

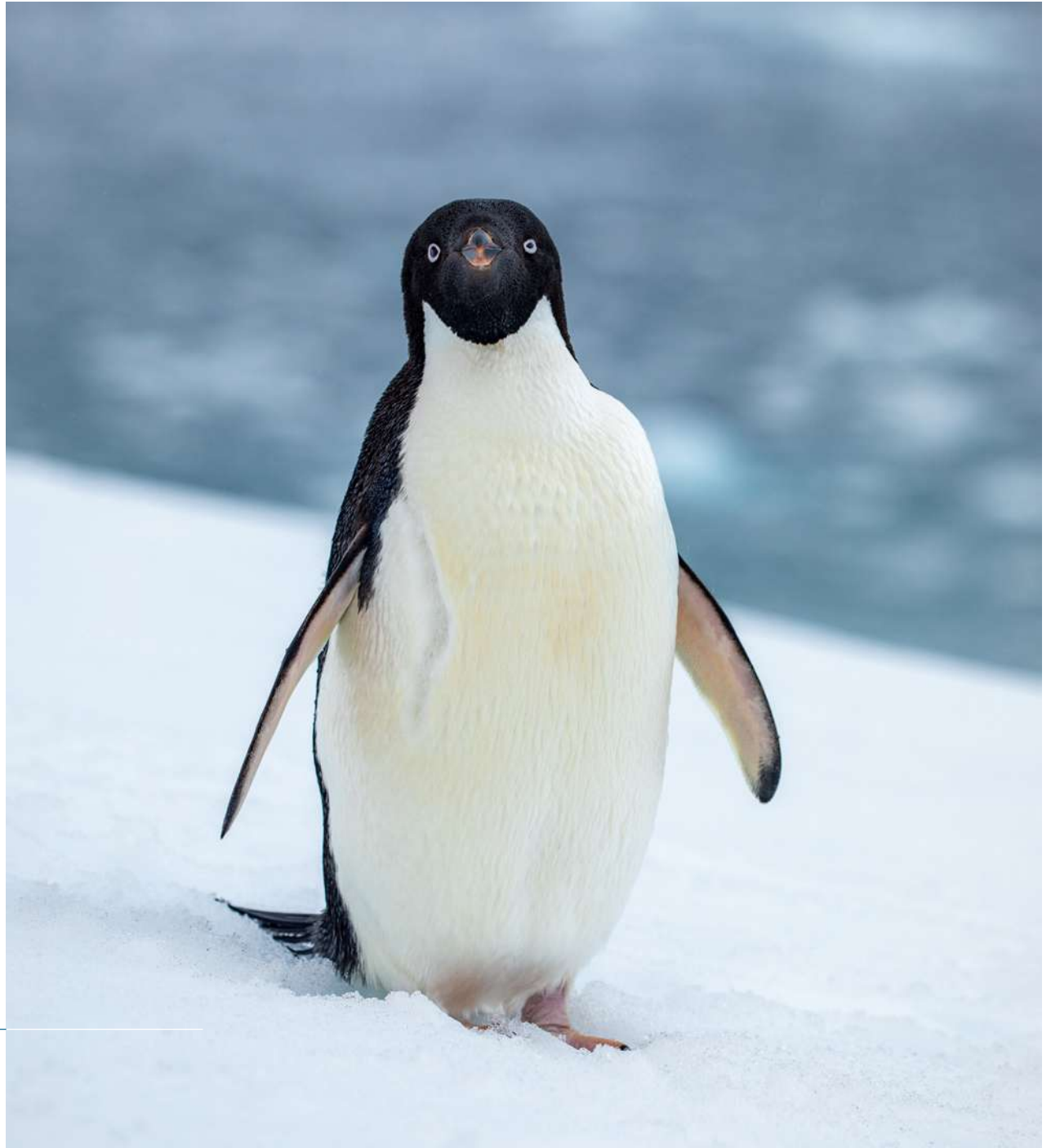
Across the Antarctic Circle

Aboard *Sylvia Earle* | 22 December 2024 – 3 January 2025



Across the Antarctic Circle

22 December 2024 – 3 January 2025



Ushuaia

DAY 1 | Sunday 22 December 2024

Latitude:
54° 48.48' S
Longitude:
068° 18.51' W

Course:
Alongside
Speed:
Alongside

Wind Speed:
6 kts NNE
Barometer:
1007 hPa

Air Temp:
6°C

At 4 pm, we clambered up the gangway where the Aurora Expedition Team and onboard hotel staff showed us to our cabins. Then it was time to explore our new home-away-from-home, the *Sylvia Earle*.

On board we total 126 Expeditioners with nationalities representing Australia (25), Canada (4), China (17), Germany (1), Ireland (2), Latvia (2), Malaysia (1), Singapore (4), UK (11), USA (59) along with 21 Expedition Team and 86 ship's crew from all over the world.

We had time to unpack, settle into cabins and enjoy delicious embarkation refreshments before Expedition Leader, Howard, called us together to welcome us aboard

the *Sylvia Earle*. Afterwards, we received our lifeboat and safety briefing and readied ourselves for the abandon ship drill.

By 7 pm it was time to head into the dining rooms, where a delicious meal was served complete with a delectable dessert.

During our meal, we steamed east along the beautiful Beagle Channel. The bustling town of Ushuaia gradually receded as we made our way past slopes forested with beech, and snowy slopes brilliant in the steely light.





Drake Passage

DAY 2 | Monday 23 December 2024

Latitude:
55°49.84' S
Longitude:
066°55.98' W

Course:
188.7°
Speed:
13.4 kts

Wind Speed:
17 kts NNW
Barometer:
1001 hPa

Air Temp:
8°C

Our day aboard the *Sylvia Earle* began with a soft fog over the ocean horizon as the ship rose and fell with the rhythm of the ocean, its X-Bow slicing through the waves.

Feeling a bit out of sorts and tired from both our travels and the rolling seas, we braved the mandatory IAATO briefing. Assistant Expedition Leader, Leo, led an informative Zodiac briefing, explaining important procedures for these sturdy, inflatable workhorses that will be our gateway to Antarctic adventures.

Next stop: Biosecurity checks. We gathered with vacuums and tweezers, inspecting Velcro strips, outerwear, and backpacks for stowaway seeds or plant matter. It was

a small but meaningful act of stewardship, ensuring no invasive hitchhikers would make their way ashore.

As the seas calmed and everyone started to get their sea legs, Vicky introduced us to Citizen Science, through which our journey will take on deeper meaning. From bird and whale sightings, cloud cover, and phytoplankton, our observations will be sent to global databases, contributing to research in the area.

Ship's photographer, Pia, shared a masterclass on phone photography. 'Cameras don't make the photographer,' she stated, demonstrating ways to elevate our mobile phone photos.





At Sea – Christmas Eve

DAY 3 | Tuesday 24 December 2024

Latitude:
62°06 .41' S
Longitude:
068°00.42' W

Course:
183.7°
Speed:
13.9 kts

Wind Speed:
25 kts NW
Barometer:
985 hPa

Air Temp:
6°C

As we patiently wait for our first double decker ice bus, we delve deep into all things whales. Learning about the astonishing evolutionary pathways of how a hippopotamus ventured into the ocean and grew fins and what truly makes a whale 'a whale'. Beyond their baleen and toothy smiles we take a glimpse of how these gentle giants fit into the complex food web and how we must navigate ways to protect their future. Indulging in our own food web we continue to traverse the high seas.

Although still thick with fog, we begin to get an insight and little snippets of what Antarctica is all about, with birds of all sorts starting to pop up, and icy bits floating in the abyss.

The anticipation is surreal. As temperatures begin to reach freezing, the reality now sets in that after all this time, this vast white made-up land shown on maps may in fact be real...

Penguins! What everyone is dying to see. Those adorable happy little feet made their way into the afternoon lecture, where we discovered exactly what they get up to on their days off. Whether its collecting rocks for a lover or escaping the leopard seal's charming grin, they are just full of adventure and will continue to withstand the harsh challenges of the unforgiving environments of the deep south!





Crystal Sound | Detaille Island

DAY 4 | Wednesday 25 December 2024

Latitude:
66°37.78' S
Longitude:
067°23.52' W

Course:
357°
Speed:
5.8 kts

Wind Speed:
4 kts E
Barometer:
986 hPa

Air Temp:
2°C

On this atmospheric Christmas morning, we were treated to our first wake-up call from Expedition Leader, Howard. Howard let us know that we were, as of a few hours earlier, south of the Antarctic Circle and with that, officially in magical Antarctica!

Just around 9 am, the Zodiacs were lowered into the water in Crystal Sound and we got to practise what our Assistant Expedition Leader, Leo, had taught us on the second day of our voyage: how to safely get into them.

Then, off it was into the blue! In the fresh Antarctic air, we cruised through ice formations, growlers, bergy bits and icebergs – with glacier fronts towering on our side.

We saw a group of crabeater seals hauled out on an ice floe and what could have been a few penguins up on a

rocky outcrop, except they then flew off... probably not penguins then. (They were blue-eyed shags.)

After lunch, we reached Detaille Island, a place that was tricky to access not just for us, but also for scientists of the past.

For those of us on land, we entered a time capsule named Base W hut, a historic monument that was last inhabited 65 years ago by UK scientists, who had to leave in a hurry in 1959 when ice conditions deteriorated. They left behind food, some personal belongings and many of their work materials, which today gave us fascinating glimpses into what life would have been like for them way back when. As the Christmas cherry on top, we were visited by a couple of amorous Adélie penguins, who politely posed for many, many cameras.







Horseshoe Island | Stonington Island

DAY 5 | Thursday 26 December 2024

Latitude:

68°11'83 S

Longitude:

068°38.57' W

Course:

102°

Speed:

14.2 kts

Wind Speed:

25 kts ESE

Barometer:

961 hPa

Air Temp:

2°C

Today we experienced a deep and true picture of Antarctica. Craggy peaks, stiff winds, and big views towards the continental spine were the backdrop for our morning at Stonington Island. The historic buildings from both British and American expeditions remain as evidence, speaking to years of exploration and discovery achieved as a result of time spent on this rocky outpost.

Cruising up Marguerite Bay we eventually encountered sea ice, but delved in to find our anchorage off Horseshoe Island. It was an ethereal spot, with misty clouds revealing glimpses of rugged terrain while waves of snow flurries framed icebergs and patches of sea ice on the way to the landing at Horseshoe Bay.

The Base Y hut did not disappoint, and it was easy to imagine settling in for a cosy winter afternoon with a cup of tea. For us, however, it was a grand place to stretch legs and walk out to a variety of vistas, and even get to watch some wildlife. Several Weddell seals were hauled out on the fast ice of the small bay, one enjoying a bit of a bath in a small upwelling.

Several folks traversed around the bay and went for a scramble with Howard up the top of the ridge, watching the snowshoers in the distance and the snorkellers down below the cliffs.

A couple of Adélie penguins came in for a closer look as we were returning to the Zodiacs. Our final treat was the return ride through the ice while snow fell. Antarctic magic!





At Sea

DAY 6 | Friday 27 December 2024

Latitude:
67°18'39 S
Longitude:
67° 50'33 W

Course:
152°
Speed:
8 kts

Wind Speed:
25 kts NE
Barometer:
986 hPa

Air Temp:
0°C

This morning, we were woken early by the soft voice of Howard announcing we were near the Laubeuf Fjord and due to ice we were not going to be able to transit through the Gullet, which is a narrow channel separating Adelaide Island and Arrowsmith Peninsula. Adelaide Island was discovered in 1832 by a British expedition under John Biscoe.

So, we headed south again into Marguerite Bay to head back out to open water. To help pass the time we listened to a fascinating lecture from alpine guide Sean, who does a side hustle in geology. Sean expertly explained the last 14 billion years of geology in about 35 minutes.

After lunch, around 67 degrees south we cruised through 'Iceberg Alley', where we drifted pass some beautifully shaped icebergs of all different shapes and sizes for a few hours.

Following that we had a visit up to the bridge, where safety officer, Yevhenii, gave us some idea of the work involved to navigate this beautiful ship in Antarctic waters and how to find and dodge the icebergs.

Around teatime, Pia gave a talk to the more 'serious photographers' on how to use framing, colour, shape, contrast and proportions among a few ideas to help your photograph composition.



Petermann Island | Wordie House

DAY 7 | Saturday 28 December 2024

Latitude:
65°11.26' S
Longitude:
064°53.05' W
Course:
74.9°
Speed:
12.3 kts

Wind Speed:
10 kts NE
Barometer:
996 hPa
Air Temp:
2°C

Our adventure aboard the *Sylvia Earle* reached a thrilling milestone last night as we crossed the Antarctic Circle under a twilight sky.

Our first landing of the day brought us to the rugged shores of Petermann Island. Here, we encountered a bustling gentoo penguin rookery, the air filled with the calls of the energetic residents and the unmistakable scent of penguin colonies. Observing the comical waddle of the adults and the fluffy gray chicks provided endless entertainment and a heartfelt connection to the vibrant life thriving in this frozen world.

In the afternoon, we visited Wordie House, where the dramatic beauty of the Antarctic wilderness was amplified by the presence of a leopard seal lounging on the sea ice. Its sleek, powerful form and watchful gaze reminded us of the intricate balance of predator and prey in this environment. Nearby, the ice creaked and groaned, a subtle soundtrack to our exploration.

As dinner concluded, the ship navigated through the spectacular Lemaire Channel, often called 'Kodak Gap' for its unparalleled beauty. Towering cliffs and glaciers flanked our passage, their icy facades glowing in the soft evening light. The still waters mirrored the grandeur above, creating a dreamlike scene that left us all in awe.





Enterprise Island | Recess Cove

DAY 8 | Sunday 29 December 2024

Latitude:
64°29.54' S
Longitude:
062°03.33' W
Course:
102.3°
Speed:
5.4 kts

Wind Speed:
15 kts NE
Barometer:
1004 hPa
Air Temp:
2°C

We woke today as the *Sylvia Earle* ghosted her way through the milky calm waters, with Enterprise Island on our bow.

We were treated to a Zodiac cruise with full interpretation around the delights of Foyn Harbor.

Rising out of the water of Foyn Harbor is the rusty hull of the renowned whaling ship, the *Guvernøren*. The largest and most extensively fitted out whaling ship prior to the First World War, she was intentionally run aground by her captain in January 1915 after she caught fire. Allegedly during a below-deck party to celebrate a successful whaling season, an oil lamp was knocked over during the celebrations.

On returning to the ship, Expeditioners were invited to complete a pre-lunch 'polar plunge' by jumping off the back of the ship into the iceberg-strewn waters. Onboard Expedition Manager, Anne, ably supported by the E-team, invited guests to wear either their swimming costumes or their birthday suit, and a record number of 71 guests will be presented with a digital certificate as a proof of their bravery.

Recess Bay landing was next on the afternoon itinerary. Here the majority of guests were able to actually set foot for the first time on the White Continent. Those who had now touched the Seven Continents took photographic evidence with the Aurora Flag in view.







Port Lockroy | Jougla Point | Melchior Islands

DAY 9 | Monday 30 December 2024

Latitude:
64°52.37' S
Longitude:
65°39.20' W

Course:
357.2
Speed:
7.5 kts

Wind Speed:
6 kts NNE
Barometer:
999 hPa

Air Temp:
2°C

Morning found us moored off Port Lockroy. One of this season's UK Antarctic Heritage team came aboard to give us an insight into the history of the location, conservation work to restore the buildings from a near-derelict state in the mid-1990s, and daily life at the famed Penguin Post Office.

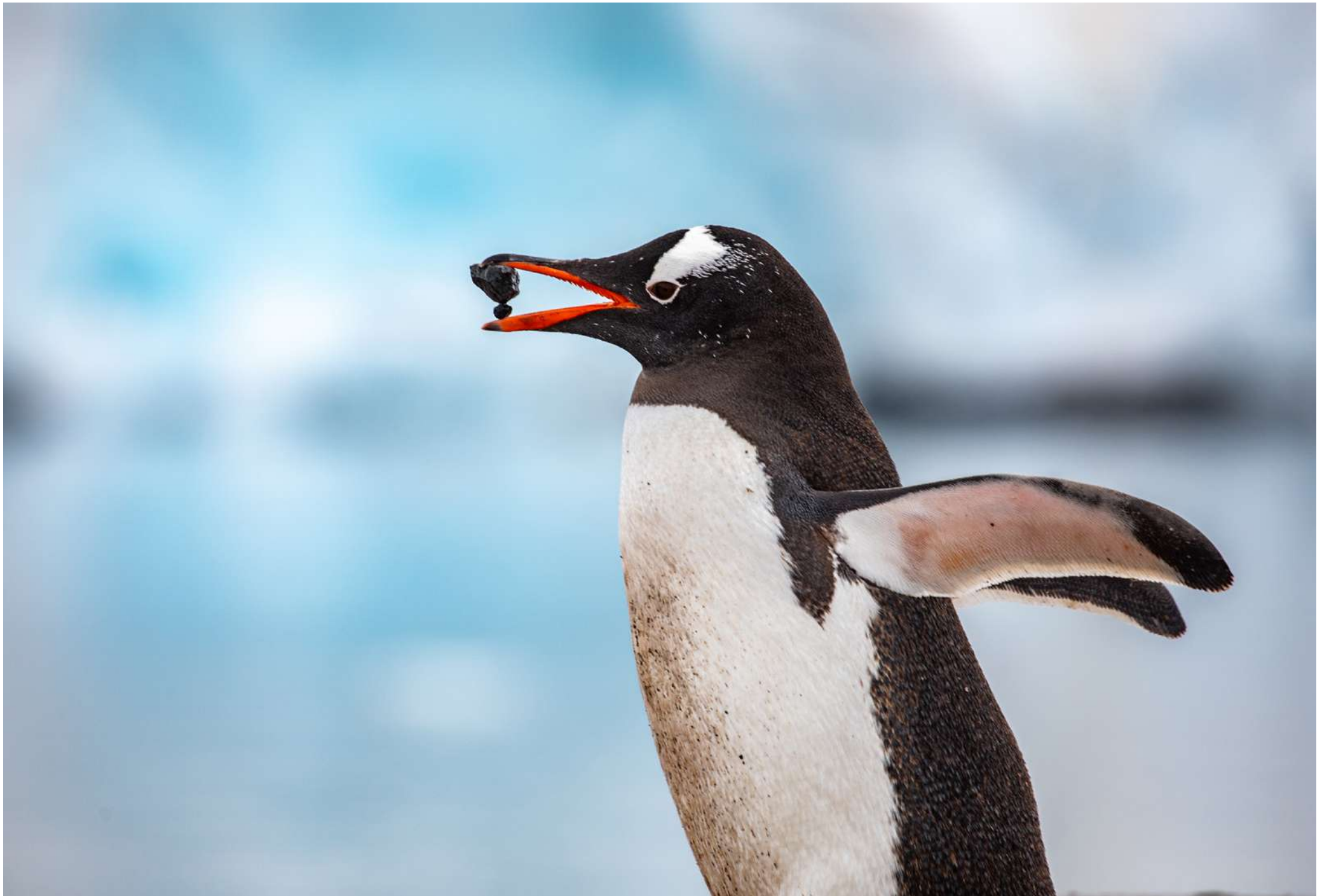
Stepping ashore was our closest encounter with gentoo penguins yet, as they waddled around their highways, paying no heed to us, and squabbled over stones to shore up their nests. A full-on sensory experience with the sounds and smells of life in the penguin colony, as well as the sights. A tiny chick, just a few days old tucked under an

adult bird, peeping for a feed; a curious, clucking sheathbill on the search for an unguarded egg; the plap-plap-plap of little feet slapping against the snowy ground.

Through the afternoon we made our way northwards to Melchior Islands, an archipelago of ice-capped islands nestled in the channel between Anvers and Brabant Islands, each given a name corresponding to a letter of the Greek alphabet: Eta, Lambda, Gamma, Omega, and countless smaller isles and skerries. Narrow channels between islands hold fast ice until late in the season, making it a haven for hauling out if you're a crabeater seal.







Telefon Bay | Snow Island

DAY 10 | Tuesday 31 December 2024

Latitude:
63°27'54 S
Longitude:
060°56'51 W

Course:
029.5
Speed:
14.8 kts

Wind Speed:
26 kts SW
Barometer:
1006 hPa

Air Temp:
2°C

Our day began with a hearty breakfast as the Captain and his crew skilfully navigated the narrow entrance to Deception Island. The ship cruised into Whalers Bay, where Howard and Sue shared fascinating insights about the island's storied past.

Later in the morning, we landed at Telefon Bay, a surreal landscape shaped by volcanic eruptions. We embarked on a refreshing walk along the crater, its surface dotted with patches of melting ice. Wildlife encounters elevated the experience, with a Weddell seal basking peacefully on the beach and a crabeater seal pup lying serenely nearby. These moments of connection with the island's inhabitants added a magical touch to our exploration of this unique volcanic setting.

After lunch, the ship repositioned northeast to Snow Island, located south of Livingston Island. Under bright sunshine, we made a memorable landing on its windswept shores. While the conditions were challenging, the rewards were immense. Gentoo and Adélie penguins wandered through the sparring elephant seals, their determined waddles contrasting with the seals' spirited tussles. Among the colonies, giant petrels and shags were nesting, their striking forms blending seamlessly into the dramatic Antarctic landscape.

Returning to the ship proved an adventure, with rough waves making the Zodiac journey exhilarating. Once safely on board, we celebrated New Year's Eve with a magnificent dinner prepared by our talented culinary team.





At Sea

DAY 11 | Wednesday 1 January 2025

Latitude:
61°17'10 S
Longitude:
062°55'40 W

Course:
344°
Speed:
13.5 kts

Wind Speed:
25 kts NW
Barometer:
1012 hPa

Air Temp:
3°C

As a beautiful sun went down on 2024, late-night revellers were ultimately lulled to sleep by the soothing waters of Drake Passage.

The new year began WITHOUT the customary, cheery wake-up calls from Howard.

By mid-morning, though, Expeditioners filed into the dining room, where a sumptuous brunch had been prepared by Singh and his team. Slowly bodies refuelled, minds cleared, and conversation turned to the magical sights and adventures of the past week... different types of whales, seals, penguins, teeming bird life, historic bases, shipwrecks, otherworldly icebergs, surreal landscapes

of massive calving glaciers, snowy plateaus, steep mountains, volcanic remnants... and, of course, friendships made.

Some special birthdays today included Julie, and a special occasion for Diana celebrating her 80th!

The afternoon saw Vicky and Jos with a Citizen Science follow-up, looking at collections gathered from the Zodiac cruises and other ways to contribute to furthering science. Andrea's talk on the Antarctic Treaty System and looking at waste management was informative and thought provoking... to be continued tomorrow!



At Sea

DAY 12 | Thursday 2 January 2025

Latitude:
55° 52.00' S
Longitude:
065° 56.91' W

Course:
342.8°
Speed:
9.7 kts

Wind Speed:
25 kts WSW
Barometer:
1002 hPa

Air Temp:
6°C

On the final full day aboard the *Sylvia Earle*, we woke up to a calm and serene morning on the Drake Passage. The day began with Sue’s navigational classes on deck 8, where we learned about nautical charts and how to use them for effective navigation.

Next, we enjoyed an enlightening lecture by Leo, who shared insights from his scientific research in Antarctica. His work focused on a variety of seals, as well as adorable emperor penguins, giving us a deeper understanding of the region’s unique wildlife and ecosystems.

Vicky conducted a final bird survey, while Dan led the last cloud observation session, offering a chance to reflect on

the natural beauty we had encountered during our voyage.

Jocelyn then hosted a sustainability workshop, where we learned about the proactive efforts of Aurora Expeditions makes to promote sustainable operations. She also encouraged us to think about the small actions we can take in our daily lives to contribute to environmental conservation.

As the day drew to a close, those who participated in activities had a heartfelt farewell; a fitting way to end such an incredible journey.

Ushuaia

DAY 13 | Friday 3 January 2025

Latitude:

54°48.58' S

Longitude:

068°18.10' W

Course:

287°

Speed:

Alongside

Wind Speed:

13 kts NW

Barometer:

1003 hPa

Air Temp:

12°C

Aurora Expeditions send out a big thank you to you all for your great humour, infectious enthusiasm and smiling faces. It was a pleasure having you all on board and being able to share some of the pleasures that the icy south has to offer. May your memories live long and bright. We have travelled 2,415 nautical miles together.



BBQ





Polar Plunge

















Snowshoeing Log

Guides: Dan Phillips, Sean Waters

25 December 2024, PM – Detaille Island

Surrounded by the amazing icebergs of Crystal Sound, we embarked on our first snowshoe outing on Detaille Island for Christmas. With the thousand shades of grey in the sea, sky and snow we strapped on the snowshoes, adjusted poles and marched off into the Antarctic wilderness for the first time, without the added complications of ropes and harness – a rare treat in Antarctica. Just over 1 kilometre of rolling terrain provided a fantastic warm-up for the coming days, topped off by the antics of the Adélie penguins and a great glimpse of 1950's life in Antarctica.

26 December 2024, AM – Neny Island

We planned to head to Neny Island opposite the general landing at Stonington Island (Base E). As we approached Stonington Island in the *Sylvia Earle*, the katabatic wind increased. The winds sweeping off the immense glacier opposite our landing ensured the trip ashore was an exciting albeit slow one that tested our waterproofs. It took a while to get ashore and we had a rather hurried snowshoe 1 kilometre up the non-glaciated slopes to a viewpoint southeast into Neny Fiord before heading back to the ship for lunch.



Number of Snowshoers: 12

Total Outings: 7

Snowshoers:

Martin Balinsky

Lori Balinsky

Sharmila Vedam

Avantika Vedam

Tanvika Vedam

Venkatakrishna Vedam

Edmund Hungerford

Julie-Anne Hungerford

James Rutyna

Ryan Stafford

Mark Lynch

Sara Lynch

26 December 2024, PM – Horseshoe Island

A short Zodiac ride through amazing ice formations saw us deposited near a couple of antique dinghies on the shore marking the small 'harbour' of the 1950's British Base Y. After a wander through the shadowy rooms of a base filled with all the items of daily life for a 1950's Antarctic, we set off for our snowshoe adventure. The low cloud base and snow prevented us from going high, so we headed off on a low-level trip around the bay. The early travel was complicated by trying to stay away from the tidal cracks in the ice, which necessitated taking snowshoes off and on, then clambering over small rocky patches. But soon enough we got onto a rising traverse of snow slopes, which give wonderful views of the iceberg-filled bay with the ship looking quite small in the cloudy background. The weather and

tricky travel gave this outing a real sense of adventure and we certainly earned our dinner, with 2.5 kilometres travelled over nearly two hours.

28 December 2024, AM – Hovgaard Island

Under another cloudy sky we jumped into the Zodiac to explore up the west side of Hovgaard Island. The approach was through amazing icebergs and brash ice, complete with a beautiful humpback whale. Once ashore at a landing none of us had been to, we negotiated the initially slushy snow to get the snowshoes on and don the rope for the first time. Everyone fell into the rhythm of walking with the rope surprisingly quickly, balancing the pace of the person in front and behind and managing the rope so we didn't trip over/step on the rope. The view that began to unfold as we got higher was astounding, with vistas to the south

end of Booth Island and the Lemaire Channel. Amazing glaciation in every direction. We dropped down the other side to complete a nearly 2-kilometre traverse of the north end of Hovgaard Island, where Nacho picked us up and we made a dash for the ship (being a bit behind time).

28 December 2024, PM – Vernadsky Base | Wordie House

Once again, the afternoon stayed well and truly overcast as we set off from the ship headed for Winter Island and Wordie House. The fast ice remained in the channels between the islands of the archipelago, necessitating a diversion around past Vernadsky, the Ukrainian research station. Thick brash ice, bergs and bergy bits made for a slow approach but eventually we were ashore, kitted up and heading for Wordie House on the other side of the Island. The snow was rotten and made us thankful of the snowshoes, but the 1950's British hut, named

after Shackleton's geologist, was well worth the visit. After the hut we headed off around the island, completing the 2.25-kilometre circumnavigation in a round 1.5 hours. Meanwhile, the ice had packed in around the landing site, making for a slow and tricky exit back to the ship.

29 December 2024, AM – Enterprise Island | Foyt Harbor

A murky morning with light rain. Rain!! Who came to Antarctica to be rained on? Dropped off by Sergei we donned snowshoes and the rope and headed uphill to a high point with great views over the surrounding bays filled with icebergs. The wreck of the *Guvernøren*, a whaling ship that sank in 1912 after an end-of-season party became a bit raucous. Poor visibility and the ongoing rain prevented us heading higher and we headed back down for a quick Zodiac excursion and then an early, slightly wet trip back to the *Sylvia Earle*.

30 December 2024, PM – Melchior Islands

We got away ahead of the crowds under a sunny blue sky for the first time this voyage. The Melchior islands were at their best, with small Islands topped by huge accumulations of snow and ice, cracking and breaking off at the edges. Another bad (irate) joke from Sean and we were at the landing, where Dan buried the anchor in the snow to keep the Zodiacs safe and sound for our return. The team swung into action, unloading the gear and getting everyone ready for action. Then it was off up the hill with ever-expanding views across to Brabant and Anvers Islands and the mainland peninsula in the distance. The sun revealed the scale of the place and highlighted the range of colours in the seemingly black-and-white landscape. Reluctantly we headed back down to the boats, happy to have finally had a sunny day in this amazing place. A 1.75-kilometre snowshoe. On the way back to the ship we were boarded by a rogue hot chocolate boat and bobbed around the ocean enjoying the last moments of our final snowshoe outing.





Snorkelling Log

Guides: Thomas Gov, Freya Dooley and Remi Ritchie

25 December 2024, PM – Detaille Island

Today marked an unforgettable milestone: our first snorkelling outing of the trip, in the sheltered waters of a small bay at Detaille Island. We first explored Base W, a historic British Antarctic Survey station frozen in time, before venturing into the icy Antarctic waters for the very first time.

As we slipped beneath the surface, myriad emotions surfaced along with us. Some of us were braced for the cold, while others were surprised to find the water not as bone chilling as we'd imagined.

Through the crystal-clear waters, we caught glimpses of the unique marine life that thrives in this extreme environment: tiny krill darting by, mysterious seaweed swaying gently in the currents, and the occasional starfish resting on the seabed.

26 December 2024, PM – Horseshoe Island

A short Zodiac trip to the island offers a scenic view of the big tabular icebergs and never-ending glaciers. On shore we got to stretch our legs and explore Horseshoe Island, a beautiful spot that isn't visited very often. After a good hour on shore, it was back to the Zodiacs for a cruise around the island to find our snorkel spot.

We found a nice piece of sea ice that was deemed thick enough for us to stand on, so in buddies we were able to step off the Zodiacs and get some cool pictures of us on the ice!

Finally time for snorkelling, today our sight consists of little coves and nice wall formations displaying the different types of volcanic rock under the water. Once we struggled into our hoods, gloves and fins, in the water we saw much more than just the cool



Number of
Snorkellers: 16
Total Outings: 7

Snorkellers:

Jenn
Lisa
Michael
Flic
Spencer
Chloe.C

Kristy
Will
Chloe.F
Jenya
Ruper
Jonathan
Phoebe

Digby
Serena
Connor

rocks - limpets, starfish and some nice-sized bits of ice that we could play on. After exploring the waters for around 30 minutes, it was time to head back to the ship to warm up and share photos of our day's adventures.

28 December 2024, AM – Petermann Island

Abundant with wildlife, the landing proved to be spectacular, littered with both Adélie and gentoo penguins. We got the trifecta when a lone chinstrap wandered into the same frame of view!

After the landing, an anticipated Zodiac cruise was necessary as picturesque icebergs surrounded the island and floating atop these icebergs we were greeted with first a crabeater seal, then a bunch of Weddell seals, then finally the much-anticipated leopard seal, which left everyone in pure amazement as it opened its jaws to let out a big yawn!

After finding a protected cove, the time had finally come to drop into the icy cold waters, a few fun bergy bits made our inner child come out and we also had our first little introduction to penguins underwater as the gentoos darted back and forth through the waters surrounding us. The Expeditioners had plenty to choose from this morning to get those treasured memories.

29 December 2024, AM – Enterprise Island

Our next stop brought us to the shipwreck *Guvernøren*, a haunting yet fascinating relic of the early 20th century. Once a vessel for whaling operations, this rusting hulk serves as a stark reminder of humanity's past exploitation of these pristine waters. Over 100 years later, nature has reclaimed the wreck, with its corroded metal now providing shelter for a variety of small crustaceans and other marine life.

Donning our snorkel gear, we spent 30 minutes exploring the underwater world around the wreck. The eerie beauty of the *Guvernøren*, juxtaposed with the abundant life it now hosts, left a lasting impression on everyone in the group.

After our snorkel, it was time to return to the ship and prepare for the next thrill of the day, the legendary polar plunge! A perfect way to cap off another unforgettable experience in Antarctica.

29 December 2024, PM – Recess Cove

This afternoon, we embarked on an unforgettable snorkel outing in a stunning Antarctic bay. We set off to a small, flat iceberg perfectly positioned in the middle of the bay. The water was unbelievably clear, revealing the intricate beauty of the iceberg below the surface. Underwater, the ice seemed almost otherworldly,

with mesmerising shapes and vivid hues of blue and green that stood in stark contrast to its above-water appearance. This ethereal underwater scene was a reminder of the hidden wonders Antarctica holds.

As we climbed back into the Zodiac, a distant whale spout caught our attention. Eager to investigate, we headed towards it and were rewarded with an incredible encounter. A humpback whale, gracefully feeding near the surface, put on an unforgettable show just a short distance from our boat. We watched in awe for about 20 minutes, appreciating its sheer size and elegance as it moved effortlessly through the water.

Eventually, it was time to return to the ship, our hearts full of gratitude for the wonders we had witnessed today. This outing will undoubtedly remain a highlight of our Antarctic journey.

30 December 2024, AM – Port Lockroy/Jougla Point

This morning we are visiting the famous Port Lockroy - the southernmost post office in the world!

It was cool to learn about life on base here for the workers who run the museum and post office, and nice to meet some of the local gentoos. After 30 minutes exploring, we shuttled to the second landing just around the corner - Jougla Point.

Here we saw more penguins and enjoyed a short walk around, observing all the gentoos on their nests... some with eggs and little chicks visible. Finally it was time for the best part of the outing; we started to get into our hoods and gloves while finding a suitable spot for our underwater exploration.

With the winds picking up, we decided on a small cove and slipped into the water to see what we could find. The visibility was not the best but we still managed to see some small little critters living around the rocks and kelp. After braving 20 minutes in the water, a splashy trip back to the ship meant straight to the sauna to warm up before our afternoon outing.

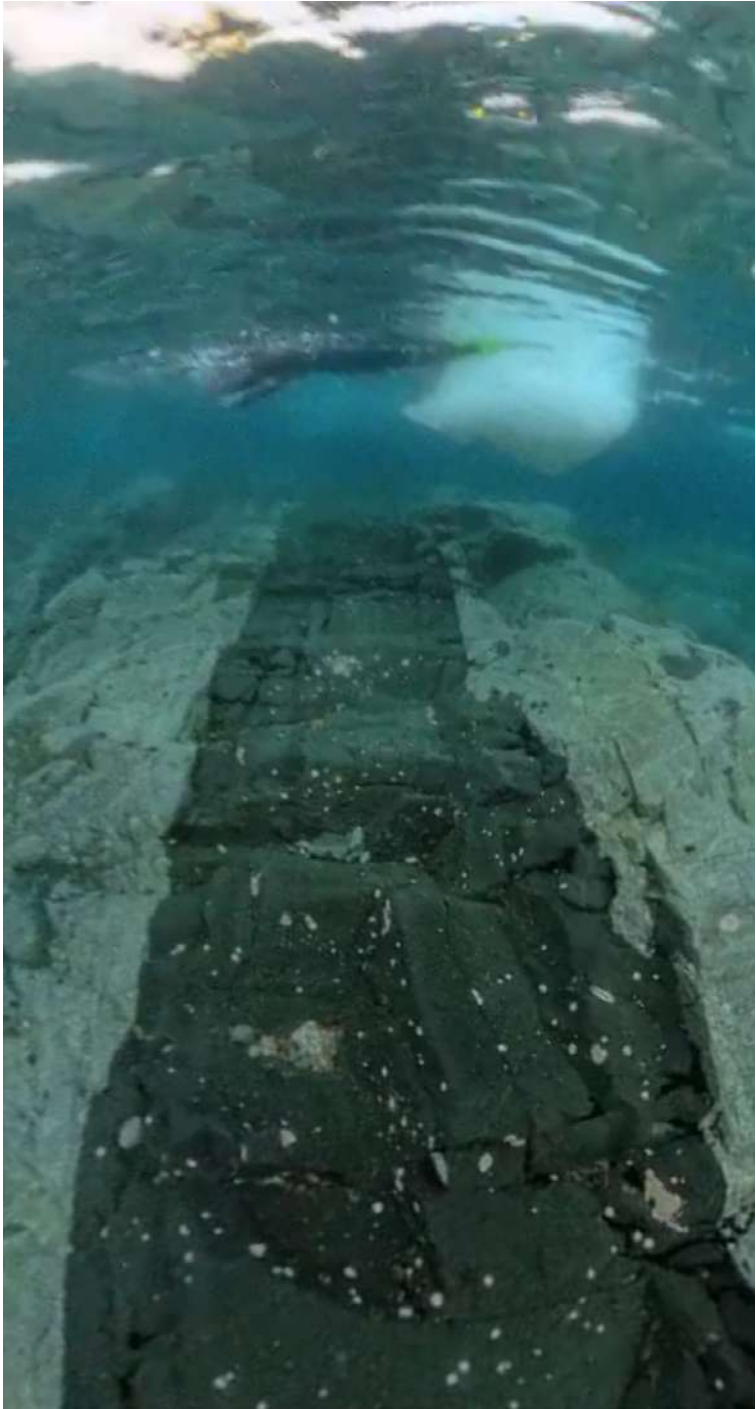
30 December 2024, PM – Melchior Islands

This afternoon we plan to Zodiac cruise and explore the islands before jumping in to explore some ice under the water. Sunny blue skies make perfect weather while we make our way through the islands, where we see over 20 Weddell seals hauled out on some fast ice in a little cove, it was truly magical to watch these guys sleep with the glaciers surrounding them... not to forget the beautiful little storm petrels that we watched dancing on the water, feeding on the algae that has melted from the ice.

After cruising for around an hour, we started to gear up to jump in the water around an iceberg and see what hidden beauty lies beneath the surface. A great way to finish off the snorkelling of this trip before heading north towards the South Shetland Islands tonight. After freezing in the water, we had a much-needed visit from the hot chocolate Zodiac which was a treat and perfect way to end off our time on the peninsula.

Back on board, spirits were made even higher by the incredible orca encounter we had, which it was safe to say something none of us will ever forget.









Kayaking Log

Kayak Guides: Michael Gray, Liza Deziel and Garath Wheeler

25 December 2024, AM – Detaille Island 5km

We got half of the group of 20 out for a nice orientation outing at Detaille. It turned out to be a greatest hits of Antarctica paddle, with wildlife, icebergs, brash and jaw-dropping big mountain scenery as a backdrop. We found our own little Adélie penguin town around the back side and were able to let others know what we had scouted, and got to paddle with penguins as we circumnavigated this pretty little island.

26 December 2024, PM – Horseshoe Island Base 5km

We cruised through a beautiful ice sculpture garden, where we encountered some crabeater seals and Wilson's storm petrels doing their water dance. We even got to paddle with some seals in the water.

28 December 2024, AM – Petermann Island 10km

Fantastic morning paddle around Petermann Island with a terrific iceberg graveyard. Abundant gentoo and a few Adélie penguins joined us as we toured ice floes looking for seals... saw one very photogenic crabeater. We also found a large shag colony, with skuas and antarctic terns cruising overhead as we circumnavigated through beautiful sea ice.

28 December 2024, PM – Wordie Hut, Winter Islands 7km

All the canyons and channels were pretty much iced up, so it was hard to access any of the hut area. We did enjoy exploring the channels through the brash, looking for seals among swimming penguins while antarctic terns and skuas wheeled above us. Vernadsky Station was visible in the background with a few lights on.



**Number of
Kayakers:** 20

**Total Paddle
Outings:** 7

**Total Distance
Paddled:** 45 km

Kayakers:

Eloise

Imogen

Michael

Masha

Guntis

Anna

Mark

Allie

Gary

Heather

Dante

Naomi

Zack

Hugo

Craig

Sitara

Annika

Merwin

Shambavi

Helga

29 December, AM – Foyin Harbor; Wreck of the *Guvernøren* 7km

We crossed to some large ice features bobbing along outside the glacial faces (not too close) and cruised, looking at the skuas, kelp gulls, shags and Antarctic terns perched on the rocky islands along the way. We heard the story of the whalers' party that resulted in the accidental burning of the *Guvernøren*, which now shipwrecked in the cove, resulting in the total loss of whale oil cargo, but not one of the 83 whalers' lives.

31 December, AM – Deception Island/Telefon Bay, 6km

Despite quite windy conditions on the way through Neptune's Window, we managed to get the whole crew out for an upwind paddle to the edges of the caldera, and then a downwind run to a sheltered cove where we ducked

in to paddle with a few gentoos while the ship repositioned to catch us later. Everyone was super appreciative of this plan in the 15-knot winds.

31 December, PM – Snow Island: 5km

Launched for a short paddle to the shoreline to scout for fur seals, but the wind came up to well over 20 knots and we had to call it. The group managed to get off the water before winds started to gust even higher, but we did a quick change to catch a Zodiac ride to shore and spend some time with some elephant seal weaners.









Bird & Mammal Sightings

Bird Species	December–January												
	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	1	2	3
Gentoo Penguin							●	●	●	●			
Chinstrap Penguin							●	●		●			
Adélie Penguin				●	●		●	●					
Wandering Albatross (Snowy)		●											
Black-browed Albatross	●	●											
Giant Petrel sp. (Northern or Southern)				●	●				●	●			
Cape Petrel	●									●			
Snow Petrel				●	●	●							
Antarctic Fulmar (Southern Fulmar)				●	●	●		●	●	●			
Grey Petrel		●											
Prion sp. (most likely Antarctic)		●											
White-chinned Petrel	●												
Wilson's Storm-petrel				●	●	●	●	●	●				
Imperial Cormorant (Blue-eyed Shag)	●			●	●		●	●	●				
Dolphin Gull	●												
Kelp Gull	●			●	●		●		●				
Skua (Brown or South Polar)				●	●		●	●		●			

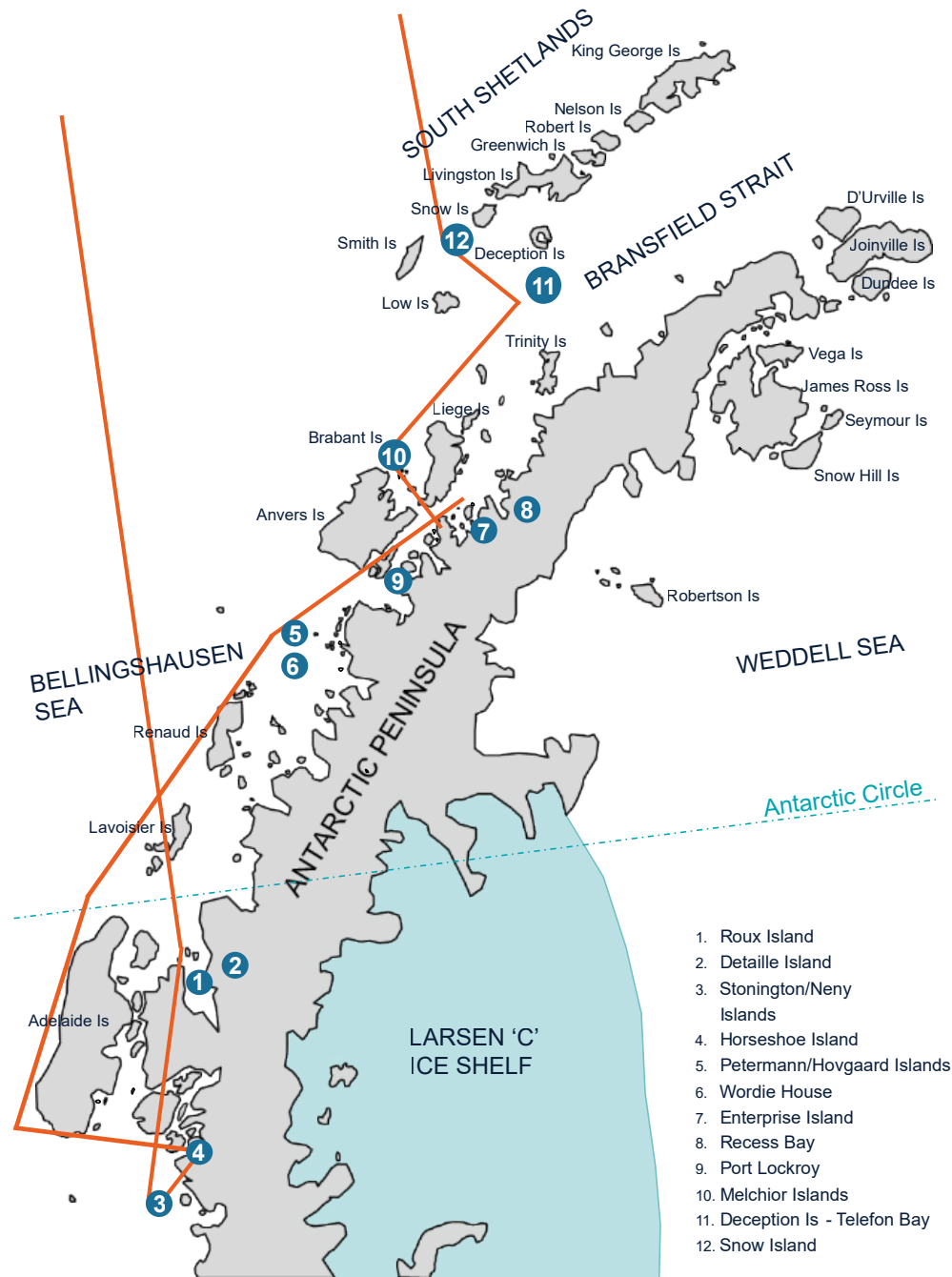
Bird Species	December–January												
	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	1	2	3
Chilean Skua	●												
South American Tern	●												
Tern sp. (most likely Antarctic)				●	●	●	●	●	●				
Snowy Sheathbill							●		●				

Mammal Species	December–January												
	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	1	2	3
Southern Elephant Seal							●			●			
Crabeater Seal				●						●			
Weddell Seal				●	●	●	●	●	●	●			
Leopard Seal							●						
Minke Whale	●				●	●							
Fin Whale										●			
Humpback Whale							●	●	●	●			
Orca									●				

Map

Across the Antarctic Circle

22 December 2024 – 3 January 2025





Our Expeditioners

Uday Agamban	Emma Dougherty	Phoebe Kaiser	Annie Lithgow	Annika Richard	Avantika Vedam
Frank Austin	Holden Dougherty	Gary Kaufman	Siting Lu	Sitara Richard	Yunjin Wang
Diana Austin	Rhys Edwards	Sinead Kennedy	Sarah Lynch	Frank Riordan	Christy Whitman
Lori Balinsky	Amanda Edwards	Paul Kennedy	Mark Lynch	Maureen Riordan	Abby Whitman
Martin Balinsky	Patricia Eng	Medha Khadye	Mike Lyons	Kelsey Riordan	Bryce Whitman
Pierce Barcio	Chloe Flutter	Rajiv Khanna	Masha Lyons	Megan Riordan	Aubrey Whitman
Helen Bone	Naomi Flutter	Roopla Khanna	Jun Ma	Matt Rutyna	Brad Whitman
Les Bone	Anna Freidenfelde	Jason Klein	John McCreery	James Rutyna	Craig Wood
Holly Brown	Jonathan Fulluck	Ali Klemencic	Rich McManus	Flic Rutyna	Digby Wood
Chloe Canavan	Hong Gong	Joy Klemencic	Connor McManus	Alice Shen	Hugo Wood
Dave Chermak	Lynne Goodman	Primoz Klemencic	Zach McManus	Rupert Spatchurst	Shanshan Xu
Steve Chermak	Jonathan Griffiths	Carrie Klemencic	Dante Millette	Ryan Stafford	Xu Xu
Pierce Chermak	Dianne Griffiths	Mark Kurtz JR.	Maria Muggridge	Guntis Svarins	Jen Yeomelakis
Marci Chermak	Bob Harvey	Spencer Lane	Kristy Nissen	Will Swetnam	Claire You
Val Cook	Ted Hungerford	Chere LeClair	Kevin Norton	Laxian Tao	Jenya Zaytseva
Heather Corbett	Julie Hungerford	Ken LeClair	Karen Norton	Shreeyala Uday	Min Zhan
Doug Corbett	Leonie Hyde	Jiayi Li	Dongding Ou	Araha Uday	Yida Zheng
Maree Dalla	Imogen Hyde	Lisa Lieberman	Wenqi Ou	Hitha Uday	Ling Zheng
Gregory Dalla	Eloise Hyde	Michael Lieberman	Haizhu Quan	Sharmila Vedam	Yingying Zhou
Janet Dougherty	Liyana Jamil	Feng Lin	Merwin Richard	Venkata Vedam	Ximianyun Zhu
Mike Dougherty	Yaohua Jiang	Serena Lissy	Shambavi Richard	Tanvika Vedam	Lulu Zou

Expedition Team

Expedition Leader: Howard Wheelan
Assistant Expedition Leader: Leo Soibelzon
Onboard Expedition Manager: Anne Oeyasaeter
Onboard Expedition Assistant: Reza Ruusoly
Marine Biologist/Naturalist: Joselyn Fenstermacher
Naturalist/Ornithologist CSC: Vicky Inglis
Naturalist: Sue Crafer
Anthropologist: Andrea Herbert
Mandarin Speaking Guide: Qing Qu
Photography Guide: Pia Harboure
Expedition First Responder: Belinda Denchfield
Expedition Guide: Nacho Marino
Lead Kayak Guide: Michael Gray
Senior Kayak Guide: Liza Deziel
Kayaking Guide: Garath Wheeler
Alpine Guide: Dan Phillips
Alpine Guide: Sean Waters
Lead Snorkel Guide: Thomas Gov
Snorkel Guide: Freya Dooley
Snorkel Guide: Remi Ritchie
Zodiac Master: Serghei Hinchu

Senior Officers & Heads of Department

Master: Jorge Alexis Ferdinez
Chief Officer: Andrey Gilevskiy
Second Officer: Vlad Nicolescu
Safety Officer: Yevhenii Zolotarov
Bosun: Leo Francis Marzan
Ship Doctor: Jose Alejandro Muller San Juan
Chief Engineer: Luis Edgardo Gil
First Engineer: Warlito Verzosa
IT Officer: Mikhail Volkov
Hotel Director: Balvant Singh
Chief Purser: Caroline Sabrina Papenfuss
F&B Service Manager: Narendra Seeram
Head Bartender: Irene Gayta
Executive Chef: Rosauro Soriano
Sous Chef: I Gusti Ketur Purnawirawan
Hotel Controller: Romat Nurhidayat
Receptionist: Angela Manuel
Receptionist: Erliza Mae Balagot
Head of Stateroom: Florante Lusong
Deck Cadet: Rodrigo Vigario Pinto
Able Seaman/Carpenter: Lexter Fadriquela
Able Seaman: Anthony John Brosas
Able Seaman: Muhammad Karier
Able Seaman: John Paul Sibug
Able Seaman: Rosendo Cruz

Photography thanks to:

Pia Harboure





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