

Across The Circle

Aboard *Sylvia Earle* | 08 February – 18 February 2026





Across The Circle

08 to 18 February 2026

King George Island | Embarkation day

DAY 1 | 08 February 2026

Latitude:
62°13'S
Longitude:
58°50'W
Course:
Anchored
Wind Speed:
Light wind
Barometer:
980
Speed:
0

Welcome to your Antarctic expedition! So, you get the idea... plans can change quickly. Despite modern technology - nature still dictates everything we do. The only thing we can guarantee here is that our team will give 100% to make this a trip of a lifetime.

It was a relief to touch down on the gravel airstrip at Frei Station. We snuck in through the only weather window in the next four days (landing at Frei Station is highly dependent on the cloud base). There was only one final leg of the epic journey to go – the Zodiac ride from shore to ship. Luckily, the weather was kind to us, and we arrived dry (if a little wind-blown) onto the *Sylvia Earle*.

After getting our photos taken, our hotel crew awaited us with drinks and a welcome dinner buffet. We could finally relax and look forward to exploring Antarctica.

The sound of seven-short-one-long rings from the ship's signal system was our cue to don warm clothes, bulky orange lifejackets and gather at the muster station to sample our safety gear.

Our safety officers and crew guided us up to the lifeboats to

get us familiar with their whereabouts.

Our Expedition Leader Mark welcomed us onboard over the PA system, inviting us to relax and explore the ship, and settle into our cabins. Tomorrow we will all be properly introduced.

There are 20 Expedition Team in total, with various specialties including: photography, conservation, oceanography, ornithology, marine biology, cetaceans, geology, glaciology, history, and medicine.

In addition to our Expedition Team, we have 87 wonderful ship's crew, from all corners of the world, here to look after everything from your cocktail order to keeping the engines running.

We total 97 Expeditioners: 35 American, 29 Chinese, 7 Australian, 7 Canadian, 6 Mexican, 6 British, 2 Taiwanese, 2 Irish, 1 from New Zealand, 2 from Chile. That includes our 2 penguin researchers from Oceanities, and our 2 musicians.

Cruising into the night, we were met by a gentle swell in the Bransfield Strait. The South Shetland Islands disappeared behind us, as we made our way towards 'Antarctica Proper'.

At Sea Towards the Antarctic Circle

DAY 2 | 09 February 2026

Latitude:
63°11'S
Longitude:
61°08'W

Wind Speed:
NE force 8 knots
Barometer:
985 hPa

Course:
246°
Speed:
8 knots

Air Temp:
1°C

We woke up to the rolling grey sea, fog blanketing the sky all the way until the horizon. We were on our way, toward the wide-open space below the Antarctic Circle where few ships dare to go.

After breakfast, we met in the lecture theatre for the welcome briefing, where the Expedition Team introduced themselves—representing many different backgrounds and nationalities, but with a common love for Antarctica. We also learned the ins and outs of our home for the next couple weeks: the *Sylvia Earle*.

Then we rolled right into the education program on board, with a lecture by our marine biologist, Annette, about penguins.

She has spent years researching them, and told us all about their different adaptations for a polar life. We learned about feeding habits, thermoregulation, and their impressive ability to filter sound so they can recognize the unique call of their mates.

Meanwhile, the wind was howling and the waves were crashing—further north, a storm was in full swing in the Drake Passage. Luckily, the flights were able to arrive a day early, taking advantage of one of the last weather windows for a couple days. Expedition mode activated.

In the afternoon, Elena presented the IAATO briefing and told us about the protocols we follow to ensure responsible



At Sea Towards the Antarctic Circle

DAY 2 | 09 February 2026

Latitude:
63°11'S

Longitude:
61°08'W

Course:
246°

Speed:
8 knots

Wind Speed:
NE force 8 knots

Barometer:
985 hPa

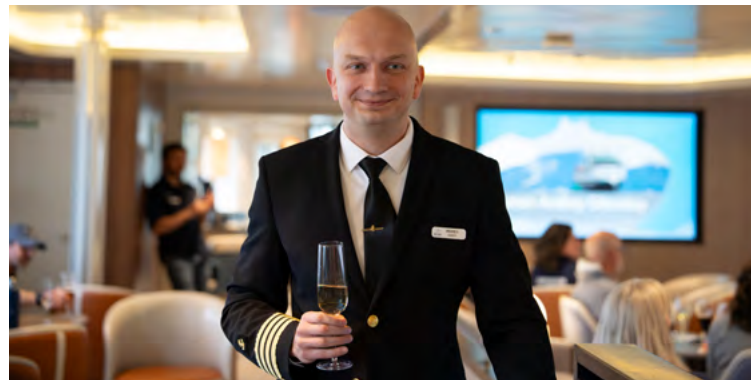
Air Temp:
1°C

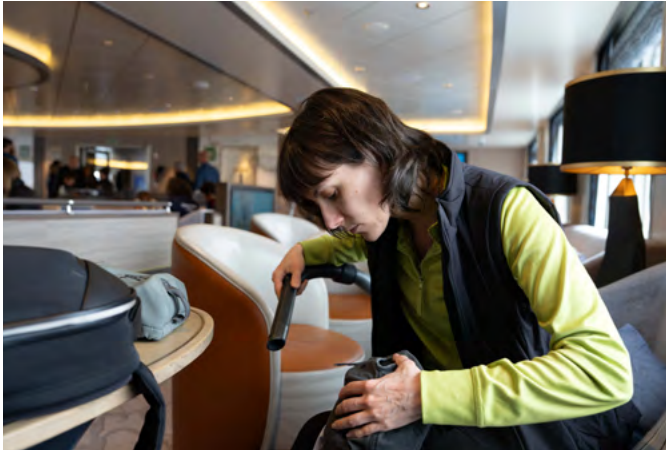
travel in Antarctica. We checked our gear during biosecurity as a way to avoid introducing alien species to such a fragile environment. It was an exciting vacuum session for all!

Afterwards, our glaciologist Sydney gave an impressive lecture about ice, glaciers, and climate in Antarctica. It was humbling to get an image of the massive amount of ice on the continent, and how quickly it continues to change. We are

truly entering a dynamic and living environment, and are lucky enough to be able to do so.

Our last event of the day was the Captain's Welcome, where we met our Expedition Captain Andrey. He has an adventurous spirit, and it will be exciting to see where he takes us! For now, the anticipation builds as we make our way down south.





At Sea | The Gullet

DAY 3 | 10 February 2026

Latitude:
65°32'S

Longitude:
66°20'W

Course:
213°

Speed:
8 knots

Wind Speed:
NE force 5 knots

Barometer:
986 hPa

Air Temp:
1°C

Just a few more hours to the Antarctic Circle! As we woke up to the gentle swell of the Southern Ocean, our excitement just increased a bit more after a look on the map with the ship's position – we had travelled quite a bit further south overnight. The cold air temperature and different sea birds of the Antarctic gliding around the ship clearly confirmed our set course southwards.

After breakfast, Kelsey gave us an impressive overview of the history of Antarctica. All these brave explorers venturing out into the unknown, and all these great companionships and initiatives to explore the mysterious white continent! The following Zodiac briefing with our Zodiac manager Nacho just brought us further into the spirit of adventure, as we

completed one more preparation of stepping out into the wild cold ourselves.

After lunch, Oceanites told us all about their mission of counting penguins for science and conservation. Over 3 million penguins counted, in the remotest corners of the planet? What an incredible effort! Looking at the images of vast penguin colonies, we got even a little bit more curious and excited about meeting these animals ourselves very soon.

And as we cruised further south, we finally crossed the invisible line – the Antarctic Circle at 66°33' South. After our Assistant Expedition Leader Elena called for Neptune's permission for the circle crossing, he appeared on deck in



At Sea | The Gullet

DAY 3 | 10 February 2026

Latitude:

65°32'S

Longitude:

66°20'W

Course:

213°

Speed:

8 knots

Wind Speed:

NE force 5 knots

Barometer:

986 hPa

Air Temp:

1°C

person to give us company as our Captain took us across the circle line. Sparkling wine and celebrations accompanied the unforgettable moment and will stay in our memories forever.

After dinner, the ship prepared to cruise through the narrow channel of 'The Gullet'. And then it happened: orcas approaching the ship! As we all grabbed our binoculars, warm jackets and hats, more and more animals appeared around

the ship. Orcas, humpback whales, seabirds, all of them brought together by the narrowing geographical constraints of the steep channel. As the sun set in a bright orange-red sky, and the moon rose over the snowy mountains, we looked out into the magical white wilderness that had just welcomed us properly, both through Neptune and the other ocean inhabitants.





Blaiklock Island | Horseshoe Island

DAY 4 | 11 February 2026

Latitude:
67°33'S
Longitude:
66°48'W

Wind Speed:
Calm
Barometer:
990 hPa

Course:
013°
Speed:
5.4 knots

Air Temp:
4°C

Wednesday morning greeted us with sunshine and promise of a fine Antarctic day. Tucked into the calm waters of Bourgeois Channel we were all excited for our first adventure in the deep South of the Peninsula.

An early breakfast and back to the cabin to prepare for the unknown. How cold will I be? How dry will I be? What camera lens to bring? All the questions and wonderings that will soon become second nature to our preparation for cruises and landings. With an actual air temperature of -4, no wind and some sunshine we all soon realized the 'feels like' factor and in this case, we found it to be far warmer than expected.

Kayakers funnelled down into the mudroom to slip on their

drysuits in anticipation of their first kayaking trip in the Antarctic. Sixteen folks in the hard kayaks and five on the inflatable made for a colourful fleet. By the afternoon, they were expertly navigating past brash ice, and it was kayaking heaven.

Zodiacs were loaded, with everyone so careful to remember and follow Nacho's rules for boating etiquette in the cold southern oceans. A two-hour cruise ensued on the N Side of Blaiklock Island. Stunning glaciers, high rocky granitic peaks with dark magma dykes streaking through and Mt. Kershaw dominating the skyline to the South. Lots of Weddell Seals on the beach, Crabeater Seals on the ice and a surprise visit from a Minke whale.



Blaiklock Island | Horseshoe Island

DAY 4 | 11 February 2026

Latitude:
67°33'S

Longitude:
66°48'W

Course:
013°

Speed:
5.4 knots

Wind Speed:
Calm

Barometer:
990 hPa

Air Temp:
4°C

The snorkel team—Thomas and Eddie—kicked things off with contagious enthusiasm. The afternoon was brilliant in the sheltered waters of Sally Cove on Horseshoe Island. Much to the team's delight an inquisitive Crabeater Seal paid them a visit.

Lunch provided a welcome breather. As we came through the narrows the E-Team spotted several Shag colonies. Grant and James from Oceanites confirmed that those colonies have not been reported before. Another first for us today!

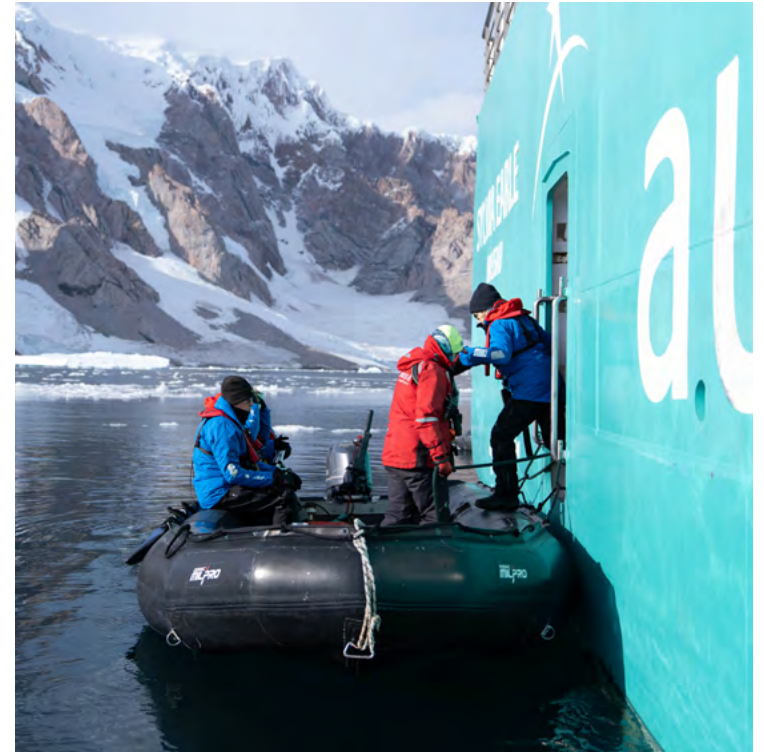
Horseshoe Island was like a national park, museum, wildlife refuge, mountain hike and geological tour all rolled into one. Everyone got a taste of life in the remote base and 25 people went for a ramble to the top of the rock overlooking Base Y. It

was great to stretch the legs.

The evening recap tied the day together with a whirl of knowledge: Mark guiding us through where we came from and where we were headed, a fascinating talk from Captain Andrey on navigating and charting the channels around Blaiklock, polar plunge briefing from Laura, Kelsey's wonderful tale of Steve the dog, and Sydney's in depth look at malachite and of course it's magical properties.

It was a full, fascinating day—sunshine, seals, laughter, surprises, a deck eight barbeque with funny hats and more Antarctic insight than any of us expected. If this was only the warm-up, the adventures ahead promise to be unforgettable.















Bongrain Island | The Gullet

DAY 5 | 12 February 2026

Latitude:
67°43'S

Longitude:
67°44'W

Course:
variable

Speed:
8 knots

Wind Speed:
NE force 2 knots

Barometer:
996 hPa

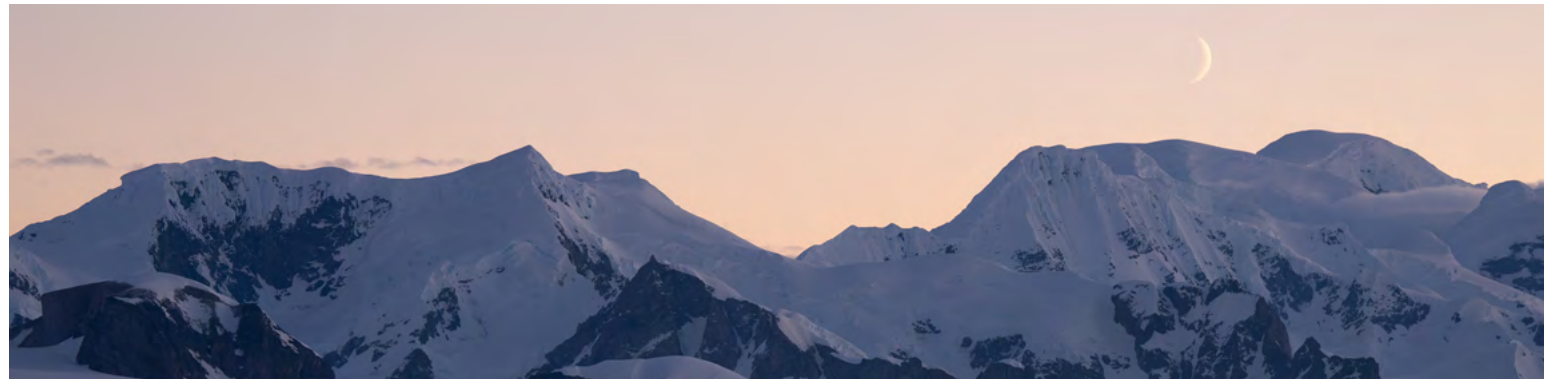
Air Temp:
0°C

Another beautiful day below the Antarctic Circle. After breakfast, we set out for Bongrain Point, where a lively colony of Adélie penguins awaited us. Zodiac drivers navigated the brash ice and the growlers to get us to the landing site, Shore Team steadying the boats in the incoming swell.

The Adélies waddled determinedly along well-worn penguin paths, some going into the water, some on the way back from a feeding spree. Some looked rather confused and cranky - most likely due to the moult - process that was well underway for a big chunk of the colony at this point if the season. Despite the starkness of the Antarctic landscape, Bongrain Point felt vibrant and full of life.

We took a short hike up to the moraine of a nearby glacier, climbing slowly over rocky ground exposed by the retreating ice. From the top, the view was breathtaking: a sweeping panorama of sculpted ice, floating bergs, and the colony spread out below. Standing there, surrounded by silence broken only by distant penguin calls and the occasional crack of shifting ice, felt humbling.

In the afternoon, we sailed toward The Gullet, framed by towering mountains and sheer ice cliffs. Bundled up against the cold, we set off across glassy water that mirrored the snowy peaks for the afternoon's Zodiac exploration. Humpback whales surfaced in the distance, their powerful



Bongrain Island | The Gullet

DAY 5 | 12 February 2026

Latitude:
67°43'S

Longitude:
67°44'W

Course:
variable

Speed:
8 knots

Wind Speed:
NE force 2 knots

Barometer:
996 hPa

Air Temp:
0°C

blows hanging in the air before they arched gracefully into deep dives. Seals lounged on ice floes, barely lifting their heads as we drifted past. Penguins porpoised through the water, darting like torpedoes beneath the surface. The scale of the landscape made us feel wonderfully small.

Back on the ship, we continued north through the eastern channel of the Gullet - the Gunnel. The Captain navigated this narrow passage with an incredible precision, meandering the

ship between impressive icebergs. As if the day hadn't already delivered enough, just on the other side of it orcas appeared all around us. They swam effortlessly alongside the ship, their black-and-white forms visible just beneath the surface, sometimes gliding directly underneath the hull. The light shifted to gold as the sun dipped lower, igniting the snow-covered peaks in a fiery glow. No doubt some of us skipped dinner, just to simmer for a bit longer in this polar magic.







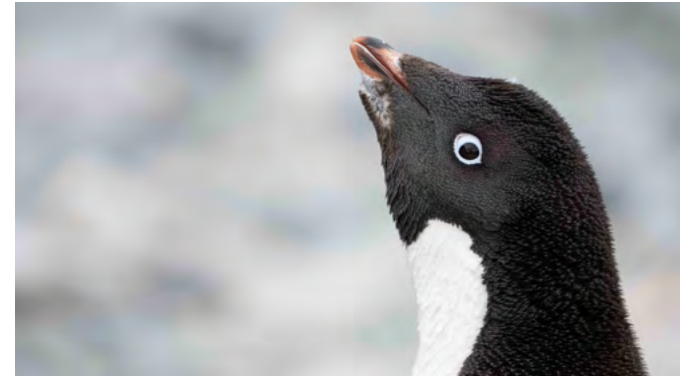












Holtedahl Bay | Prospect Point

DAY 6 | 13 February 2026

Latitude:
66°02'S

Longitude:
65°32'W

Course:
variable

Speed:
4.8 knots

Wind Speed:
Calm

Barometer:
993 hPa

Air Temp:
5°C

Today we woke up to sunny and flat conditions in Holtedahl Bay. The name stems from Professor Olaf Holtedahl a Norwegian Geologist who conducted geological research during the 1927-28 season in the South Shetland Islands. The expedition which named the region was the British Graham Land expedition in 1934-37 under the leadership of John Rymill. It was one of the last expeditions which was primarily privately funded and one of their objectives was to map 1600km of the Graham Land coast which they were successful with. All 16 of the Expedition members actually received the Polar Medal for their efforts from the UK government.

The excitement in the bay for us was the ability to stand on top of an ice floe which Expedition Leader Mark had scouted

ahead of time and we were privileged to enjoy the bay which was full of brash ice, large icebergs, and some seals in the vicinity.

Following the Zodiac cruise we had the opportunity to participate in the polar plunge. We had 45 people jump in the frigid waters where 41 were passengers and 4 were staff.

In the afternoon we relocated to the Fish Islands which was also named from the British Graham Land expedition.

Here, we had several opportunities to hop the islands viewing both Adélie penguins and Blue-eyed shags! Eamon even had a juvenile Shag land on his kayak. One of the other highlights of the outing we had was the opportunity to land at Prospect



Holtedahl Bay | Prospect Point

DAY 6 | 13 February 2026

Latitude:
66°02'S

Longitude:
65°32'W

Wind Speed:
Calm

Barometer:
993 hPa

Course:
variable

Speed:
4.8 knots

Air Temp:
5°C

point our first continental landing. As Mark pointed out, you could ski to the South pole from the location although it might take a while as the distance exceeds 2600km (1615 miles) if walking in a straight line.

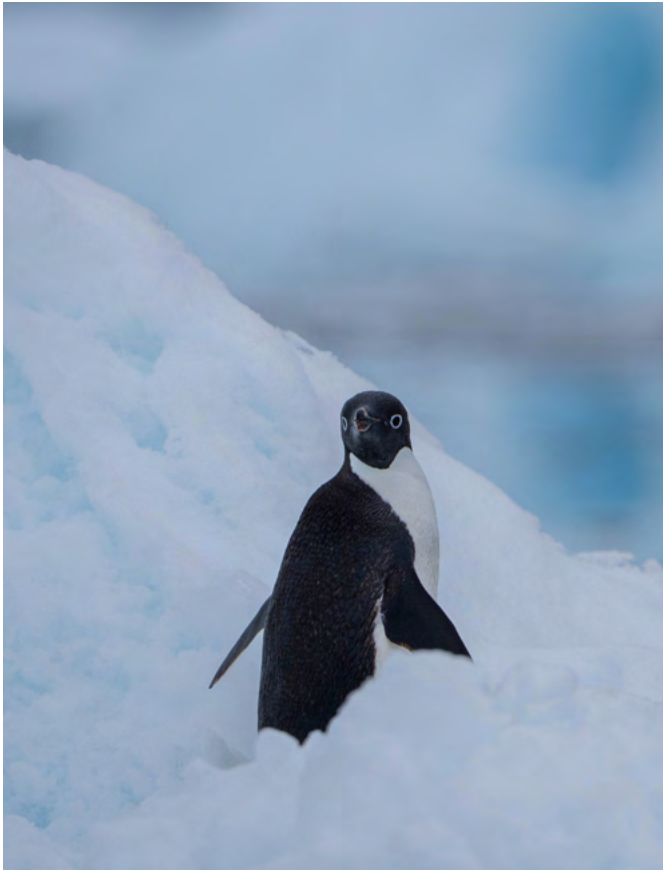
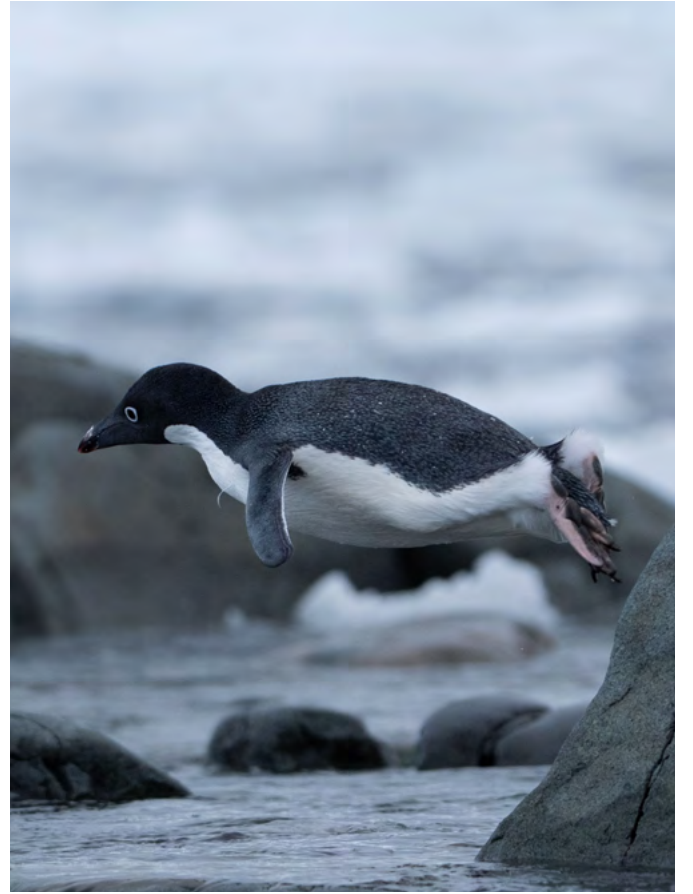
Prospect Point was also the location of the British research Station J. The hut, known as Penola (which was also the name of the ship used by the British Graham Land expedition), it was occupied from February 2, 1957 to February 23, 1959 and the researchers carried out searching in the survey and geology. The station was removed in April 2004.

All in all, a glorious day.









Vernadsky Station & Wordie House | Pléneau Island

DAY 7 | 14 February 2026

Latitude:
65°14'S
Longitude:
64°13'W

Wind Speed:
N force 3 knots
Barometer:
986 hPa

Course:
at Vernadsky
Speed:
0 knots

Air Temp:
5°C

We woke up to our first real Antarctic weather. The sky was grey, and light rain and snow fell softly, making the landscape look even more dramatic.

After breakfast, the sea outside felt a bit less calm than the days before, with small waves and wind reminding us where we were. But once we entered the channels near Vernadsky Station, in the Argentine Islands, everything changed. The water became very calm and smooth, protected by the surrounding islands and mountains. It felt peaceful, almost like sailing on a lake in the middle of Antarctica. Kayakers went for a paddle around the archipelago, and the snorkelers found a nice calm spot near a gentoo penguin colony.

We then went out for a Zodiac cruise. Growlers and bergy

bits floated all around us, and the sky was covered by low nimbostratus clouds. During the cruise, we saw our first gentoo penguins. They swam incredibly fast and jumped out of the water like little torpedoes, while others stood on ice floes watching us with curiosity.

Later in the morning, we landed at Vernadsky Station, where the Ukrainian team welcomed us warmly. It was fascinating to see how people live and work in such a remote place. We learned about their scientific research and daily life, and some of us even sent postcards from one of the southernmost post offices in the world.

After that, we visited Wordie House, an old British base preserved as a historic site. Inside, everything was simple and



Vernadsky Stn & Wordie House | Pléneau Island

DAY 7 | 14 February 2026

Latitude:
65°14'S

Longitude:
64°13'W

Course:
at Vernadsky

Speed:
0 knots

Wind Speed:
N force 3 knots

Barometer:
986 hPa

Air Temp:
5°C

practical, showing how explorers lived here many years ago in very harsh conditions. It really felt like stepping back in time. In the afternoon, we arrived at Pléneau Island. The bay was full of large icebergs in beautiful shapes and colours, from bright white to deep blue.

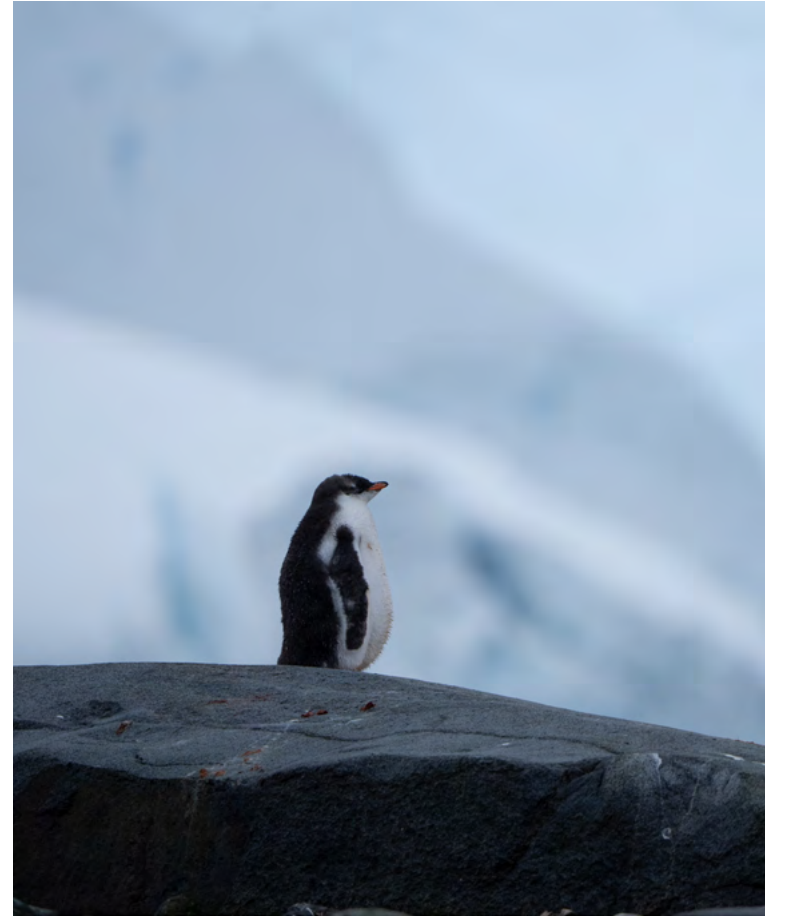
On shore, we found a huge gentoo penguin colony. The noise was amazing, with hundreds of penguins calling and moving everywhere. Some walked right past us, completely busy with their daily routines.

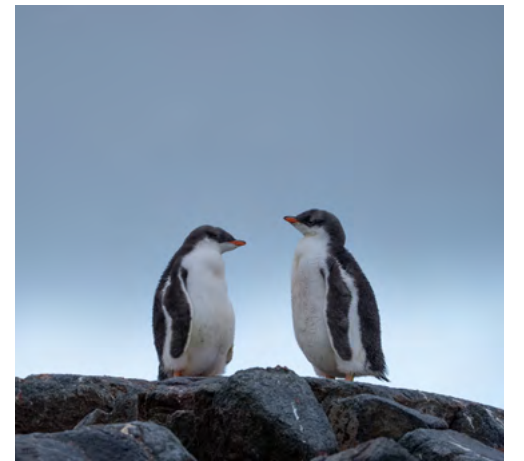
While cruising among the ice, a leopard seal appeared near the Zodiacs. It swam slowly around us, powerful and elegant, watching us closely. Seeing such a top predator from so near was both exciting and a little intimidating.

To finish this unforgettable day, the ship sailed through the spectacular Lemaire Channel. Steep mountains rose on both sides, reflected perfectly in the calm water. With the soft evening light and light snowfall, it was a magical and peaceful ending to a truly special Valentine's Day in Antarctica.











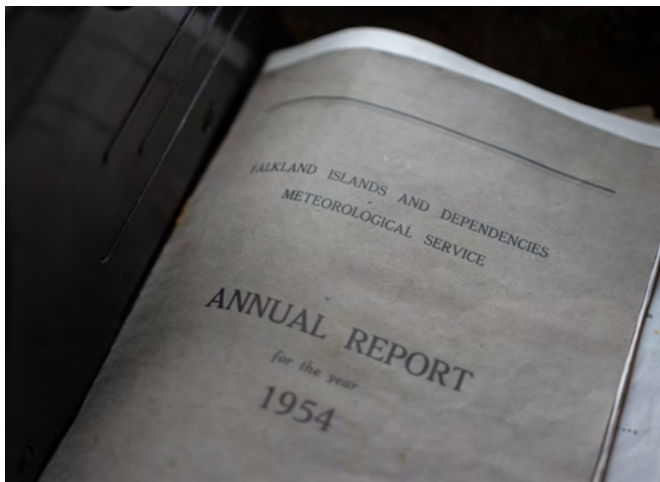












Moreaux Islands | Port Lockroy| Neumayer Channel

DAY 8 | 15 February 2026

Latitude:
65°01'S

Longitude:
63°19'W

Course:
122°

Speed:
6.8 knots

Wind Speed:
NE force 3 knots

Barometer:
981 hPa

Air Temp:
2°C

Today we woke to the raw, untamed beauty of the Antarctic Peninsula aboard the Expedition cruise vessel *Sylvia Earle*. A pale silver light stretched across the ice-strewn waters as we prepared for an unforgettable Zodiac cruise in Flandres Bay. Spirits were high as our guests boarded the small boats, bundled against the sharp polar air, cameras ready for whatever Antarctica chose to reveal.

Flandres Bay offered a spectacle beyond expectations. Towering glaciers rose like frozen cathedrals, their deep blue faces glowing from within. We paused in respectful silence as a section of ice suddenly calved, collapsing into the sea with a thunderous roar — a powerful reminder that this is a living, shifting wilderness. Humpback whales surfaced nearby, their blows hanging in the cold air before their dark backs arched

gracefully beneath the surface. Seals rested peacefully on drifting ice floes, occasionally lifting their heads to observe our quiet procession.

The highlight of the morning was an exceptionally rare sighting of beaked whales. Even our seasoned Expedition Team watched in amazement as these elusive cetaceans glided through the water, offering us a fleeting but extraordinary encounter. It was one of those magical Antarctic moments that words can hardly capture.

In the afternoon, we had planned to welcome the team from Port Lockroy, the historic British Base A. They were scheduled to come aboard to share stories about their remarkable life on a tiny island surrounded by hundreds of penguins, where



Moreaux Islands | Port Lockroy| Neumayer Channel

DAY 8 | 15 February 2026

Latitude:
65°01'S

Longitude:
63°19'W

Course:
122°

Speed:
6.8 knots

Wind Speed:
NE force 3 knots

Barometer:
981 hPa

Air Temp:
2°C

they manage the station and care for the wildlife colony. Unfortunately, due to logistical reasons, they were unable to make the transfer to the ship.

Meanwhile, strong winds swept across the peninsula throughout the day, preventing us from approaching their island safely. Embracing the spirit of flexibility, our Captain charted a new course and treated us to a ship cruise through the dramatic Neumayer Channel. Steep, snow-covered

peaks and sculpted ice formations framed our passage in unforgettable grandeur.

After dinner, the evening transformed into celebration. Our joyful and ever-energetic shopkeeper led a lively dance class that filled the bar with laughter. Expeditioners embraced new steps, shared smiles, and ended the day warmed not only by movement, but by the shared wonder of Antarctica.









Freud Passage | Palaver Point

DAY 9 | 16 February 2026

Latitude:
64°14'S

Longitude:
61°51'W

Course:
299°

Speed:
8.4 knots

Wind Speed:
N force 2 knots

Barometer:
975 hPa

Air Temp:
1°C

It was one of those classic Antarctic days that reminded us why this part of the world feels so alive and unpredictable. We began with a Zodiac cruise through Freud Passage, weaving our way between scattered ice and dramatic cliff faces. The sea was alive with movement, and so was the ice, this was a landscape that never truly stood still.

We encountered Weddell seals, spotted gracefully swimming in the water rather than hauled out on the ice. Their sleek heads surfaced quietly between floes before slipping beneath the surface again, perfectly at home in the icy conditions. Antarctic fur seals brought bursts of energy to the morning, proposing through the swell and curiously approaching the Zodiacs before darting away again.

All around us, the glaciers told their own story. We witnessed a few glacier carvings, deep blue crevasses, sculpted arches, and rippled textures etched by wind, water, and time. The ice appeared almost architectural in places, shaped into delicate formations that seemed impossibly fragile despite their immense scale. Each turn in the passage revealed another frozen masterpiece, and cameras were rarely lowered.

For a lucky few, the morning offered an extra treat: fleeting views of chinstrap penguins hauled out on some icebergs, a tantalising preview of what awaited us later.

In the afternoon, we repositioned to Palaver Point for a landing. As soon as we stepped ashore, we were immersed



Freud Passage | Palaver Point

DAY 9 | 16 February 2026

Latitude:
64°14'S

Longitude:
61°51'W

Wind Speed:
N force 2 knots

Barometer:
975 hPa

Course:
299°

Speed:
8.4 knots

Air Temp:
1°C

in the lively activity of a bustling chinstrap penguin colony. Hundreds of birds called noisily across the slopes, tending nests and navigating well-worn penguin highways that criss-crossed the rocky terrain.

A steady hike brought us up to a viewpoint overlooking the bay. From above, the colony spread out beneath us, framed by floating ice and towering peaks beyond. It was a breathtaking perspective, a reminder of the scale of this wild place and the privilege we shared in experiencing it up close.

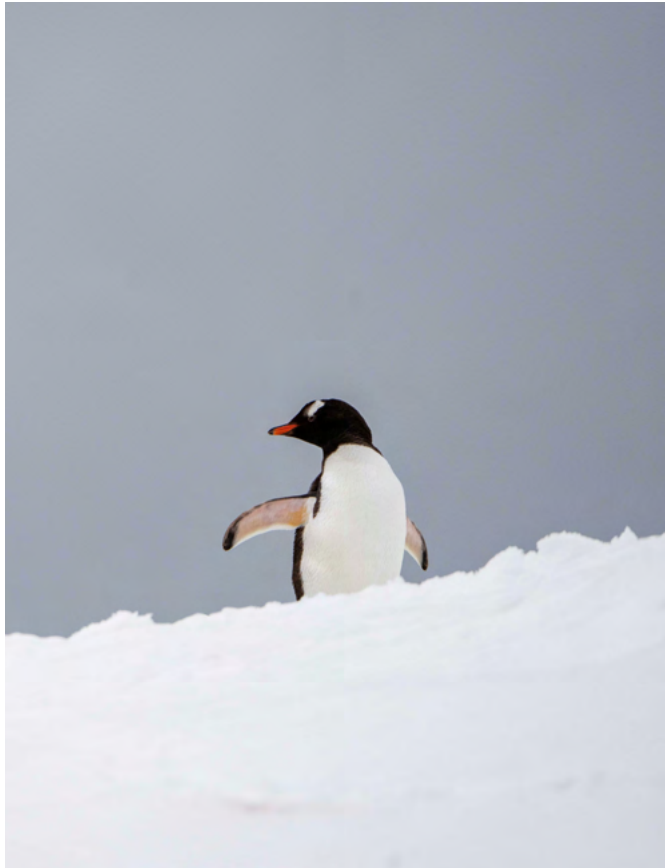
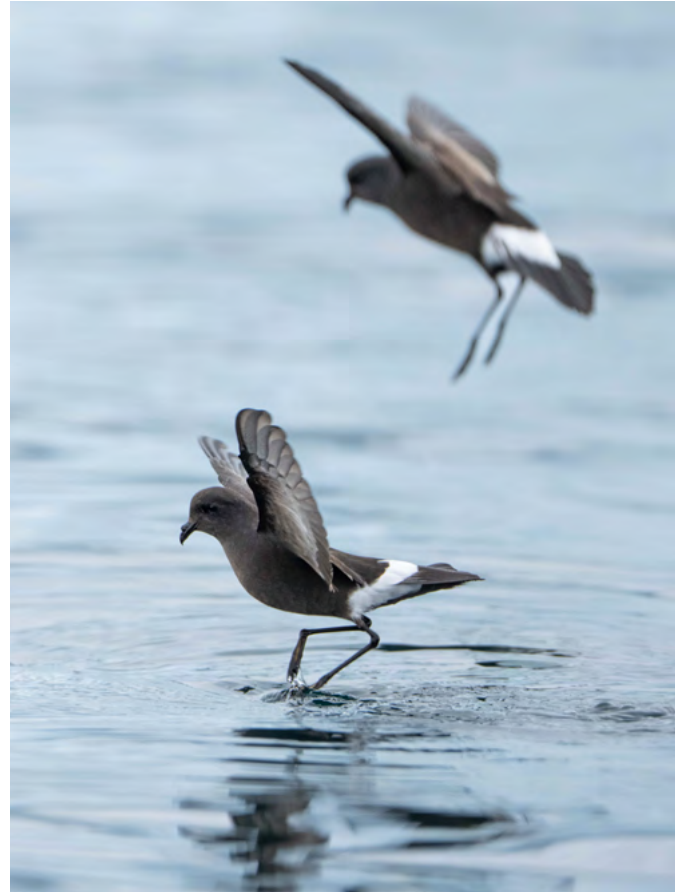








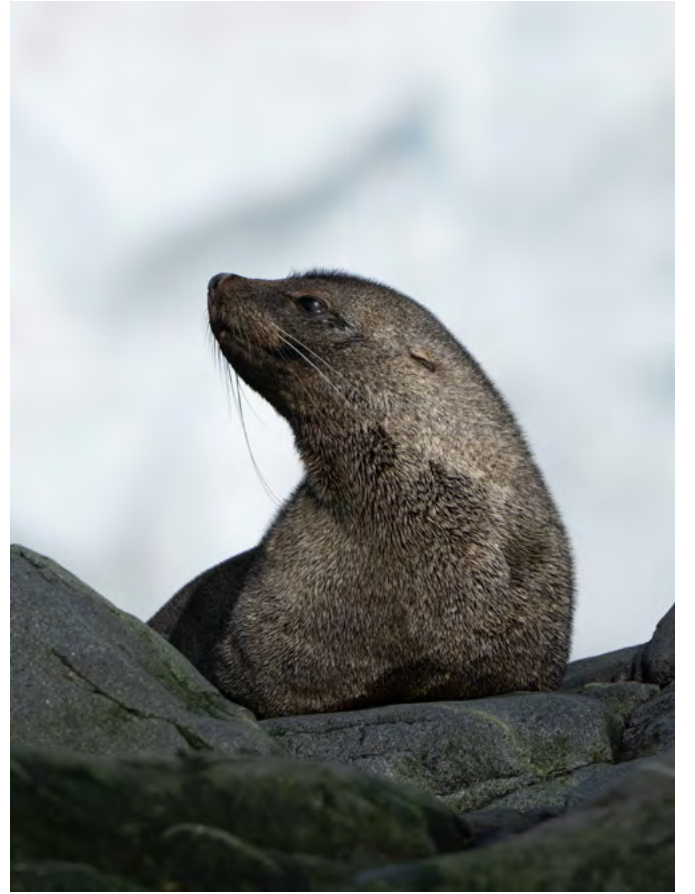
















South Shetland Islands | Disembarkation

DAY 10 | 17 February 2026

Latitude:
62°44'S

Longitude:
59°32'W

Course:
Variable

Speed:
8 knots

Wind Speed:
W force 3 knots

Barometer:
987 hPa

Air Temp:
2°C

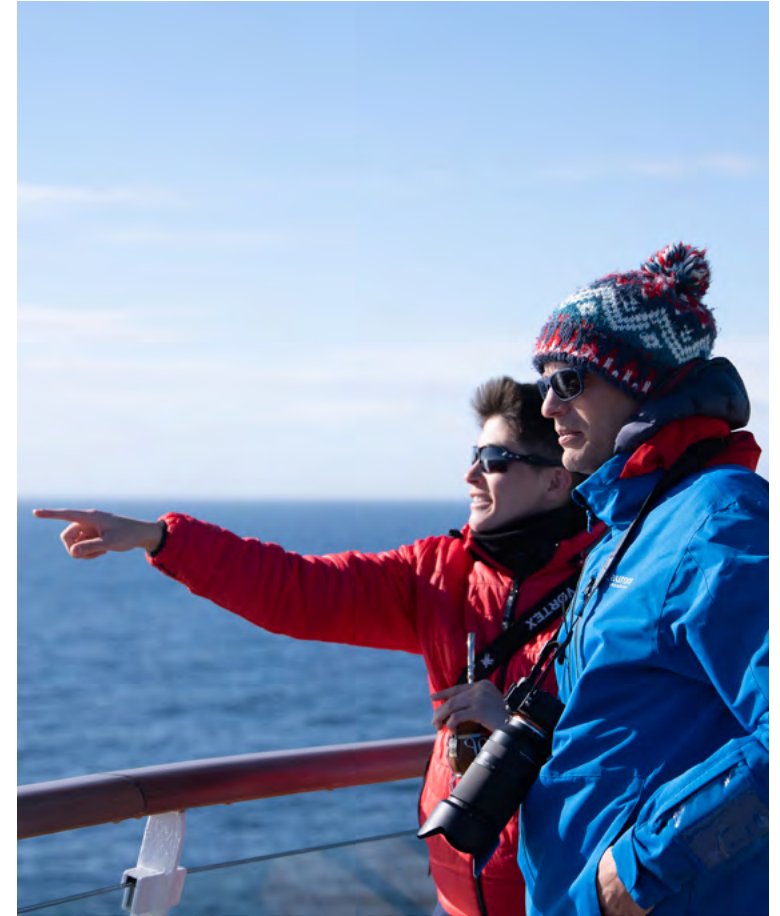
Our final day aboard an expedition cruise with Aurora Expeditions began in the most unforgettable way — with a special wake-up call from Mark and a pod of magnificent Fin whales. The second largest mammals on Earth, these gentle giants surfaced gracefully beside the ship, their towering blows misting the crisp morning air. As we gathered on deck in awe, Annette shared fascinating facts. Fin whales are so enormous they create their own waves, waves strong enough for dolphins to ride. She also reminded us never to place a wrist over a whale's blowhole — the force of a single exhale is powerful enough to break bones. Tempting but not worth it for most.

Later that morning, we attended our disembarkation briefing. Mark outlined two possible plans for the day: 'Plan A-wesome'

and 'Plan B-on Voyage.' The playful names couldn't quite mask the reality that weather would once again decide our fate. Over lunch, the announcement came — Plan B it was. Just as weather had brought us in a day early, it now required us to depart quickly to make our weather window.

We hurried to finish lunch, packed our bags, and gathered one last time for the Captain's Farewell. Live music played magically as a slideshow of our journey played on the screen — glaciers, penguins, whales, laughter, and shared joys. Soon we loaded up and made our way back to KGI, where it had all begun. As we waved goodbye to the incredible Expedition Team, we carried with us more than photographs. We carried gratitude, deeper respect for nature, and memories that will last a lifetime.







BBQ





Polar Plunge





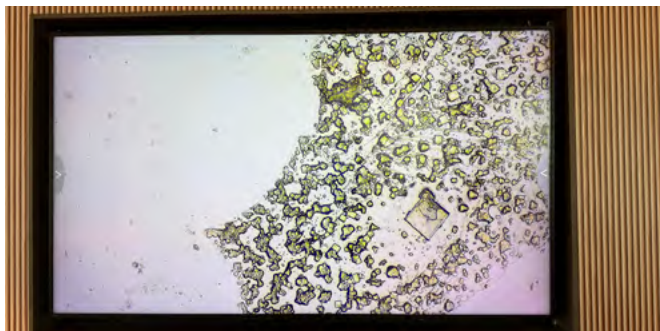
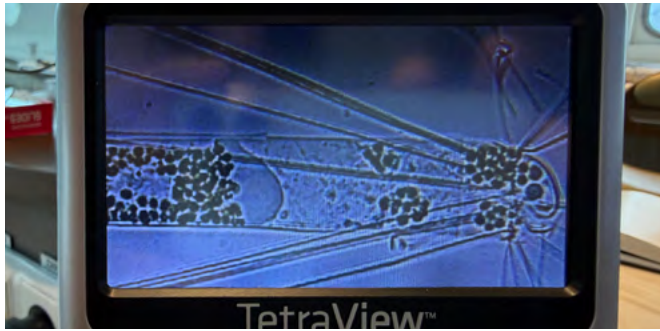
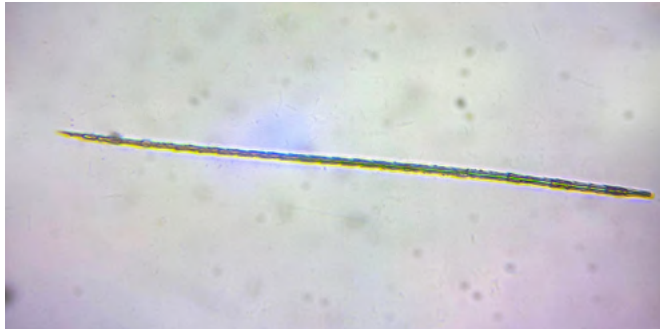






Citizen Science







Kayaking Log

Guides: Eamon Larkin, Edu Larrañaga, Kris Ronning, Reg Grundy, Anula Jochym

11 February 2026, AM: Bleiklock Island – 3.8 km

Blaiklock was a great start to our kayaking program where the conditions were flat calm and there was heaps of ice to navigate through. Once we disembarked from the ship the *Sylvia Earle* started to proceed towards the channel that we probed the depths for using a Zodiac and instruction from the bridge. The highlight for me during that outing was the 2x Crabeater seals we saw lounging around on the ice before we proceeded to be picked up from the operation. The sun was shining, the mountain tops were covered in snow and we really had ideal conditions for the kickoff to the program.

11 February 2026, PM: Horseshoe Island – 4.2 km

Horseshoe island did not disappoint where we saw our first penguins up close! Adélie penguins were hanging out in small clusters where I counted a baker's dozen in one concentration. The name Adélie comes French explorer Jules Dumont d'Urville who discovered the species in 1840 and named it after his wife. We handrailed

the coastline and found some more protected waters to play around in. We saw a curious juvenile Blue-eyed shag that lingered around until it felt we got close enough and flew off. We exited a small channel and saw our first Weddell seal resting on land and gazed upon some icebergs before being brought to land. The Malachite rock was what stuck out to me the most!!

12 February 2026, AM: Bongrain Point – 2.6 km

Our small intrepid kayaker headed out into the Antarctic waters. Kayaking beneath mountains rising up out of the waters to reach a 1000m. The deep water below down to 250m just metres from shore. We wove and dodged amongst the ice, deeper into the bay hugging the coastline. Low cloud drifting in. The deep rumble of the glacier ahead of us in the distance. We paused on this slow and steady kayak to view the Crabeater seal laying lazily on the ice flow. Undisturbed by our presence. We just sat and watched. All too soon it was time to load into the Zodiac and head to shore for the penguins.

Number of Kayakers:17

Total Number of Outings:10

Total Distance Paddled:

41.9 km

Kayakers:

Paul Clayton

Susan Neal

Gregory Pollack

Jennifer Warren

Monica Poplawsky

Felix Romano

Eduardo Zundeleovich

Patricia Sacal

Vivianne Benabib

Benny Kalby

Anne Pollack

Woody Pollack

Lucia Ullrychova

Christopher Skoog

Belinda Skoog

Alyssa Benedetti

Nicholas Spooner

12 February 2026, PM: The Gullet – 5.6 km

A few days earlier we had sailed through the Gullet so we knew it was spectacular in here.

As we left the ship we were not disappointed. The background was stunning and there was plenty of ice around us. A flock of storm petrels got our attention. There were terns and fulmars as well all zooming around. They were not alone. There was a humpback feeding there amongst all the birds. Majestic. We moved on after a while and warmed up with some paddling. A couple of seals were spotted swimming in the ice. A couple of Adélie penguins watched the seals also, confused looking as usual. Nearby a crabeater seal was happily snoozing on ice. This was Auroras first time kayaking in The Gullet and it was excellent.

13 February 2026, AM: Holtedah Bay – 4.6 km

It was mirror calm as we departed the ship into the very icy Holtedah bay. On our way in we were worried there was too much ice, but now we had

found plenty of open water to navigate in. It was so placid in here the sea had begun to freeze into circles of pancake ice. Some ice was crispy and broke easily with our kayaks, other pieces were slushy and slowed us down. Still other pancakes were too thick to break through and reverse was the best option. Jutting out of all this brash were a few huge ice bergs of various shapes. We weaved our way through the icy maze to the enormous ice floe that everyone was walking on. We kayaked a while longer then landed onto the sea ice with a Zodiac. Like kids we played on the ice and marvelled at how awesome it was to be able to experience this. A magical outing.

13 February 2026, PM: Prospect Point / Fish Islands – 4.7 km

‘There might be too much ice’ said Eamon as we approached our location for the afternoon outing. Indeed, the brash ice was thick and seemingly endless but after an assessment from the upper decks we decided to go ahead! Fish Islands delivered what we hoped for – penguin rookeries with birds travelling to and fro their feeding grounds, endless sea of ice that we

had to navigate hoping for a bit of open water on the other side. And tricky currents - everything around us was moving, in several different directions – it seemed like there was not a single still thing in the whole landscape. Everyone seemed to enjoy making their own open channels while crushing into bigger pieces of ice – some of them giving way easily, some requiring some persistence and diplomacy. We finished our paddle in this maze of ice – Edu picked us up and we headed towards Prospect Point – to step on the 7th Continent.

14 February 2026, AM: Wordie House / Vernadsky Station – 4 km

You know the feeling when you commit to doing something but when the moment comes you look for a reason not to? The weather at Argentine Islands brought that on. The wind, the cold and the chop were not too inviting but we decided to get on the water anyway. We did not regret the decision, even when the it started snowing. We watched the gentoos awkwardly moving around their rocky nesting grounds while simultaneously

we awkwardly dodged the growlers, bergy bits and icebergs towards which the wind was pushing us. Leopard seal casually checked us out and followed us for a little bit, while we made the corner around the Vernadsky station. We entered the channels of Argentine Islands hoping for some shelter, just like the Chilean sail boat moored across one of them. Soon enough we reached the Wordie House a historic British base, after visiting which we headed to Vernadsky to visit the Ukrainian and Mexican researchers stationed there.

15 February 2026, AM: Moureaux Islands – 5.4 km

This morning we experienced the Antarctic Peninsula from a truly intimate perspective during our sea kayaking excursion in Flandres Bay. Paddling quietly across the glassy water, we felt completely immersed in the vast stillness of this extraordinary place.

In the distance, whales surfaced gracefully, their blows rising like soft clouds against the cold horizon. Even from afar, their presence added a sense of scale and wonder to the landscape. At one unforgettable moment, a nearby iceberg cracked sharply and began



to shift and rotate, reminding us that Antarctica is constantly alive and in motion.

Majestic mountains towered above us, their peaks draped in snow, while immense glaciers spilled down toward the sea in dazzling shades of blue and white. We paddled through dense brush ice, carefully navigating between countless small fragments. The gentle sound of ice brushing against our kayaks made the experience both thrilling and deeply serene — a remarkable start to the day in Antarctica

16 February 2026, AM: Freud Passage – 4.1 km

The plan was to wander the passage and investigate some wildlife. With glass calm waters we headed south around the island to our east. Two chinstrap penguins seemed to be impossible perch high, on an iceberg with what seemed a huge launch from the water to reach the vantage point. We wonder how such a thing was possible. Fur seals on the small rock islet lying under the glacier face made view from a distance prudent. Continuing on around the point of the island and into the mouth of the

passage with the hope of wildlife. With our time running out some jumped into the Zodiac, some elected to stay kayaking and turn and retrace our steps toward the ship. Our trusty Uber was called to complete a super calm and smooth water adventure.

16 February 2026, PM: Palaver Point – 2.9 km

Wind direction checked we motored in the Zodiac for the hard work into the wind. Joined by some of our amazing ship's deck crew who would get the once in a lifetime opportunity to paddle in Antarctic waters. Finding a suitable launching place we slid into our kayaks for what would turn out to be our last time. Two fanatically keen paddlers joined us in the kayak for the adventure. Furs seal hauled out lazily, penguins pooping at high velocity, shags being shags on a rock. But watching the comedic little chinstrap penguins mass launch of the rocks was the highlight for many in the kayak group this afternoon. A drift around the point. One last look, one last stroke, one last reflection and all to soon our kayaking and paddling adventure came to a close.













Paddling Log

Guides: Eamon Larkin, Edu Larrañaga, Kris Ronning, Reg Grundy, Anula Jochym

11 February 2026, AM: Bleiklock Island – 3.1 km

Our first paddle and in what a unique place! We can easily claim that we were some of very few people to paddle in this unusual spot – the passage which still in the '90s was fully blocked by an ice shelf.. The perfect stillness of the water mixed with the surreal icescape was such an unusual experience. We navigated through the ice, big and small, enjoying the channels we got to make in the thickening brash. The size of icebergs in the distance was impossible to gauge, unless a Zodiac appeared in front of it – a little black dot. We enjoyed the peace and quiet while bobbing on the water, just to notice that the place is not so silent at all – the crackling sound of melting glacier ice that surrounded us was impossible to ignore. What a gift – being able to hear and experience the thousands of years of this glacial history being released back to the atmosphere.

11 February 2026, PM: Horseshoe Island – 4 km

In the afternoon we set off for a sporty

paddle! The swell around Horseshoe Island was impossible to hide from but we decided to take on the challenge. We set off just around the corner from the landing spot and enjoyed a little bit of a solitude and excitement of the conditions around us. We cruised along the cliffy coastline admiring the streaks of brilliant greens and blues of the malachite permeating through the cracks in the rock. We managed to dodge every single shallow and breaking wave and, with no doubt a sense of relief, we entered the calm bay of the island. The birds we spotted on the outcrops were hard to identify: was it a penguin or just a cormorant? While circling the bay we did find a few pockets of Adélie penguins in the middle of their catastrophic moult, with a occasional Weddell seal camouflaging with the surrounding rock.

12 February 2026, PM: Bongrain Point – 2.6 km

Our small intrepid kayaker headed out into the Antarctic waters. Kayaking beneath mountains rising up out of the waters to reach a 1000m. The



Number of Paddlers:6

Total Paddle Outings:10

Total Distance Paddled:
34.4 km

Paddlers:

Kathy Robinette

Debra Corey

David Corey

Julie Almquist

Deborah Winter

Colleen Lindow

deep water below down to 250m just metres from shore. We weaved and dodged amongst the ice, deeper into the bay hugging the coastline. Low cloud drifting in. The deep rumble of the glacier ahead of us in the distance. We paused on this slow and steady kayak to view the Crabeater seal laying lazily on the ice flow. Undisturbed by our presence. We just sat and watched. All too soon it was time to load into the Zodiac and head to shore for the penguins.

**12 February 2026, PM:
The Gullet – 3.1 km**

A team of three suited up for the journey in the Gullet. Named after the narrow constriction in the land surrounding the waterway as it catches lots of icebergs. The plan was to generally just cruise around in our trusty inflatable kayaks. Heading north towards the narrower channels with the hope of seeing whales in the known hot spot. Alas not to be. They were elusive as wild creatures of the deep often are. Ice a plenty made it tough going at times. A longer paddle over some open water to view a couple of

Crabeater seals up on an iceberg made the outing most memorable. With cold seeping into our bodies after a long day out in the elements we called our UBER Zodiac and was picked up by Edu and whisked back to the warmth of our ship. (We later found the Orca's on the northern side of the Gullet via a ships cruise).

**13 February 2026, AM:
Holtedah Bay – 3 km**

Can a day get more perfect than that? The brilliant sunshine was reflecting from every single piece of ice in the bay: the glaciers, the icebergs, the icicles, the brash. As soon as we got into our kayaks we felt the same – this is all we needed right now: to sit, watch and listen to this incredible place. The experience was one of a kind: the gliding through the perfectly still water, with the ice cracking under our paddles, leaving a very temporary mark of our presence, soon to be sealed behind us once again. We meandered in the brash labyrinth, moving from one clearing to another, listening for thunder-like sounds of calving glaciers and rolling icebergs. The pieces of ice

surrounding us took on a variety of shapes: fish, dragons, even human-like faces. We finished this dream-like paddle by doing a quite unique landing: we stepped out of our kayaks onto sea ice – an experience that very few get to have.

**13 February 2026, PM:
Prospect Point / Fish Islands – 2.2 km**

Wow what a paddle. Thick ice everywhere we need to be very careful and considered with our course around the Fish Islands. Adélie penguins were the order of the paddle. The island covered with colonies of the tuxedoed little flightless bird. Beautiful small islets dotted the water, held small icebergs and directed ice flows this way and that on the currents that pushed through tiny channels. Not a long paddle but one packed with big landscapes, beautiful creatures, small rocky islands. We punched out through one last brash ice field to get to the safety Zodiacs to load out and call it a day on the water.

**14 February 2026, AM:
Wordie House / Vernadsky Station – 5.1 km**

Out with Julie and Deborah on another adventure, this time at the Argentine Islands where the Vernadsky Station was located. There was some swell and a bit of wind to start our journey but that dissipated once we got closer to the coastline. We managed to see several Gentoos both chicks and Adults which is a smell and sight we were not yet accustomed to! Our paddle session was essentially conducted in a large Spiral which concluded at the station. As we rounded a few more corners we saw more and more infrastructure where the station slowly revealed itself. What also slowly revealed itself was a Leopard seal sticking its head out of the water near an iceberg which influenced us to paddle but a tad faster than our previous pace. We managed to paddle through a few rock features on the water before arriving at Wordie House. We paddled past it at first as the ladies were keen to check out the sailboat which had just unmoored its lines. We turned back to the hut where Julie and Deborah stepped on land and were later taken to the station while I returned the kayaks to the ship. A great outing, all in all two thumbs up!



15 February 2026, AM:
Moreaux Islands – 4.4 km

Moreaux Island is not very big but Flanders Bay where it sits is. The scale of the mountains and glaciers on all sides of the bay dwarf the little island, making it look like a tiny white macaroon.

Before we entered the kayaks we spotted a whale. It was sleeping or 'logging', moving very slowly and barely breaking the surface. Beautiful, peaceful. We left it to snooze and ventured towards the glacier which was still over a mile away. On approach we saw a huge ice berg rolling and rocking like some big breathing monster. It's bulk silently rising high and dropping back into the water. We gave it a wide berth and continued on. Sounds cracked from the glaciers like thunderstorms in the distance. We crunched through some brash ice to finish a bit colder and a lot happier.

16 February 2026, AM:
Freud Passage – 3.4 km

This morning we set out kayaking in Freud Passage, Antarctica, under a pale, quiet sky. The water was incredibly calm, almost like glass, reflecting the towering white landscape around us. As we paddled, the only sounds were the gentle dip of our paddles and the astonishing cracks and rumbles of nearby glaciers shifting and breathing. Every so often, a deep echo rolled across the passage, reminding us of the immense power contained within the ice.

Enormous mountains surrounded us on all sides, their dark rock faces streaked with snow and ancient ice. The scale of everything felt overwhelming and humbling at the same time. The stillness made each moment feel suspended in time.

After our final stretch, we paddled directly back to the expedition cruise ship *Sylvia Earle*, climbing aboard with cold hands and full hearts, grateful for such a rare and unforgettable Antarctic morning.



16 February 2026, PM:
Palaver Point – 3.5 km

This afternoon we kayaked along the coast of Palaver Point under bright sunshine and clear skies. The weather was surprisingly pleasant, with only a light breeze rippling the surface of the water. Golden light reflected off the sea as we paddled, and the snow-covered slopes around us seemed to glow warmly in the afternoon sun. The calm conditions allowed us to fully absorb the scenery—the rugged shoreline, small pieces of drifting ice, and the vast Antarctic landscape stretching into the distance.

After finishing our paddle, we headed ashore for a landing. Stepping onto land after time on the water added a new sense of adventure to the day. We walked carefully toward a colony of chinstrap penguins, observing them in their natural habitat. Watching them waddle across the rocky ground, calling to one another and tending to their nests, was both amusing and unforgettable. It was a perfect Antarctic afternoon, blending sunshine, wildlife, and exploration.



Snorkelling Log

Guides: Thomas GOV (lead), Eddie Hauzer

Snorkel Expedition #1
11 February 2026, PM:
Horseshoe Island
67°48,6580' S, 67°17,7722' W

Today we experienced our first snorkel at Horseshoe Island, an exciting milestone for the group. There is always a mix of anticipation and curiosity before that first immersion in Antarctic waters. Even for experienced divers and snorkelers, the environment here demands respect.

The sea greeted us with an unusual green glow, the result of a phytoplankton bloom. While it significantly reduced visibility, turning the underwater world into a hazy and mysterious space, it was also a very positive sign. Phytoplankton forms the base of the Antarctic food web, supporting everything from tiny zooplankton to fish, seals, and whales. Swimming through it felt like drifting inside the foundation of the entire ecosystem.

The limited visibility made wildlife encounters more challenging, but that only added to the sense of adventure. Shapes appeared and disappeared in

the green water, keeping us alert and curious. Some of us were fortunate enough to catch a glimpse of a crabeater seal moving through the water, or at least Eddie and Thomas had the best view of it from the boat. Even the possibility of sharing the water with such an animal heightened the experience.

More than anything, this outing was about familiarisation. It was our opportunity to test the gear, adjust our layers, and grow comfortable using the drysuit in real Antarctic conditions. Managing buoyancy, clearing masks, communicating with one another, all the small practical details matter here. The first entry into cold polar water is always memorable, but by the end of the session, movements felt more natural and confidence had grown.

There is something special about that first snorkel. It sets the tone for everything that follows. Despite the reduced visibility, or perhaps partly because of it, the experience felt raw and authentic. It was a fun and exciting introduction to Antarctic snorkelling, a first step into a new and remarkable underwater world.



Number of Snorkellers:8

Total Number of Outings:

8/11 Outings Offered

Outings cancelled:

Pleneau island: Leopard seals

Freud passage/Hunt island:

leopard seal

Snorkellers:

Raluca Podiu

Lucian Grijincu

Deanne Denmark

Joanne Dougherty

Steven Chang

Chang-Hung Yao

Tsai-Yu Chung

Gwendolyn Holden

Snorkel Expedition #2

12 February 2026, AM:

Bongrain point

67°43,2390' S 67°43,4175' W

At Bongrain Point, on our second day below the Antarctic Circle, we slipped into the rhythm of expedition life. This was our second snorkelling outing, and already everything felt smoother. The choreography of layering up, thermal base layers, thick socks, drysuit, hood, gloves, was no longer a clumsy dance but a familiar routine. What had seemed bulky and awkward just yesterday now felt reassuring, almost empowering. We were learning how to belong here.

Before heading to the water, we spent time ashore among a lively Adélie penguin rookery. Their energy was infectious. Behind them, a beautiful glacier flowed down toward the sea, reminding us that everything here is in motion, even when it appears still.

Then it was time. We waded in through a fringe of brash ice, small loose chunks clinking gently together at the surface. The glacier had painted the water a cloudy, milky hue, heavy with

suspended sediment. Visibility was limited, the underwater world muted and mysterious. And yet, somehow, that did not matter. What we will remember is the ice.

We swam slowly among the scattered pieces, each one sculpted into soft curves and sharp edges, air bubbles trapped like frozen constellations inside. Some were flat and sturdy enough to lean on or even sit upon, carefully balancing as they drifted. There was something wonderfully childlike about it all, this simple joy of interacting with floating ice at the bottom of the world. The cold faded into the background. The murky water became irrelevant. Surrounded by glacier, penguins, and drifting ice, we felt fully present.

It was a great, fun morning, one of those moments when Antarctica stops being a place on a map and becomes something you truly experience.

Snorkel Expedition #3

12 February 2026, PM:

The Gullet

67°11,5696' S 67°34,5158' W

At Bongrain Point, on our second day In the afternoon, the spirit of exploration truly took over as we ventured into the Gullet, a spectacular and rarely visited passage where towering mountains press close and the ice seems to guard the way forward. Navigating here by Zodiac feels like a genuine expedition, weaving through brash ice and scanning every shoreline for movement.

It did not take long before wildlife began to appear. Seals were everywhere. Crabearer seals stretched out along the ice, their pale bodies blending into the frozen landscape. A powerful leopard seal slept with quiet confidence. Weddell seals rested near cracks in the ice, some slipping gracefully into the water as we approached. The afternoon was unmistakably marked by seals, each encounter adding to the sense that we were guests in a thriving and intimate world.

We eventually crossed toward a series of small outcropped islands and found a calm, protected bay that seemed perfect for snorkelling. Above us, a colony of Antarctic shags occupied the

cliffs, their dark forms scattered against the rock. Beneath the surface, the scene transformed completely.

A steep wall dropped away into the depths, disappearing into the blue. The presence of the shag colony above made the water rich in nutrients, and life clung to every available surface. The underwater rocks were covered in invertebrates. Sea urchins nestled in crevices. Sea stars stretched across the wall in subtle shades of orange and red. Isopods crept slowly over the stones. The entire wall felt alive, textured and dynamic despite the cold.

As we hovered along the drop off, a curious Weddell seal lingered nearby, watching us with large, calm eyes. It kept a respectful distance, yet its presence was unmistakable. For a few quiet moments, we observed one another in shared curiosity.

It was a beautiful and memorable expedition afternoon, a reminder that even in the most remote corners of Antarctica, life flourishes in remarkable ways.



Snorkel Expedition #4

13 February 2026, AM:

Holtedah Bay

66°6,4570' S 65°24,6214' W

At Holtedah Bay, the day offered one of those rare Antarctic combinations of scale and intimacy.

We began with an ice landing, stepping out onto a massive floating floe. Standing on top of such a vast piece of drifting ice is something truly extraordinary. The surface stretched out around us in soft whites and subtle blues, gently rising and falling with the swell. Beneath our boots lay meters of compacted snow and frozen seawater, carrying the weight of seasons past. The silence felt amplified, broken only by the distant crackle and the faint movement of the sea against the edges of the floe.

After taking in the moment from above, we transitioned to experiencing the ice from below.

We slipped into the water for a snorkel around a growler nearby, its smooth curves glowing beneath the surface. What appeared compact and solid from the outside revealed intricate textures

underwater, sculpted shapes and pockets carved by melt and movement. The clarity allowed us to focus on the details, and that is when we noticed the bubbles.

Streams of tiny, shimmering bubbles escaped continuously from the glacial ice. Ancient air, trapped thousands of years ago when snow first fell and compressed into ice, was now being slowly released back into the ocean. As the bubbles rose, they sparkled in the light, racing upward in delicate silver trails. Watching them felt almost hypnotic.

It was more than just a visual spectacle. It was a tangible reminder of deep time. Each stream of bubbles represented centuries of snowfall, pressure, and transformation, now dissolving quietly into the present moment. Floating there beside the growler, observing this slow exhale of history, gave the experience a powerful sense of perspective.

It was an incredibly fun snorkel, playful and light at times, yet also profound. Holtedah Bay offered us a truly unique Antarctic moment, one that connected us not only to the landscape around us, but to the ancient story held within the ice itself.



Snorkel Expedition #5

13 February 2026, PM:

The Fish Islands

66°1,5621' S 65°21,6207' W

At Holtedah Bay, the day offered one At Prospect Point, the day began with something truly special: a landing on the Antarctic continent itself. Stepping ashore on the mainland carries a certain gravity. The rocky shoreline, the vast icy backdrop, and the crisp polar air combined to create a powerful sense of place. It is a meaningful moment, a reminder of just how remote and extraordinary this environment truly is.

After exploring on land, we regrouped for a full Zodiac outing toward a narrow channel near the Fish Islands, close to a shag colony. The cliffs were dotted with the birds, their dark silhouettes standing out against the pale rock. Their calls echoed across the water as we prepared to enter the sea.

Once in the water, the experience became dynamic and immersive. Swimming alongside the shags was extraordinary. Birds that appear somewhat heavy and deliberate on land transformed completely underwater. They moved with surprising grace,

using their wings to propel themselves smoothly through the water, steering and adjusting direction with effortless precision.

At times one would pass just meters away, gliding through the blue with calm focus. Being present in their element felt like stepping into a hidden dimension of their lives. The narrow channel, the steep underwater walls, and the constant movement of birds around us created an atmosphere that felt vibrant and alive.

Flor, the shop manager, joined us for this outing, which made the experience even more enjoyable. Sharing such a rare and intimate wildlife encounter as a complete team added to the sense of connection and excitement. Back in the Zodiac, faces were glowing and conversations animated as everyone replayed their favourite moments.

From setting foot on the Antarctic continent to drifting underwater beside seabirds, the outing perfectly captured the spirit of Antarctic exploration. It was immersive, energetic, and completely unforgettable. We all had a fantastic time.



Snorkel Expedition #6
14 February 2026, AM:
Argentine Islands
65°14,7755' S 64°15,0605' W

This morning at the Argentine Islands offered a different kind of exploration, blending human history with the raw beauty of Antarctica.

We had the rare privilege of being invited to visit the Ukrainian research station Vernadsky, a unique and special occasion. Stepping inside, we discovered a warm and welcoming atmosphere in the middle of an otherwise austere landscape. The station stands as a reminder of the long scientific commitment to understanding this remote region, and it was fascinating to glimpse daily life at the edge of the world.

Not far away, we visited the British historical Station W, better known as Wordie House. Walking through its preserved rooms felt like stepping back several decades. Supplies, tools, and personal items remain carefully arranged, as if the occupants had just stepped outside for a moment. Time

truly seems frozen there, suspended between past and present, offering a tangible connection to earlier Antarctic expeditions and overwintering teams.

Cruising around the islands by Zodiac was beautiful despite the moody weather. Low clouds drifted across the sky and the temperature remained brisk, yet the landscape felt vibrant. We encountered our first gentoo penguins of the trip, always a special milestone. Their bright orange bills stood out against the grey tones of rock and sea. Patches of pink snow algae coloured parts of the shoreline, a surprising and delicate splash of life in the cold. Icebergs of various shapes and sizes drifted quietly between the islands, adding depth and contrast to the scenery.

We later slipped into the water not far from the station for our snorkelling outing. Penguins gathered along the shore, watching from a distance. We hoped they might join us in the water, but they were clearly not in a swimming mood and chose to remain dry on land. Even without their underwater company, the experience was memorable.

It was a great morning, shaped by history, wildlife, and atmosphere, even if the weather kept us fully aware that we are still deep in Antarctica.

Snorkel Expedition #7
15 February 2026, AM:
Flandres Bay
65°5,6059' S 63°5,3319' W

Today we visited Flandres Bay and the Moureaux islands, heading out with the quiet hope of seeing whales. The atmosphere on the water felt full of anticipation from the very beginning. The bay was calm, framed by glaciers and rugged peaks, with soft light shifting across the ice.

It did not take long before our hopes were rewarded. We saw many whales throughout the outing, their blows rising in the distance before their dark backs rolled gracefully through the surface. Sharing the water with them, even from the Zodiac, created a powerful sense of scale and humility. Each sighting brought a renewed wave of excitement across the group.

Beyond the whales, the cruise itself was wonderful. Seals rested on floating ice and rocky outcrops, occasionally lifting their heads to watch us pass. Seabirds circled and skimmed the surface around us, adding constant movement to the wide Antarctic landscape. Flandres Bay revealed itself as a vibrant and lively place, rich with wildlife and framed by dramatic scenery.

On the way back, as the visibility in the water was excellent, we decided to take a short dip near a beautifully sculpted growler drifting nearby.

Slipping beneath the surface offered a completely different perspective. From above, the growler appeared solid and compact, but underwater it transformed into a world of curves, translucent blues, and intricate textures. The ice revealed delicate patterns shaped by melt and time, with subtle gradations of colour shifting as the light filtered down.

Floating quietly beside it, we could fully appreciate the hidden architecture of the iceberg. It was calm, silent, and mesmerising.



It was an amazing experience and a perfect way to enjoy the beauty of Flandres Bay from a different perspective, above and below the surface, wildlife and ice combined into one unforgettable day.

Snorkel Expedition #8
16 February 2026, PM:
Palaver point
64°8,8878' S 61°45,2345' W

At Palaver Point, the day began early in the mudroom. We moved with purpose, gearing up quickly so we could snorkel first and still be back in time to join the rest of the Expeditioners for a hike to a small summit overlooking the bay. There is always something satisfying about these well timed Antarctic mornings, when adventure seems to stack neatly upon adventure.

The sun was shining brightly, and for once Antarctica felt almost warm. The black drysuits absorbed the sunlight as we prepared, giving us an extra touch of comfort before slipping into the water. Even in the cold sea, that gentle solar warmth made a difference.

Conditions felt inviting, at least by Antarctic standards.

Palaver Point is known for its chinstrap penguins, and it did not take long before we saw them porpoising at the surface. On land they appear almost comical, but underwater they transform completely. They become torpedoes, impossibly fast and agile, streaking past in a flash of white and black. At first it seemed nearly impossible to get a proper look at them. Just shadows and sudden movement in the blue.

Patience paid off.

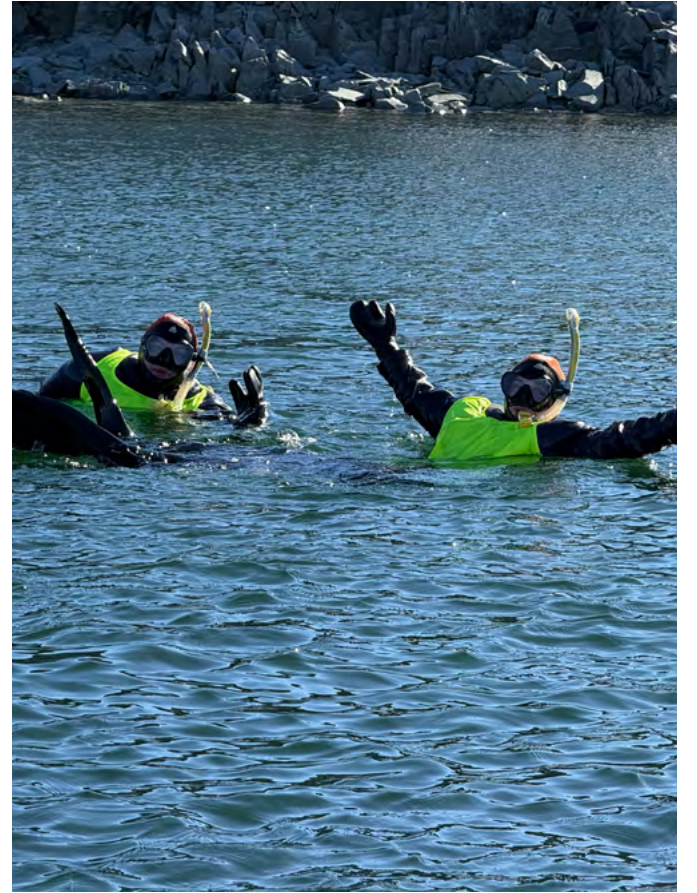
By hovering calmly and anticipating their paths in and out of the colony, we finally managed to observe them more clearly. For brief but thrilling moments, a penguin would cut across our field of view, twisting effortlessly before vanishing into the distance. Those seconds alone made the effort worthwhile.

After about thirty minutes in the water, we climbed back into the Zodiac and returned to the ship, cheeks glowing from the cold and the sun. The transition from drysuit to hiking gear was swift, and soon we were back



ashore, this time heading uphill.

The hike rewarded us with sweeping views over the coastline, bright in the sunshine. Penguins dotted the slopes below, and the sea shimmered beyond them. It was one of those rare Antarctic days where everything aligns, wildlife, weather, and energy, creating a morning that felt both active and deeply fulfilling.

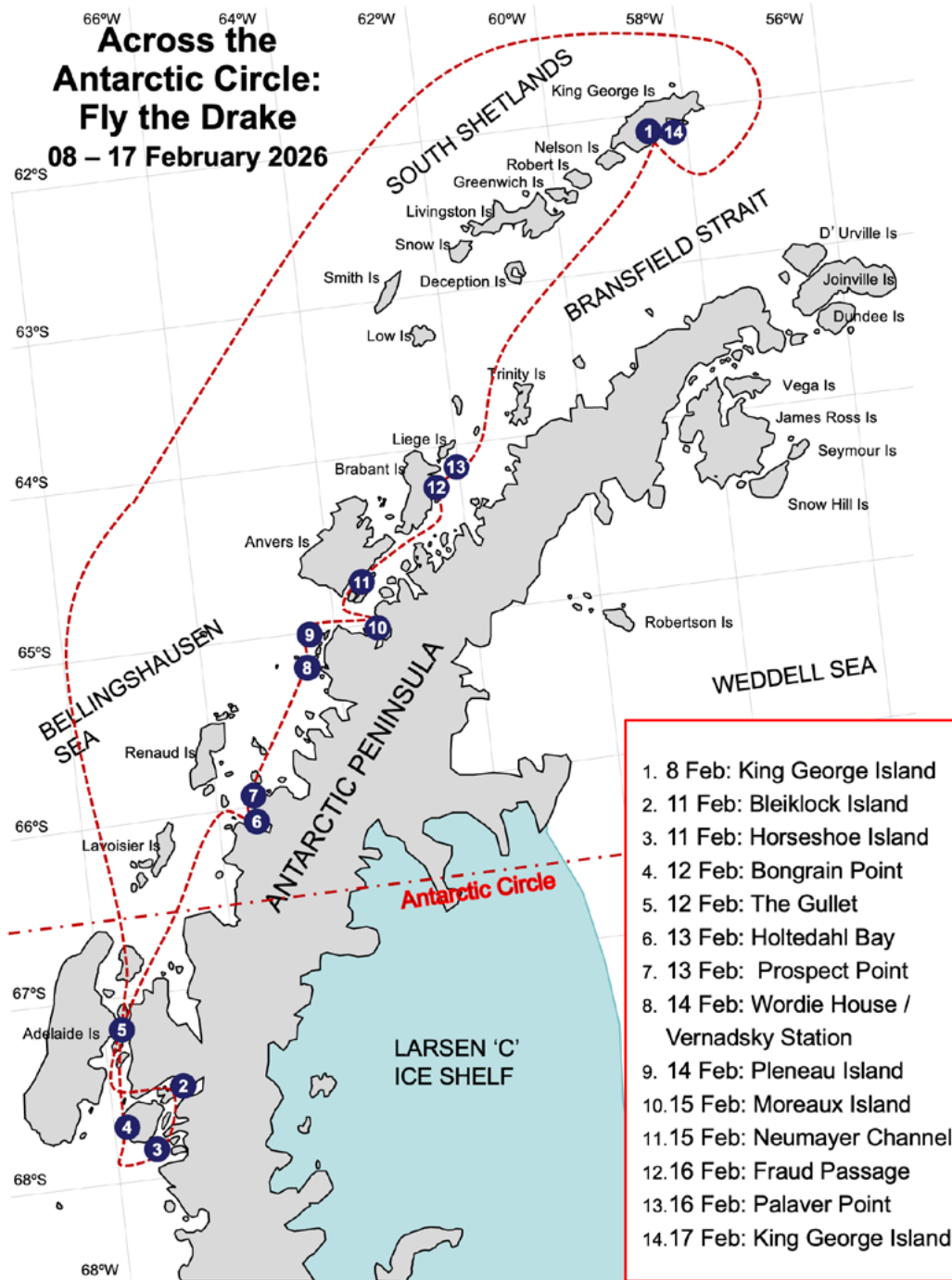


Bird & Mammal Sightings

Bird Species	February									
	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
Gentoo Penguin						•	•		•	
Chinstrap Penguin						•	•	•	•	
Adélie Penguin			•	•	•					
Black-browed Albatross		•							•	
Grey-headed Albatross		•							•	
Giant Petrel sp. (Northern or Southern)		•								
Cape Petrel	•	•		•						
Snow Petrel		•		•	•	•	•	•		
Antarctic Fulmar (Southern Fulmar)	•	•			•		•	•		
Prion sp. (likely Antarctic)	•									
White-chinned Petrel		•								
Wilson's Storm-petrel		•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	
Imperial Cormorant (Blue-eyed Shag)			•	•	•		•	•	•	
Kelp Gull			•		•	•	•			
Skua (Brown or South Polar)			•	•	•	•	•	•	•	
Antarctic Tern	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	
Snowy Sheathbill			•		•	•	•	•		

Mammal Species	February									
	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
Antarctic Fur Seal							•	•	•	
Crabeater Seal			•	•	•		•			
Weddell Seal			•	•				•		
Leopard Seal						•		•		
Minke Whale			•	•			•			
Humpback Whale		•			•	•	•	•		
Orca		•						•		
Arnoux beaked whale							•			

Map



Across The Circle

08 to 18 February 2026



Our Expeditioners

Michael Albright

Julie Almquist

Vivianne Benabib

Alyssa Benedetti

Pearl Benson

Cindy Bishop

Jim Bishop Jr

Gayle Blums

Anne Marie Carmichael-
McDaniel

Steven Chang

David Chavis

Xin Chen

Hong Chen

Wei Chen

Michael Cheng

Tsai-Yu Chung

Paul Clayton

Debra Corey

David Corey

DeAunne Denmark

Wenyi Dong

Joanne Dougherty

Hong Du

Heather Gilbert

Lucian Adrian Grijincu

Gwendolyn Holden

Amanda Hopkins

Wei Jia

Keith Johnson

Juliet Johnson

Beny Kably

Gavin Kelly

Shelley Komisar

Anjelica Leovic

Michael Li

Michelle Li

Zhuohing Li

Colleen Lindow

Pengju Liu

Liqun Liu

Kai Liu

Xia Liu

Teresa Loudon

David Loudon

Yifan Lij

Naina Manji

Matt McDaniel

Sue Neal

Leo Ou

Raluca Elena Podiuc

Greg Pollack

Anne Pollack

Woody Pollack

Monica Poplawsky

Kathy Robinette

Felix Romano

Paty Sacal de Kably

Mike Salter

Janet Salter

Ryan Scheer

Kathie Sirkin

Belinda Skoog

Chris Skoog

Nick Spooner-Rodie

Terry Stolz

Shuo Sun Sun

Sun Changmin Sun

Hong SUN

Robin Toole

Shannon Turner

Lucia Ulrychova

Hanyong Wang

Fang Wang

Yiwei Wang

Yidan Wang

Yihao Wang

Shelia Wang

Ziyi Wang

Jincheng Wang

Jen Warren

Mark Will

Charlotte Will

Deborah Winter

Rob Wofchuck

Jinyan Xu

Hua Xu

Chang-Hung Yao

Jennie Zeng

Shaojun Zhang

Kana Zhao

Yongqi Zhao

Eduardo Zundelevich

Expedition Team

Expedition Leader: Elena Wimberger
Assistant Expedition Leader: Mark Brophy
Onboard Expedition Manager: Rosie Leaney
Shop Manager: Flor March
Marine Biologist: Annette Scheffer
Geologist/Glaciologist: Sydney Carste
Naturalist/Ornithologist: Ed Nolan
Historian: Kelsey Camacho
Photography Guide: Fiona Wardle
Expedition First Responder: Laura Boenish
Expedition Guide/Mandarin Translator: Rose Luan
Lead Senior Kayak Guide: Eamon Larkin
Senior Kayak Guide: Eduardo Larranga
Senior Kayak Guide: Anula Jochym
Kayak Guide: Reg Grundy
Kayak Guide: Kris Ronning
Lead Snorkel Guide: Thomas Gov
Snorkel Guide: Eddie Hauzer
Senior Alpine Guide: Dave Stark
Zodiac Manager: Nacho Marino
Oceanites Researcher: Grant Humphries
Oceanites Researcher: James Bunyan
Pianist: Catherine Thomann-Etchegaray
Viola: Dominique Thomann-Etchegaray

Senior Officers & Heads of Department

Master: Andrey Gilevskiy
Chief Officer: Viktor Koshelets
Second Officer: JP Sibug
Safety Officer: Bryan Salem
Bosun: Leo Marzan
Ship Doctor: Maria Zambrano Ruales
Chief Engineer: Enes Candic
First Engineer: Sergeii Luba
IT Officer: Rene Reyes
Hotel Director: Vill Ignacio
F&B Service Manager: Narendra Seeram
Head Bartender: Sheenie Landauz
Chief Purser: Peter Diaz
Executive Chef: Indra Wicaksono
Sous Chef: Priteviraj Dakona
Hotel Controller: Orlando Costa
Receptionist: Angela Manuel
Receptionist: Jaica Puyod
Head Stateroom Attendant: Florante Lusong
Deck Cadet: Constantin Turmacu
Able Seaman: Eduardo Aloyan
Able Seaman: Ferdy Diaz Roque
Able Seaman: Prasad Pallikara Vilayan
Able Seaman: Anthony Brosas
Able Seaman: Dan Danico
Able Seaman: Jovito Sagusay
Able Seaman: Joseph Lyndon Baid
Able Seaman: Adrian Bersabal
Able Seaman: Jerome Mendez Castillo
Able Seaman: Joby Cheruparambil

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