

# Ross Sea Odyssey

Aboard *Douglas Mawson* | 17 January 2026 – 09 February 2026

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# Ross Sea Odyssey

17 Jan 2026 to 09 Feb 2026

# Dunedin

DAY 1 | 17 January 2026

**Latitude:**  
45°52'5" S  
**Longitude:**  
170°31'1" E

**Wind Speed:**  
12 knots S  
**Barometer:**  
1020 hPa

**Course:**  
alongside

**Air Temp:**  
14°C

Here we are in the picturesque town of Dunedin, known to Ngāi Tahu, the local iwi, as Ōtepoti, 'the place of the bracket.'

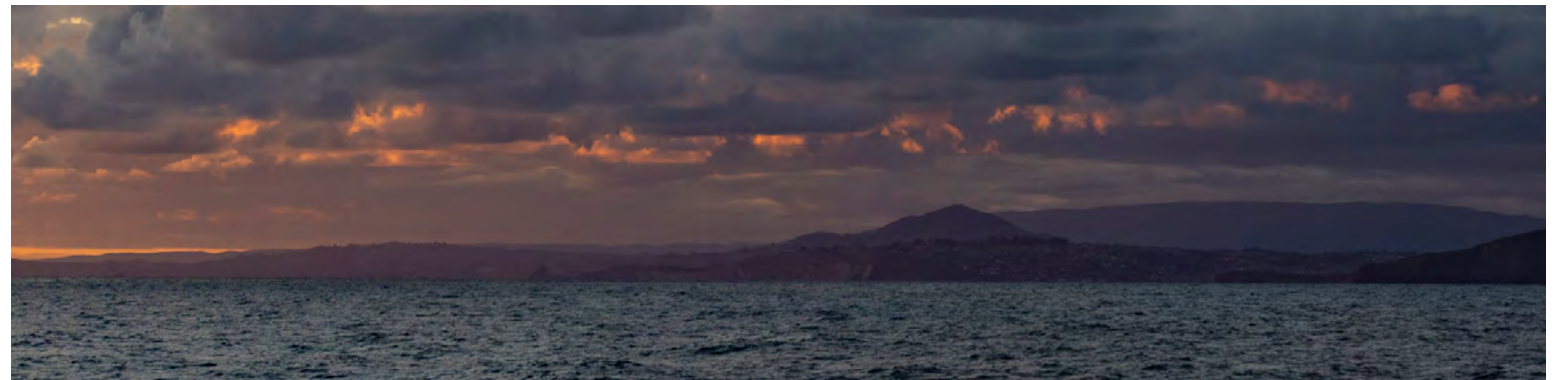
Our morning was spent leisurely in Dunedin at an easy pace, with some last-minute purchases for some of us. From there, we set off to discover the area in four small groups, either by bus for a city tour of Dunedin or on foot, to enjoy the charm and character of this lovely southern New Zealand town.

As we arrived at the wharf, Expedition Leader Roger, photographer Scott, and historian Avi greeted us warmly, checked us in, and captured a memorable photo for the photo board. Before we knew it, we were stepping on board the *Douglas Mawson*, ready to begin our adventure at sea. First, we completed the necessary immigration formalities, and

soon an inviting buffet awaited us in the S/Y Aurora Bar. After enjoying it, we checked in at Reception, and the hotel team led us across the decks to our cabins, where we quickly settled into our cozy 'home away from home.'

Expedition Leader Roger then invited us into the Lecture Theatre for the mandatory safety drill, followed by an official welcome aboard and a brief introductory briefing. We were introduced to the multi-skilled Expedition Team, eager to share their knowledge and just as excited as we were for the journey ahead. Lelia and Hotel Director Singh walked us through life onboard, while Dr. Alejandro ensured we knew how to stay healthy throughout the voyage.

After that, we made our way to the dining room to enjoy a



# Dunedin

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1020 hPa

**Air Temp:**  
14°C

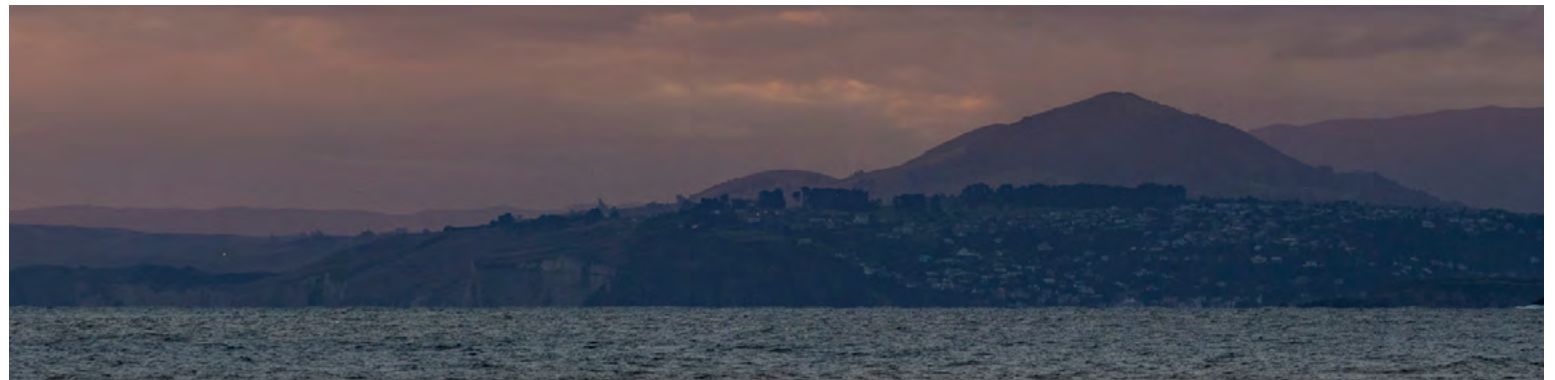
delicious dinner, prepared by our talented galley team and served by our friendly waiting staff.

Together, we number 127 Expeditioners from Australia (62), the USA (21), China (21), New Zealand (7), the UK (5), Brazil (4), Canada (2), India (1), and Singapore (1), along with 84 crew members from all around the globe and 22 Expedition Team members. This team brings a wide range of expertise,

including polar exploration, marine mammals, glaciology, geology, history, ornithology, photography, medicine, and kayaking.

After many hours of travel to reach the *Douglas Mawson*, it's time to relax, breathe in the sea air, and get excited for the next 25 days of adventure!

● Position at 0900







# At Sea

DAY 2 | 18 January 2026

**Latitude:**  
47°38'2" S  
**Longitude:**  
169°14'02" E

**Wind Speed:**  
7 knots SW  
**Barometer:**  
1028 hPa

**Course:**  
214°  
**Speed:**  
10.3 knots

**Air Temp:**  
13°C

The first full day of our expedition, and Roger woke us gently and with the very encouraging news that the sea was calm, and the sun was out. As the nearest land had slipped far behind us in the night, early birds on deck adjusted their eyes to the expansiveness of the Southern Ocean, with only the occasional flap-flap-glide of a passing Sooty Shearwater to punctuate the space.

Back inside, we made the acquaintance of the all-important coffee machine and then navigated our way along the full length of breakfast buffet (so many choices!) Fuelled up for the day, we all gathered in the lecture theatre for a busy morning of briefings, including the mandatory biosecurity and Zodiac briefings that will enable us to start our operations tomorrow. Next, we headed to the mudroom to try on our

Muck Boots (so stylish!), then back up to the lecture theatre to check and clean our gear. We have quite a few more biosecurity parties ahead of us as we move between different environments and different jurisdictions.

After lunch, we joined Ben, Jay, Pat and T-A in the lecture theatre to learn about the geology, plants, marine mammals and birds of the Auckland Islands. And for history buffs, this was followed up with a fascinating tale of shipwrecks and sealing by historian Ben. Although a sizable number of us have explored with Aurora before, the New Zealand Sub-Antarctics are a new region for many, so a primer on shield volcanoes, megaherbs, local sealions, endemic birds and local history helped set the scene for our first landings.



# At Sea

DAY 2 | 18 January 2026

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**Course:**  
214°  
**Speed:**  
10.3 knots

**Wind Speed:**  
7 knots SW  
**Barometer:**  
1028 hPa

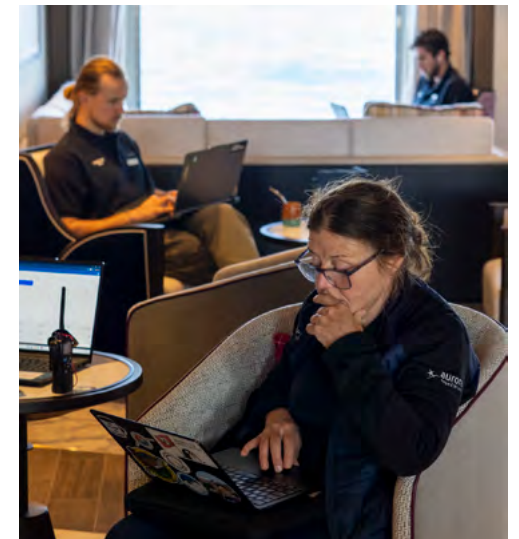
**Air Temp:**  
13°C

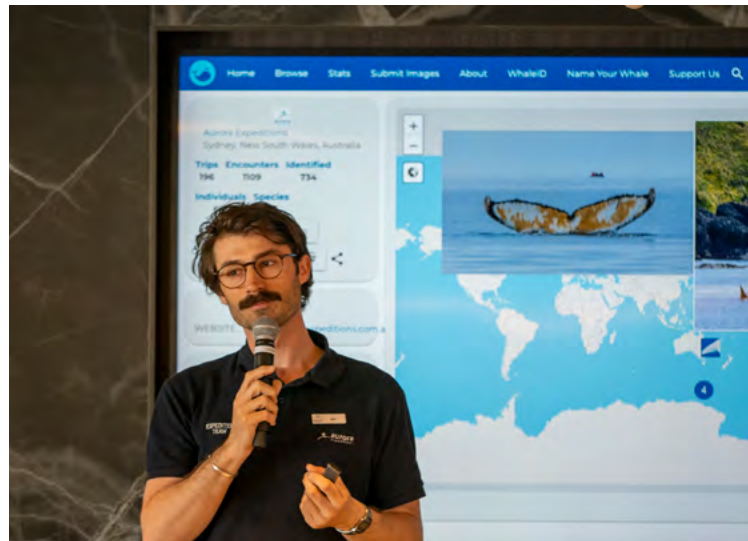
In the late afternoon, and with the sea almost flat, we kicked off our Citizen Science program with an eBird Seabird survey on the back of deck 7. The ratio of participants to birds was high! Light winds aren't the best for most Southern Ocean seabirds as it takes a lot of effort for them to fly in these conditions, but there were still a few out and about and we enjoyed meeting some Pintado (Cape) Petrels as they followed along behind the ship. We also met some albatrosses (shy,

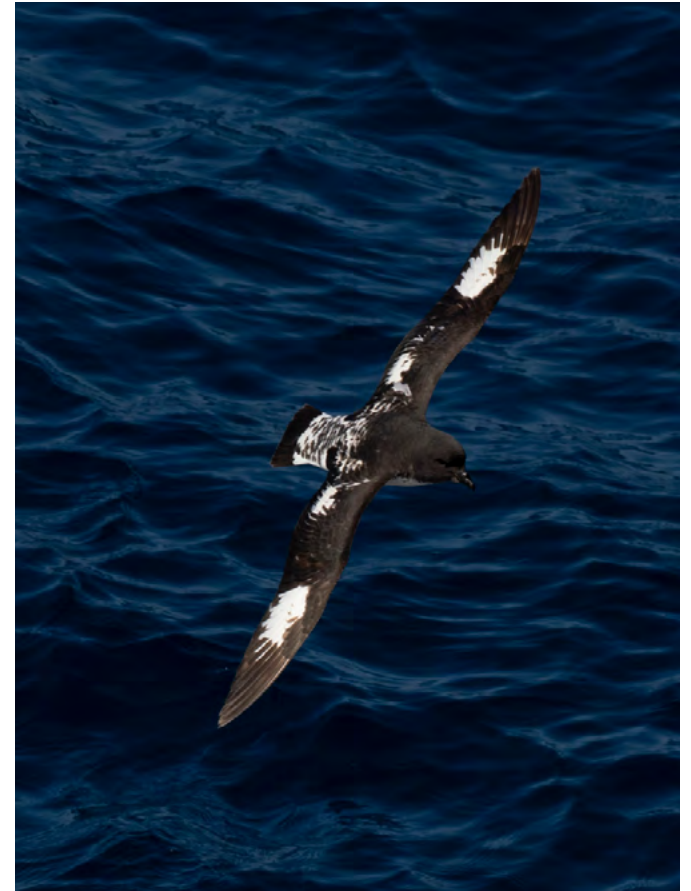
Salvin's and southern royal) and a tiny, black-bellied storm-petrel, fluttering moth-like just above the water.

We wrapped up the day with our first evening recap and briefing, then most of us took the chance to catch up on some extra sleep after our long journeys to get here. Can't wait for our first landing tomorrow!









# Enderby Island

DAY 3 | 19 January 2026

**Latitude:**  
50°26'2" S  
**Longitude:**  
166°26'3" E

**Wind Speed:**  
16 knots SW  
**Barometer:**  
1029 hPa

**Course:**  
219°  
**Speed:**  
8.5 knots

**Air Temp:**  
11°C

Our day began bright and early with a 7:00 am wake-up call, followed by a breakfast to fuel the adventures ahead. With excitement building, we set our course to explore the spectacular Enderby Island.

The first boots ashore belonged to the long hiking group, who were eager to rack up their step counts and disappear into the landscape. Once they were on their way, the rest of us followed, stepping onto the island ready for our own adventure. We were immediately reminded that this was wild territory, Hooker sea lions loudly and proudly made their ownership of the beach known, while the unforgettable sight of yellow-eyed penguins (hoiho) greeted us on arrival.

Venturing inland along the boardwalk, we passed through

beautiful, stunted forests where southern rātā flowers were still blooming. The last of the late-flowering megaherbs dotted the landscape, and those with a sharp eye even spotted tiny carnivorous plants growing right beside the boardwalk. As if that wasn't enough, we were fortunate to see albatrosses sitting on nests close to the track, and as the wind picked up, watched some soar effortlessly above our heads.

With so many new species and observations from just one morning, our species lists needed some serious updating. Eventually, we returned to the ship for a much-needed lunch and a chance to refuel for the afternoon's activities. As the long walkers began returning from their long journey, the first kayak outing of the voyage set off, paddling from Sandy Bay to Hartwicke. Meanwhile, the rest of us cruised



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166°26'3" E

**Wind Speed:**  
16 knots SW  
**Barometer:**  
1029 hPa

along Enderby Island's coastline even exploring a few caves before crossing over to the main Auckland Island. There, we enjoyed a short walk through the historic settlement of Hardwicke, including a visit to the famous Victoria Tree.

**Course:**  
219°  
**Speed:**  
8.5 knots

**Air Temp:**  
11°C

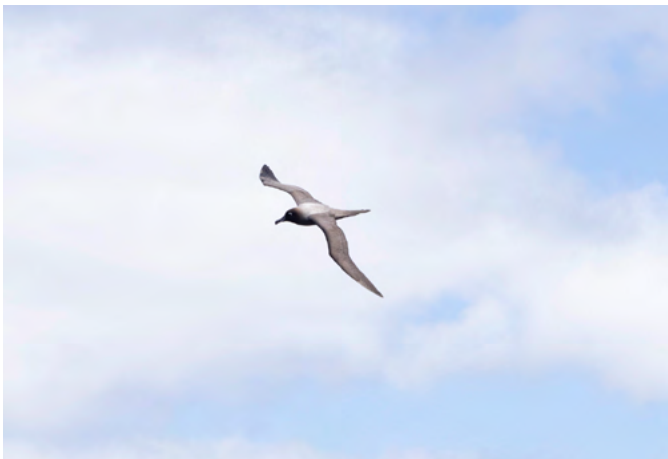
After a full day ashore, we all came back aboard for the Captain's Welcome and a briefing on tomorrow's plans. Dinner buzzed with conversation, laughter, and shared excitement as we reflected on an incredible first day, perfect weather, unforgettable wildlife, and the promise of even more adventure ahead.

















# Auckland Islands

DAY 4 | 20 January 2026

**Latitude:**  
50°39'8" S  
**Longitude:**  
166°10'9" E

**Wind Speed:**  
8 knots NW  
**Barometer:**  
1026 hPa

Another beautiful day in the Auckland Islands, and one that will be hard to top. Sunshine, glassy water, and barely a whisper of wind, truly a one-in-a-million kind of day in the Sub-Antarctic.

**Course:**  
at anchor  
**Speed:**  
0.0 knots

**Air Temp:**  
10°C

Our morning began in Musgrave Inlet, where the islands showed off their gentler side. We explored hidden caves and cruised beneath a canopy of flowering rātā, accompanied by the songs of bellbirds and tūi drifting through the trees. Then came the penguins, and what a penguin bonanza it was. Rockhopper penguins were everywhere: launching themselves into the water, hopping across rugged rocks, squabbling, calling, and going about their busy lives with endless personality. As if that wasn't special enough, we were also treated to a sighting of a solitary hoiho, quietly

standing apart. Watching these birds up close, unhurried and undisturbed, was nothing short of magical. Reluctantly, we returned to *Douglas Mawson*, knowing another adventure awaited further south.

The afternoon delivered something entirely different, and equally unforgettable. Our passage through the Victoria Passage was spectacular. Being able to transit the narrow gap between Auckland Island and Adam's Island is a rare privilege, and today it lived up to its reputation. The sea boiled and surged, waves rebounding off steep cliffs as if we'd been tossed into a washing machine.

On the northern side, a white-capped albatross colony clung to the cliffs; on the southern side, dark tunnels yawned



# Auckland Islands

DAY 4 | 20 January 2026

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**Latitude:**  
50°39'8" S  
**Longitude:**  
166°10'9" E

**Wind Speed:**  
8 knots NW  
**Barometer:**  
1026 hPa

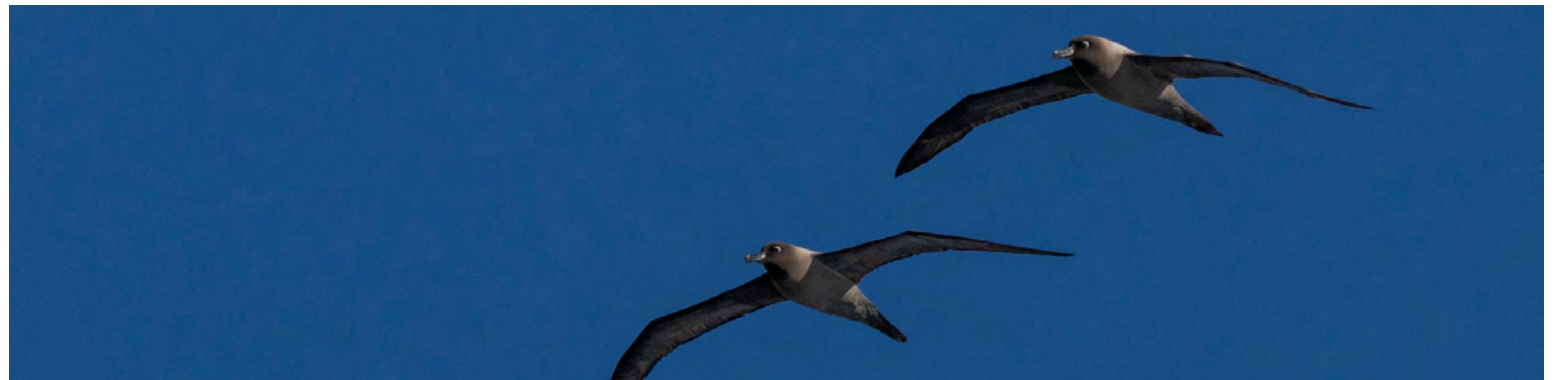
**Course:**  
at anchor  
**Speed:**  
0.0 knots

**Air Temp:**  
10°C

open in the rock. Light-mantled sooty albatrosses soared effortlessly overhead as we bobbed, pitched, and stared in every direction at once. It was impossible not to imagine what it must have been like navigating this place in a wooden ship, and to feel deep respect for those early explorers.

Now, as evening settles, we are back on board, salty, smiling, and full of stories. Course is set for Campbell Island tomorrow, and after a day like this, anticipation is running high.

● Position at 0600

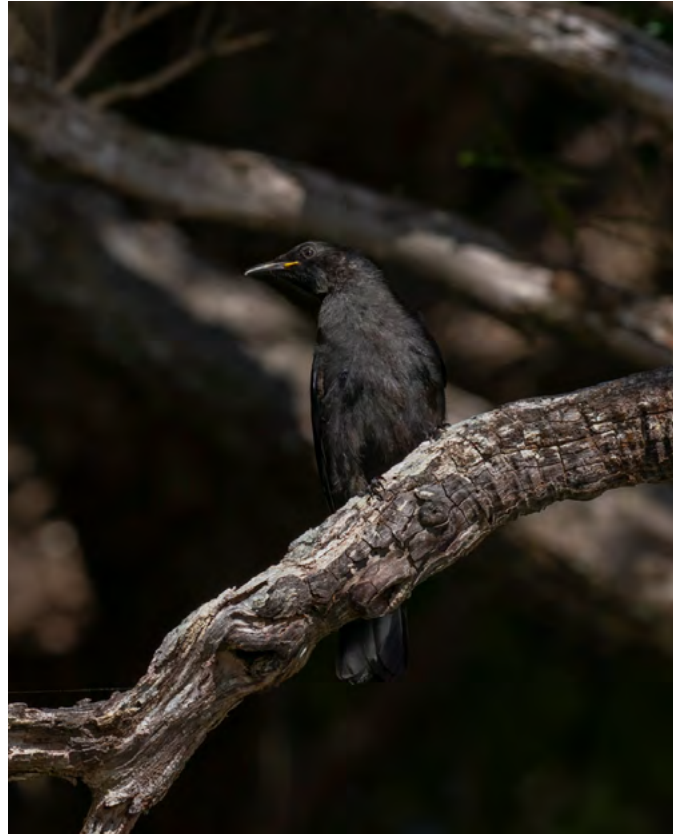












# Campbell Island

DAY 5 | 21 January 2026,

**Latitude:**  
52°22'4" S  
**Longitude:**  
169°11'3"E

**Course:**  
130°  
**Speed:**  
9.6 knots

**Wind Speed:**  
11.8 knots NW  
**Barometer:**  
1018 hPa

**Air Temp:**  
10°C

Well, maybe that's a bit too dramatic, but we had an amazing day nonetheless, and we can't believe how much we fit in. North Cape: quiet, calm, yet full of life at every turn. Cape petrels foraging around the giant kelp, giant jellyfish beneath the surface, terns diving for small fish, cormorants rafting in large groups, and the sheer numbers of albatrosses nesting on the cliffs. But the bonus was the crested penguin sheltering in the ragged rocks beneath the sea cliffs, an extremely rare treat for those who saw this incredible little penguin. It was a wildlife extravaganza. Not to mention impressive caves, a towering sea arch, and rushing waterfalls to make this an even more spectacular outing. But that's the thing about the Sub-Antarctic Islands: there is always something more.

This was evident as we reached one of the most special

places on Campbell Island, Col Lyall. This place is the epitome of the Sub-Antarctic Islands. The scenery alone takes your breath away. Beautiful hills, steep cliffs, with valleys filled with a myriad of flora leading to ocean inlets make for a magical place. From your first step on land, you feel privileged to be here, and even more so as you receive a gruff welcome from a large male sea lion.

Often blocking our route from the Zodiac and across our path, these big mammals really make their presence known.

But the agenda for the day was to climb the wooden boardwalk to the top of the island. For many, there was excitement and intrigue, but also a hint of trepidation, as the 7 km return walk required a little more commitment. It was hard



# Campbell Island

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169°11'3"E

**Wind Speed:**  
11.8 knots NW  
**Barometer:**  
1018 hPa

**Course:**  
130°  
**Speed:**  
9.6 knots

**Air Temp:**  
10°C

to resist: the lush forest and the vibrant colours of the ferns, lilies, daisies, orchids, and so much more. The vibrant colours of all the megaherbs were astonishing.

Wait! Did we forget to mention that we saw southern royal albatrosses along the narrow path, nesting and flying overhead? There was even one special sighting of a pair that were certainly reaffirming their bond.

Let's see what tomorrow brings.









# At Sea – Southern Ocean

DAY 6 | 22 January 2026

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**Latitude:**  
55°19'9" S

**Longitude:**  
170°10'2" E

**Course:**  
172°

**Speed:**  
12.8 knots

**Wind Speed:**  
15 knots N

**Barometer:**  
1000 hPa

**Air Temp:**  
11°C

Today was one of those days where you somehow fit everything in and still wonder where the time went.

We started the morning gently with breakfast, easing into the day with coffee, warm food, and plenty of excited chatter about what lay ahead.

Shortly after, we gathered in the Lecture Theatre for the daily recap with the E-Team and briefing from Roger, which helped set the tone and gave us a clear picture of how packed (and fun) the schedule of the next few days was going to be.

Mid-morning kicked off with a practical highlight: Scott's lecture on how to take better photos with your smartphone. It was surprisingly useful, lots of simple tips that instantly made everyone rethink how they'd been snapping icebergs and wildlife from the decks, Zodiac or land.

Not long after, we stayed put for a fascinating talk on Southern Ocean seabirds with TA. Learning how these birds survive such extreme conditions gave a whole new appreciation for every albatross and petrel we'd spotted so far and will spot soon. From now on, we all love seabirds!

Lunch was a welcome pause, and by early afternoon the *Douglas Mawson* buzzed with activity. There were so many

options: a virtual reality tour of the historic Antarctic huts, the ever-popular iceberg competition (bets were placed with serious intent), and a writing workshop with Expeditioner Belinda for those feeling creative. It was one of those moments where choosing meant missing something else, but in a good way.

Afternoon tea at the S/Y Aurora Bar was the perfect reset before diving into Citizen Science Hour. Between cloud surveys with Ben, eBird surveys with TA, and a hands-on plankton workshop with Jay, it felt great to contribute in small but meaningful ways to science.

As the day wound down, Greg's evening lecture on kelp, *Veils of the Deep*, was unexpectedly fascinating, revealing a hidden underwater world most of us rarely think about.

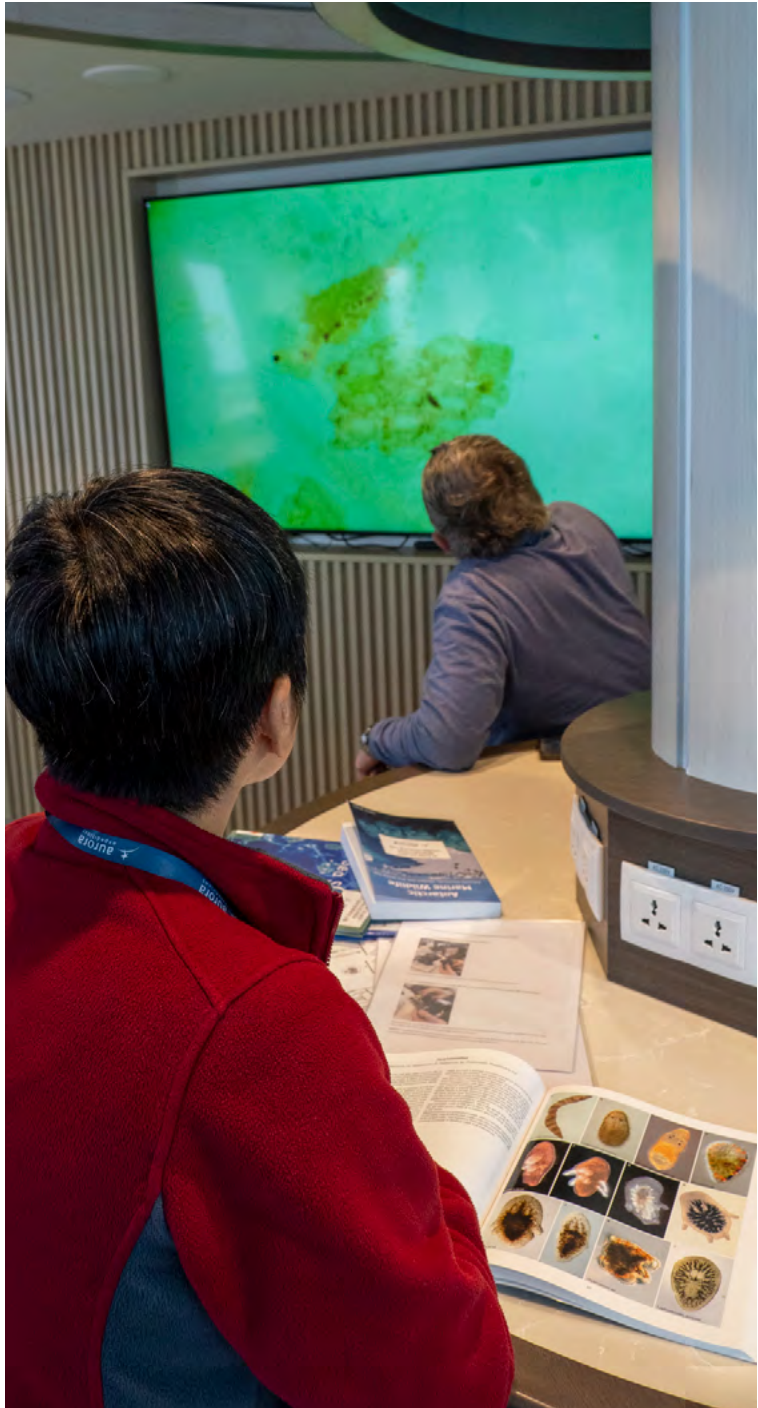
A cocktail and some canapés, before dinner rounded out the evening.

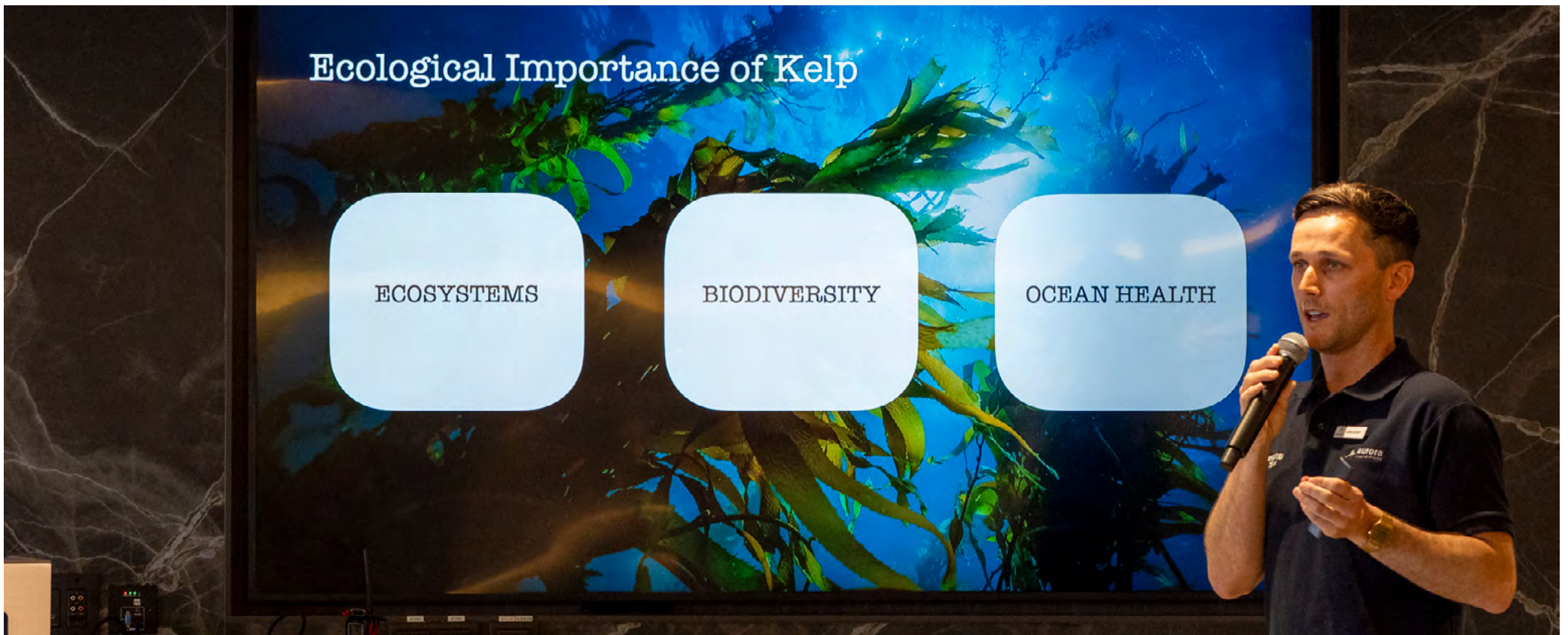
The day ended quietly with movie night and popcorn: *The Last Ocean*, a powerful Ross Sea story that left the room thoughtful and silent as the credits rolled.

A full day at sea, busy, inspiring, and exactly why being onboard the *Douglas Mawson* feels so special.









# At Sea

DAY 7 | 23 January 2026

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**Latitude:**  
60°37'3" S  
**Longitude:**  
172° 23'9" E

**Course:**  
165°  
**Speed:**  
10.5 knots

**Wind Speed:**  
17 knots S  
**Barometer:**  
1002 hPa

**Air Temp:**  
5°C

We woke this morning to a gentle rolling swell across the bow and probably the most movement onboard the ship yet.

A morning lecture by our Citizen Science Coordinator Jay revealed the true depth of the question, why is Antarctica cold? A thrilling lecture that helped to uncover the secrets of the Southern Ocean.

And as the day continued, we began to feel that change in the temperature outside as we crossed the convergence zone where Sub-Antarctic warmer waters meet the cold polar waters of Antarctica and the anticipation continues to build.

Before lunch we were presented with an interesting lecture by Ben M. on the history of the Southern Ocean as a realm discovered by early explorers, sealers and whalers alike.

And for some we were surprised by a short viewing of some pilot whales crossing the bow of the ship!

With a few hours after lunch to rest we continued with activities by having a biosecurity session for our gear in preparation for Antarctica. Interrupting our biosecurity was

an announcement by Roger that the first iceberg of the trip could be seen in the distance on the port side. Whilst this was an exciting sighting it also shocked many people with how quickly one had been seen and for some the realisation that they were unlikely to win the iceberg competition.

The biosecurity session was followed by a workshop hour led by the Expedition Team and Expeditioners including a writing workshop and bird identification.

Many people returned to the theatre in the late afternoon for a screening of a film, *The Great White Silence* which was a silent film that was surprisingly intriguing and showed us more of the extremes of the Antarctic continent.

An earlier dinner tonight helped us get some much-needed rest after the excitement of the day's events and all the activities being offered.

So, we said goodnight tonight to the gentle rocking of the ship and the building excitement for our arrival soon in the Ross Sea.





# At Sea – Southern Ocean – Across the Antarctic Circle

DAY 8 | 24 January 2026

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**Latitude:**  
64°39'9" S  
**Longitude:**  
172°36'4" E

**Course:**  
184°  
**Speed:**  
12.2 knots

**Wind Speed:**  
33 knots W  
**Barometer:**  
998 hPa

**Air Temp:**  
1°C

If today had a theme, it was 'expect the unexpected (and bring snacks).'

We eased into the day in proper ship rhythm: breakfast with a side of wide, grey ocean rolling past the windows, and that lovely sense that anything could happen out here.

The first lecture was perfectly timed: 'Whales of the Ice.' And in the most Southern Ocean move possible, it was interrupted by a whale outside, the real-life guest speaker nobody scheduled. Heads swivelled, pointing commenced, and for a moment the lecture theatre became a delighted, whispering lookout. Hard to compete with a whale, to be fair.

After that, we stayed in discovery mode with a Virtual Reality Huts Tour, followed by a second lecture: 'Pioneering Spirit of Sir James Clark Ross,' with Expeditioner Philippa Ross, another reminder that the ocean we're gliding across has been daring people into stories for centuries.

Early afternoon Workshop Hour offered plenty to dip into:

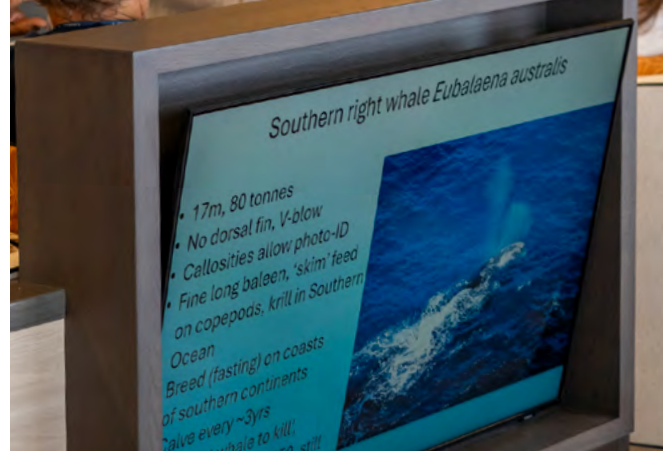
more virtual reality, a writing workshop with Belinda, bird photography with Scott, and some seriously tempting creative time (hello, Zentangle art).

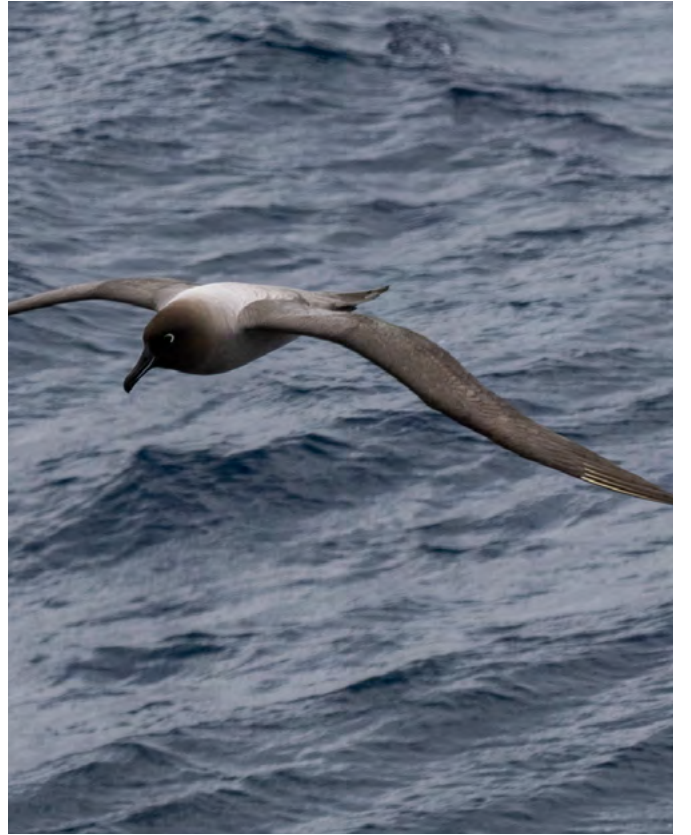
Later, we got practical with biosecurity: boots and gear getting the attention they deserve before landings.

We then rounded out the learning with 'Introduction to Geology' with Ben. Because even when it's all sea, the rocks are still part of the plot.

And then... the moment. At 18:00 we crossed the Antarctic Circle, and the ship turned it into a proper celebration, complete with a circle stamp on our foreheads. Nothing says 'I did a very cool thing' like walking around grinning with a literal stamp of proof. Silly, joyful, strangely ceremonial... exactly right.

Later, the ship settled into a cheerful buzz as we headed into recap & briefing, all of us a little giddy and very ready for whatever tomorrow brings.





# At Sea – Southern Ocean

DAY 9 | 25 January 2026

**Latitude:**  
69°18'4" S  
**Longitude:**  
178°46'5" E

**Course:**  
159°  
**Speed:**  
12.5 knots

**Wind Speed:**  
16 knots SW  
**Barometer:**  
983 hPa

**Air Temp:**  
-1°C

The mighty Southern Ocean continues to rock us benignly, despite its reputation as the 'wildest ocean in the world'.

We begin our day with the breakfast excitement of a whole host of humpbacks heading north against our southing. We are heading for a gap in the ice band that so often delays voyagers' entry to the Ross Sea – past a giant iceberg, which sets us on course direct to McMurdo Sound and the Ross Ice Shelf.

Avi entertains us with 'The Hunt for the End of the World' talk, interrupted by another encounter with whales.

As we forge our way into the Ross Sea, it is timely that Sean's lecture reminds us of the two main types of ice – sea ice is

frozen sea water, and icebergs are frozen fresh water. We are starting to see both these types of ice, and an occasional Weddell seal or Adélie penguin inhabiting the floes. Now we are really starting to feel Antarctic!

It's a good sea afternoon for various activities – our New Zealand Antarctic Heritage Trust representative Ella runs sessions of the Virtual Reality tour of Scott's Discovery hut; Jay runs a timely HappyWhale session; Belinda assembles her writing workshop; and Avi her visual art sessions. Such a full and rich schedule.

Amidst all this, the decision is made to go to 'Plan B' because conditions favour it, so we head towards Cape Adare.



# At Sea – Southern Ocean

DAY 9 | 25 January 2026

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**Longitude:**  
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**Course:**  
159°  
**Speed:**  
12.5 knots

**Wind Speed:**  
16 knots SW  
**Barometer:**  
983 hPa

**Air Temp:**  
-1°C

Ben M takes us through the story of the British Antarctic Expedition 1898-1900. Headed by the Norwegian Carsten Borchgrevink, this was the first expedition to overwinter on the Antarctic continent and kicked off the next 20 years of expeditions of the so called 'Heroic Age'.

We continue to be favoured with sunny weather and calm seas, and after another delicious dinner Ryan and Ben tell the tale of the stranding of the Akademik Shokalsky in Eastern Antarctica 2013-14, and the role of the plastic dog 'Stay' in the eventual rescue. We have Stay's ancestral twin Stay 2 on board, raising

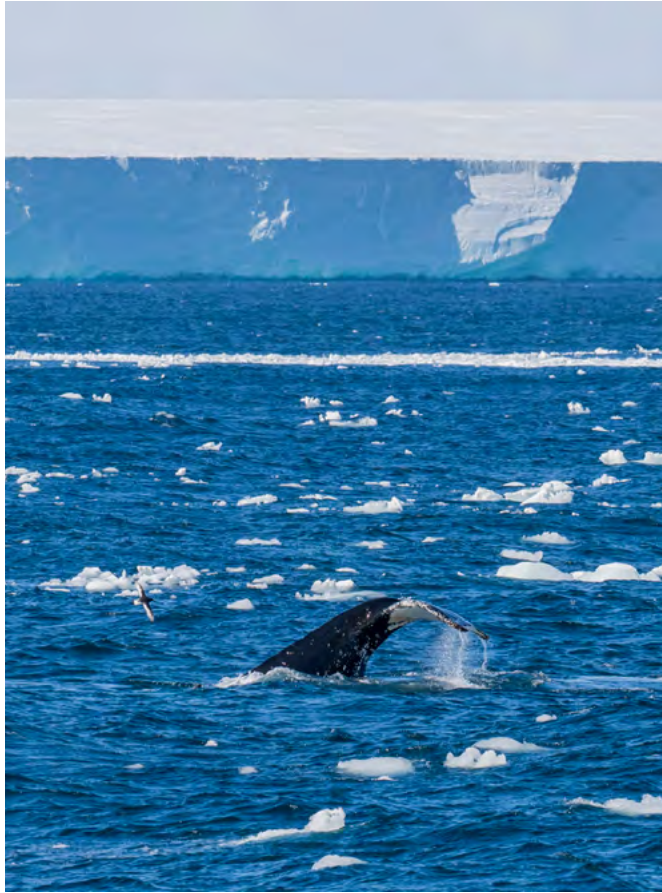
funds for Guide Dogs Tasmania, from whence she hails.

As this talk ends, many go onto the observation decks to see our Captains take the Douglas through our first pack ice. What an exciting, wonderful experience it is, to feel the ship shudder, see the floes split and glide smoothly apart, as the sun floods across the ice-filled seascape ahead. Seals, penguins, and the occasional whale in the un-setting golden sun keep many entranced long after a sensible bedtime.

A fitting end to a marvelous introduction to the Ross Sea.









# Cape Adare

DAY 10 | 26 January 2026

**Latitude:**  
71°51'2" S  
**Longitude:**  
173°36'9" E

**Course:**  
301°  
**Speed:**  
12.9 knots

**Wind Speed:**  
17 knots N  
**Barometer:**  
990 hPa

**Air Temp:**  
-1°C

This morning kicked off with Kyle giving us a brilliant crash course on the seals of Antarctica. Suddenly every dark shape on the ice became a potential wildlife spotting: Weddell's, crab-eaters, the occasional leopard seal... but now we can actually identify what we are looking at!

Late morning, we spotted land ahead. Cape Adare rose in the distance and the seas were incredibly calm and glassy (something we seem to be getting used to!). On approach, we passed an iceberg that stole the show: it had a blowhole where the swell would surge underneath and then explode upward like a mini volcano. It was so unique it made us feel like kids seeing something exciting for the first time. All around us the ocean was alive. Porpoising penguins, seals hauled out on drifting ice, wildlife everywhere you looked.

Once we arrived, the team did a scout. The north beach was getting hit with big swell, but the south beach gave us a safe window. We threaded between ice floes stacked with hundreds of Adélie penguins, only to then step ashore and weave through thousands of Adélie penguins! Including their round, fluff-ball chicks chatting away and eagerly awaiting their next meal.

We moved slowly and gently through the colony toward Borchgrevink's hut, passing relics of the early expedition: the ships anchor used to prevent the huts roof from blowing right off, old barrels weathered into the environment - some now repurposed as perfect circular, sheltered Adélie nests.

Inside the hut, it hit hard how brutal that first overwintering



# Cape Adare

DAY 10 | 26 January 2026

**Latitude:**  
71°51'2" S  
**Longitude:**  
173°36'9" E

**Course:**  
301°  
**Speed:**  
12.9 knots

**Wind Speed:**  
17 knots N  
**Barometer:**  
990 hPa

**Air Temp:**  
-1°C

must have been. The poignant hand drawn sketches on the ceiling gave a distinct feeling of relatability - a person just like us had laid there and drawn it.

During dinner the restaurant was buzzing with stories and laughter as we sailed away. The sea was like a mirror, the sun hovered low and shone gold over the mountain range.

Many Expeditioners fought the (sensible) pull to go to bed, staying up on deck 8 until after midnight watching minke and humpback whales breach and feed. One lucky soul even had a skua attempt a landing on their head.

A true expedition day, sobering, fun and completely unforgettable.













# Ross Sea

DAY 11 | 27 January 2026

**Latitude:**  
73°13'2" S  
**Longitude:**  
171°36'9" E

**Course:**  
188°  
**Speed:**  
11.3 knots

**Wind Speed:**  
11 knots NE  
**Barometer:**  
978 hPa

**Air Temp:**  
1°C

Waking up to a smooth, flat Ross Sea is a strange thing. Usually, this is a place where howling winds and monstrous seas ensure that we are working hard to keep our balance onboard a rocking and rolling ship. For us though, we have had an amazingly good run of weather. Something we rarely see down here! But nonetheless, lady luck has been on our side (so far at least), and we continue to sail along a glass like mirror as we head even further south down into this cold wonderland.

Today we are at sea, recharging and reflecting on the wonderful landing we experienced yesterday at Cape Adare. Last night we were lucky to see our first emperor penguin, and for those who stayed up late, plenty of minke whales in the beautiful late evening light.

As we are making our way to Ross Island, a very significant area in the history of polar exploration, it is time to learn about some of the expeditions of the heroic age. Ben M. shares the story of Shackleton's Nimrod expedition (with a hilarious rendition of an emperor penguin with a Scottish accent), and Avi recounts Scott's Terra Nova expedition. This is the perfect way to prepare us for our planned visits to both Shackleton's

and Scott's huts tomorrow and to build some anticipation and excitement.

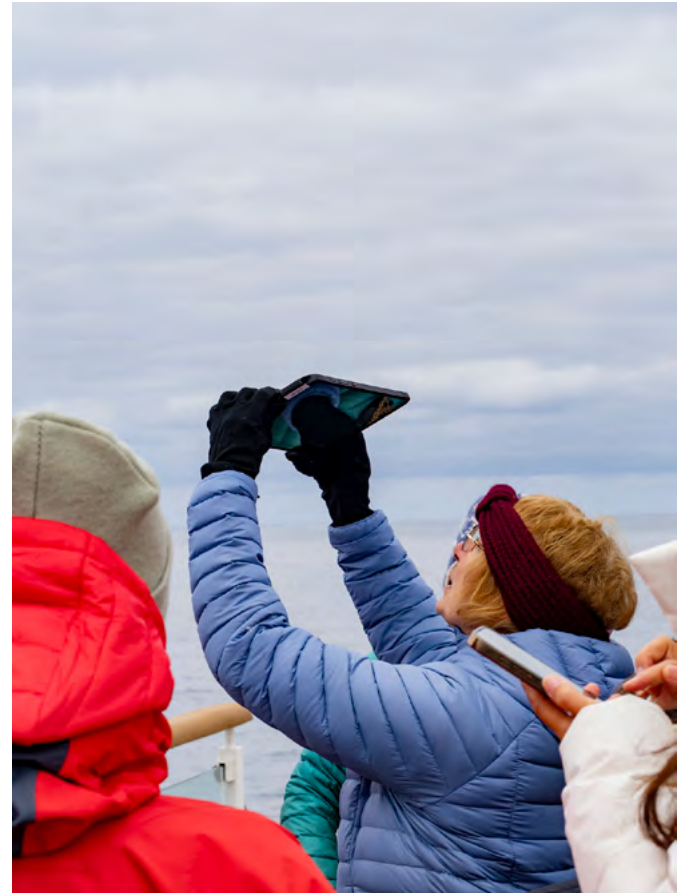
Of course, we cannot forget about our feathered friends that we'll also be seeing more of, and TA gives us a wonderful presentation on penguins and all the fun facts about these quirky little critters.

A beautiful calm day like this also demands some time on deck soaking in the 'Ross lake' and keeping an eye out for wildlife. minke whales are sporadically spotted throughout the day, whilst an afternoon passing of some drift ice reveals several seals. The sun makes an appearance in the late afternoon, and it is divine to just soak in a bit of vitamin D.

Just before the briefing, we spot a pod of killer whales! Although somewhat distant, this is a very exciting sight and our first taste of these beautiful animals.

After the sighting, we learn in the briefing about our plans for the hut visits on the following day. What an exciting time ahead! The weather looks somewhat challenging, but we hope for a successful day to follow.





# Cape Royds & Cape Evans

DAY 12 | 28 January 2026

**Latitude:**  
77°47'4" S  
**Longitude:**  
166°16'8" E

**Course:**  
229°  
**Speed:**  
12.9 knots

**Wind Speed:**  
13 knots NE  
**Barometer:**  
979 hPa

**Air Temp:**  
-1°C

We began entering McMurdo Sound at 6:00 a.m., greeted by light winds, high cloud, and spectacular views of Mount Erebus. Many of us were already gathered in the observation lounge and out on deck, eager for what lay ahead.

As we passed Cape Bird, the shelter of Mt. Erebus fell away, and the wind hit us hard, gusts up to 40 knots, but spirits remained high.

Visiting both Shackleton's Hut at Cape Royds and Scott's Hut at Cape Evans in a single day felt like a rare privilege. The contrast between the two sites gave everyone plenty to reflect on.

As each hut could accommodate only eight people at a time, we divided into three groups and ran six Zodiac shuttles per group.

The Expedition Team guided us through the ASPAs (Antarctic Specially Protected Areas), into the huts, and back out again before releasing us to explore independently.

Operations ran smoothly, thanks in large part to Ella from the New Zealand Antarctic Heritage Trust, whose enthusiasm was infectious, and to Ben M., who oversaw operations at both sites.

At Cape Royds, a gentle 25-minute walk led us from the landing site to the hut, with Mount Erebus looming beautifully behind us the entire way. We had an eight-minute hut visit before continuing to a penguin viewing point overlooking the Adélie penguin colony.



# Cape Royds & Cape Evans

DAY 12 | 28 January 2026

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77°47'4" S  
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**Speed:**  
12.9 knots

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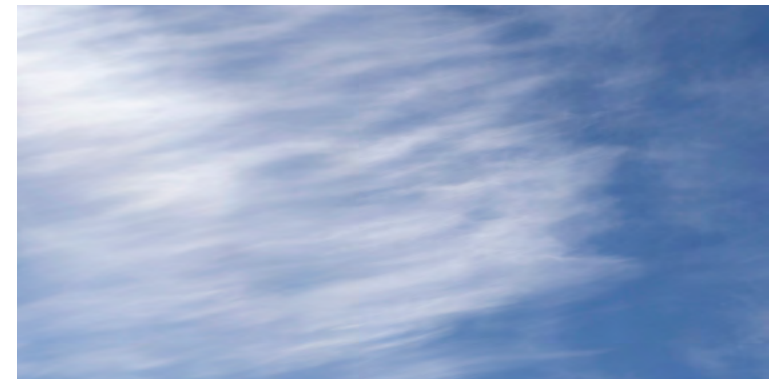
Cape Evans followed a similar rhythm. The landing was just a three-minute walk from the hut, and each group had twelve minutes inside, what a privilege!! About half of us opted for a longer hike to a high lookout point, where sweeping views of McMurdo Sound and the glaciated slopes of Mount Erebus opened dramatically.

An unexpected highlight at Cape Evans was the sighting of a fin whale just offshore, an extraordinary moment, as Pete noted he had never heard of a fin whale being recorded in the Ross Sea. The news spread quickly through the groups, adding an extra

layer of wonder to an already remarkable landing.

After three and a half hours ashore, we returned to the ship just in time for a slightly late dinner.

But the day still wasn't over. We cruised along the ice edge until midnight, with lots of us gathered in the observation lounge. Orcas spy-hopping through holes in the fast ice, others racing past, Adélie penguins, Weddell seals, and golden light on the mountains made for an unforgettable end to an unforgettable day



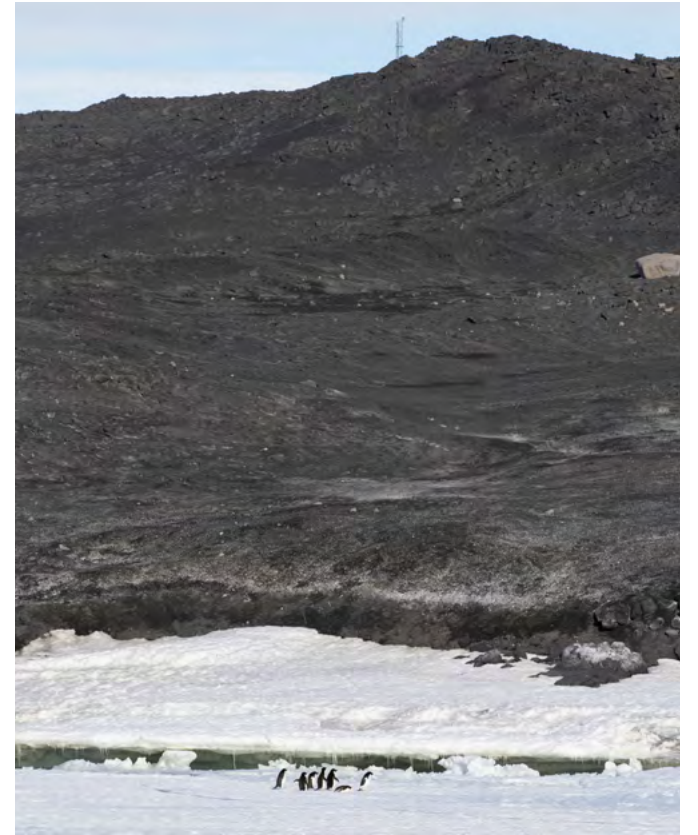














# Cape Bird & Ross Ice Shelf

DAY 13 | 29 January 2026

**Latitude:**  
77°12'9" S  
**Longitude:**  
165°05'8" E

**Course:**  
356°  
**Speed:**  
7.8 knots

**Wind Speed:**  
15 knots SSE  
**Barometer:**  
978 hPa

**Air Temp:**  
-2°C

After an amazing evening reflecting on the yesterday glimpse into history, we awoke this morning further north, off the south-east coast of Cape Bird.

Named for the second in command of James Clark Ross's ship the Erebus, Cape Bird is the northern-most point of Ross Island and was formed by the earliest of the four volcanic centers which make up Ross Island. The grey overcast morning seemed a fitting backdrop for the imposing, glacier clad coastline of basalt bluffs and ice cliffs.

After an early breakfast the Zodiacs were launched, and exploration of the coastline began. A lonely emperor penguin kept their distance no doubt somewhat bemused by the unusual black icebergs ridden by a new species of blue and red penguins.

Cape Bird is the site of the southern-most Adélie rookery with approximately 40 000 nesting pairs, and they were out in force with their wonderful antics, lining icebergs, bustling around the shoreline and marching hither and thither to apparently very important meetings. Around the edges of the colonies and in the sky overhead the skuas waited for their opportunity to indulge in a buffet lunch. Also prowling the ice

edge for an easy meal was a leopard seal observed by a lucky few.

Amongst all this action the intrepid kayakers paddled north along the coast, icebergs collapsed and the sea ice ground itself into oblivion against the shoreline. The mornings chilliness called for a pre-lunch hot chocolate, so it was back to the ship in time for the lunchtime BBQ. Perfectly mature adults donned strange headgear to indulge in the 'summertime' ritual of burgers, sausages and salads all consumed at -20C.

After lunch we warmed up inside watching as Cape Crozier slipped by on starboard. Site of the epic 'Worst Journey in the World' it looked suitably bleak and quickly gave way to the western end of the Ross Ice Shelf. The size of France, this floating mass of glacial ice stretches over 1000 kms (620 miles) to the south, increasing in thickness from 100-250m near the ice front to 750m near the inland grounding line. A 70 knots katabatic wind blowing off the iceshelf gave us a real taste of how unforgiving Antarctica can be, and we soon turned tail and set a course for tomorrow's adventure near the Drygalski Ice Tongue.



# Ross Sea

DAY 14 | 30 January 2026

Latitude: x  
Longitude: x  
Course: x  
Speed: x

Wind Speed: x  
Barometer: x  
Air Temp: x°

Well- how things can change in a sleepy few hours. The happy bing-bong of the P.A system summonsed us to a post-breakfast meeting to discuss a new plan.

Having been enroute to the Drygalski Ice Tongue and the northern Victoria Land Coast last night, we were now enroute directly north. Conditions are king down here in the deep south with little room for error and overnight the ship's Captain Jorge and Roger had read the tea leaves and dissected the chickens entrails (actually carefully perused the rapidly changing weather and ice forecasts) and come to the reluctant decision that coming out of Terra Nova Bay under forecast wind, swell and ice presented a hazard to life and limb that was not acceptable. So, in the interests of safety and comfort we adjusted our overnight course to starboard and headed for the break in the band of sea ice guarding the entrance to the Ross Sea.

Once we had adjusted ourselves to the new reality, Pat educated us about the weird and wonderful organisms living under the ice. Accompanied by the dulcet tones of David Attenborough narrating the amazing footage of the 'brinicles' forming between the undersurface of the sea ice and the seafloor, we learnt about the amazing adaptations of beasties

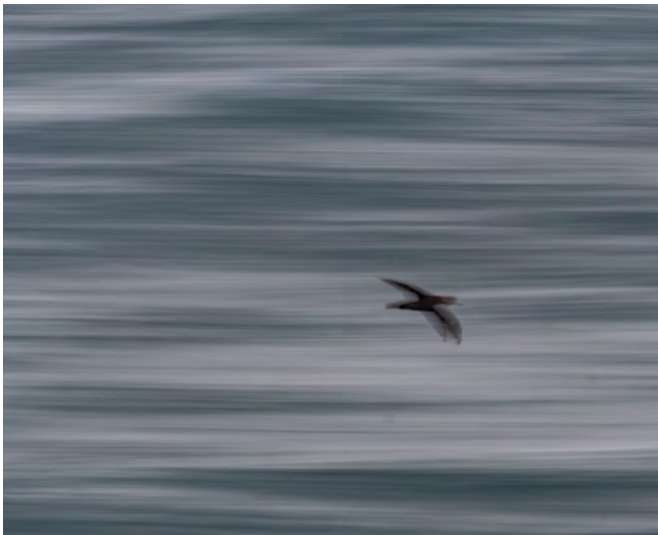
such as the tooth fish (*Dissostichus mawsoni*) or chilean sea bass for those with a culinary bent, and the white-blooded crocodile ice fish (*Channichthyidae*).

Workshop hour saw artists, writers and citizen scientists beavering away as well and some folk re-exploring the historic huts via the VR headsets.

Later in the afternoon a panel of the E-team members gave their thoughts on various topics in a question-and-answer session. The discussion ranged from climate change to Antarctic out-reach and provided a thought-provoking platform for sharing thoughts and ideas on the amazing places we have travelled in.

After another magnificent dinner Matty gave us a fantastic insight into life on the biggest national base on the continent, McMurdo Station, from William and Harry to the difficulties of constructing an ice wharf in this difficult environment.

And finally, after a busy day of twists and turns we were rocked gently to sleep by 4-5m Ross Sea rollers.





# Southern Ocean

DAY 15 | 31 January 2026

**Latitude:**  
70°49'4" S  
**Longitude:**  
179° 29'5" E

**Course:**  
335°  
**Speed:**  
10.2 knots

**Wind Speed:**  
32 knots SW  
**Barometer:**  
964 hPa

**Air Temp:**  
0°C

Weary eyes and green-tinged faces flooded the breakfast tables as we rolled our way out of the Ross Sea. Our adventure had been fortunate, the weather gods largely favouring us, but as so often happens in these latitudes, their goodwill was fleeting. All too easily they abandoned us as we turned north for lower latitudes, leaving us to contend with the full temperament of the Southern Ocean.

The last day of January was spent entirely at sea as we pressed onward toward Macquarie Island. Lumps of cold, deep, bluish-black water rose and fell around us, bashing the ship from all sides and humbling the mighty expedition vessel as it was slowly chewed and digested in the gullet of the great Southern Ocean. The *Douglas Mawson* groaned and shuddered, yet pushed steadily forward, a testament to her

strength and the skill of those guiding her.

Despite the motion, spirits on board remained remarkably high. If anything, the conditions created the perfect atmosphere for an immersive experience of what true polar expeditions must have felt like. There was no escaping the environment, every roll, every creak, every clatter of crockery served as a reminder of where we were and what these oceans demand.

Historic tales of Amundsen's hunt for the Pole were woven together with Ben's stories and depictions of South Pole travel in the modern era. Sledge hauling, glacier travel, crevasse rescue, and life in a survivalist igloo were all simulated by various guides throughout the day, bringing the Heroic Age



# Southern Ocean

DAY 15 | 31 January 2026

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**Course:**  
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10.2 knots

**Wind Speed:**  
32 knots SW  
**Barometer:**  
964 hPa

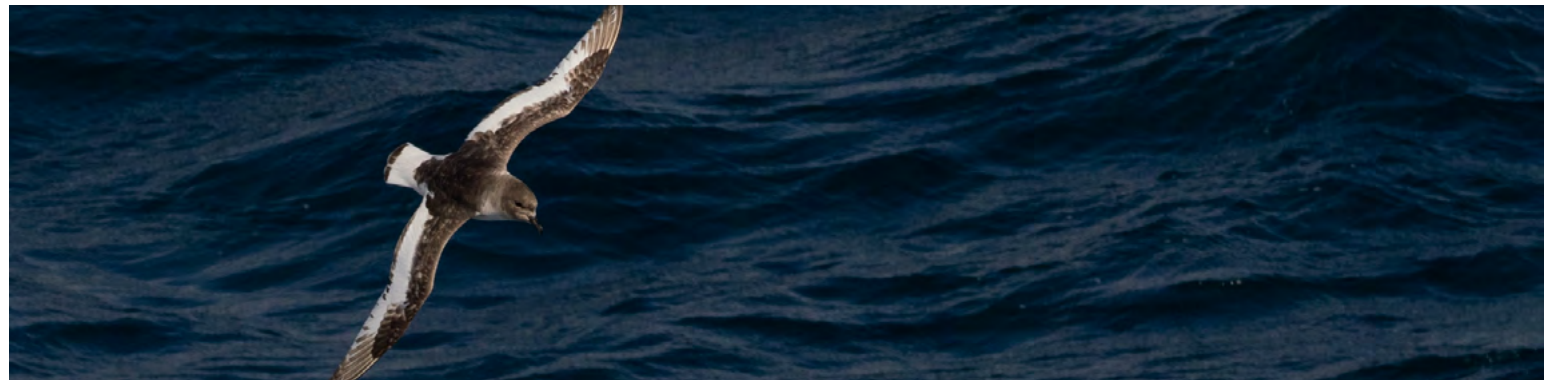
**Air Temp:**  
0°C

vividly to life within the confines of the ship.

The program continued with a deeply thought-provoking presentation on the psychological demands of polar exploration, what allowed some individuals and teams to thrive, and what accelerated the demise of others when isolation, cold, and uncertainty took hold.

As evening approached, the ship shimmied between the last

remnants of pack ice and passed through the gates of the Southern Ocean. Winds abated, swells eased, and the sea transformed. A warm orange glow stretched unbroken to every horizon, reflected across a glassy surface rarely seen in these waters. Humpback whales tipped their caps to those on deck, almost as if farewelling us. Our time in the Ross Sea had drawn to a close, a new chapter now opening, with one of the world's most beautiful sub-Antarctic islands eagerly awaiting our arrival.







# Southern Ocean

DAY 16 | 01 February 2026

**Latitude:**  
67°23'6" S  
**Longitude:**  
173°24'5" E

**Course:**  
325°  
**Speed:**  
10.3 knots

**Wind Speed:**  
8 knots NNE  
**Barometer:**  
973 hPa

**Air Temp:**  
0°C

Another action-packed day at sea as we continued to make good progress northwards. Early-birds enjoyed a brilliant sunrise and met the first of the day's pintado (Cape) petrels and light mantled albatrosses. Pete kicked-off today's ocean-themed education program with a fascinating, sobering and ultimately hopeful story of the history of whaling in the Antarctic and Southern Ocean.

Ella welcomed more of us inside the New Zealand Antarctic Heritage Trust huts as the virtual reality tours continued. And, after the mid-morning coffee machine queue subsided, T-A shared a presentation on marine debris, including the impacts of ocean plastic on seabirds, and lots of positive steps we can take to tackle this quite enormous environmental challenge.

More seabirds turned up by lunchtime, including the first southern fulmar in almost a week. The afternoon workshop hour lured many of us away from potential siestas as we chatted all things phytoplankton with Jay, honed our creative writing skills with Belinda, ducked back into the virtual huts with Ella or joined Phillipa for a mindfulness workshop and the opportunity to bring our focus back to the here and now in the middle of the ocean.

The sea state settled further during the afternoon, making for a very comfortable viewing of David Attenborough's latest film, Ocean.

The kitchen team kindly made popcorn for us, and we crunched along in unison with the on-screen wrasse who



# Southern Ocean

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**Course:**  
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**Speed:**  
10.3 knots

**Wind Speed:**  
8 knots NNE  
**Barometer:**  
973 hPa

**Air Temp:**  
0°C

were filmed feasting on small purple urchins. The film was devastating in parts, always beguiling to look at and, ultimately very hopeful. Lots of us have now taken up the challenge to share the film with at least one other person in our lives to help get the message out.

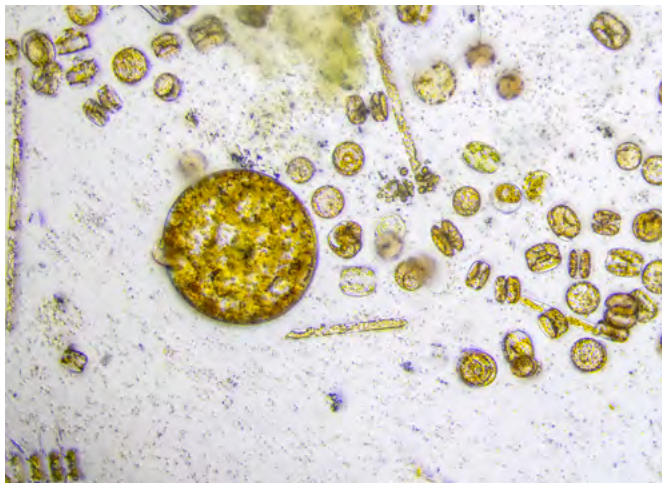
Long-finned pilot whales then a blue whale made a late-afternoon appearance, and a flock of at least 100 sooty shearwaters streamed by heading South. Then Jane joined with the E-Team to give a pre-dinner presentation on fisheries in the Antarctic Treaty zone and generously shared her

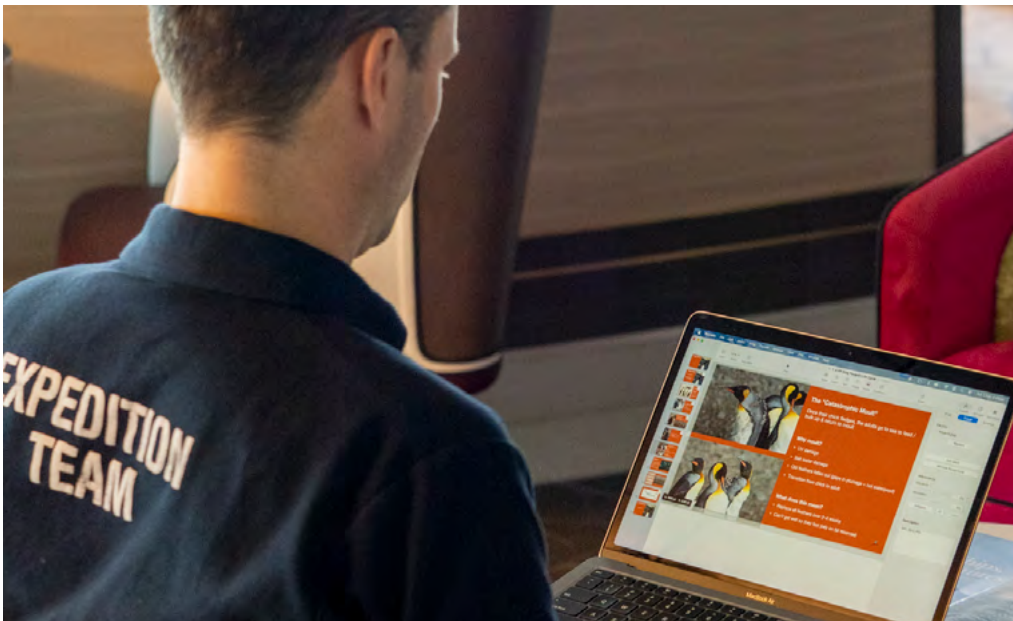
experience and insights from work as a fisheries observer.

More whales popped up during dinner – fin whales this time – then we were surrounded by Antarctic prions zipping about in all directions around the ship.

After dinner, Martin shared some of the stunning images he and Tomas have captured so far on our expedition and let us in on 'the making of' stories from their Northern Hemisphere work on narwhals and polar bears – a fitting reminder of the global importance of all our ocean environments.









# Southern Ocean

DAY 17 | 02 February 2026

**Latitude:**  
67°24.3' S  
**Longitude:**  
167°12.6' E

**Course:**  
328  
**Speed:**  
11.5 knots

**Wind Speed:**  
7 knots W  
**Barometer:**  
982 hPa

**Air Temp:**  
0°C

We woke this morning to the gentle sway of the Southern Ocean.

The kind of motion that makes you briefly wonder whether you're still in bed or already walking like a penguin. As Expeditioners aboard the *Douglas Mawson*, we've learned to accept this as normal life now. Breakfast confirmed it: coffee in hand, ice outside the windows.

Today was officially a 'Chillax Day,' which in expedition terms means fewer PA announcements and a collective agreement to move at a humane pace.

After breakfast, we gathered in the Aurora Bar for board games. Strategies were questionable, friendships were tested, and it became clear that competitive instincts do not freeze at high latitudes.

Mid-morning found us preparing for 'Humans of *Douglas Mawson*.' some of us sat together, swapping stories and realizing that every single one of us has already had a moment of 'Why did I sign up for this?' closely followed by 'I'm so glad I did.' Nearby, others stepped into virtual reality huts tours, travelling back in time without having to wear six layers of socks.

Lunch arrived right on schedule, proving once again that time aboard the ship is measured less in hours and more in meals.

The afternoon unfolded creatively in the Observation Lounge, where we moulded clay, painted freely, and folded origami that may or may not resemble what the instructions promised. The views outside were breathtaking; inside, we created masterpieces only an Expedition Team could love.

Churros and dulce de leche appeared for afternoon tea, boosting morale instantly. Later, we scattered into the library and lounge spaces, some of us refining photo competition entries, others writing, and a few bravely attempting mindfulness while the ship gently rolled beneath us.

As evening approached, the bar became our stage. Guitars were played, stories were shared, voices were raised, and laughter filled the room. Cocktails and canapés followed, because apparently surviving Antarctica requires excellent catering.

We ended the day full, of food, stories, and gratitude, reminded once again that this expedition is not just about where we are going, but about the people we're becoming together aboard the *Douglas Mawson*.



# Southern Ocean

DAY 18 | 03 February 2026

**Latitude:**

59°17.5' S

**Longitude:**

162°36.1' E

**Course:**

332°

**Speed:**

11.3 knots

**Wind Speed:**

27 knots NW

**Barometer:**

988 hPa

**Air Temp:**

5°C

Roger's morning call warned of building seas throughout the day as we wove our way down the hallway to breakfast.

With one more day planned at sea before reaching Macquarie Island, the vast scale of the Southern Ocean is really sinking in. We may be part of one of the last generations of humans who travelled long distances primarily by sea, rather than by air. The world feels so much bigger when we're moving across its surface at 12 knots, and the idea of reaching an isolated, rugged island like Macquarie feels even more remarkable in this vast expanse.

Today's educational program included a second knot-tying session to prepare us for the unique challenges of life at sea. We learned how to lash ourselves to the gunwale of a rolling

ship, an essential skill for safety, and about the incredible efforts being made to rid Macquarie Island of pests. The conservation efforts here have been key in restoring its unique ecosystem. Our final biosecurity session also took place, and everyone now is well-prepared to ensure we don't introduce any foreign species.

After lunch, where we suspect the oranges have run out, we had the opportunity to watch *The Great White Whale*, a documentary about climbing Big Ben Volcano on Heard Island. It was a captivating way to pass the time and fuel the excitement of our upcoming landing. We also had a precap on Macquarie Island, learning more about what makes the island unique in the world, like its incredible birdlife and its role in Antarctic history.



# Southern Ocean

DAY 18 | 03 February 2026

**Latitude:**

59°17.5' S

**Longitude:**

162°36.1' E

**Course:**

332°

**Speed:**

11.3 knots

**Wind Speed:**

27 knots NW

**Barometer:**

988 hPa

**Air Temp:**

5°C

Bouncing and rolling in our seats, we listened to Pete's presentation on his incredible experiences sailing to the Ross Sea. One of his most memorable journeys was to support a summit attempt on Mount Minto. We had seen it from Cape Adare earlier, its icy peak looking like an inhospitable monument to the forces of nature. His tales of riding out Antarctic storms in a small sail craft reinforced his description of being gripped by the fear of the place, fear that ultimately

kept him and his crew alive, focused, and ready for the extreme conditions they faced.

As the day wound down, excitement was building. We prepared for bed, eagerly anticipating the morning when we would wake up with Macquarie Island in view, its rugged cliffs rising from the Southern Ocean, awaiting our arrival.





# Lusitania Bay & Sandy Bay —Macquarie Island

DAY 19 | 04 February 2026

**Latitude:**

55°24.0' S

**Longitude:**

159°18.2' E

**Course:**

327°

**Speed:**

9.9 knots

**Wind Speed:**

18 knots SW

**Barometer:**

991 hPa

**Air Temp:**

4°C

The ship was rocking and rolling as we were approaching Macquarie Island in the morning.

Shortly after breakfast, we started to see a tiny island on the horizon, such an exciting moment after a few days in the open ocean. We were a bit worried about the swell at the coast and were doubting whether we would be able to get off the ship, but as soon as we got into the lee of the island, it became clear that it was going to be an amazing day on Macquarie Island.

We approached Lusitania Bay and enjoyed a spectacular ship cruise along the largest king penguin colony on the island. Around 200,000 birds have reclaimed this place since the grim penguin oil-processing enterprise was shut down here

in 1920. It was a great feeling to witness nature's triumph over the rusting remains of oil-processing machinery. Meanwhile, we gathered on deck 8 for a group photo, capturing a moment that symbolised our shared experience and the achievement from an unforgettable voyage through Antarctica and the New Zealand and Australian Sub-Antarctic islands.

Watching the Macquarie Island Eradication Program video later added even more depth to this moment, showing just how much effort and long-term commitment were required to restore the island's fragile ecosystem.

In the afternoon, we managed to land at Sandy Bay, one of only two available landing sites on the island. A truly magnificent place, it is home to thousands of royal penguins,



# Lusitania Bay & Sandy Bay —Macquarie Island

DAY 19 | 04 February 2026

**Latitude:**  
55°24.0' S  
**Longitude:**  
159°18.2' E

**Wind Speed:**  
18 knots SW  
**Barometer:**  
991 hPa

**Course:**  
327°  
**Speed:**  
9.9 knots

**Air Temp:**  
4°C

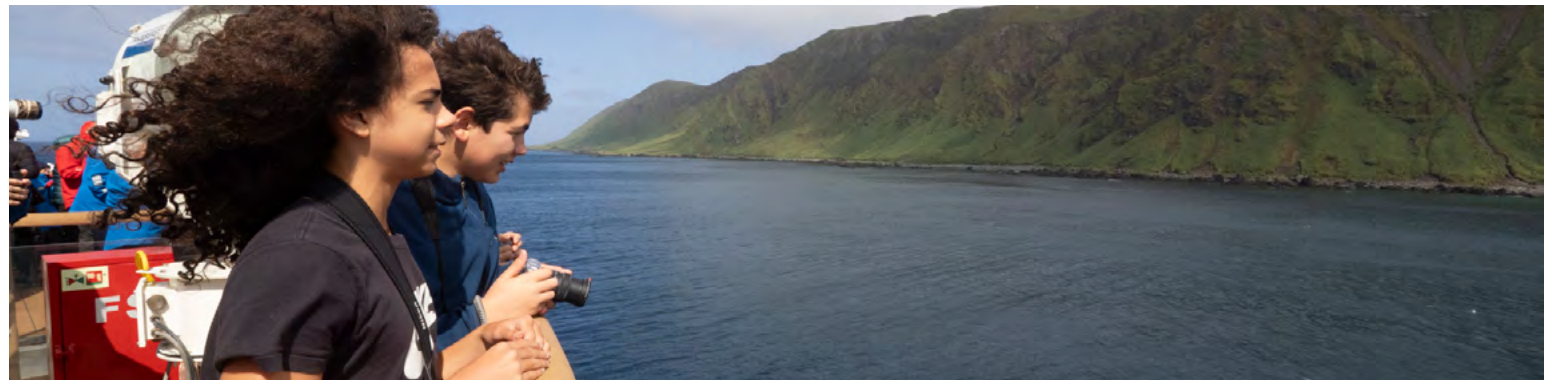
the endemic species of Macquarie Island, whose largest colony is found here. It was so amazing to step on solid ground and explore a place we had been dreaming about for a long time.

The sun was shining, there was almost no swell at the beach, and everyone had a fantastic time walking around and enjoying the richness of wildlife and the dramatic scenery. Royal and king penguins were going in and out of the water, elephant seals were sunbathing on the shore, occasionally

throwing sand on themselves to cool down, while skuas and giant petrels were soaring overhead, always on the lookout for something to feed on. The place was so full of life.

The highlight was walking up the boardwalk to the high point overlooking the royal penguin colony on the hillside, an unforgettable view and a powerful reminder of successful conservation in action.

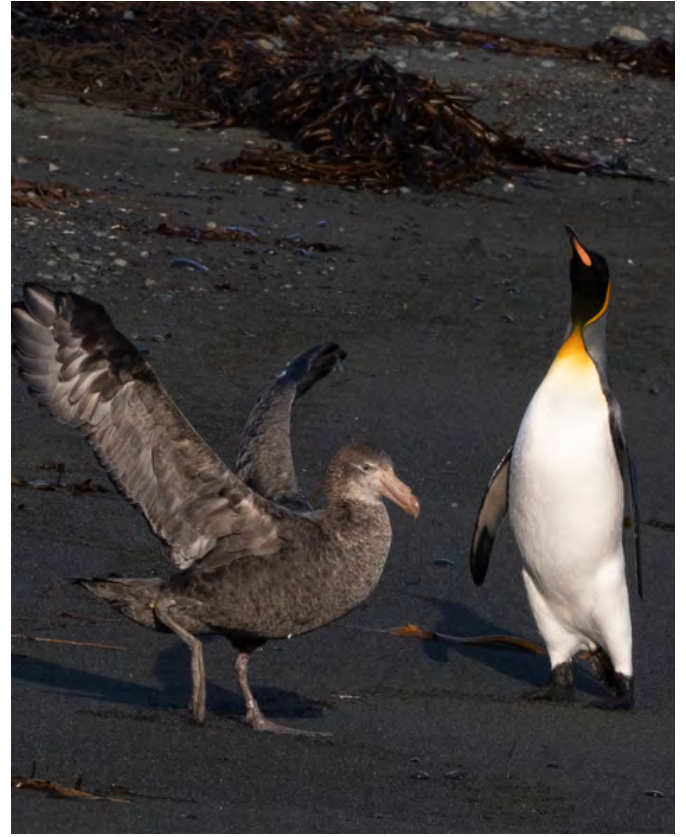
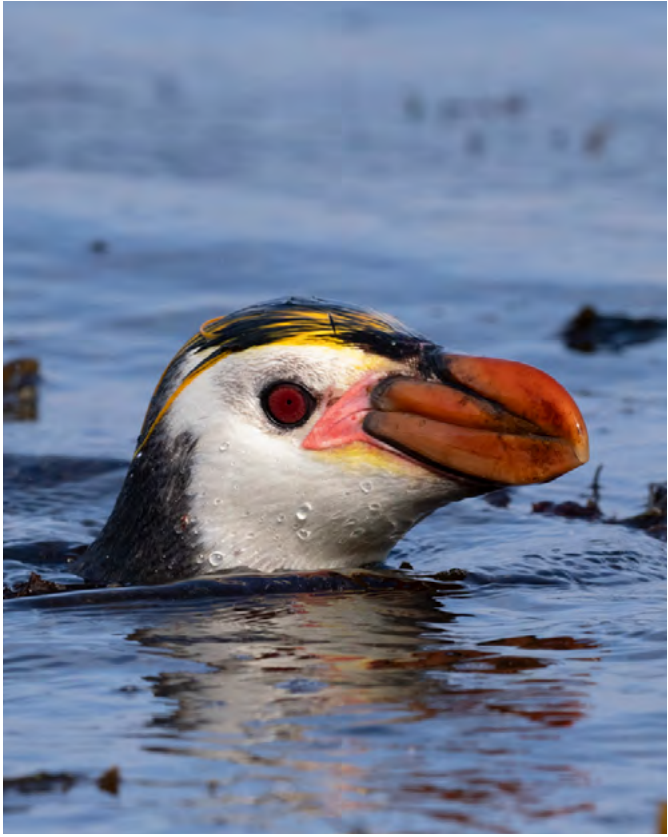
It was truly a day to remember.











# Macquarie Island

DAY 20 | 05 February 2026

**Latitude:**  
54°34.0' S  
**Longitude:**  
158°55.9' E

**Course:**  
at anchor  
**Speed:**  
0.0 knots

**Wind Speed:**  
24 knots NW  
**Barometer:**  
988 hPa

**Air Temp:**  
9°C

This morning's early birds, coffee in hand, peeped out through the dawn to discover that our little ship was completely encircled by King Penguins. Rafts of curious kings were loafing about on the sea, preening, splooshing, contact calling and generally being extremely nose-y about our presence. And as the light lifted, we gradually saw more and more of them (and they, us, presumably!) It's hard to imagine a more extraordinary way to start a day.

After breakfast, and with the wind and swell thankfully still manageable, we took to the Zodiacs and headed for our second Macquarie Island landing, this time at the Isthmus. We were greeted by Anne and Soph, the friendly staff from Tasmania Parks and Wildlife Service and the Australian Antarctic Division, and also a beachful of moulting

Elephant Seals in various states of itchy, grumpy, belching dishevelment.

In contrast to yesterday's blue sky and sunshine conditions, today felt decidedly more 'normal' for the Sub-Antarctics. Misty cloud swirled about the island, and we were properly drizzled upon as we explored the tracks to West Beach, the digesters and the lookout. Along the way we met a cheery band of Gentoo Penguins, Kelp Gulls picking for food along the tideline, a tiny fur seal on a tussock castle, dozens of skuas and giant petrels asleep on the beach and more of our King Penguin friends wandering around in search of something interesting to inspect.

By midday, and with the wind picking up rapidly, it was time



# Macquarie Island

DAY 20 | 05 February 2026

**Latitude:**  
54°34.0' S  
**Longitude:**  
158°55.9' E

**Wind Speed:**  
24 knots NW  
**Barometer:**  
988 hPa

**Course:**  
at anchor  
**Speed:**  
0.0 knots

**Air Temp:**  
9°C

to retreat to our warm dry ship and turn the bow northwards. We battened down the hatches (ie put our laptops on a bed instead of the bench, so nautical!) and farewelled Macca. Bye King Penguins, you were great!

As we sailed away, Dr. Rhys shared his story of life as the sole medic working on Macca for a season (appendectomy not optional). Then followed the Macquarie Island pop-up shop to raise funds for the Macquarie Island Conservation Foundation. Originally scheduled for an hour, everything sold out within 12 minutes, only Orcas at an Elephant Seal party could have

rivalled the feeding frenziness! Great news for the foundation though, thanks on their behalf to everyone who bought a t-shirt, sticker or card.

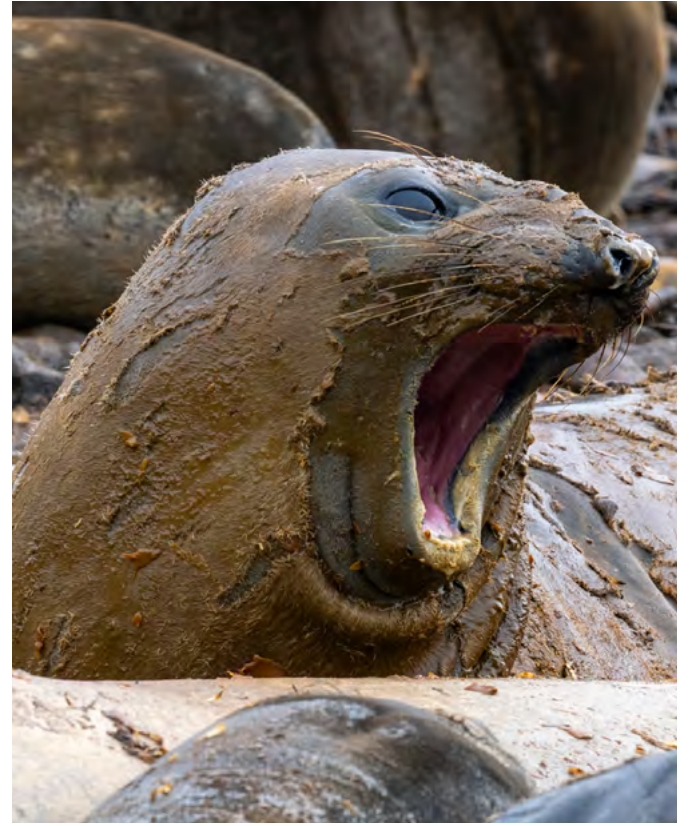
Once the dust settled, we heard from Jay who unravelled the mysteries of time and tides for us. And we wrapped up a huge day with a talk from Roger about his adventures as a seabird researcher including clinging to mountainsides in albatross colonies and hand-raising penguin chicks. We are all very jealous of the last bit!











# At Sea

DAY 21 | 06 February 2026

**Latitude:**  
50°20.7' S  
**Longitude:**  
166°43.5' E  
**Course:**  
024°  
**Speed:**  
10.5 knots

**Wind Speed:**  
43 knots WNW  
**Barometer:**  
993 hPa  
**Air Temp:**  
12°C

We woke to a rough, lumpy sea the kind that makes the horizon bounce, and your cup of tea slide a little too close to the edge. Even so, everyone was in good spirits. By morning tea, the ship had turned into a little storytelling hub for our first round of Humans of *Douglas Mawson*, where Expeditioners shared their skills, travels, passions, and wonderfully niche life experiences.

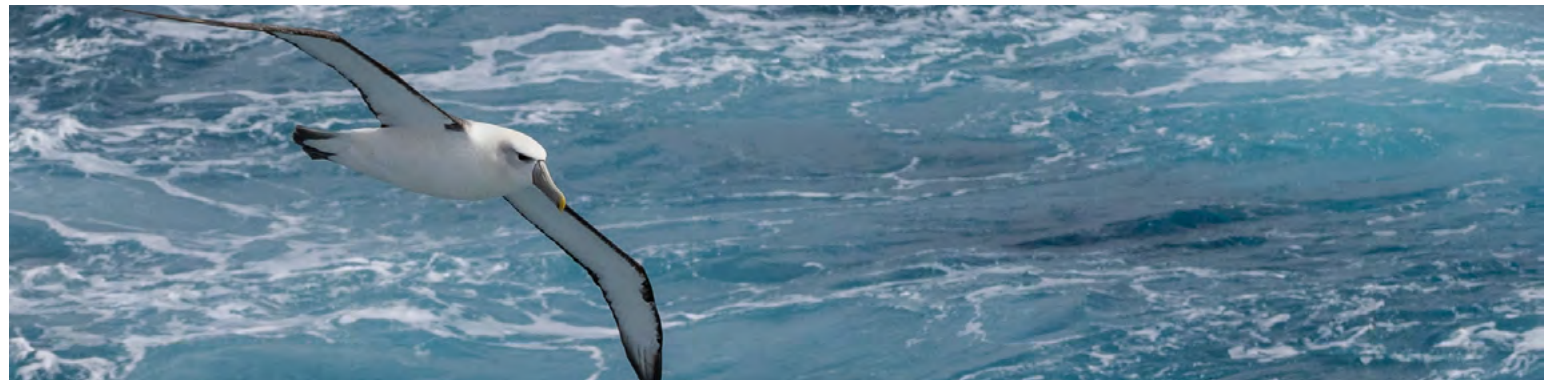
We started the morning with Belinda and My Personal Penguin, then Scott's The Penguin Hunter, and Jim finished the session with Chinese Polar Expedition. Later we had more talks: Peter on Climate and agriculture, Sophie & Chris with Drake shake, and Leonard closed it out with the story of his polar voyage. It was exactly what you want on a sea day

warm, funny, and genuinely interesting.

By lunchtime the ocean had settled into a kinder mood, and we enjoyed a beautiful meal with the feeling that we'd earned it.

The afternoon kept the storytelling going. At 2:30pm, Philippa took us through A Voyage of Rediscovery, sharing her journey and what brought her on this trip. At 4:30pm, Scott took us to the Falkland Islands through his photography, a brilliant armchair expedition full of light, memory, and spectacular scenes.

At 6:15pm we met at the bar, then headed to the theatre for our final Citizen Science recap. We celebrated the projects we've



# At Sea

DAY 21 | 06 February 2026

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**Latitude:**  
50°20.7' S

**Longitude:**  
166°43.5' E

**Wind Speed:**  
43 knots WNW

**Barometer:**  
993 hPa

**Course:**  
024°

**Speed:**  
10.5 knots

**Air Temp:**  
12°C

contributed to and the data we've gathered and heard about the education initiatives linked to Antarctica. Roger wrapped up with a briefing on the next couple of days, with a few different plans ready depending on what the sea decides.

We finished the day with Yvan sharing the story of his epic long paddle north, a great note to end on before everyone sensibly headed off to sleep.

PS: The killer game claimed a new victim today: Gregory killed Sean (during his 'blindfolded' VR experience), with a camera, in the library.







# At Sea

DAY 22 | 07 February 2026

**Latitude:**  
50°12.11' S  
**Longitude:**  
166°52.8' E

**Course:**  
033°  
**Speed:**  
11.3 knots

**Wind Speed:**  
22 knots WNW  
**Barometer:**  
997 hPa

**Air Temp:**  
11°C

After a sheltered night tucked in around the Auckland Islands, we've turned our bows toward New Zealand and spent the day in full learning mode as the miles slipped quietly by.

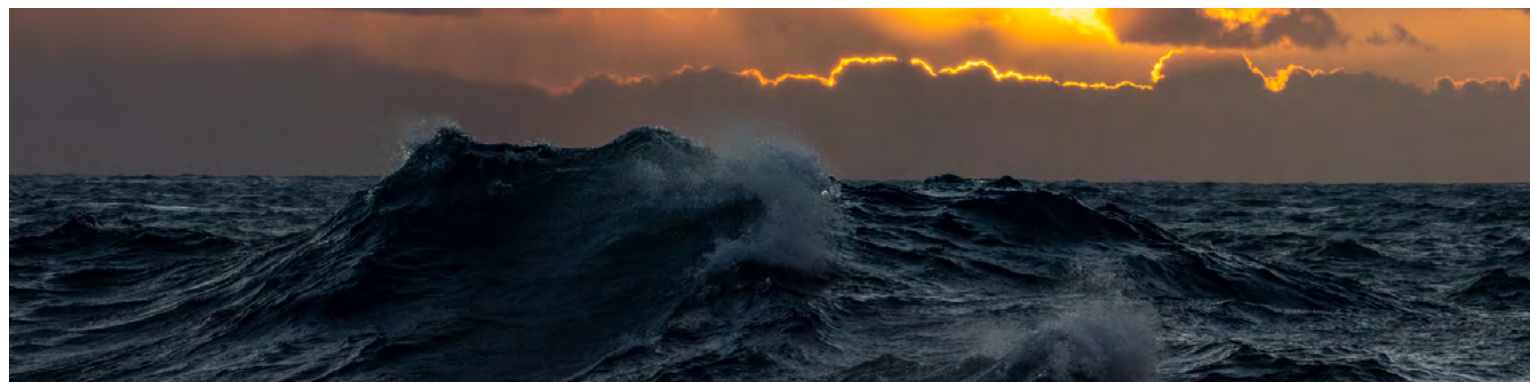
Our workshop hour had something for everyone. The creative writing group gathered while the Citizen Science crew kept busy with an eBird survey and uploads to Happywhale. Every checklist and whale fluke photo adds another small but meaningful piece to the global puzzle of wildlife research, not bad for a day at sea.

Meanwhile, the ever-talented hotel team revealed the secrets behind their towel-folding wizardry. Under their guidance, ordinary bath towels transformed into an improbable zoo of animals. Our attempts were enthusiastic... if not always

anatomically correct.

Ashley then took us behind the scenes of our sturdy home afloat, the *Douglas Mawson*. From her build to the systems that keep everything running smoothly, we gained a new appreciation for the engineering and teamwork that carry us safely across vast Southern Ocean distances. Later in the afternoon, bridge tours gave many of us a chance to step into the nerve center of the ship, watching navigation in action, scanning radar screens, and seeing firsthand where decisions are made as we thread our way through these waters.

The evening brought us back to Antarctica in spirit. Ella from the New Zealand Antarctic Heritage Trust shared the story of the conservation work being done to preserve the historic



# At Sea

DAY 22 | 07 February 2026

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**Latitude:**  
50°12.11' S

**Longitude:**  
166°52.8' E

**Course:**  
033°

**Speed:**  
11.3 knots

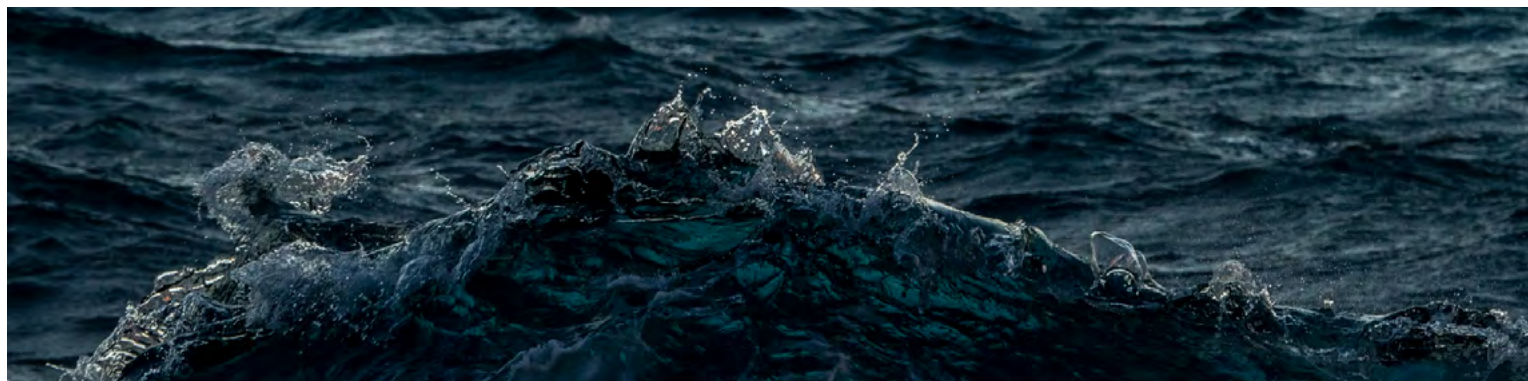
**Wind Speed:**  
22 knots WNW

**Barometer:**  
997 hPa

**Air Temp:**  
11°C

huts of the Ross Sea region. Having visited several of these huts ourselves, we understand how powerful, and fragile, these places are. Extreme cold, relentless weather, distance from New Zealand, and short working seasons make every restoration effort a challenge.

After Captain's Farewell and a fine dinner, we were glad to lend our support at a lively on board auction. A cozy Tom Crean sweater, a graphic novel of *The Worst Journey in the World*, penguin treasures, books, and other special items all went under the hammer, a fun way to help protect polar history for future generations.





# At Sea

DAY 23 | 08 February 2026

**Latitude:**  
50°12.11' S  
**Longitude:**  
166°52.8' E  
**Course:**  
033°  
**Speed:**  
11.3 knots

**Wind Speed:**  
22 knots WNW  
**Barometer:**  
997 hPa  
**Air Temp:**  
11°C

The last sea day always feels a little unreal and today was no exception. After weeks tracing a remarkable path from New Zealand and Australia through the Sub-Antarctic Islands and deep into the Ross Sea, we all felt that quiet mix of gratitude, happiness, and disbelief that the journey is coming to an end. Tomorrow, we will disembark in Dunedin, and suddenly the voyage feels very real.

We began the day with breakfast at Cape Denison and The Hut Restaurants, already aware that these familiar routines were becoming memories. Short after, we gathered in the Lecture Theatre for the disembarkation briefing with Lelia. Practical information was shared, but beneath it all was a shared sense of how did this go by so fast? Faces around the room reflected the same feeling, excited to return, yet not quite ready to leave.

Later in the morning, Greg's lecture on Māori culture offered a meaningful transition back to Aotearoa. After weeks immersed in remote landscapes, wildlife, and ice, it felt grounding to learn more about the culture and history of the land welcoming us back.

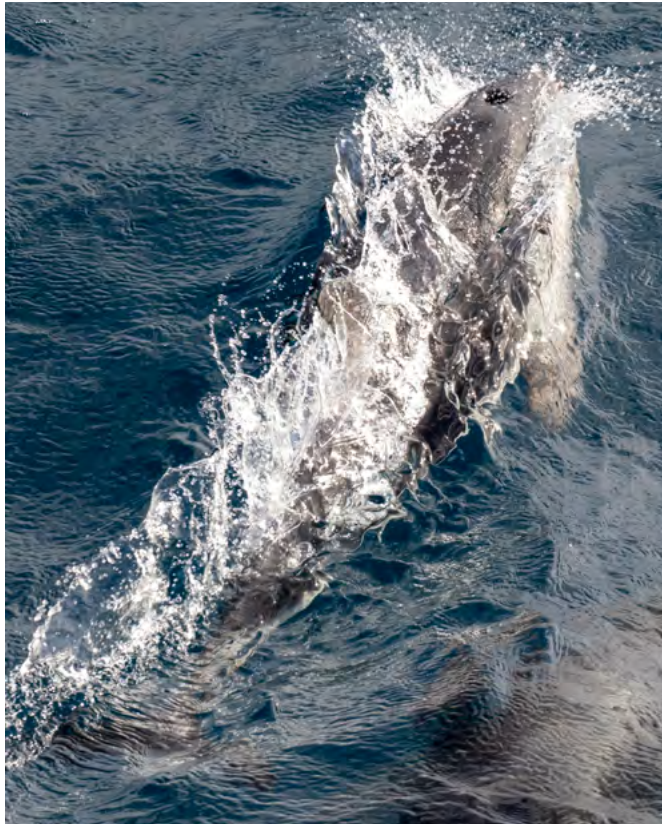
Lunch was unhurried, filled with easy conversation and

laughter. By mid-afternoon, emotions ran high during the E-Team farewell lead by Roger and voyage slideshow prepared by Scott. Watching our journey unfold again, icy landings, Zodiac rides, powerful moments in the Ross Sea, and countless shared smiles, reminded us just how special this expedition has been. There were cheers, applause, and more than a few misty eyes.

Afternoon, we were out on deck passing Taiaroa Head, soaking it all in. Cameras came out, then went away again, as we simply stood together and watched the coastline draw closer.

The evening was the perfect celebration: sparkling wine tasting with Gary in the Library, followed by cocktails and canapés at the Aurora Bar, accompanied by Scott's music performance, which filled the space with warmth and joy. Dinner at Cape Denison was lively and heartfelt, with stories exchanged and promises made to stay in touch.

Tonight, the sea is calm, and so are we. This voyage has been extraordinary. Tomorrow we disembark, but the memories, friendships, and experiences will travel home with us.



# Dunedin, New Zealand

DAY 24 | 09 February 2026

---

**Latitude:**  
45°52'5" S  
**Longitude:**  
170°31'1" E

**Wind Speed:**  
5 knots E  
**Barometer:**  
999 hPa

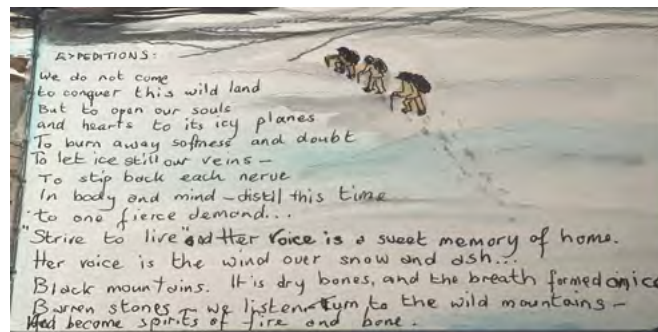
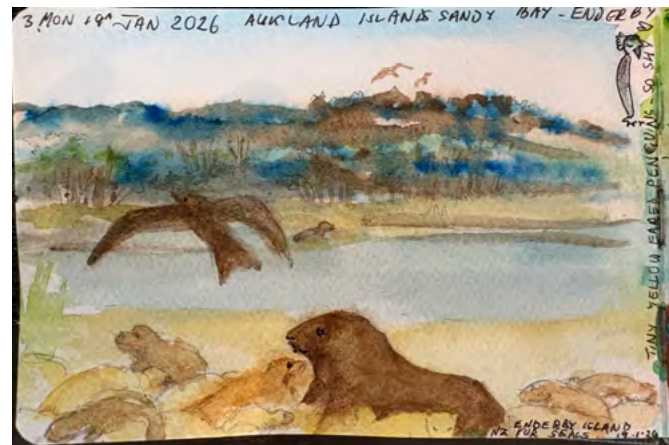
After a wonderful last day onboard, we woke from a solid night's sleep to find our mighty vessel, the *Douglas Mawson*, safely alongside in the port of Dunedin. We enjoyed one last breakfast together before disembarking.

**Course:**  
alongside  
**Speed:**  
0.0 knots

**Air Temp:**  
16°C

With bags packed and farewells said, our journey to the New Zealand & Antarctic Sub-Antarctic Islands and the Ross Sea came to an end. We stepped ashore with great memories of incredible wildlife, wild landscapes, and the friendships made along the way. Wishing everyone safe onward travels and hoping our paths cross again soon.

# Artwork



# BBQ

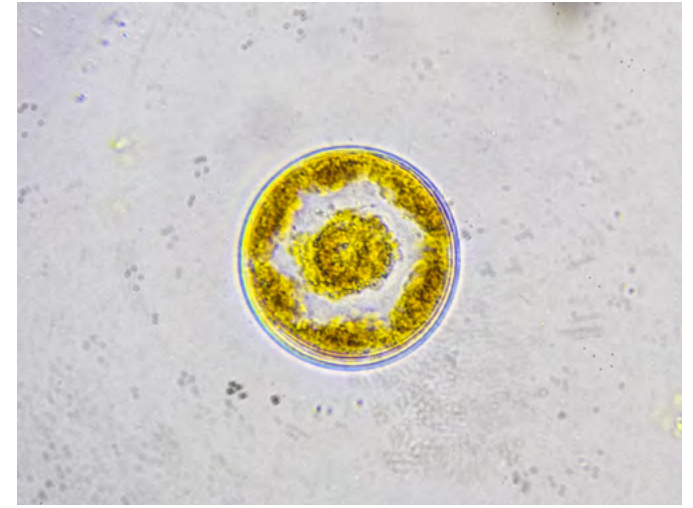


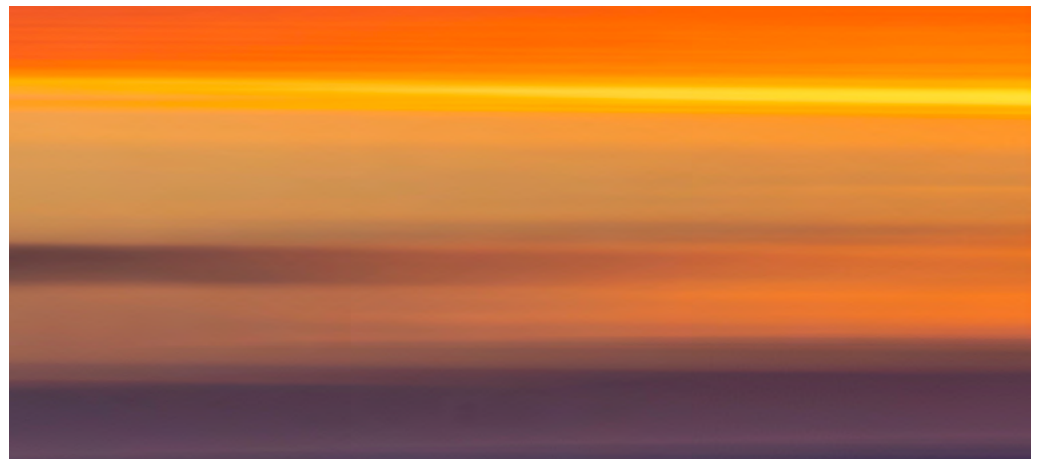
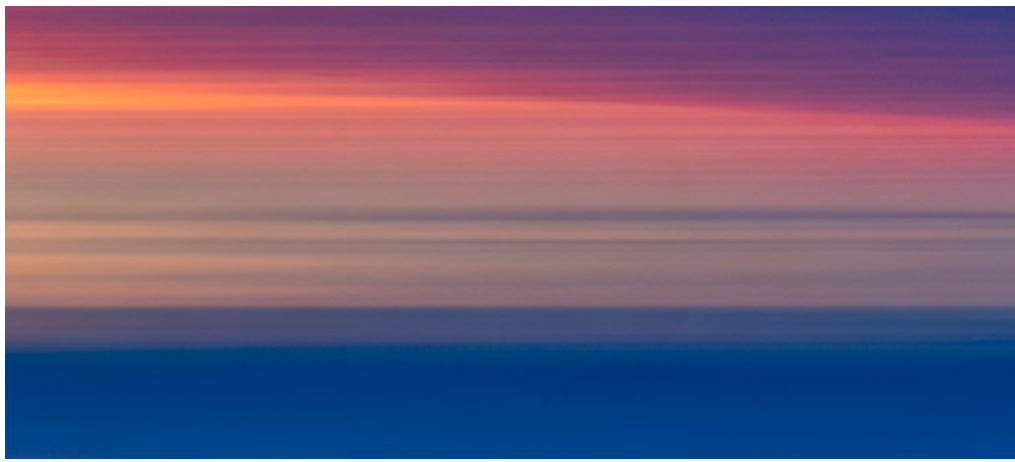
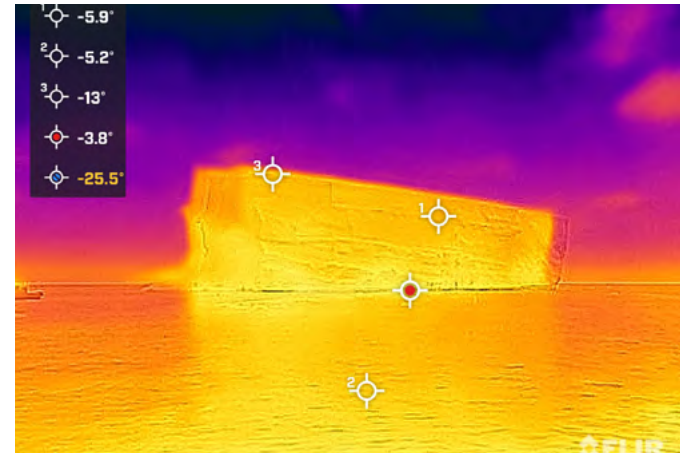
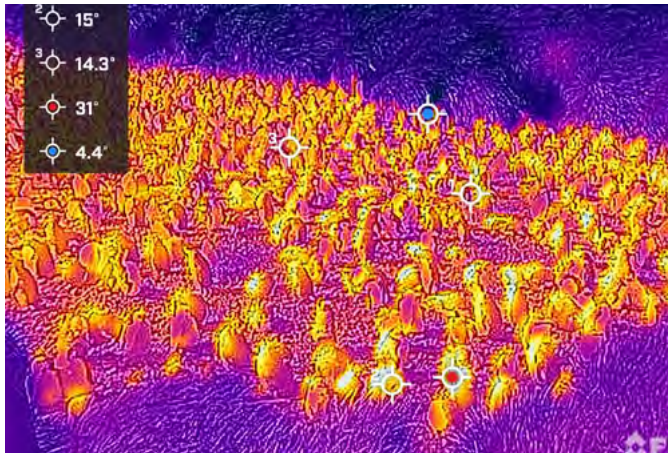






# Citizen Science







# Kayaking Log

Guides: Alex Chavanne, Ivan Klochkov

## 19 January 2026, PM: Enderby Island, NZ – 9.17 km

It was our first kayaking outing, and we simply could not ask for better weather conditions! It was a bit windy when we were getting off the ship and getting used to our boats, but as soon as we got around the Western tip of Enderby Island, the wind eased and we entered very sheltered waters. We talked through some important things like hand signals and group formation on the water and then crossed the straight between Enderby and Rose Islands. It was so much fun to paddle through a little bit of current in the middle of the straight – everyone did a great job! One of the highlights of this paddle was amazing clear water and dancing forests of kelp all around us. We saw numerous New Zealand Sea Lions – one of them charged towards Sue and Janice but did not approach too close – that was exciting! Towards the end of the trip we explored the rocky coastline of the main Auckland Island, hugging the shore and gazing upon incredibly rich vegetation and listening to birds. We finished at Beacon Point, a little headland South from Hardwick. Once

we got out of kayaks, we managed to do a quick landing to explore the remains of the Settlement. What a wonderful evening it was!

## 20 January 2026, AM: Musgrove Cove, NZ – 7.32 km

Continuing our run of uncharacteristically fine weather, we woke this morning in Musgrave harbour to smooth seas and blue skies. This small inlet was the perfect site for our morning's paddle as numerous attractions were found within our reach.

Leaving from the ship we were off directly through thick kelp beds to see the Southern Rockhopper penguins. We had great views of them moving to and from their nesting sites amid the volcanic boulders. Passing a sunny point on the way onwards, we got to see their beautiful coloration in the sun, with bright red eyes and glorious golden yellow crests on their heads. We took a few moments in the perfect calm weather to have a zen moment before the Zodiacs caught up to us and relished birdsong, warmth, and scents of blooming Sub-Antarctic vegetation.



**Number of Kayakers:**10

**Total Paddle Outings:**5

**Total Distance Paddled:**  
32.79 km

**Kayakers:**

Susan Carey

Janice Jones

Heather Elliot

Clive Elliot

Thamara Oliveira

Renato Rodrigues Pereira

Francisco Pereira de Melo

Martin Findlater

Jennifer Everingham

Birgit Behnke

Continuing on around the bay, we entered a network of caves eroded over time by the sea. First, a sinkhole that we entered through an arch to look upwards at a near perfect circle of sun and vegetation, then a deep dark cave with good acoustics. We paddled on out of the bay stopping at another large cave, before turning our backs on a breeze that had picked up and cruising back to the ship.

#### **21 January 2026, AM: Southeast Harbour, Campbell Island, NZ – 5.84 km**

This paddle was one of the big highlights of our trip! We hit the water at the mouth of Northeast Harbour and explored an incredible steep coastline of Campbell Island. It was fascinating to see all the geological features with various layers of different colors. We paddled into the massive cave and went through very cool arch – at some point it felt like entering the ancient cathedral. As we kept paddling North, we saw a beautiful waterfall with a cave behind it – of course we paddled into it without any hesitation – it was fantastic! Towards the end we reached the Albatross colony – thousands of birds were nesting on towering cliffs

and creating loud noise – the place was so full of life! We reached the North Cape which gave us protection from the northerly wind and hopped in the Zodiac to go back to the ship. Every minute of this outing was spectacular!

#### **26 January 2026, PM: Cape Adare, Ross Sea – 5.2 km**

After several days at sea, dark cliffs loomed large on the horizon as we approached the Antarctic. We'd travelled through a thick band of ice as we approached, and here, finally and at last we had reached the Antarctic Continent. Cape Adare is considered by some to be the gateway to the Ross Sea, lying as it does at its northern extent, and boasts the world's largest Adélie penguin rookery and the site of Borchgrevink's hut where he wintered on during the Southern Cross Expedition. We arrived, weaving our way through tabular icebergs to our anchorage, and found it to be stunningly calm, and relatively warm. Excitement rippled through the group as we got ourselves ready for a paddle after several days at sea. Hitting the water, we first made our way towards a band of ice with several crabeater

seals resting. Paying us no heed, we continued on encountering floe after floe of sea ice with dozens of restings penguins on each. Perhaps curious, perhaps not, they continued resting as we paddled further towards shore. The swell that was almost imperceptible out in the bay was evident on shore where it found bottom, and caused enormous chunks of ice to crash and roll as we paddled outside the breaking waves. We experienced the smells of a large penguin colony for the first time as we made our way along the coast, as wave after wave of penguin porpoised past us in the air for a flash and then out of sight again. In order to get a chance on to visit the hut and colony, we wrapped up the paddle and circled back to the ship and had a quick change of equipment before heading ashore to round out our afternoon

#### **29 January 2026, AM: Cape Bird, Ross Sea – 5.26 km**

It was a cold and breezy morning as we were approaching Cape Bird – a rugged and exposed place at the North of Ross Island. Nevertheless, we decided to use the opportunity to get into our kayaks – not every day you get a chance to paddle at 77 degrees

South! Only a few people on our planet ever kayaked that far South. We paddled along the coast playing around with bergy bits and icebergs, admiring their beautiful shapes and discussing how they are formed. We noticed that there was a bit of a current – at some point we rafted up and saw an iceberg floating by with quite a reasonable speed. We paddled North checking out some Adélie penguins on the beach and grounded icefloes. There was very cool big iceberg with dozens of Adélies on it – they were looking like they are just about to jump in the water but were hesitating and discussing who is going to be the first. We observed these funny folks for a little while and kept paddling. By the end of the outing, we reached big Adélie penguin colony and stunning glacial face – a great place to finish. As we were hopping in the Zodiac, the massive iceberg in a distanced calved and started rolling – it was such a spectacular and exciting moment! It was a great farewell from Ross Sea.





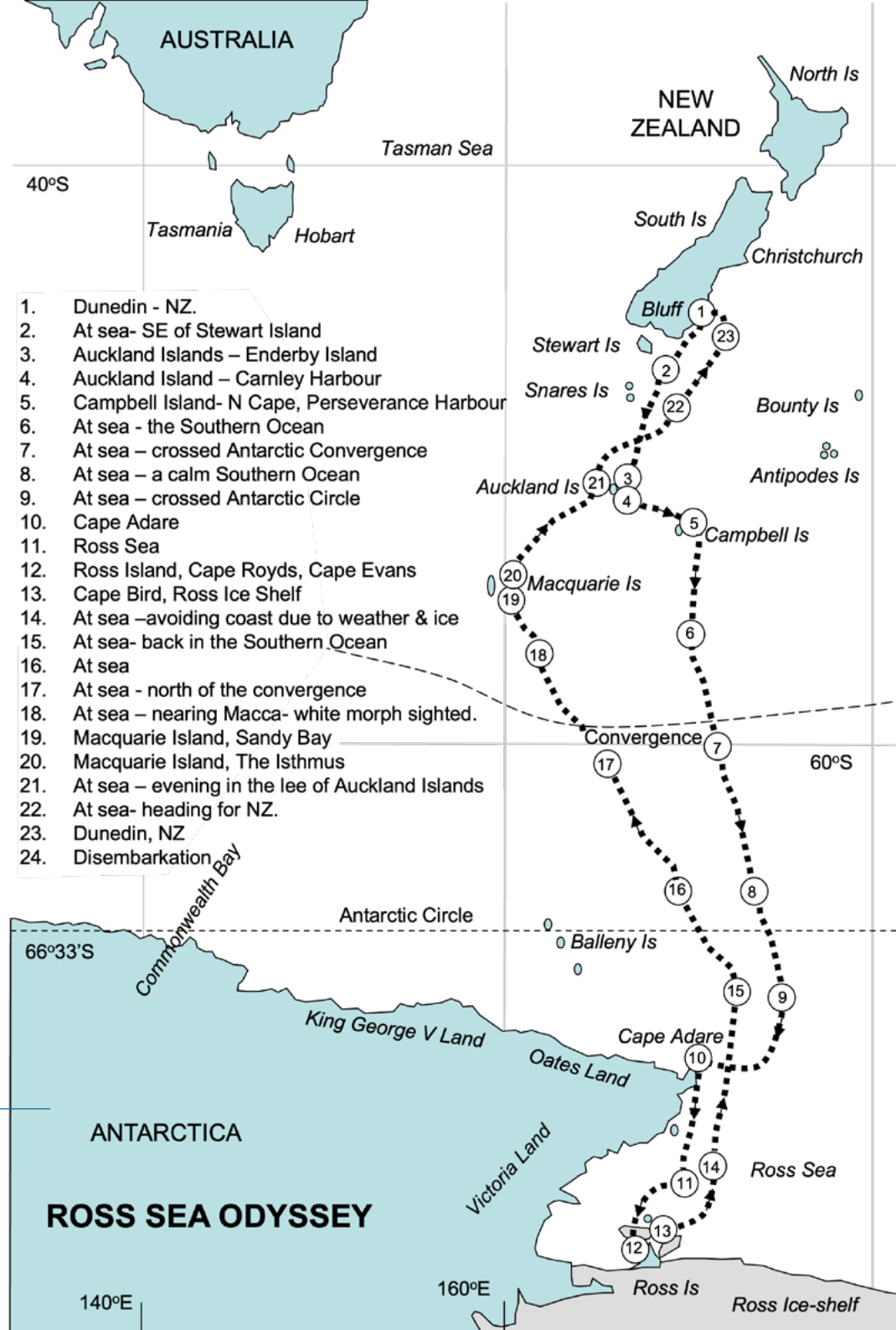








# Map



## Ross Sea Odyssey

17 Jan 2026 to 09 Feb 2026



# Our Expeditioners

Jacqui Adams	Sam Edwards	Jill Holloway	Chunyan Liu	Yeguo Qi	Ray Stepney
Leon Allen	Shaz Edwards-Berg	Carra Huang	Jennifer Lobb	Shenqian Qiu	Chris Stockdale
Kerry Allen	Heather Elliott	Margaret Hunt	Heather Mcmath	Amanda Roberts	Leonard Sussman
Tanuja Anam	Clive Elliott	Linda Hurley	Jocelyn Moore	Leora Robertson	Clyde Takeshi Kakazu
Ella Beckett	Jenny Everingham	NIGEL Ibbotson	John Moore	Steve Robertson	Christine Thomson
Birgit Behnke	Martin Findlater	Jude Ibbotson	Chris Morley	Wendy Rodgers	Scott Trochim
Gary Belgre	Bob Fisher	Yajuan Jiang	Sophy Morley	Renato Rodrigues Pereira	Luzhe Wang
Terri Bosley	Tarnya Fitzgibbon	Janice Jones	Kim Neuhold	Diogo Rodrigues Pereira	Tony Ping Wei
Robbie Burnstine	Karen Forno	Jon Jordan	Peter Neuhold	Lou Rodriques	E Weng
Peter Callaghan	Kate Fox	Matty Jordan	Sean Nicolson	Philippa Ross	Will Williamson
Bruce Campbell	Yi Fu	Qing Kang	Thamara Oliveira	Bernadette Ryan	Emma Williamson
Heather Campbell	Thomas Gasior	Lester Kenway	Stuart Paige	Peter Scholefield	Susan Wilson
Jianxi Cao	Janet Goold	Kim Kenway	Dianne Pakes	Pat Scholefield	Diane Winterling
Sue Carey	Robert Goold	Geoff King	Ian Pakes	Platon Serkalev	Phil Winterling
Maritza Castro	Shanaka Goonewardena	Mary Kormendy	Eliane Parslow	Natalja Serkalev	Ziqiang Yang
Yue Chen	Stephen Green	John Kormendy	Gwen Pearlstein	Taher Shahbazi Mirzahasanloo	Lingling Yang
Hui Cheng	Martin Gregus	Yanping Lai	Sue Pearson	Dori Sharp	Mao Ye
Susanne Clark	Bryce Guest	Ms Le Lec	Fan Peng	Jim Sharp	Yuan Zhao
Jon Clarke	Annabelle Guest	Mitch Leon	Yi Peng	Belinda Shoemaker	Yi Zheng
Robyn Connor	Jen Hewett	Rong Li	Francisco Pereira de Melo	Ken Shoemaker	Tao Zhou
Anu Datta	Susan Hewett	Huiyu Li	Kristen Pope		
Glen Dawson	Sue Hewett	Hongmei Li			

## Expedition Team

Expedition Leader: Roger Kirkwood  
Assistant Expedition Leader: Ashley Perrin  
Onboard Expedition Manager: Lelia Cataldi  
Shop Manager: Ana Prado  
Geologist / Glaciologist: Sean Waters  
Geologist / Glaciologist: Ben Comeskey  
Historian: Ben Maddison  
Marine Biologist: Kyle Smith  
Marine Biologist: Pat Horgan  
Marine Biologist: Pete Gill  
Ornithologist: T-A Hooley  
Ornithologist: Greg Padoa  
Naturalist & Citizen Science Coordinator: Jay Verniest  
Historian & Education Coordinator: Avi Schlüter  
Photographer: Scott Portelli  
Expedition Medic: Rhys Harding  
Lead Senior Kayak Guide: Alex Chavanne  
Senior Kayak Guide: Ivan Klachkov  
Zodiac Master: Ryan Kaempfe  
PTGA Assessor: Howard Whelan  
Mandarin Interpreter Guide: Chen Zhonfyuan  
Mandarin Interpreter Guide: Grace Feng

## Senior Officers & Heads of Department

Master: Jorge Ferdinez  
Staff Captain: Azelie Poret  
Staff Captain: Bogdan Shmalko  
Ice Captain: Maxim Serkalev  
Safety Officer: Sergey Abramov  
Second Officer: Barbara Sylvine Clerc  
Second Officer: Marc Vicent Yap  
Ship Doctor: Alejandro Levin Viner  
Ship Doctor: Jacobus Viljoen  
Chief Engineer: Oleksandr Tsvietkov  
Staff Chief Engineer: Denis Musaev  
IT Officer: Ronaldo Jamero  
Hotel Director: Singh Balvant  
F & B Service Manager: Rajesh Murao  
Chief Purser: Erliza Balagot  
Executive Chef: Pratik Ekoskar  
Hotel Controller: William Ajes  
Sous Chef: Vinay Kumar Singh  
Sous Chef: I Gusti Purnawirawan  
Head Bartender: Alan Fernandes  
Head Waiter: Allan Liscano  
Head Steward: Sotero Agtagma  
Receptionist: Johnny Valdez  
Receptionist: Jelyn Merilo  
Bosun: Aldus Brian Francis  
Able Seaman: Christian Talavera

## Photography thanks to:

Photographer: Scott Portelli





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