

Coastal Tasmania: Untamed Wildness

Aboard *Douglas Mawson* | 1 December – 11 December 2025

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Hobart, Tasmania

DAY 1 | Tuesday 02 December 2025

Latitude:
42°53.0' S

Longitude:
147°20.3' E

Course:
Alongside

Speed:
Alongside

Wind Speed:
3 knots NW

Barometer:
1008 hPa

Air Temp:
6°

Here we are in the picturesque city of Hobart, the capital of Australia's island state of Tasmania. Today marked the first day of our Tasmanian expedition aboard the *Douglas Mawson*. After a good night's sleep, we made the short journey to meet the ship and its Aurora friendly crew.

Once onboard, we checked in and were guided by the hotel team to our 'home away from home' for the next 11 days. After lunch, Expedition Leader Daniel welcomed us in the Lecture Theatre, marking the *Douglas Mawson's* first official voyage and highlighting the spirit of adventure that defines Aurora expeditions. We were introduced to the Expedition Team, eager to share their knowledge. Onboard Expedition Manager Justine and Hotel Director Singh then explained life on board.

The mandatory lifeboat drill followed. The sound of seven-short-one-long rings was our cue to don warm clothes and bulky orange lifejackets before gathering at the muster station. Safety officers guided us to the lifeboats to familiarise us with their location.

At 1730, we returned to the Lecture Theatre for a Zodiac briefing, biosecurity checks and a jacket exchange. By 1900, we enjoyed dinner prepared by the galley team and served by welcoming staff.

Together we total 127 Expeditioners from Australia (93), Canada (3), Germany (2), Netherlands (1), New Zealand (1), UK (8), USA (19), along with 87 crew from all around the globe. After long journeys for many, it was time to breathe in the sea air and look forward to 11 days of adventure.



Bruny Island, Great Taylors Bay (southeast coast)

DAY 2 | Wednesday 03 December 2025

Latitude:
43°24.8' S

Longitude:
147°08.5' E

Course:
310°

Speed:
11.3 knots

Wind Speed:
5 knots NNW

Barometer:
1005 hPa

Air Temp:
13-16°

We woke peacefully at anchor in Great Taylors Bay on our first full day of expedition in Tasmania. This morning we went ashore to explore the Labillardière Peninsula within South Bruny National Park. The peninsula was named for the naturalist onboard the French expedition led by Captain Antoine Joseph Raymond Bruni D'Entrecasteaux. Bruny Island and its separating channel also bear his name.

Our exploration began with a Zodiac landing at Jetty Beach, where a westerly breeze lapped the shore. Walking tracks were closed due to a recent bushfire, so we wandered up the sandy road, marvelling at prolific yellow flowering melaleuca, or swamp honey myrtle, lining both sides. Other colours dotted the walk, with spring flowers in bloom including purple flag iris, tea tree and lemon boronia.

Birdsong accompanied us, and many enjoyed identifying species by sight and sound.

Departing Taylors Bay, we saw snow on Adamson Peak to the southwest as we rounded the peninsula. Cape Bruny lighthouse came into view after lunch, and many spent time on deck watching scenery. Common dolphins cavorted under the bow, while shy albatross and streams of short-tailed shearwaters flew past.

Later, Zodiacs explored the dolerite coast, viewing bull kelp and black-faced cormorants standing like statues. Returning to the *Douglas Mawson*, we gathered in the Bar for cocktails and canapés, sharing a toast with Captain Jorge Ferdinez and his officers.







Tasman Peninsula

DAY 3 | Thursday 04 December 2025

Latitude:

43°00.0' S

Longitude:

147°44.0' E

Course:

Anchored

Speed:

0.0 knots

Wind Speed:

6 knots NW

Barometer:

996 hPa

Air Temp:

21°

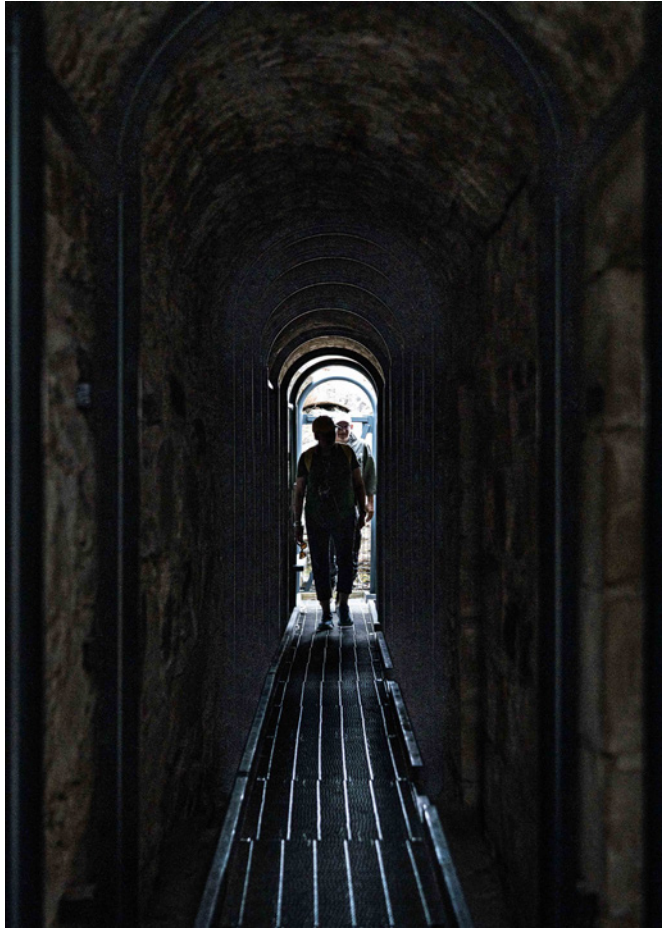
Considering the winds elsewhere in Tasmania, our passage across Storm Bay, named by Abel Tasman, was benign. As the sun rose, we entered the protected waters of Norfolk Bay on the northeast corner of the Tasman Peninsula. Our rearranged plans included a visit to the Coal Mines Historic Site, where up to 600 convicts once laboured in the 'inky blackness of underground tunnels' to mine coal. We explored the remains of the penitentiary, imagining life through the eyes of Port Arthur's worst felons. A few pademelons were spotted in the surrounding bush. While half the Expeditioners explored on land, the others Zodiac-cruised north, finding rays in clear shallow waters, abundant birdlife including a white-bellied sea eagle, and admiring the sandstone shoreline.

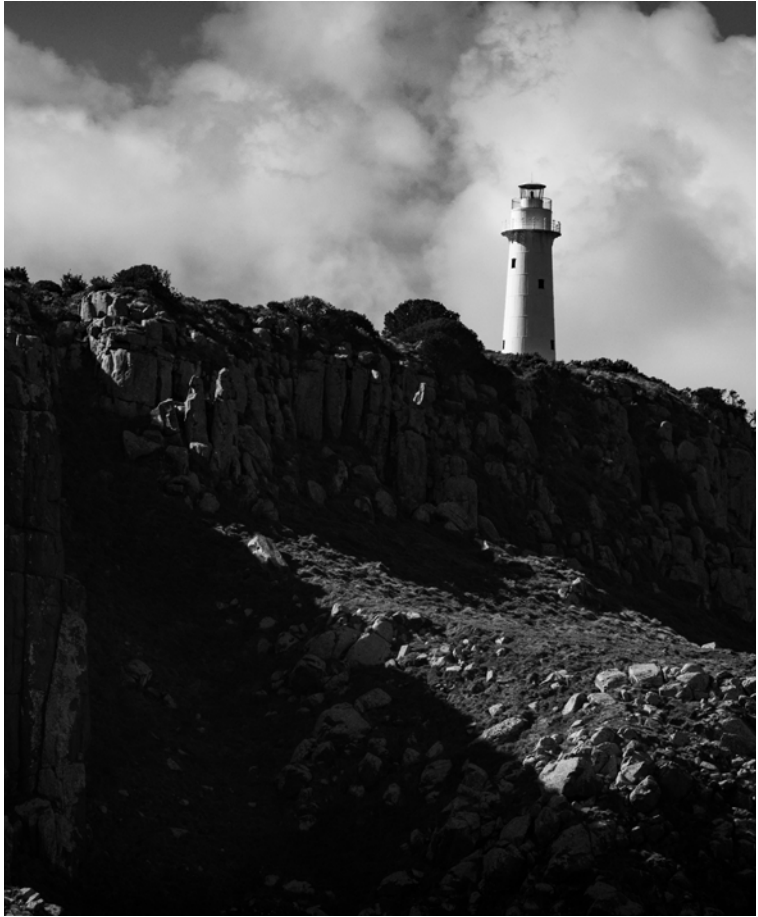
Our afternoon plans changed again as a westerly gale met us on exiting Norfolk Bay. Ornithologist Heidi gave a presentation on Tasmanian seabirds while we began our circumnavigation of the peninsula. She shared insights into species such as short-tailed shearwaters and Australasian gannets, and the extraordinary 13,000-kilometre nonstop flight of the bar-tailed godwit.

The afternoon was spent ship-cruising along the tallest sea cliffs in the Southern Hemisphere. Our Captain and crew brought the ship close to Cape Raoul, Tasman Island and Cape Hauy, passing the climbing rocks of the Candlestick and Totem Pole. Wildlife was abundant: pods of common dolphins bow-rode, shy albatross filled the skies, gannets soared past, shearwaters joined feeding frenzies, humpback whales blew in the distance and killer whales appeared.











At Sea | Bass Strait

DAY 4 | Friday 05 December 2025

Latitude:

40°40.6' S

Longitude:

148°15.2' E

Course:

296°

Speed:

10 knots

Wind Speed:

5 knots NW

Barometer:

1009 hPa

Air Temp:

14°

Today was a sea day as we sailed north and west from the Tasman Peninsula, up the east coast, traversing Banks Strait and continuing west through the infamous Bass Strait. The fact that Van Diemen's Land was an island and not part of New Holland was only established in 1798 when George Bass and Matthew Flinders circumnavigated it.

In the morning, geologist David shared his passion for the 'Rocks, Minerals and Fossils of Tasmania' with plenty of show and tell. In the afternoon, Steve spoke about the long history of Tasmanian Aboriginal people and the cycle of ice ages that lowered and raised sea levels, precipitating waves of settlement from the north. He debunked the myth that Tasmanian Aboriginal people were wiped out, explaining their presence in sealing camps in Bass Strait and the

growing recognition of their society's sophistication. Modern efforts to revive language and acknowledge the tragedy of the black war were highlighted.

Jonathan added details about the role of British colonial penal settlements, foundations of Hobart, and the rationale for early settlements: strengthening the British Army, thwarting French claims, and housing convicts. Later, Jamie shared photography tips for all levels, from mirrorless camera owners to 'smart phoners'.

At the evening briefing, Tim recounted climber Paul Pritchard's dramatic rescue from the Totem Pole, while David introduced the notion of super moons. After dinner, many watched the actual super moonrise with champagne in hand, a fitting end to another Aurora expedition day.





Three Hummock Island | Albatross Island

DAY 5 | Saturday 06 December 2025

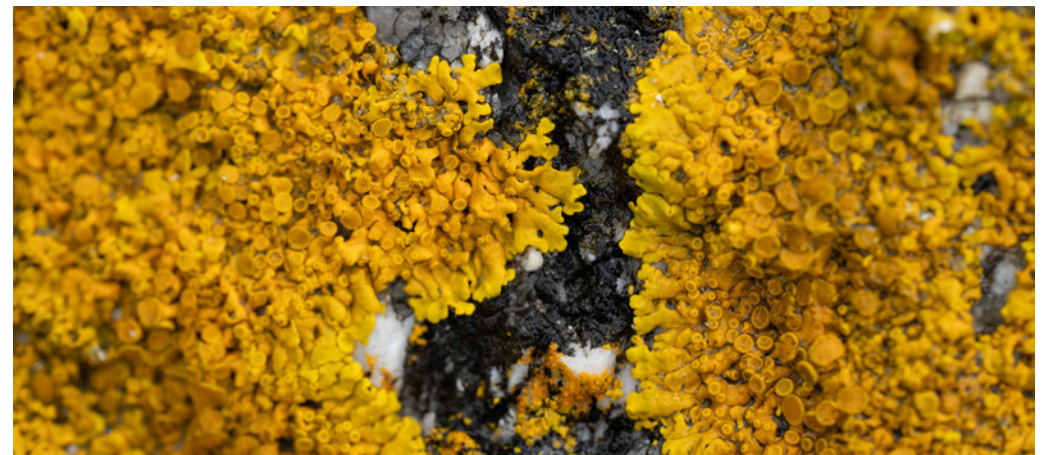
Latitude: 40°27.3' S	Wind Speed: 5 knots NW	<p>After a beautiful day at sea, we arrived at Three Hummock Island in the early hours. After breakfast, we were welcomed by Mel and Casey on the beach near their homestead on the western side of the island. Many Expeditioners were keen to explore. About a third set off for a long walk to the South Hummock summit and Granite Hill lookout, a 16-kilometre hike with very happy hikers. Another group visited Signal Hill lookout, with views of Hunter Island. We were accompanied by Cape Barren geese and surrounded by the sounds of lapwings. Forester kangaroos roamed the flat area near the homestead, and the third group returned from their 7-kilometre hike, also admiring birds and kangaroos.</p>	<p>Casey and Mel kindly invited us inside the homestead for a hot drink after the hikes. We then returned to the beach for a slightly bumpy ride back to the ship.</p> <p>Three Hummock Island was so beautiful that we were delighted to be invited back for another landing on the other side. During lunch we repositioned and arrived at East Telegraph Bay for a stroll along the beach. Some were brave enough for a swim, while others admired shells and coastline.</p> <p>Just when we thought the day could not get better, we arrived at Albatross Island for a ship cruise before dinner. This 18-hectare reserve is one of only three islands around Tasmania where shy albatross breed, with about 5000 pairs.</p>
Longitude: 144°50.2' E	Barometer: 1000 hPa		
Course: At anchor	Air Temp: 16°		
Speed: 0.0 knots			











Flinders Island

DAY 6 | Sunday 07 December 2025

Latitude:
39°44.7' S

Longitude:
147°52.6' E

Course:
At anchor

Speed:
0.0 knots

Wind Speed:
5 knots WSW

Barometer:
1012 hPa

Air Temp:
18°

This morning we steamed towards Trousers Point, our 'plan A' landing, but turned back due to strong winds and swells. Heading north to Palana, despite extra pitching, many joined Rosie in the Lecture Theatre to learn about marine mammals we have seen. So far we have been fortunate to encounter hundreds of common dolphins, a few fur seals, humpback whales and even an orca.

At Palana, we had a splashy Zodiac ride to the jetty, welcomed by the Flinders Island community. Being Sunday, many were on their day off from jobs such as teaching or cattle-boat work, and were excited to show us around. We are the first expedition cruise ship ever to visit Flinders Island.

We split into small groups to explore. Birders observed many species, including a flock of yellow-tailed black cockatoos. Hikers explored the beach at Palana, stopping to sample local spirits. Others joined road trips, admiring landscapes, tasting wines, enjoying lunches and visiting the museum. Some visited Wybalenna, described as 'shocking and sobering but enlightening'.

By late afternoon, our buses neared the Zodiac landing site, the perfect time for wombat spotting. These fluffy marsupials are the island's own smaller subspecies. We slowed to admire the wisdom of wombats grazing in paddocks or scampering from the roadside. Wallabies also grazed nearby, hopping clear of our path.







Deal Island | At Sea

DAY 7 | Monday 08 December 2025

Latitude:

39°35.7' S

Longitude:

147°52.2' E

Course:

095°

Speed:

11 knots

Wind Speed:

5 knots NW

Barometer:

1007 hPa

Air Temp:

19°

We spent the previous night heading north to the Kent Island group, with the bridge team expertly navigating us into Bass Strait. This group of islands is the northernmost point of Tasmania, made up of Erith, Dover and Deal, along with smaller rocky islets. Our plan was to land on Deal Island and hike to the lighthouse, but wind and swell prevented safe Zodiac operations. The ship tried three positions without success, so we admired Deal Island from the decks as we cruised past. The lighthouse, built in 1848, warned approaching ships, though 20 were lost around the group. The islands have been occupied by Indigenous people for thousands of years, later by sealers and whalers, and finally lighthouse keepers. A caretaker remains, though the lighthouse ceased operation in 1992.

Back on board, we spent time spotting seabirds, and some Expeditioners saw dolphins.

Stephen gave a personal talk about his and Heidi's time as lighthouse keepers on Maatsuyker Island, sharing stories of daily life on a remote outpost. As we continued south, a small group braved the swell to complete a cloud survey.

In the afternoon Rosie spoke about kelp forests and their ecological importance, sharing experiences and photos of diving in Tasmania's cold-water reefs. After our briefing for Maria Island, we watched a sunset and enjoyed dinner.

Afterwards, Alun Thomas, grandson of Sir Douglas Mawson, presented on Project Blizzard and the restoration of Mawson's huts at Cape Denison, a fitting end to the day onboard.





Maria Island, Bunker Bay

DAY 8 | Tuesday 09 December 2025

Latitude:
42°40.4' S

Longitude:
148°10.1' E

Course:
265°

Speed:
9.8 knots

Wind Speed:
7 knots W

Barometer:
1007 hPa

Air Temp:
16°

Maria Island is an absolute gem. Abundant wildlife and myriad walking adventures, including the towering summits of Bishop and Clerk and Mount Maria, present a microcosm of Tasmania. Aboriginal, colonial and commercial history add further layers of interest, creating a fascinating place to visit.

For many Expeditioners the day began with a predawn wake up onboard the *Douglas Mawson*, a quick coffee and a bouncy Zodiac ride to Darlington jetty. Early starts can be a trial, but the effort was rewarded as we strolled through Darlington to the Painted Cliffs while the sun rose over Bishop and Clerk. We had the island, its wildlife and birds to ourselves, exploring the geological wonder of intricate sandstone patterns and colourful layers.

Strong winds made the return Zodiac ride splashy, with most receiving a seawater shower. Over breakfast it was clear

conditions were worsening, so further cruises and landings were cancelled. We weighed anchor for a ship's cruise around the cliffs of the north and east coasts. Dolphins played in the bow wave, shy albatross soared unusually high, and Rosie spotted a humpback whale surfacing.

Bunker Bay provided a stunning anchorage for a Zodiac cruise around Cape des Tombeaux. We explored Whalers Cove and the Keyhole before dolphins escorted us back to the ship.

Back onboard, we gathered for recap before entering a transformed Cape Denison restaurant. A Tasmanian-style BBQ buffet, party hats, steaming glühwein and classic songs set the tone for a lively evening that continued in the Aurora Bar with dancing.









Port Arthur

DAY 9 | Wednesday 10 December 2025

Latitude:

43°09.0' S

Longitude:

147°51.6' E

Course:

At anchor

Speed:

0.0 knots

Wind Speed:

2 knots W

Barometer:

1019 hPa

Air Temp:

19°

After travelling overnight from Maria Island, Expeditioners aboard the *Douglas Mawson* awoke to a calm, sunlit morning on the Tasman Peninsula. As the ship held position in Carnarvon Bay, we enjoyed sweeping views of the Port Arthur Historic Site.

Following breakfast, Zodiacs ferried us ashore in smooth conditions, delivering everyone to the historic jetty where local guides awaited. Expeditioners dispersed into smaller groups for a day rich in storytelling, archaeology and reflection.

Port Arthur's history is confronting yet compelling. Once the centrepiece of the British Empire's convict system in Australia, the site operated from the 1830s until 1877. Guides walked us through the Penitentiary, the eerie Separate Prison, and domestic quarters and workshops that supported a community built around punishment, labour and hardship, but also new beginnings in Van Diemen's Land.

Interpretation also acknowledged far older stories. Expeditioners were introduced to the deep-time presence of the Palawa people, whose connection to the Tasman Peninsula long predates European arrival. Many sampled Palawa Kipli, including grilled abalone, connecting culture directly to place and palate.

Lunch offered time to reflect, with bright weather encouraging strolls through gardens and along the shoreline. A quiet moment came at the Broad Arrow Memorial Garden, commemorating lives lost in the 1996 tragedy, emphasising remembrance and resilience.

In the evening, we gathered for a slideshow celebrating our journey, followed by the Captain's Farewell Dinner. Shared stories, reflections and a beautifully prepared meal made for a fitting finale to the maiden expedition of the *Douglas Mawson*.





Hobart, Tasmania

DAY 10 | Thursday 11 December 2025

Latitude:

43°15.3' S

Longitude:

147°47.8' E

Course:

087°

Speed:

12.2 knots

Wind Speed:

2 knots SW

Barometer:

1025 hPa

Air Temp:

15°

After a wonderful day in Port Arthur yesterday, we woke from a solid night's sleep to see our mighty vessel, the *Douglas Mawson*, securely tied alongside the port of Hobart. We enjoyed a final breakfast aboard before disembarking at 0800.

Aurora Expeditions thanks you for joining us aboard *Douglas Mawson* to Tasmania. We hope to see you on the high seas again someday!

BBQ





Citizen Science



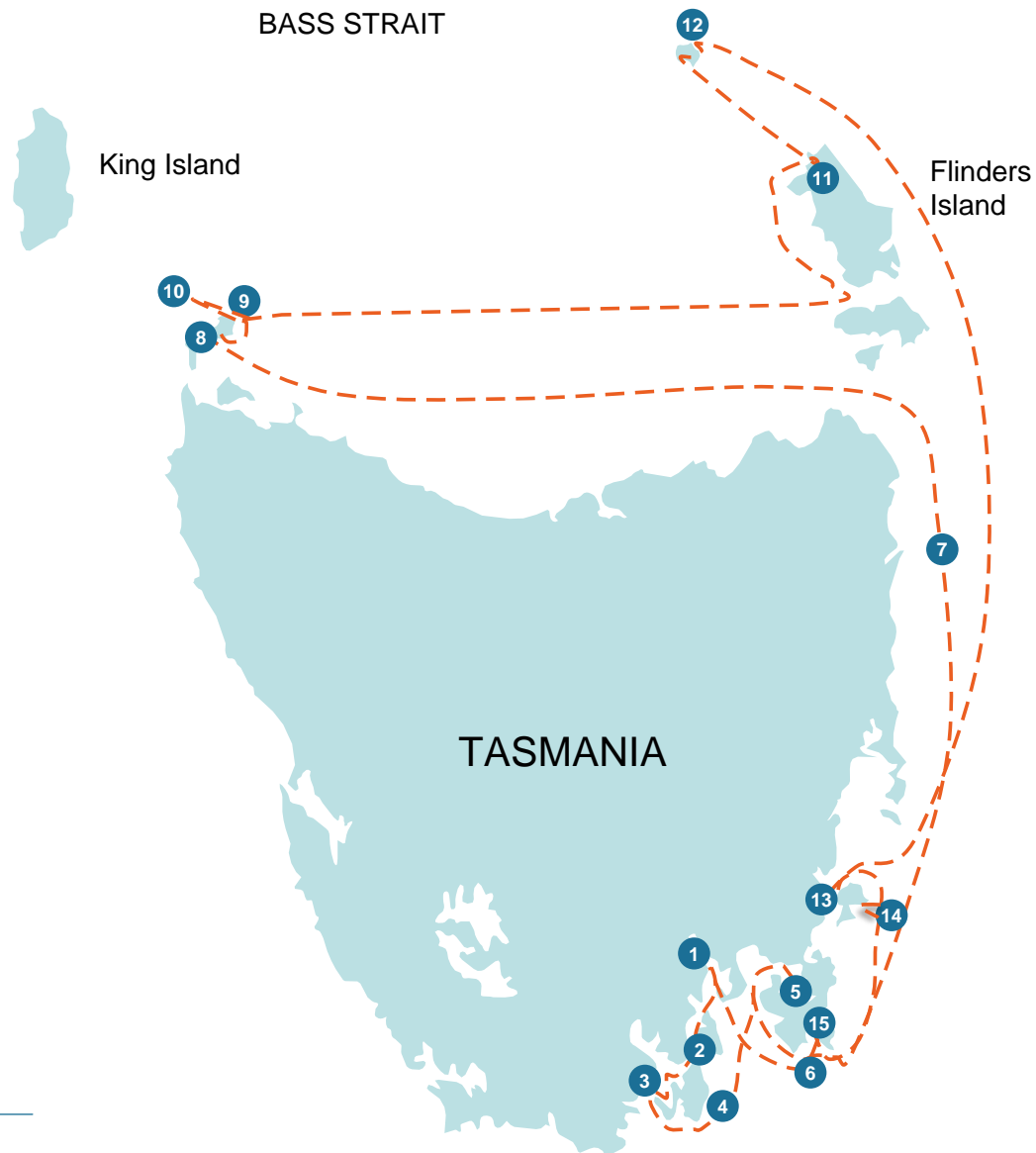
Mammal & Reptile Sightings

Mammals	December										
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
Common Dolphin		●	●	●	●				●		
Australian Fur Seal		●	●	●					●		
Humpback Whale				●	●				●		
Orca				●							
Southern Brown Bandicoot										●	
Bennett's Wallaby							●				
Echidna				●	●		●			●	
Pademelon				●		●			●	●	
Wombat							●		●		
Foresters Kangaroo						●					

Reptile Species	December										
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
Lizard, unidentified						●					
Snake, copperhead			●								

Map

1. Hobart
2. D'Entrecasteaux Channel
3. Great Taylors Bay | Jetty Beach
4. Arched Island
5. Norfolk Bay | Coal Mines
6. Tasman Peninsula | Cape Cruise
7. East & North Coast at Sea
8. Three Hummock Island | Home Beach
9. Three Hummock Island | East Telegraph Beach
10. Albatross Island
11. Flinders Island | Palana
12. Deal Island
13. Maria Island | Darlington
14. Maria Island | Riedle Bay
15. Port Arthur
16. Hobart



Coastal Tasmania: Untamed Wildness

1 December – 11 December 2025



Our Expeditioners

Ben Alexander	Helen Creasey	Max Howland	Max Maksimovic	Kathryn Pressler	Marissa Titmarsh
Kathleen Alexander	Kath Cunningham	Maureen Howland	Steve McClung	Craig Pressler	Benjamin Tumilty
Arleen Arnott	Mark Davidson	Val Hristova	Aidan McElduff	Michael Ray	Nicki Turner
David Balkin	Jennifer Davidson	Timothy Jarvis	Karen McKenzie	Penny Ray	Alix Valenti
Rosemaray Balkin	Liz Drever	Karen Johanson	Steven McLaughlin	Lilo Rheinstein	Amanda Vance
Ceri Beal-Waite	Jane Eastburn	Helen Kear	Lisa Mcleod	Gabrielle Rini	James Vance
Maureen Boyce	Wade Eastburn	Rob Kear	Julie Miller	Alison Rowland	Sandy Velini
Frank Breen	Ben Elkan	Margaret Kimball	Kathy Mooney	Ben Rowley	Andrea Ward
Spencer Bruskin	Dylan Evans	Marco Kimberlee	Sean Mooney	Sue Rowley	Lou Ann Watson
Anna Buch	Suzan Evans	Phil Kimberlee	Steve Morgan	Kitty Schild	Anita Williams
Neville Buch	Ange Ferres	Jenjira Kitzki	Ruth Morgan	Heather Schmitt	Anna Willis
Cathi Burnett-Cosgrove	Julia Freeman	Nicolas Kitzki	Lance Mumby	Lesley Schoer	Liz Woodruff
Asheesh Chacko	Alison Freeman	Valerie Kleindienst	Derek Newbigging	Alex Scott	Heather Worsfield
Jacob Chacko	Lisa Gair	Kwan Kwan	Jen Newbigging	Kirsten Scott	Sandra Worsfold
Izzy Chacko	Elva Gentle	Cristina Logg	Russ Newkirk	Ivona Siniarska	Rosie Young
Claire Chacko	Max Gentle	Connie Logg	Peter O'Brien	Sandra Smith	Julie Zammit
Lesley Chisholm	Nicole Grant	Larry Long	John O'Malley	Susan Soloyanis	Ron Zammit
Hugh Chisholm	Paul Gyr	Juana Mae Long	Jodie O'Malley	David Somerville	
Peter Clare	Pip Hacon	Trevor Lund	Oen Ong	Barry Thomas	
Leon Cohen	George Hacon	Marie Lund	Jenny Ostenfeld	Sadie Thomas	
Caroline Cohen	Jo Hammerand	Heinz Maarseveen	Jim Pedley	Alun Thomas	
Jane Cook	Cheri Hardesty	Jane Maarseveen	Julia Pomazkina	Jenny Thorpe	

Expedition Team

Expedition Leader: Daniel Stavert
Assistant Expedition Leader: Isabelle Howells
Onboard Expedition Manager: Justine Bornholdt
Shop Manager: Ari Benz Ciria
Marine Biologist: Rosie Leaney
Ornithologist & CS Coordinator: Heidi Krajewsky
Historian: Jonathan Chester
Geologist: David Dieckfoss
Photography Guide: Jamie Lafferty
Expedition Medic: Moniek Mestrom
Expedition Guide: Stephen Anstee
Expedition Guide: Eamon Larkin
Expedition Guide: Tim Stredwick
Zodiac Master: Sergei Andronov
Zodiac Master: Ryan Kaempfe

Senior Officers & Heads of Department

Master: Jorge Ferdinez
Staff Captain: Azelie Poret
Second Officer: Ian Osorio Azocar
Safety Officer: Yevhenii Zolotarov
Ship Doctor: Alejandro Levin Viner
Chief Engineer: Oleksandr Tsvietkov
Staff Chief Engineer: Ivan Mitaki
IT Officer: Ronaldo Jamero
Hotel Director: Balvant Singh
Head Bartender: Alan Fernandez
Head Waiter: Allan Liscano
Chief Purser: Caroline Pepenfuss
Executive Chef: Pratik Ekoskar
Sous Chef: Vinay Kumar
Hotel Controller: William Ajes
Receptionist: Johnny Valdez
Receptionist: Jelyn Merilo
Head Steward: Sotero Agtagma
Bosun: Rey Genita
Able Seaman: Talavera Christian
Able Seaman: Jovito Sagusay
Able Seaman: Rowell Motol
Able Seaman: Adrian Bersabal
Able Seaman: Jerome Castillo
Able Seaman: Joby Cheruparambil

Photography thanks to: _____

Jamie Lafferty





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