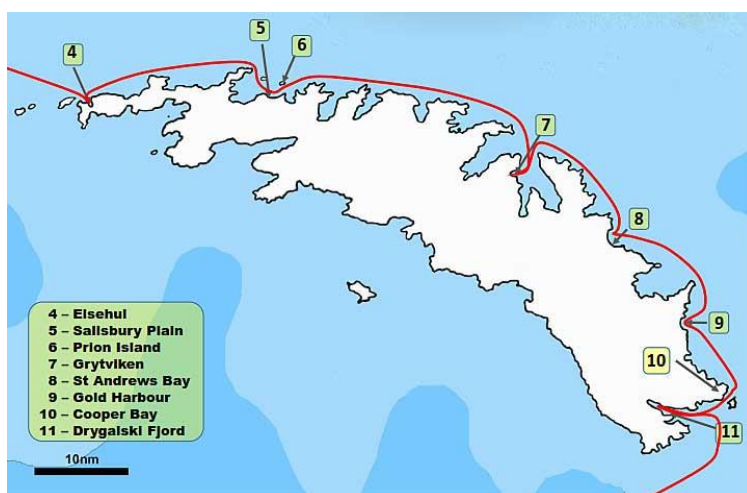
By now the sun was getting lower in the sky and the light on the nearest icebergs was astonishing. Just as the top of the sun reached the horizon it turned bright emerald green – the so-called ‘green flash’, an atmospheric phenomenon. How lucky can you get?

Day 8

Thursday 28th January

Elsehul & Salisbury Plain – South Georgia. 12:00 GPS position: 54° 00' S, 037° 58' W. Weather: overcast but bright, 8°C, wind from W, Force 4

Whales, whales and yet more whales! Fin, Sei, Humpback and many more Right Whales were seen by the early risers this morning. Off in the distance were icebergs and the towering, jagged peaks of South Georgia – we had arrived. Passing Bird Island, the ship turned into the entrance of Elsehul and, before long, we were off in the zodiacs to explore our surroundings. In addition to cliffs and bare rock, there were grassy slopes and some others covered with tussock grass. The cruise was a wildlife extravaganza, with numerous species all trying to claim our attention. Not far from the ship a small group of Black-browed and Grey-headed Albatrosses allowed a close approach, whilst not far away were hundreds of feeding Antarctic Prions. They looked a little like out-of-plumage phalaropes; every now and then swirling around in a tight flock before landing to feed once more.



Heading deeper into the bay we came to a small group of moulting King Penguins; nearby were Macaroni Penguins. These feisty birds were going up and down a very steep, rocky trail and allowed a very close approach. The colony itself was quite high up, as was an adjacent colony of Black-browed Albatrosses. By now just about everyone had seen the numerous South Georgia Pipits, and there were South Georgia Pintail, South Georgia Shag and Antarctic Terns around too. Lots of fur seals

were checking out the boats but many more were in amongst the swirling kelp or on the beaches. Here and there were a few young, but still massive, Southern Elephant Seals. In a little cove were many more seals and pups plus King Penguins, and a large group of Northern Giant Petrels feeding on a seal pup. Looking down on all this were nesting Grey-headed Albatrosses and their downy chicks. Some magnificent Light-mantled Albatrosses soared around effortlessly, completing the ensemble. Elsehul was certainly an extraordinary introduction to South Georgia!

Some careful weaving between small islands (one was studded with Wandering Albatrosses) brought us to the anchorage at Salisbury Plain. It may have been windy and it may have been raining heavily but at least, given the winter weather back home, we didn't have to wade through floods to get to the King Penguin colony! The beach where we landed was covered with both penguins and fur seals, especially the tiny, black youngsters. Walking towards the colony was exciting enough but the sight of perhaps tens of thousands of penguins at the end of it was mind-boggling. Words alone simply cannot describe the experience so I won't try! However, and needless to say, the colony was like nothing else that the majority of us had ever seen. So, simply put, today could not have been better.

Day 9

Friday 29th January

Prion Island & Grytviken – South Georgia. 12:00 GPS position: 54° 02' S, 036° 51' W.
Weather: much sunshine, 9°C, wind from SW, Force 3

Prion Island – going ashore to see Wandering Albatross on the nest! During the night the ship had been out at sea but, as we approached our anchorage, a number of small islands could be seen in the vicinity. Prion was not far away and the first group was soon ashore; eager to scuttle up the boardwalk through the tussock grass to the albatross nesting area. Near the top there was a huge, white adult sitting serenely on its nest, just a few feet away. Higher up the boardwalk there were more birds but they were much further away. The views across the bay to the main island were tremendous. Some boats then left the beach for a scenic zodiac cruise.

However the wind had, by now, increased in strength and the ship had started to drag its anchor. It was quickly weighed and the ship repositioned, but one of the boats had developed a problem (a split fuel line) so a rescue boat had to be summoned. The guests were quickly transferred and were returned to the ship. By now the wind was very strong so everybody ashore was taken back to Ortelius to wait and see if conditions improved. They didn't so that meant that many people, unfortunately, didn't get ashore at all.

It is said that every cloud has a silver lining. Thus it was that we were in the right place at the right time to see yet more whales. The sun was shining, the sea was a brilliant green and the whales were popping up everywhere – Humpback (several next to the ship), Fin and yet more Southern Right Whales. Also taking advantage of the abundant food were several hundred Macaroni Penguins.

Grytviken held an avian surprise too – several unexpected Snow Petrels, which at times fed like terns along the edge of the kelp. Once we were all inside the stout fence of the cemetery (to keep out the rampaging seals) a whisky toast was enjoyed around Shackleton's grave. Two locally-led guided walks were undertaken but there was still plenty of time to explore the whaling station, visit the church and ring the bells, visit the boat shed to see the replica of James Caird, visit the excellent museum, queue forever in the post office and visit and patronise the well-stocked shop. In the evening, dinner was a little unusual – an inside barbecue. Joining us were about ten very welcome guests from ashore; museum and British Antarctic Survey staff.

There was also time to explore the plant life around the sheltered bay of Grytviken. On the football pitch were Subantarctic Pearlwort (*Colobanthus subulatus*) and Antarctic Pearlwort (*Colobanthus quitensis*) along with Magellanic Rush (*Rostkovia magellanica*). Adjacent to the church we found Subantarctic Buttercup (*Rannunculus bitermatus*) and growing in the adjacent stream, Blinks (*Montia fontana*). Behind the Post Office was our only specimen of Shield Fern (*Polystichum mobrioides*).



Approaching Grytviken by Peter Dunn

Day 10

Saturday 30th January

St. Andrew's Bay – South Georgia. 12:00 GPS position: 54° 26' S, 036° 10' W. Weather: hot and sunny (10°C), wind from NW, force 2-3

A flat calm sea, cliffs, lush vegetation, snow-capped mountains, glaciers and even more King Penguins – that was the sight that greeted us this morning at spectacular St. Andrew's Bay. The majority of us headed straight for the beach but a few of us enjoyed a zodiac cruise first; covering both the cliffs and the penguin-thronged beach. Our ultimate objective ashore was the top of the moraine next to the vast penguin colony. It was a good walk from the boats but was well worth it, as we were even closer to the big glacier. Sitting down in the sunshine on some of Martin's comfortable botany including Tufted Fescue (*Festuca contracta*), with a panoramic view before us, was the best thing to do. We could find our own vantage point and marvel at our surroundings. It was also good to close our eyes and just listen for a while. But, as usual, time slipped away all too quickly. On the way back to the boats the staff once more played pass-the-parcel with us as we re-crossed the, by-now, hugely swollen, raging, treacherous, penguin-infested river.

After lunch another visit was paid to the beach and this time there were some new options on offer as well as 'old favourites'. Very popular was the long zodiac cruise, which went both along the beach and along the cliffs. The sight of the penguins with a backdrop of snowy mountains was breathtaking. Far in the other direction a pair of Light-mantled Albatrosses was found, high up on a ledge. Having the longest legs in the team, Andrew was volunteered to lead the longest walk – to and onto the glacier. It was an outstanding success and a big thrill; fancy being able to walk on glacial ice. Mick, in true Shackleton style, led his group over the hills and far away to find our only specimen of Clubmoss (*Lycopodium magellanicum*). Tremendous views of Light-mantled Albatross were had and the walk was a great way to burn off any surplus calories. Meanwhile, Simon took a small but select group up to the moraine to show them the penguin colony from above. All this was done in glorious sunshine, which only went behind high cloud as our time ashore drew to a close.

Day 11

Sunday 31st January

Gold Harbour, Cooper Bay, Drygalski Fjord – South Georgia & at sea. 12:00 GPS position: 54° 47' S, 035° 48' W. Weather: calm, bright and sunny, 7.5°C, wind from NE, Force 4

We planned to be on the beach by dawn this morning so we gathered with our 'landing kit' on by 03.30. By 04.00 the first of us were on our way ashore to witness the sunrise colours in the sky. To be able to photograph King Penguins at the water's edge against a backdrop of pinks and yellows was very special and well worth getting up for. Zodiac cruising, ambling around on the beach and a steep walk to nearby Gold Head were all possible. From the heights there were panoramic views of the penguins, the mountains and the hanging glaciers, but incoming fog forced an early descent. Another Southern Right Whale was watched from the ship and a Light-mantled Albatross flew by just a few feet away at eye level before we filed hungrily into breakfast.

Ortelius soon anchored in the middle of Cooper Bay; all ready for a zodiac cruise. On adjacent Cooper Island was a colony of Chinstrap Penguins; indeed, some had already been seen in the water. Pipits were numerous and there were also many Macaroni Penguins around. On the main island near another Chinstrap Penguin colony were icebergs that played host to some of the nearby colony's birds. It was amusing to watch them trying to get up onto the ice from the water. On the other side of the bay the Macaroni Penguins were watched at close range on the rocks and entering the water. Then a report came through of a Light-mantled Albatross's nest and several

were seen flying gracefully around. Finally, after a Humpback Whale was spotted, the zodiacs diverted and most of us got a look at it. As the ship moved away, the whale started breaching and flipper-slapping – waving goodbye!

Sailing through the passage between Cooper Island and the ‘mainland’ we could see lots of whales and spouts but they had to wait until later. Drygalski Fjord was narrow and lined by steep, snowy, jagged mountains. Coming down the slopes were both waterfalls and glaciers; the latter had deposited ice into the blue water. The captain turned the ship just after the large and impressive glacier at the head of the fjord came into view. Many Snow Petrels and at least two Weddell Seals were seen.

It took some time to leave South Georgia due to all the whales that we had to keep slowing down for. There must have been several dozen Humpback Whales, a number of Fin Whales (brown-skinned due to diatoms) and, best of all, several huge Blue Whales. A misnomer today since, like the Fin Whales, they were covered with diatoms too. They were difficult to follow but we were able to get some clear views during the short periods of time that they spent at the surface. And as if the whales weren’t good enough, there were birds too. By far the commonest (thousands and thousands) were the Antarctic Prions, but there were also large numbers of Wilson’s Storm Petrels. A good variety of other species appeared too: Gentoo, Chinstrap and Macaroni Penguins, Giant Petrels, Black-browed, Wandering and a Southern Royal Albatross, White-chinned, Cape and Snow Petrels, and many South Georgian Diving-Petrels. And there were also numerous giant icebergs, basking in the sun. What a way to leave South Georgia – overall, our visit had certainly exceeded all expectations!

Day 12

Monday 1st February

Scotia Sea. 12:00 GPS position: 57° 23’ S, 039° 20’ W. Weather: gloomy, 4°C, wind from W, Force 8

Today was a new day and a new month too. Grey skies, fog, ice in the water and a heaving sea greeted us when we awoke. Waves were breaking over the bow all day, sending great sheets of spray across the front of the ship. For some reason there was not a soul to be seen on the balcony below the bridge. After yesterday’s glut of birds there were very few today; two of the best were Soft-plumaged Petrel and Great Shearwater.

Due to the movement caused by the rolling sea most of the focus today was on the inside of the ship, mostly on the inside of our cabins and mostly on the inside of our eyelids. After all the excitement and exertions on South Georgia a reflective and restful sea day was just what the doctor ordered. During the day there were, nevertheless, excellent and varied talks in the bar. Peter helped us identify the birds of Antarctica. Tim was next in line and regaled us with many humorous anecdotes from the natural world. In the afternoon Andrew talked about the fascinating world of sea ice. Hopefully we would see some soon.



Southern Giant Petrel by Peter Dunn

Day 13

Tuesday 2nd February

Scotia Sea. 12:00 GPS position: 59° 28' S, 044° 55' W. Weather: brighter but cold, 1°C, wind from SW, Force 4-5

Today found us cruising steadily along towards our ultimate goal: Antarctica. First light revealed a hint of blue (briefly) in the sky, big waves again, small icebergs and some snow. During the night the wind had gone around to the south so it felt very cold outside. Very early risers spotted Fin Whales, two Light-mantled Albatrosses and the first Southern Fulmar of the trip. Those who arose a little later were just as pleased to spot breakfast in the welcoming dining room.

Activities on the ship continued unabated: the Shackleton film, hoovering each other to remove plant seeds, Jo coolly informing us about glaciers and Simon spouting forth on whales. Not long afterwards was a special happy hour, which was rapidly followed by a special auction. The aim was to raise money for the rat eradication project on South Georgia and amongst various items to go under the hammer were Mick's painted tee-shirts, a bronze seal and a South Georgia flag. In the distance the mountainous and snowy South Orkneys could be seen, and in the other direction, but out of sight, was another ship: not a navy ship but the British Antarctic Survey's James Clarke Ross, on a parallel course to us.

The birds remained unchanging but there were more Southern Fulmars later in the day. There were dozens of spouting whales from late morning until after dinner; seemingly all were Fin Whales. Some of them were quite close to the ship and gave very good views. Here and there were fur seals and there was a superb green flash too as the sun set below a cloudless horizon.

Day 14

Wednesday 3rd February

Scotia Sea. 12:00 GPS position: 62° 01' S, 050° 55' W. Weather: calm but foggy, 0°C, wind from W, Force 3

Well, another sea day and another full daily programme. Breakfast, lunch and dinner again, plus a range of educational meetings: Troels recounted the extraordinary circumstances of the Nordenskjold expedition, the second part of the Shackleton film was screened, Mick clocked up another hour by talking about Greenwich mean time and navigation at sea, Mario aired his thoughts on the management and conservation of whales and, finally, there was the usual informative briefing and recap from the staff team.

An earlier than expected wake-up call got us all mobilised in quick-smart time because an Antarctic Petrel had been spotted close to the ship but in the fog. It wasn't seen again but during the morning quite a few others were, sometimes at close range. Picking out a brown-and-white bird amongst the black-and-white Cape Petrels was a lot easier than anticipated. Lots of Snow Petrels and lots of Southern Fulmars were very welcome too, in addition to a scattering of other more familiar species. More whales again – surprise, surprise. There were perhaps close to 30 Fins Whales plus at least one Humpback Whale and a group of Killer Whales, which caused a mass exodus from the bar during Troels' talk! Despite the captain turning the ship they were not seen again.

As if all this wasn't enough, the captain was soon urging the ship through a belt of pack ice! Of special note among the birds present were about 100 or so wintering Arctic Terns – a big surprise. Many more were seen later on too. We also had our first Leopard Seal loafing on the pack ice. Just after lunch it was quite foggy but it

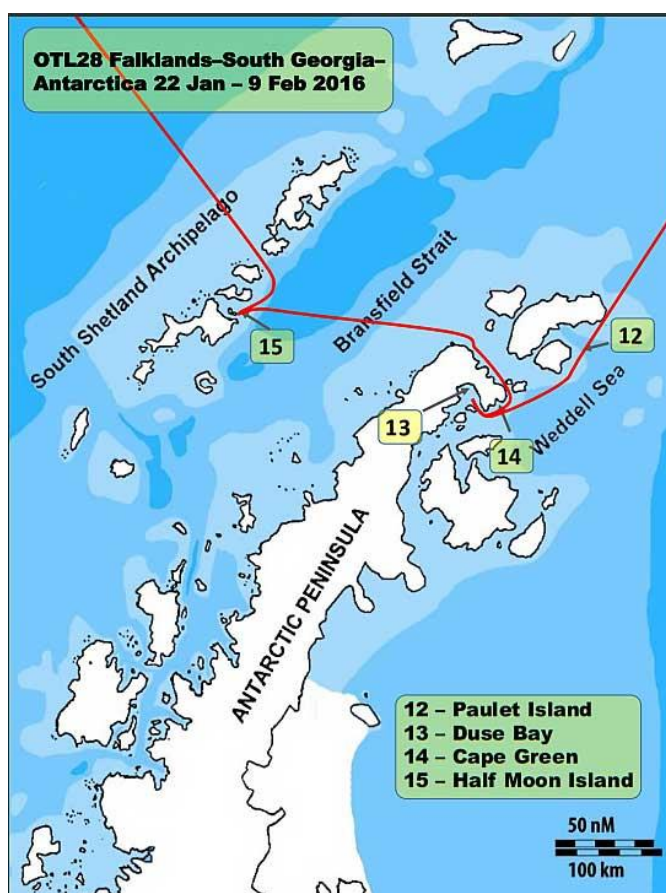
soon cleared to reveal many impressive icebergs. During Mick's talk the ship went past one that had many thousands of birds on it but they were not identifiable. Not long afterwards another iceberg had similar numbers so we changed course to have a look. It was astonishing to see that the majority of birds were Antarctic Petrels, but there were also more terns and several hundred Snow Petrels. When the latter took off they looked like a blizzard. Other icebergs came and went and several of them too had thousands more petrels 'aboard'. None of the staff had ever seen anything like it. Most trips only see one or two Antarctic Petrels but we had seen tens of thousands. All of them were moulting adults and we had discovered their previously unknown moulting grounds.

And then there were yet more whales, especially during Mario's whale talk! There were some Fin Whales and a couple of fast-moving Antarctic Minke Whales, but there were lots and lots of Humpback Whales. Some were close and some were far; they seemed to be everywhere. In addition to watching them fluke, we also saw breaching and one animal was continuously flipper-slapping. It was as if it was beckoning to Mario's audience to come outside and say hello! It was yet another stupendous day.

Day 15

Thursday 4th February

Weddell Sea: Paulet Island & Duse Bay, Erebus and Terror Gulf. 12:00 GPS position: 63° 33' S, 055° 46' W. Weather: cloudless, 9°C, wind from N, Force 2



Very, very, very early risers were more than amply rewarded with pre-dawn colours, a wonderland of ice, a glassy sea and a sunrise to beat all sunrises. Later risers had to make do with golden light, illuminated icebergs, Adelie Penguins in the water and a wake-up coffee. Paulet Island was suitably volcano-shaped and also lacked the ice layer of surrounding land, thus showing off the geology to perfection. Once ashore we were able to better appreciate the penguin colony; the adult population was swollen by many thousands of chicks. Some of them had finished moulting their downy feathers so were on the verge of becoming independent.

Different walks were offered by the staff – around a lake to the ruins of the Nordenskjold hut or directly along the ice-studded beach to it. Another option was a very popular zodiac cruise along the shoreline and in amongst grounded ice, which featured Weddell Seals in particular, and an offshore view of the large and raucous Antarctic Shag colony in general. Along the beach the first penguin chicks

were just about ready to go into the sea for the first time. This seemed to encourage some of us too, who became members of the exclusive Paulet Polar Plungers Club in the process. The rest of us watched in amazement and young shags, a skua and a fur seal were equally baffled!

During the afternoon and evening the ship cruised into Erebus and Terror Gulf and then up into Duse Bay and out again, where it spent much of the night (reaching our southernmost point: 63° 45.4' S, 056° 34.8' W). In the gulf itself there were lots of large and impressive icebergs, as well as floes and big ice sheets. There weren't very many birds but Snow Petrels were numerous, there were Adelie Penguins around, and Leopard and Crabeater Seals were spotted too. Out on the bow, Roger Baker excelled himself by presenting a 30th anniversary cake for company and clients, all washed down with a tot of warming rum.

As it was being served, one of the wildlife highlights of the voyage was a group of large, type B, Pack Ice Killer Whales. After three previous but very brief sightings, we finally had an encounter that everyone could enjoy. Altogether it lasted for an hour and 20 minutes! There were approximately 30 diatom-stained animals, which included several large-finned males and some small calves too. Although spread over a large area, we had superb close views of several of them and at times they could be seen perfectly as they swam just below the surface. Some of them were eating a penguin; the feet and parson's nose left to float away. Others menacingly patrolled the ice edge, causing several Adelie Penguins to run hurriedly away!

Day 16

Friday 5th February

Cape Green & Antarctic Sound. 12:00 GPS position: 63° 39' S, 056° 49' W. Weather: sunny, 7°C, wind from W, Force 4

Today dawned bright and sunny. Whereas at 04.00 it was flat calm, by 07.00 the wind was blowing at over 40 knots. Not too far away was one of the regular continental landings for ships, Brown Bluff. Around us were numerous growlers and icebergs, several of which had Adelie Penguins sitting on them. Antarctic Minke and Humpback Whales were seen before breakfast. Because there was so much wind at the bluff it was not possible to do anything regarding getting off the ship. Instead, Ortelius slipped through Fridtjof Sound and back into Erebus and Terror Gulf.

Once we had turned the corner we navigated through quite heavy ice and the boats then took us ashore at Cape Green. It is little-visited (if ever!) so another Naturetrek exclusive was chalked up! The cape is on the south-eastern corner of the Tabarin Peninsula, at the northern end of the Antarctic Peninsula. This meant that, quite unexpectedly, we were able to set foot on the continent itself. Wildlife was virtually absent, the geologists were in ecstasy, and the rest of us were simply very pleased indeed. During the ride back through the ice there was another surprise for us – a landing on an ice floe. Most of us were able to do something that we had not even dreamed about and would certainly not think possible!

Not too far away up Antarctic Sound was the large Argentinian base in Hope Bay on the Antarctic Peninsula. Although we hoped to get off the ship and land, the wind, once again, defeated us. The setting was impressive, with a large Adelie Penguin colony set against a backdrop of glaciers and mountains. Just above and to the left of the bright orange base was a long hut below the ice cap. Formerly a British station, it is now Uruguayan. By now the wind had increased visibly in strength, with spray being blown across the surface. The wind speed was around 50 knots (x 1.15 = 57.5mph), which on the Beaufort scale is force 10; storm. The sun was shining brightly and the many massive tabular icebergs, together with the stormy sea, created a very dramatic aspect. Then there came a big surprise - the diehards quickly abandoned the bow in favour of more sheltered places, like the bar, which had cakes, coffee, comfort, companionship and conviviality.

Day 17

Saturday 6th February

Half Moon Island, South Shetland Islands & the Drake Passage. 12:00 GPS position: 62° 15' S, 059° 20' W. Weather: very bright, 5°C, wind from W, Force 4

Yesterday evening we headed out of Antarctic Sound and into the exposed and very stormy Bransfield Strait, where the waves were massive. By this morning things had improved considerably but it was still windy. The captain took us to have a look at Half Moon Island and conditions were so good that a spontaneous but very short landing was made. With a backdrop of mountainous, snowy, Livingston Island, the Chinstrap Penguins at the top of the rise behind the beach looked stunning. The chicks were large and healthy-looking and were very photogenic. The same was true of our surroundings and the bright sunshine enhanced things. Rocks above the colony and presumably the winter snow contained numbers of colourful lichens including *Xanthoria elegans*, *Caloplaca regalis*, *Ramalina terebrata* and *Haematomma erythroma*. Time was very limited so we were soon making our way down to the other beach, where the zodiacs were waiting.

The ship then headed for Nelson Strait, between Nelson and Robert islands. Icebergs were plentiful and so were the whales – Humpbacks and Fins again. Ship activities continued, with Jo talking about the rocks of Antarctica, Troels introducing a documentary about Roald Amundsen, and Mario explaining how to estimate cetacean abundance. So then, how many whales and dolphins have we seen on our trip? Well, a few more were added to the tally in the afternoon, with the best being a very close Gray's Beaked Whale. However and very frustratingly, the fog soon closed in, forcing us all inside.

Day 18

Sunday 7th February

Drake Passage. 12:00 GPS position: 58° 33' S, 063° 11' W. Weather: foggy then clear, 6°C, wind from NW, Force 4

Disappointingly, the fog was still with us this morning and didn't clear until lunchtime. Activities inside continued apace: Tim gave us an insight into wildlife photography, Marie-Anne tantalisingly played with a large predator called George, Jo explained climate change, and there was a video to watch. Filmed on the sailing ship Peking in 1929 and narrated 50 years later, it told the story of a huge and impressive storm off Cape Horn. The most amazing footage was taken from atop a mast showing, far below, the sea washing across the deck from one side to the other! Quote of the film, "Health and safety? Never heard of it! After all, it would be silly to let go, wouldn't it?"

In terms of wildlife, it was a very quiet day, with the highlight being several groups of Rockhopper Penguins. Later on there were several albatrosses and a few Sooty Shearwaters. The big news from Andrew was that, since we had made good time, we would now be able to sail off Cape Horn. If things went to plan, the Cape should be in sight early tomorrow morning.



Cape Horn in the mist by Peter Dunn

Day 19

Monday 8th February

Cape Horn & Beagle Channel. 12:00 GPS position: 55° 22' S, 066° 23' W. Weather: hot and sunny, 14°C, wind from W, Force 2-3

A much earlier than normal wake-up call from Andrew (at 06.00!) to announce Cape Horn got us all up and out to see this fabled landmark. The sea was calm but was carpeted with birds. The commonest was Sooty Shearwater, with thousands and thousands of individuals, both in flight and forming large rafts on the water. Black-browed Albatrosses were numerous too, with hundreds seen. There was also a sprinkling of other birds: Southern Giant Petrel, White-chinned Petrel, Great Shearwater, Chilean Skua, Wilson's Storm Petrel and Magellanic Penguin. The stars of the show were Peale's Dolphins, a group of which repeatedly performed acrobatic back-flips. At our closest point there was only three miles between us and Cape Horn, where the Chilean station and its huge flag could be seen. The cape itself was the dramatic, pointed peak a little to the west but it soon disappeared behind a veil of rain.

Ortelius continued on her way towards the entrance to the Beagle Channel; the sea got calmer and calmer and the sun came out. Thousands more shearwaters scattered as the ship approached them, and sea lions and terns were spotted. The best sightings were made just after breakfast-time when most people were still inside the ship.

Other highlights included handing in our lifejackets and wellies and paying our bills so that we could have our passports back, complete with stamps from the Falklands and South Georgia. Meanwhile, out in the Beagle Channel, the wildlife was still continuing to surprise us. Several Sei Whales appeared and one or two of them were quite close. Then dolphins were spotted coming towards the bow and they were identified as Dusky Dolphins. It wasn't long before the Ushuaia pilot was picked up from his station near the entrance to the channel. Shortly afterwards we passed the sea lion island again and up to 200 were in residence. Then came the penguin island. In addition to large numbers of Magellanic Penguins there are also a few pairs of Gentoo Penguins. On the cliff was a small colony of Rock Shags. The southernmost town in the world was passed (Puerto Williams, on the Chilean side) before Ortelius finally reached our starting point all those weeks ago, Ushuaia.

Day 20

Tuesday 9th February

Ushuaia

This morning it was finally time for us to leave Ortelius, after what can only be described as, literally, a once-in-a-lifetime trip.

We had a few hours to potter around Ushuaia and re-acquaint ourselves with some of the birds we had seen earlier. These included Kelp and Upland Geese, Black-faced Ibis, Magellanic Snipe, Bar-winged and Dark-bellied Cinclodes, South American Tern and Austral Negrito. It was then time to head to the airport for our early afternoon flight to Buenos Aires.

Day 21

Wednesday 10th February

Buenos Aires

Those staying at the Medero had the chance of another visit to Contanera Sur, where several new birds were added: Cattle Tyrant, Black-backed Water Tyrant, Yellow-billed Cardinal, White-eyed and Nanday Parakeets, Ringed Teal and Argentinean Lake Duck were among them. Those staying at the Holiday Inn saw Green-barred and Black Woodpeckers, Great Kiskadee, Hooded Siskin and Saffron Yellow-Finch. We then made our way to the airport for the overnight flight back to Heathrow, along roads lined by Jacaranda, Kapok and Chilean Pines. And those ever-present Southern Lapwings bid us farewell from the roadside verges.

Day 22

Thursday 11th February

Heathrow

The overnight flight made good time and we landed smoothly just after 06.00 to be greeted by clear cool London weather. Many met up at the baggage reclaim to say their goodbyes whilst others had onward connections, after what for most was the trip of a lifetime.

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Light-mantled Albatross by Tim Melling



Chinstrap Penguin diving from iceberg by Tim Melling

Species Lists

Birds (✓ = recorded but not counted; H = heard only)

	Common name	Scientific name	January/February																			
			21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1	Southern Screamer	<i>Chauna torquata</i>	2																			4
2	White-faced Whistling Duck	<i>Dendrocygna viduata</i>	2																			
3	Coscoroba Swan	<i>Coscoroba coscoroba</i>	10																			4
4	Black-necked Swan	<i>Cygnus melancoryphus</i>		4																		
5	Flying Steamer Duck	<i>Tachyeres patachonicus</i>		6		2															3	
6	Fuegian (flightless) Steamer Duck	<i>Tachyeres pteneres</i>		✓																		2
7	Falkland Steamer Duck	<i>Tachyeres brachypterus</i>				15	✓															
8	Upland Goose	<i>Chloephaga picta</i>		3		✓	✓															
9	Kelp Goose	<i>Chloephaga hybrida</i>		6		4	2														2	
10	Ashy-headed Goose	<i>Chloephaga poliocephala</i>		3																		
11	Ruddy-headed Goose	<i>Chloephaga rubidiceps</i>				9																
12	Brazilian Teal	<i>Amazonetta brasiliensis</i>																				2
13	Ringed Teal	<i>Callonetta leucophrys</i>																				✓
14	Crested Duck	<i>Lophonetta specularioides</i>		1		2	✓															
15	Bronze-winged Duck (Spectacled)	<i>Specularnas specularis</i>		2																		
16	White-cheeked Pintail	<i>Anas bahamensis</i>	✓																			5
17	Yellow-billed Pintail (South Georgia)	<i>Anas georgica georgica</i>	✓																			2
	Yellow-billed Pintail	<i>Anas georgica spinicauda</i>								6	2	✓										
18	Silver Teal	<i>Anas versicolor</i>	✓																			✓
19	Red Shoveler	<i>Anas platalea</i>		✓																		
20	Rosy-billed Pochard	<i>Netta peposaca</i>	7																			2
21	Lake Duck	<i>Oxyura vittata</i>																				1
22	King Penguin	<i>Aptenodytes patagonicus</i>				✓	1			-3	✓	-3	✓									
23	Gentoo Penguin	<i>Pygoscelis papua</i>				✓	6		✓	2	✓	✓	✓		2			2	8		✓	
24	Adelie Penguin	<i>Pygoscelis adeliae</i>															✓	✓	✓			
25	Chinstrap Penguin	<i>Pygoscelis antarcticus</i>								1			✓		1	✓		1	✓			
26	Southern Rockhopper Penguin	<i>Eudyptes chrysocome</i>				✓	✓	2													✓	
27	Macaroni Penguin	<i>Eudyptes chrysolophus</i>							✓	✓	✓	✓	✓								✓	
28	Magellanic Penguin	<i>Spheniscus magellanicus</i>		✓	6	✓	✓															✓

	Common name	Scientific name	January/February																			
			21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
29	Wilson's Storm Petrel	<i>Oceanites oceanicus</i>			✓	✓	✓	✓	1	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
30	Grey-backed Storm Petrel	<i>Garrodia nereis</i>			1	✓	✓	1														
31	Black-bellied Storm Petrel	<i>Fregatta tropica</i>						✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓			
32	Wandering Albatross	<i>Diomedea exulans</i>					6	8	6	5	7	1	✓	2	2					1		
33	Southern Royal Albatross	<i>Diomedea epomophora</i>			1		1	2	3											1	2	
34	Northern Royal Albatross	<i>Diomedea sanfordi</i>			1		3	✓														
35	Light-mantled Albatross	<i>Phoebastria palpebrata</i>							1			2	4		2					1		
36	Black-browed Albatross	<i>Thalassarche melanophris</i>		9	✓	✓	✓	5	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	2			✓	✓	✓	
37	Buller's Albatross	<i>Thalassarche bulleri</i>											2								1	
38	Grey-headed Albatross	<i>Thalassarche chrysostoma</i>							3	✓	✓			2	1				✓	✓		
39	Southern Fulmar	<i>Pachyptila crassirostris</i>													4	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
40	Southern Giant Petrel	<i>Macronectes giganteus</i>		6	✓	✓	✓	2	✓	1	2	2	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	
41	Northern Giant Petrel	<i>Macronectes halli</i>			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	
42	Antarctic Petrel	<i>Thalassoica antarctica</i>														-3						
43	Cape Petrel	<i>Daption capense</i>			5				✓	✓	✓	1	✓	2	3	-3	✓	✓	✓	✓		
44	Snow Petrel	<i>Pagodroma nivea</i>							1	✓	4	1	✓		2	-3	✓	✓				
45	Blue Petrel	<i>Halobaena caerulea</i>							2	3			100	1	✓	1			✓	1		
46	Antarctic Prion	<i>Pachyptila desolata</i>						1	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓					2	
47	Slender-billed Prion	<i>Pachyptila belcheri</i>			✓	✓	✓	2												✓		
48	Fairy Prion	<i>Fulmarus glacialisoides</i>							4	2			1									
49	Kerguelen Petrel	<i>Aphrodroma brevirostris</i>						1														
50	Atlantic Petrel	<i>Pterodroma incerta</i>						1														
51	Soft-plumaged Petrel	<i>Pterodroma mollis</i>					4	15	✓				1	✓	✓						1	
52	White-chinned Petrel	<i>Procellaria aequinoctialis</i>			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	2	✓		✓	✓	✓	
53	Sooty Shearwater	<i>Ardenna grisea</i>		✓	✓	✓	-3	✓	✓											✓	✓	
54	Great Shearwater	<i>Ardenna gravis</i>			✓	✓	2	✓	2					✓						2	1	
55	Manx Shearwater	<i>Puffinus puffinus</i>			1																	
56	Magellanic Diving Petrel	<i>Pelecanoides magellani</i>		✓																	✓	
57	South Georgia Diving Petrel	<i>Pelecanoides georgicus</i>											✓									
58	Common Diving Petrel	<i>Pelecanoides urinatrix</i>			1	✓	1	2	2	✓			✓	✓						✓		
59	Pied-billed Grebe	<i>Podilymbus podiceps</i>		5																		2
60	White-tufted Grebe	<i>Rollandia rolland</i>		✓																		✓

	Common name	Scientific name	January/February																				
			21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
61	Great Grebe	<i>Podiceps major</i>	1	2																			
62	Black-faced Ibis	<i>Theristicus melanopsis</i>		2																			
63	White-faced Ibis	<i>Plegadis chihi</i>																					✓
64	Rufescent Tiger Heron	<i>Tigrisoma lineatum</i>	3																				3
65	Stripe-backed Bittern	<i>Ixobrychus involucris</i>	1																				
66	Black-crowned Night Heron	<i>Nycticorax nycticorax</i>					✓															1	
67	Striated Heron	<i>Butorides striata</i>																					✓
68	Cocoi Heron	<i>Ardea cocoi</i>																					2
69	Great Egret	<i>Ardea alba</i>	✓																				1
70	Snowy Egret	<i>Egretta thula</i>	✓																				2
71	Neotropic Cormorant	<i>Phalacrocorax brasilianus</i>	2																				1
72	Rock Shag	<i>Phalacrocorax magellanicus</i>		2		✓	✓															2	
73	Imperial Shag (Blue-eyed)	<i>Leucocarbo atriceps</i>		2		✓	✓															✓	
74	South Georgia Shag	<i>Leucocarbo georgianus</i>							✓	✓	✓	✓	✓										
75	Antarctic Shag	<i>Leucocarbo bransfieldensis</i>															✓	2	✓				
76	Turkey Vulture	<i>Cathartes aura</i>		✓		✓	✓																✓
77	Andean Condor	<i>Vultur gryphus</i>		2																			
78	Black-chested Buzzard Eagle	<i>Geranoaetus melanoleucus</i>		1																			
79	Western Osprey	<i>Pandion haliaetus</i>	1																				
80	Roadside Hawk	<i>Rupornis magnirostris</i>	1																				
81	Harris's Hawk	<i>Parabuteo unicinctus</i>																					2
82	Variable Hawk	<i>Geranoaetus polyosoma</i>					1																
83	Giant Wood Rail	<i>Aramides ypecaha</i>	2																				
84	Common Gallinule	<i>Gallinula galeata</i>	✓																				✓
85	Red-gartered Coot	<i>Fulica armillata</i>	✓																				✓
86	Red-fronted Coot	<i>Fulica rufifrons</i>	5																				1
87	Limpkin	<i>Aramus guarauna</i>	8																				✓
88	Snowy Sheathbill	<i>Chionis albus</i>								✓	✓	✓	✓										
89	Magellanic Oystercatcher	<i>Haematopus leucopodus</i>		5		✓	10																
90	Blackish Oystercatcher	<i>Haematopus ater</i>				5	1																
91	Southern Lapwing	<i>Vanellus chilensis</i>	✓	4																		✓	✓
92	Two-banded Plover	<i>Charadrius falklandicus</i>					✓																

	Common name	Scientific name	January/February																				
			21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
93	Wattled Jacana	<i>Jacana jacana</i>	✓																				
94	South American Snipe (Magellanic)	<i>Gallinago paraguaiiae magellanica</i>				2	✓																✓
95	White-rumped Sandpiper	<i>Calidris fuscicollis</i>					✓																
96	Brown-hooded Gull	<i>Chroicocephalus maculipennis</i>		2		✓	✓																
97	Dolphin Gull	<i>Leucophaeus scoresbii</i>		✓		✓	✓																✓
98	Kelp Gull	<i>Larus dominicanus</i>		✓		✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓				✓	2	✓		✓	✓	
99	Roseate Tern	<i>Sterna dougallii</i>																					
100	South American Tern	<i>Sterna hirundinacea</i>		2		✓	✓															✓	✓
101	Arctic Tern	<i>Sterna paradisaea</i>									✓		✓			8	✓						
102	Antarctic Tern	<i>Sterna vittata</i>								✓	✓	✓	✓				3	✓	2				
103	Chilean Skua	<i>Stercorarius chilensis</i>		1																		3	
104	South Polar Skua	<i>Stercorarius maccormicki</i>															✓	3	✓				
105	Brown Skua	<i>Stercorarius antarcticus</i>				✓	✓	3	2														
	Brown Skua (Subantarctic)	<i>Stercorarius antarcticus lonnbergi</i>									1	✓	✓	✓									
106	Rock Dove (Feral)	<i>Columba livia 'feral'</i>	✓																				✓
107	Picazuro Pigeon	<i>Patagioenas picazuro</i>																					✓
108	Picui Ground Dove	<i>Columbina picui</i>	2																				
109	Eared Dove	<i>Zenaida auriculata</i>	✓																				✓
110	Guira Cuckoo	<i>Guira guira</i>		1																			H
111	Glittering-bellied Emerald	<i>Chlorostilbon lucidus</i>																					✓
112	White-throated Caracara	<i>Phalcooenus albogularis</i>		✓																			
113	Striated Caracara	<i>Phalcooenus australis</i>				✓	1																
114	Southern Crested Caracara	<i>Caracara plancus</i>	1	3		1																	
115	Chimango Caracara	<i>Milvago chimango</i>	2	✓																		1	✓
116	American Kestrel	<i>Falco sparverius</i>		1																			
117	Peregrine Falcon	<i>Falco peregrinus</i>					2																
118	Monk Parakeet	<i>Myiopsitta monachus</i>	✓																				✓
119	Austral Parakeet	<i>Enicognathus ferrugineus</i>		5																			
120	Nanday Parakeet	<i>Aratinga nenday</i>	1																				✓
121	White-eyed Parakeet	<i>Psittacara leucophthalmus</i>																					5
122	Blackish Cinclodes	<i>Cinclodes antarcticus</i>				✓	✓																
123	Dark-bellied Cinclodes	<i>Cinclodes patagonicus</i>		1																			

	Common name	Scientific name	January/February																				
			21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
124	Buff-winged Cinclodes	<i>Cinclodes fuscus</i>		✓																		✓	
125	Rufous Hornero	<i>Furnarius rufus</i>	3																				✓
126	Thorn-tailed Rayadito	<i>Aphrastura spinicauda</i>		2																			
127	Yellow-chinned Spinetail	<i>Certhiaxis cinnamomeus</i>	H																				
128	Narrow-billed Woodcreeper	<i>Lepidocolaptes angustirostris</i>																					1
129	White-crested Elaenia	<i>Elaenia albiceps</i>		✓																			
130	Tufted Tit-tyrant	<i>Anairetes parulus</i>		5																			
131	Austral Negrito	<i>Lessonia rufa</i>		✓																		✓	
132	Yellow-browed Tyrant	<i>Satrapa icterophrys</i>																					1
133	Dark-faced Ground Tyrant	<i>Muscisaxicola maclovianus</i>				2	1																
134	Black-backed Water Tyrant	<i>Fluvicola albiventer</i>																					1
135	Cattle Tyrant	<i>Machetornis rixosa</i>																					1
136	Great Kiskadee	<i>Pitangus sulphuratus</i>	✓																				✓
137	Red-eyed Vireo (migratory Chivi)	<i>Vireo olivaceus chivi</i>																					1
138	Chilean Swallow	<i>Tachycineta leucopyga</i>		✓																			
139	White-rumped Swallow	<i>Tachycineta leucorhoa</i>	2																				1
140	Grey-breasted Martin	<i>Progne chalybea</i>	2																				
141	Brown-chested Martin	<i>Progne tapera</i>	1																				✓
142	Blue-and-white Swallow	<i>Notiochelidon cyanoleuca</i>																					1
143	Sedge Wren	<i>Cistothorus platensis</i>				1	✓																
144	House Wren	<i>Troglodytes aedon</i>	1																				1
145	Cobb's Wren	<i>Troglodytes cobbi</i>				3																	
146	Masked Gnatcatcher	<i>Polioptila dumicola</i>																					5
147	Chalk-browed Mockingbird	<i>Mimus saturninus</i>	2																				✓
148	Common Starling	<i>Sturnus vulgaris</i>																					✓
149	Rufous-bellied Thrush	<i>Turdus rufiventris</i>	1																				2
150	Austral Thrush	<i>Turdus falcklandii</i>		1		✓	✓																
151	Creamy-bellied Thrush	<i>Turdus amaurochalinus</i>	1																				
152	House Sparrow	<i>Passer domesticus</i>		✓			✓																✓
153	Correndera Pipit	<i>Anthus correndera</i>					✓																
154	South Georgia Pipit	<i>Anthus antarcticus</i>								15	✓	✓	✓										
155	Black-chinned Siskin	<i>Spinus barbatus</i>		✓		✓	✓																

	Common name	Scientific name	January/February																				
			21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
156	Long-tailed Meadowlark	<i>Sturnella loyca</i>				✓	✓																
157	Shiny Cowbird	<i>Molothrus bonariensis</i>																					✓
158	Greyish Baywing	<i>Agelaioides badius</i>																					2
159	Rufous-collared Sparrow	<i>Zonotrichia capensis</i>		✓																			✓
160	Red-crested Cardinal	<i>Paroaria coronata</i>	✓																				
161	Yellow-billed Cardinal	<i>Paroaria capitata</i>																					✓
162	Patagonian Sierra Finch	<i>Phrygilus patagonicus</i>		6																			
163	White-bridled Finch	<i>Melanodera melanodera</i>				✓	✓																
164	Saffron Finch	<i>Sicalis flaveola</i>																					1
165	Double-collared Seedeater	<i>Sporophila caerulea</i>																					2

Mammals

1	South American Fur Seal	<i>Arctocephalus australis</i>			✓	✓	✓																✓
2	Antarctic Fur Seal	<i>Arctocephalus gazella</i>								✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				
3	South American Sea Lion	<i>Otaria flavescens</i>		✓			✓																✓
4	Southern Elephant Seal	<i>Mirounga leonina</i>								✓	✓	✓	✓									✓	
5	Leopard Seal	<i>Hydrurga leptonyx</i>														✓	✓	✓					
6	Weddell Seal	<i>Leptonychotes weddellii</i>											✓				✓						
7	Crabeater Seal	<i>Lobodon carcinophaga</i>															✓						
8	Commerson's Dolphin	<i>Cephalorhynchus commersonii</i>					✓																
9	Hourglass Dolphin	<i>Lagenorhynchus cruciger</i>						✓						✓									
10	Dusky Dolphin	<i>Lagenorhynchus obscurus</i>																					✓
11	Peale's Dolphin	<i>Lagenorhynchus australis</i>			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓														✓
12	Orca (Killer Whale)	<i>Orcinus orca</i>							✓							✓	✓						
13	Southern Bottlenose Whale	<i>Hyperoodon planifrons</i>						5															
14	Gray's Beaked Whale	<i>Mesoplodon grayi</i>							1													1	
15	Southern Right Whale	<i>Eubalaena australis</i>							✓	✓	✓			✓									
16	Dwarf Minke Whale	<i>Balaenoptera acutorostrata</i>												✓								✓	✓
17	Antarctic Minke Whale	<i>Balaenoptera bonaerensis</i>														✓	✓	✓	✓				
18	Sei Whale	<i>Balaenoptera borealis</i>					✓	✓	✓													✓	✓
19	Fin Whale	<i>Balaenoptera physalus</i>				✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓					✓	✓
20	Blue Whale	<i>Balaenoptera musculus</i>												✓									

	Common name	Scientific name	January/February																				
			21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
21	Humpback Whale	<i>Megaptera novaengliae</i>								✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓	✓			
22	Fuegan Red Fox	<i>Pseudalopex culpaeus</i>		✓																			
23	Guanaco	<i>Guanaco guanaco</i>																				✓	



Snow Petrel by Peter Dunn



Southern Rockhopper Penguins by Tim Melling



Gold Beach at dawn by Peter Dunn



The Naturetrek Group & Guides by anon



South Georgia Pipit by Tim Melling



Southern Fulmar by Peter Dunn

Plants

Latin name	Common name	Notes
Pteridophyta	Spore producing plants. Ferns & their allies	
Aspidiaceae		
<i>Polystichum mohrioides</i>	Shield Fern	Grytviken
Blechnaceae		
<i>Blechnum magellanicum</i>	Tall Fern	Sanders / Stanley
<i>Blechnum penna-marina</i>	Small Fern	Teirra del Fuego
Lycopodiaceae	Clubmoss Family	
<i>Lycopodium magellanicum</i>	Clubmoss	Tierra del Fuego / St Andrews Bay
Spermatophyta	Seed producing Plants	
Gymnosperma	Conifers	
<i>Cupressus macrocarpa</i>	Monterey Cypress	Stanley
Angiospermae	Flowering Plants	
Alstroemeriaceae	Alstromera Family	
<i>Luzuriaga marginata</i>	Almond Flower	Stanley (Gypsey Cove)
Apiaceae	Carrot Family	
<i>Bolax gummifera</i>	Balsam Bog	Stanley (Gypsy Cove)
<i>Osmorhiza chilensis</i>	A wild Celery	Teirra del Fuego
Asteraceae	Daisy Family	
<i>Achillea millefolium</i>	Yarrow	Tierra del Fuego
<i>Adenocaulon chilense</i>	Adenocaulon	Tierra del Fuego
<i>Aster vahlii</i>	Marsh Daisy	Carccas
<i>Baccharis magellanicum</i>	Christmas Bush	Carccas
<i>Bellis perennis</i>	Daisy	Tierra del Fuego
<i>Chevreulia lycopodioides</i>	Clubmoss Cudweed	Stanly (Gypsey Cove)
<i>Cotula scariosa</i>	Cotula	Saunders / Stanley
<i>Chilotrichum diffusum</i>	Fachine	Tierra del Fuego
<i>Cirsium vulgare</i>	Spear Thistle	Stanley
<i>Gamochoaeta affinis</i>	Falkland Cudweed	Saunders Island
<i>Hieracium aurantiacum</i>	Orange Hawkweed	Stanley
<i>Hieracium antarcticum</i>	Antarctic Hawkweed	Teirra del Fuego / Stanley
<i>Leptinella scariosa</i>	Buttonweed	Tierra del Fuego / Falklands
<i>Nassauvia gaudichaudii</i>	Coastal Nassauvia	Saunders / Carcass Islands
<i>Senecio candicans</i>	Sea Cabbage	Saunders / Carccas Islands
<i>Senecio littoralis</i>	Falklands Woolly Ragwort	Gypsy Cove
<i>Senecio tricuspidata</i>	A Senecio	Tierra del Fuego
<i>Sonchus aspera</i>	Prickly Sow-thistle	Stanley
<i>Taraxacum officinale</i>	Dandelion	Tierra del Fuego
<i>Triplospermum maritimum</i>	Sea Mayweed	Stanley
Brassicaceae	Cabbage Family	
<i>Capstella bursa pastoris</i>	Shepards Purse	Stanley

Latin name	Common name	Notes
Boraginaceae <i>Myosotis arevensis</i>	Borage Family Forget-me-not	Tierra del Fuego
Berberidaceae <i>Berberis microphylla</i> <i>Berberis ilicifolia</i>	Berberis Family Calafate Holly Leafed Berberis	Tierra del Fuego Tierra del Fuego
Campanulaceae <i>Pratia repens</i>	Bell Flower Family Berry-lobelia	Tierra del Fuego
Caprifoliaceae <i>Lonicera periclymenum</i>	Honeysuckle Family Honeysuckle	Tierra del fuego
Callitrichaceae <i>Callitriche antarctica</i>	Starwort Family Antartic Starwort	Prion Island
Caryophyllaceae <i>Cerastium glomeratum</i> <i>Cerastium fontanum</i> <i>Colobanthus subulatus</i> <i>Colobanthus quitensis</i> <i>Sagina procumbens</i> <i>Spergularia marina</i>	Pink Family Sticky Mouse-ear Mouse-eared Chickweed Subantarctic Pearlwort Antartic Pearlwort Procumbent Pearlwort Lesser Sea Spurrey	Tierra del Fuego Grytviken Grytviken Grytviken Stanley Stanley
Celastraceae <i>Maytenus disticha</i> <i>Maytenus magellanicum</i>	Bittersweet Family Dwarf Pick Wood Pick Wood	Tierra del Fuego Tierra del Fuego
Crassulaceae <i>Carex curta</i> <i>Crassula moschata</i> <i>Sedum forsterianum</i>	Stonecrop Family White Sedge Native Stonecrop Rock Stonecrop	Tierra del Fuego Saunders / Carccas Islands Stanley
Empetraceae <i>Empetrum rubrum</i>	Crowberry Family Diddle-dee	Tierra del Fuego / Saunders / Carcass / Saunders
Ericaceae <i>Galutheria mucronata</i> <i>Pernettya pumila</i>	Heath Family Prickly Heath Mountain Berry	Tierra del Fuego Stanley
Fabaceae <i>Lotus corniculatus</i> <i>Trifolium dubium</i> <i>Trifolium pratense</i> <i>Trifolium repens</i> <i>Ulex europea</i> <i>Vicia tetrasperma</i>	Pea Family Birds Foot Trefoil Lesser Trefoil Red Clover White Clover Gorse Smooth Tare	Stanley Stanley Tierra del Fuego Tierra del Fuego / Grytviken Saunders / Carcass Islands Tierra del Fuego
Grossulariaceae <i>Ribes magellanicum</i>	Gooseberry Family Magellanic Currant	Tierra del Fuego
Gunneraceae <i>Gunnera magellanica</i>	Gunnera Family Pigvine / Devils Strawberry	Tierra del Fuego

Latin name	Common name	Notes
Juncaceae		
<i>Juncus scheuzerioides</i>	Rush Family Native Rush	Saunders
<i>Rostkovia magellanica</i>	Magellanic Rush	Grytviken
Iridaceae		
<i>Olsynium filifolium</i>	Iris Family Pale Maiden	Tierra del Fuego
Linaceae		
<i>Linum catharticum</i>	Flax Family Purging Flax	Tierra del Fuego
Misodendraceae		
<i>Misodendrum punctulatum</i>	Misodendra Family Feathery Mistletoe/Chinese Lantern	Tierra del Fuego
Nothofagaceae		
<i>Nothofagus antartica</i>	Southern Beech Family Antartic Beech	Tierra del Fuego
<i>Nothofagus pumilio</i>	Lenga Beech	Tierra del Fuego
<i>Nothofagus betuloides</i>	Magellan's Beech	Tierra del Fuego
Orchidaceae		
<i>Codonorchis lessonii</i>	Orchid Family Dog Orchid	Tierra del Fuego
<i>Gavilea araucana</i>	Green / White Orchid	Tierra del Fuego
<i>Gavilea lutea</i>	Yellow Orchid	Tierra del Fuego
Oxalidaceae		
<i>Oxalis enneaphylla</i>	Sorrel Family Scurvy Grass Sorrel	Stanley (Gypsy Cove)
Plantaginaceae		
<i>Hebe elliptica</i>	Plantain Family Native Boxwood	Saunders
Plumbaginaceae		
<i>Armeria macloviana</i>	Thrift Family Falkland Sea Thrift	Stanley
<i>America maritima</i>	Sea Thrift	Stanley
Poaceae		
<i>Aira praecox</i>	Grass Family Early Hair Grass	Carcass
<i>Agrostis capillaris</i>	Common Bent	Carcass
<i>Alopecurus magellanicus</i>	Fuegian Foxtail	Tierra del Fuego
<i>Ammophila arenaria</i>	Marram Grass	Stanley / Carcass Islands
<i>Anthoxanthum odoratum</i>	Sweet Vernal Grass	Stanley
<i>Dactylis glomerata</i>	Cock's-foot	Tierra del Fuego
<i>Deschampsia antartica</i>	Antartic Hair Grass	Grytviken
<i>Festuca contracta</i>	Tufted Fescue	Grytviken
<i>Festuca magellanica</i>	Magellanic Fescue	Carcass
<i>Festuca pratensis</i>	Meadow Fescue	Tierra del Fuego
<i>Holcus lanatus</i>	Yorkshire Fog	Tierra del fuego
<i>Phleum alpinum</i>	Alpine Cats Tail	Grytviken
<i>Poa annua</i>	Annual Meadow Grass	Sanders
<i>Poa flabellata</i>	Tussuck Grass	Carccas
<i>Poa pratensis</i>	Smooth-stalked Meadow Grass	Grytviken
<i>Poa robusta</i>	Shore Meadow Grass	Stanley
Polygonaceae		
<i>Rumex acetosella</i>	Dock Family Sheeps Sorrel	Tierra del Fuego

Latin name	Common name	Notes
<i>Rumex crispus</i>	Curled Dock	Tierra del Fuego
Portulacaceae	Purslane Family	
<i>Montia fontana</i>	Blinks	Grytviken
Primulaceae	Primrose Family	
<i>Anagallis alterifolia</i>	Bog Pimpernell	Tierra del Fuego
Ranunculaceae	Buttercup Family	
<i>Caltha sagittata</i>	Arrow-leafed Marigold	Tierra del Fuego
<i>Ranunculus biternatus</i>	Subantarctic Buttercup	Grytviken
<i>Ranunculus peduncularis</i>	A Buttercup	Tierra del Fuego
<i>Ranunculus repens</i>	Creeping Buttercup	Grytviken
Rosaceae	Rose Family	
<i>Acaena magellanica</i>	Greater Burnet or Prickly-burr	Tierra del Fuego / Grytviken
<i>Acaena lucida</i>	Native Yarrow	Saunders Island
<i>Acaena ovalifolia</i>	Oval-leaved Burnet	Tierra del Fuego
<i>Acaena pinnatifida</i>	A Burnet	Tierra del Fuego
<i>Acaena tenera</i>	Lesser Burnet	Grytviken
<i>Geum magellanicum</i>	_____	Tierra del Fuego
Salicaceae	Willow Family	
<i>Salix fragallis</i>	Willow	Tierra del Fuego
Valerianaceae	Valerian Family	
<i>Valeriana carnosa</i>	A Valerian	Tierra del Fuego
Violaceae	Violet family	
<i>Viola magellanica</i>	Fuegian Violet	Tierra del Fuego
<i>Viola maculata</i>	Native Yellow Violet	Carcass Island
Winteraceae		
<i>Drimys winteri</i>	Winters Bark	Tierra del Fuego
Bryophytes	Mosses	
<i>Marchantia berteroana</i>		St Andrews Bay
<i>Pohlia wahalenbergii</i>		St Andrews Bay
<i>Polytrichum strictum</i>		Grytviken
<i>Syntrichia robusta</i>		Grytviken
<i>Warnstorfia sarmentosa</i>		Grytviken
Lichens	Lichens	
<i>Amandinca coniops</i>		Half Moon Island
<i>Caloplaca regalis</i>		Half Moon Island
<i>Cladonia carneola</i>		St Andrews Bay
<i>Haematomma erythromma</i>		Half Moon Island
<i>Ramalina terebrata</i>		Half Moon Island
<i>Stereocaulon alpinum</i>		Grytviken
<i>Turgidosculum complicatulum</i>		Half Moon Island
<i>Usnea antarctica</i>		St Andrews Bay / Half Moon Island
<i>Xanthoria elegans</i>		Half Moon Island

Latin name	Common name	Notes
<i>Fungi</i> <i>Cyttaria darwinii</i> <i>Omphalina Spp</i>	Fungi Indian Bread	Tierra del Fuego St Andrews Bay

Map of the route



Dawn in the Antarctic by Tim Melling



Ortelius in Antarctic Ice by Peter Dunn