

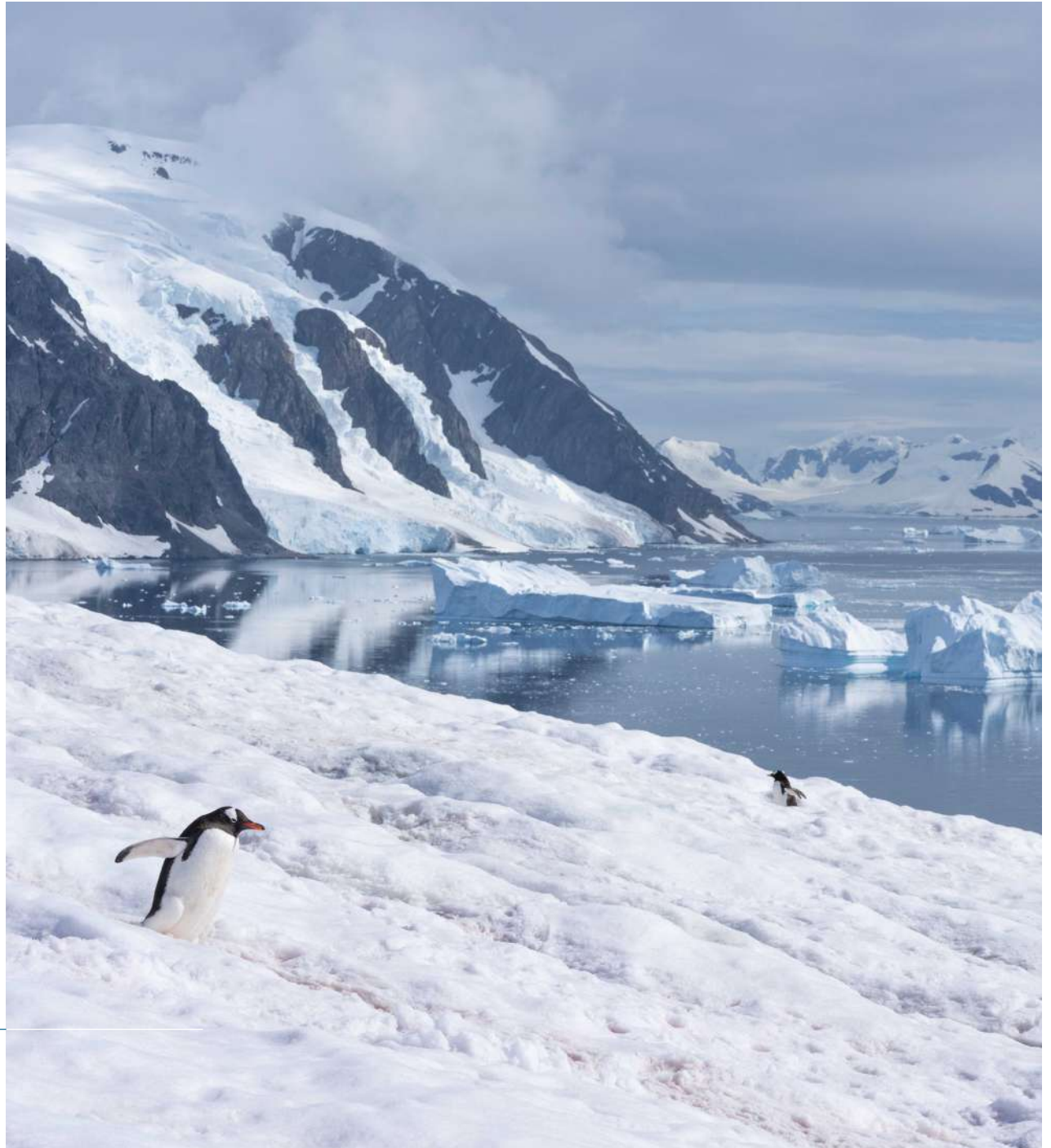
Antarctic Explorer

Aboard *Greg Mortimer* | 28 January – 7 February 2025



Antarctic Explorer

28 January – 7 February 2025



Punta Arenas & King George Island

DAY 1 | Tuesday 28 January 2025

Latitude:
62° 12.15' S
Longitude:
58° 55.9' W

Course:
N/A
Speed:
At Anchor

Wind Speed:
5 knots W
Barometer:
987 hpa

Air Temp:
3°C

After an eventful morning in Punta Arenas, we were delighted to learn that conditions allowed our flight to King George Island—we were finally bound for Antarctica!

Arriving at the *Greg Mortimer*, we shed layers in the mudroom and met Samantha (onboard expedition manager) and Fiona (photographer) for check-in and a photo. Refreshments awaited in the Elephant Island Bar, followed by a tour to our cabins—our home for the next 11 days.

Expedition Leader, Mario, welcomed us in the lecture theatre, introducing our expert Expedition Team. Hotel Director, Alex, guided us through ship life, while Doctor Javier advised on health at sea. A lifeboat drill followed before we enjoyed a delicious dinner.

Together we total 73 Expeditioners from Australia (5), Canada (5), China (28), Hong Kong (1), India (1), UK (4), USA (21), New Zealand (3), Poland (1), Thailand (1), Uruguay (3), along with 84 crew from all around the globe.

Our 21 Expedition Team members have a variety of specialities, including polar exploration, marine mammals, mountaineering, geology, history, ornithology, photography, medicine, snorkelling and kayaking.

After hours of travel to reach the *Greg Mortimer*, it's time to relax, breathe in the sea air, and get excited for the adventures ahead!

Deception Island & Baily Head

DAY 2 | Wednesday 29 January 2025

Latitude:
62° 38.0' S
Longitude:
59° 31.0' W

Course:
231°
Speed:
6.4 knots

Wind Speed:
8 knots W
Barometer:
995 hPa

Air Temp:
2°

Early birds awoke to brilliant sunshine gleaming off the mountains of the South Shetland Islands as we sailed south. It was a joy to finally experience Antarctica in all its glory, with penguins porpoising alongside the *Greg Mortimer* and humpback whales spotted by keen observers.

The morning began with IAATO and Zodiac briefings, followed by biosecurity and gear fitting to ensure we were prepared for this fragile environment. Later, Mario encouraged us onto deck as we transited Neptune's Bellows into the steaming heart of Deception Island. This famous caldera seemed particularly spectacular today, with the slopes and glaciers blanketed in fresh snow. As

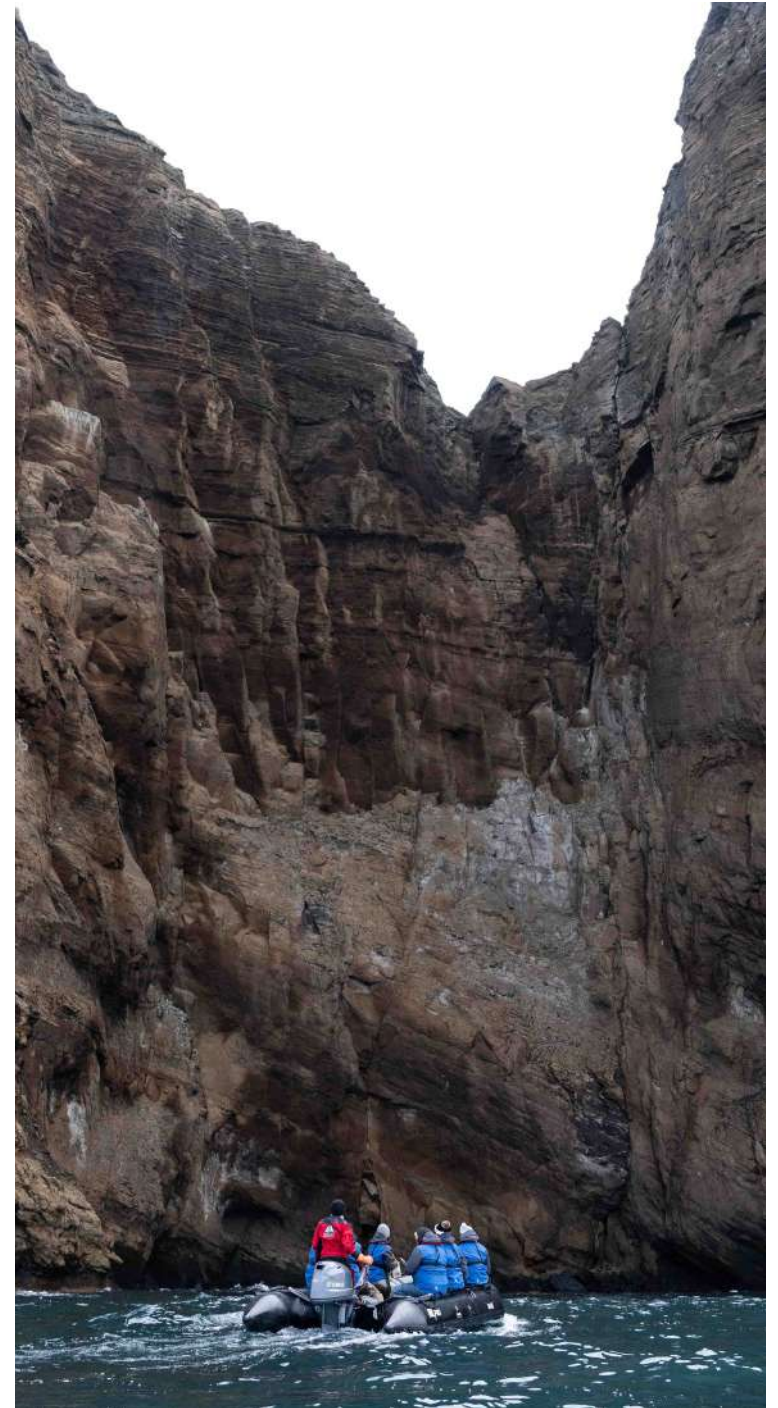
we sailed within the volcano, Hannah and Tim shared insights into its history, from its whaling past to devastating eruptions that flattened research bases.

We explored Baily Head by Zodiac; chinstrap penguins dominated the scene, their 30,000-strong colony perched high on ridges. At sea level, they torpedoed past us. We also got our species list off to a fantastic start with sightings including southern giant petrels, cape petrels and Wilson's storm petrels, plus elephant seals and antarctic fur seals.

Back on board, the Captain's welcome marked our first full day together, raising a glass to the adventures ahead—including Chinese New Year.







Antarctic Sound, Kinnes Cove & Weddell Sea

DAY 3 | Thursday 30 January 2025

Latitude:
63° 18.0' S
Longitude:
56° 46.0' W
Course:
106°
Speed:
4.6 knots

Wind Speed:
9 knots NNE
Barometer:
1010 hPa
Air Temp:
6°C

At 6am, Mario's promised wake-up 'bing-bong' sounded, drawing some out to admire the Antarctic Sound.

A scout boat found Kinnes Cove in Antarctic Sound and returned with the news that unfortunately there was just too much wildlife on the beach to land. What a problem to have! Instead, we embarked on Zodiac explorations and kayaking, spotting thousands of Adélie penguins, leopard seals, and even a breaching humpback whale - seen by a lucky few.

In the afternoon, the *Greg Mortimer* attempted to keep sailing east to get further into the Weddell Sea, with another sighting of a breaching humpback en route, but we

were blocked by ice, so we repositioned to Active Sound near the Argentinian research base Petrel.

Our mission this afternoon was to walk on frozen water, with 200 metres of sea below us. Each Zodiac drove rather fast at the slab of ice upon which our fearless Expedition Leader, Mario, and ornithologist, T-A, were waiting for us, along with a few more Adélie penguins. The ice proved thick enough, then it was back on the Zodiac for a bumpy ride back to our mother ship.

Mario congratulated the sailors of the day who'd ventured out in pretty challenging conditions in the Zodiacs today, and T-A entertained us with an enlightening talk on penguins.





Palaver Point & Mikkelsen Harbour

DAY 4 | Friday 31 January 2025

Latitude:
63° 50.0' S
Longitude:
61° 29.0' W

Course:
215°
Speed:
9.7 knots

Wind Speed:
9 knots S
Barometer:
1000 hPa

Air Temp:
0°C

This day may be a day etched into history for many of us on board, as it was our first chance to set foot on the Antarctic Peninsula. Our ship is positioned off Palaver Point, a gateway to breathtaking scenery and wildlife.

Mountains draped in glacier ice, hundreds of chinstrap penguins, and mirror-like seas stretching beyond the horizon. A rather plump Weddell seal lay hauled out on the lower ice slopes near our landing site. Those who felt up to the challenge embarked on a short but steep climb to a vantage point, where they were rewarded with an unforgettable panoramic view: a bay framed by ice-covered mountains, teeming with penguins.

As the ship repositioned to Mikkelsen Harbour, some joined Expedition Guide, Ed, for a cloud survey on deck.

Later, we were greeted by falling snow at Mikkelsen Harbour, setting the stage for what felt like the quintessential Antarctic experience: a Zodiac exploration through the ice floe. Snowflakes swirled around us, dusting the Zodiacs and those aboard, creating an authentic sense of adventure. As we navigated the ice-covered waters, it was easy to imagine the early explorers venturing into the unknown. It was a humbling experience, a reminder of the courage and curiosity that has driven human exploration for centuries. In our own small way, we became part of that legacy.





Orne Harbour & Danco Island

DAY 5 | Saturday 1 February 2025

Latitude:

64° 35.0' S

Longitude:

62° 32.0' W

Course:

0°

Speed:

0 knots

Wind Speed:

9 knots E

Barometer:

1004 hPa

Air Temp:

1°C

This morning started with a delicious breakfast burrito from our galley team, accompanied with a view of stunning Orne Harbour in the Gerlache Strait. We disembarked for a hike in the snow—our first continental landing! A thriving colony of chinstrap penguins greeted us, with plenty of chicks around and skuas watching them closely.

Orne Harbour, named after 19th-century North American sealer Captain David Orne, offers breathtaking glacial scenery with rugged peaks and icefalls. During the return Zodiac exploration, we spotted a relaxed leopard seal on an ice floe and a surprising amount of salp floating in the water.

In the afternoon, we repositioned south to the scenic Errera Channel and arrived at Danco Island. In clear, sunny

conditions, kayakers, paddlers and hikers set out in this dreamy setting of icebergs and roaring glaciers. Around 2,000 gentoo penguins nest here each season, their busy highways stretching to the top of our hike, with many chicks running around the colony. The island, charted in 1897 by Adrien de Gerlache's Belgian Antarctic Expedition, is named after geophysicist Emile Danco. Surrounding this beautiful island we encountered three species of seals: the Weddell seal, crabeater seal and also the leopard seal.

After a warm, sunny day, we enjoyed drinks and canapés before the daily recap, where the Expedition Team answered questions and Mario outlined plans for another unforgettable day ahead.







Neko Harbour & False Bay

DAY 6 | Sunday 2 February 2025

Latitude:
64° 45.0' S
Longitude:
62° 53.0' W
Course:
103°
Speed:
5.4 knots

Wind Speed:
3 knots N
Barometer:
1005 hPa
Air Temp:
1°C

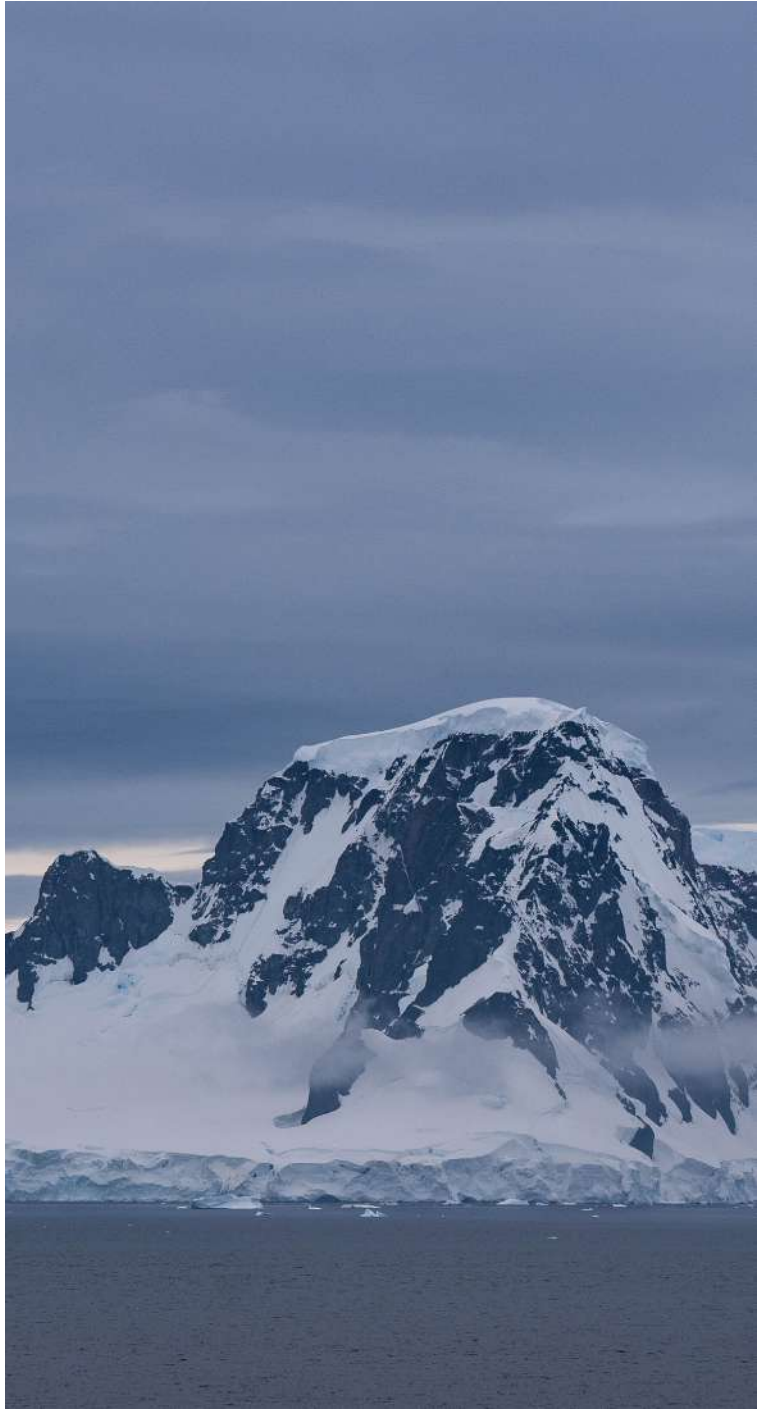
This morning's planned landing at Neko Harbour was unfortunately cancelled after Mario was called back to handle a medical situation. We set course for King George Island to medivac a passenger from Frei Station's airstrip, Ensuring the Expeditioner received swift and full medical care was the priority - we would all absolutely want that for ourselves and our loved ones, and hope that their condition improves.

As we sailed north, Hannah gave a lecture on the Nordenskjöld expedition of 1901—1904; a fascinating tale of hardship, luck, and sheer survival. Later Ed and Tim guided a cloud survey, assessing cover, height, opacity and hue. Meanwhile, T-A led a bird survey, first from the comfort of the domes before heading outside for a better view.

In the lecture theatre, Kyle's talk on whales was particularly memorable when he described baleen as "a moustache growing inside your mouth"—a vivid image! Before recap, Erin hosted a fun game of 'Name That Sound', where Kyle and Ed attempted to identify calls of Antarctic animals by replicating them, much to everyone's amusement.

After a delicious BBQ dinner, we explored False Bay in the South Shetland Islands by Zodiac. Calm waters and gentle ocean swells accompanied us as we visited a glacier and observed chinstrap and gentoo penguins along the beach. As darkness fell, our journey back to the ship felt truly atmospheric. Tomorrow, we hope for a weather window for the medivac, but today, we made the most of the situation.





Edinburgh Hill & South Shetland Islands

DAY 7 | Monday 3 February 2025

Latitude:
62° 33.0' S
Longitude:
59° 54.0' W

Course:
53°
Speed:
6.4 knots

Wind Speed:
25 knots E
Barometer:
1001 hPa

Air Temp:
0°C

It was evident by the rolling of the *Greg Mortimer* as we woke early that we were sailing across the more exposed waters of the Bransfield Strait, a stark contrast to the calm seas of previous days. The cloud was low, but intervals of bright, watery sun shone on all the Expeditioners in the Zodiacs as we approached the absolutely spectacular volcanic plug of Edinburgh Hill. Soaring in uniformity to over 180 metres above sea level, the hexagonal columns of dolerite that were formed by the cooling lava, were simply... WOW!

Named after Scotland's capital, Edinburgh Hill resembles the city's famous castle, which also sits atop a volcanic plug. Such spectacular dolerite columns exist in Iceland, Ireland's Giant's Causeway, Scotland's Fingal's Cave, and Tasmania.

Before lunch, Tim gave an insightful talk on Antarctica's complex geological history, spanning billions of years from ancient supercontinents to modern tectonic shifts. Kyle presented a detailed lecture on Antarctic seals, showcasing the knowledge and passion of our Expedition Team.

By late afternoon, we anchored in Ardley Cove, King George Island, awaiting the predicted weather window for the medical evacuation. Fortunately, the operation went smoothly, ensuring our fellow Expeditioner would soon receive the care they needed. All of the crew, Expedition Team and Expeditioners on board the *Greg Mortimer* wish them a speedy return to full health.







Martel Inlet, Penguin Island & Turret Point

DAY 8 | Tuesday 4 February 2025

Latitude:
62° 07.0' S
Longitude:
58° 25.0' W

Course:
348°
Speed:
4.6 knots

Wind Speed:
17 knots SW
Barometer:
1001 hPa

Air Temp:
0°C

The sky finally opened, letting long-missed sunshine through. We had a fantastic morning at Martel Inlet, Admiralty Bay, and King George Island, home to stunning glaciers and the Brazilian Comandante Ferraz Antarctic Station. Our Zodiac exploration was abundant in wildlife—Weddell, leopard and crabeater seals, plus a curious minke whale—all against a surreal backdrop of rugged coastline and towering glaciers. Constantly shaped by wind, tide and temperature, no two visits here are ever the same.

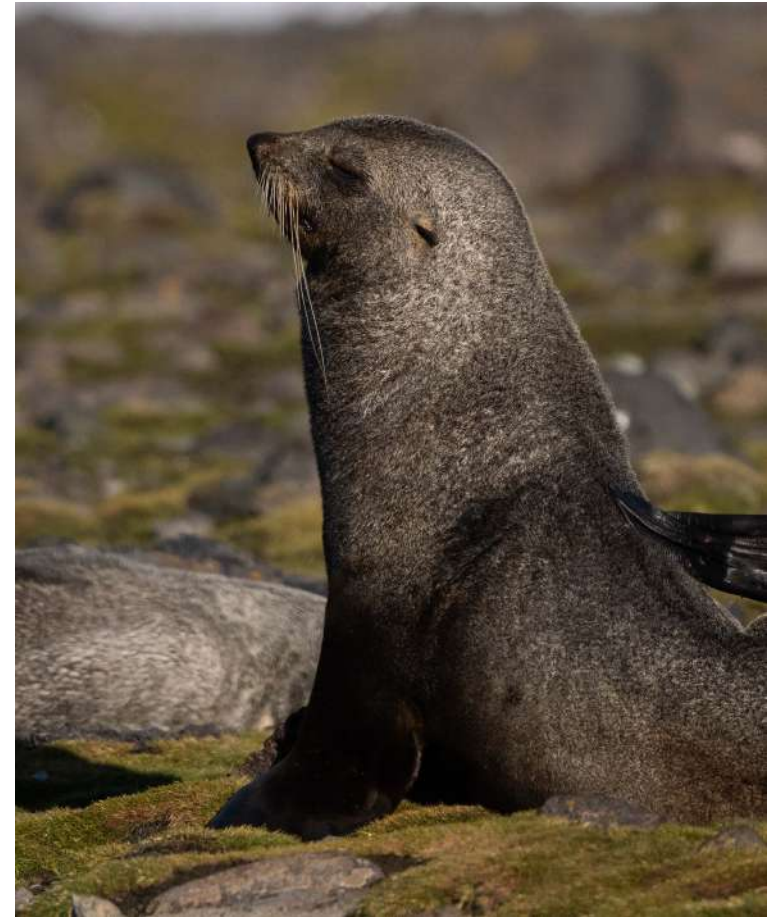
Several of us braved the freezing, crystal-clear 1-degree Celsius water for the polar plunge, with reactions ranging from instant shock to remarkable composure.

Our first landing site, Penguin Island was a small volcanic island with dramatic landscapes, including black-sand

beaches, rugged cliffs, and the striking dormant volcanic cone Deacon Peak. The challenging summit hike rewarded us with sweeping views of ice-covered waters and distant glaciers. We passed mosses and lichens—some of the only plant life capable of surviving Antarctica's harsh conditions. Penguin Island was named for its large colonies of chinstrap and gentoo penguins, which could be seen nesting along the shore.

Our second landing, Turret Point, was a wonderful site, with gentoo and chinstrap penguins tucked among rocky outcrops. Moulting penguins waddled along the shore. The true stars were the elephant seals—wallowing on the rocky beach, resting and fasting as their moult progressed. Our peaceful interactions were interrupted by the fur seals, which seemed to be discontent with the lack of attention.







Drake Passage

DAY 9 | Wednesday 5 February 2025

Latitude:
56° 51.7' S
Longitude:
63° 33.4' W

Course:
305°
Speed:
11.5 knots

Wind Speed:
15 knots E
Barometer:
1004 hPa

Air Temp:
5°C

Our first day in the dreaded Drake Passage. Everyone had been warned many times about the dangers of crossing the Drake, but all have survived our first day.

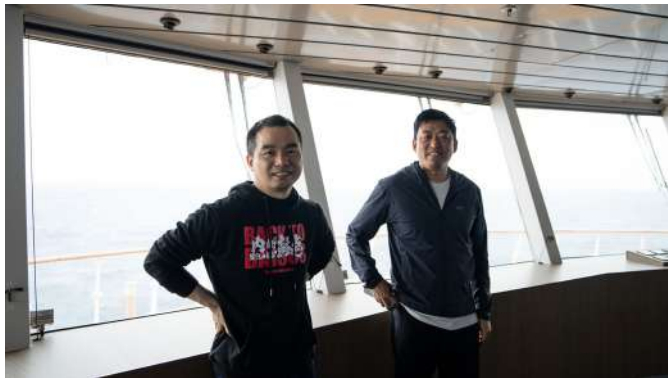
T-A gave a fantastic lecture on seabirds, explaining how these incredible creatures have adapted to life in extreme oceanic conditions. This was followed by a seabird survey for eBird and the open-ocean seabird survey. In half an hour exactly one brown skua was seen; however, even no data is still good data and this information helps to tell scientists about areas with less birdlife.

The bridge was open for visits today and it was very interesting to be able to observe the officer on watch at work and see how the ship is really run from behind the scenes.

Before lunch, Timothy, Melina and Hannah gave fantastic insight to their own personal experiences living on Antarctica bases. In the afternoon, Hannah presented a lecture about discovering Antarctica and all the notable names in Antarctic history, followed by an Antarctic trivia run by Erin.

Mario gave an update about weather conditions and we learned that it was looking much nicer for the following day. T-A gave another seabird of the day talk, this time featuring the giant petrel. Ed talked about the power of albatross, wearing data trackers are used to track down illegal fishing vessels, and Erin discussed how typical maps don't reflect the true nature of Antarctica. Finally, Tim and his Citizen Science team summarised all of the citizen science efforts that have been made this trip.





Drake Passage

DAY 10 | Thursday 6 February 2025

Latitude:
57° 37' S
Longitude:
64° 02.8' W

Course:
326°
Speed:
11.8 knots

Wind Speed:
6 knots NW
Barometer:
1009 hPa

Air Temp:
4°C

There are few ways more remarkable to finish a trip than by sailing the Drake Passage. We had 'Drake lake' conditions today, and a gentle energy hummed throughout the ship as we continued to make our way in towards the Beagle Channel.

In the morning, Hannah delivered a lecture about the history of women in Antarctica, which was followed by a briefing on disembarkation with Samantha. There's a reluctance in the air at the thought of leaving the *Greg Mortimer* and we can all taste the bittersweetness of having had a substantial voyage.

T-A gave a lecture on marine debris, which was somehow altogether sobering, informative and hopeful. Following this

was Tim G's phytoplankton workshop, where we examined samples under the microscope and marvelled at the otherworldly shapes.

Then we enjoyed the Captain's farewell, toasting the exceptional crew who navigated us through the icy seascapes of the Antarctic. Mario gave his final address, and we reflected on the experiences we have shared. Fiona's voyage slideshow followed, which gave us an opportunity to remember all the small moments that have brought such richness to our voyage. It may take a day or two for our experiences in Antarctica to sink into our consciousness, and to feel more than surreal. Or perhaps such a place remains surreal in our minds forever.





Ushuaia

DAY 11 | Friday 7 February 2025

Latitude:
54° 51.05' S
Longitude:
68° 17.0' W

Wind Speed:
27–33 knots
Barometer:
1003 hPa

Course:
108°
Speed:
Alongside

Air Temp:
6°C

Disembarkation at 8am
Aurora Expeditions thanks you for joining us aboard the *Greg Mortimer* to Antarctica. We hope to see you on the high seas again someday!

Polar Plunge













Kayaking Log

Kayak Guides: Tim Vanhoutteghem, Erin Scott, Anula Jochym, Tim Stredwick

30 January 2025, AM – Kinnes Cove 2.5km

Our first kayak operation in Antarctica! And a quite special one – we rarely get to visit the Antarctic Sound, let alone paddle in it! The doorway to the Weddell Sea welcomed us with quite wintry scenery – big tabular icebergs, strong gusting winds and occasional snow. We managed to find a calm spot inside Kinnes Cove to get on the water, very conveniently right next to a leopard seal lounging on a flat bergy bit. We paddled through the crystal-clear water and deeper into the cove, surrounded by impressive glaciers. As the headwind was giving us a good workout, we decided to turn around and do a short downwind run to our own private Adélie penguin colony, located on a chain of skerries. The place was bustling with life! And proved to have some gentoos scattered here and there.

31 January 2025, AM – Palaver Point 2.5km

'Palaver' is defined as a "long or improvised parley between two groups, typically those without a shared language or culture"—a fitting description of Palaver Point, home to a large chinstrap colony we visited that morning. We cruised along the coastline, taking in the atmosphere with all available senses. Among all the ruckus we managed to spot a Weddell seal. We could easily watch the chinstraps for hours – going in and out of the water, fledging chicks, and the occasional moulting adult. The decision was made to follow the rocky outcrop a little bit further and it was definitely worth it! A few fur seals, young males, were relaxing away from all the noise. We left them be and decided on a quick circumnavigation of a decently-sized iceberg to finish off our paddle.



Number of Kayakers: 10
Total Paddle Outings: 7
Total Distance Paddled: 27.7 km

Kayakers:
Barry Braund
Rosalind Leaming
Eric Leaming
Stuart Mackellar
Lisa Stecker
Kerry Greer

Yanli Chen
Xiangfei Mu
Zhen Ren
Hang Yin

31 January 2025, PM – Mik-kelsen Harbour 2.5km

Only two keen kayakers put their names down for a kayak around D'Hainaut Island in Mikkelsen Harbour. Perhaps the other kayakers were deterred by the weather: the cloud was low and the visibility was poor. But with no wind, a gentle snowfall floated down around us, settling the decks of the kayaks in front of us and in the water around us. Our circumnavigation of the island started at the Argentinian refuge hut. Dodging rocks and brash ice we completed the circuit and slowly headed back towards the *Greg Mortimer* before being picked up by Anula.

1 February 2025, AM – Orne Harbour 2.5km

The cloud was low in Orne Harbour as we launched two kayaks from the Zodiac. Visibility was good and there were promising patches of sun on the mountains across Gerlache Strait. Heading for the shore, there were plenty of chinstrap penguins on the rocks and in the water around us. Anula spotted a couple of humpback whales, so leaving the shore we headed out a little way into Gerlache Strait to bob around, watching them repeatedly dive for over twenty minutes before it was time to return to the *Greg Mortimer*.

1 February 2025, PM – Danco Island 5.7km

Blue sky stretched out overhead and the sun shone brightly on our afternoon at Danco Island! We embarked on our Zodiac and drove over to check out a crabeater seal on an ice floe, as well as some impressively large icebergs. Once we got into our kayaks, it became apparent that some strong currents were at play, and we began to see the ice move around us. We quickly changed course to avoid getting stuck in the ice, and made our way instead north, towards Cuverville Island! We paddled in glassy waters with the sun sparkling off the ice, and penguins porpoising intermittently all around us. We eventually reached our destination: a protected little anchorage, where a sailboat was moored. We saw evidence of whaling artefacts on the rocks, and got picked up by the Zodiac near a little iceberg 'graveyard'.

4 February 2025, AM – Martel Inlet 4km

The visibility was excellent as we set off to our launch spot. Bright patches of sun shone onto the mountain around us, promising a sunny kayak trip. The southwest wind provided a little challenge to the kayakers as we headed straight into it and its accompanying low, choppy sea. Plaza Point provided some fun as we weaved our way through gaps in the offshore rocks. Past Plaza Point, the coast turned northeast so the wind was on the beam; the group sped up along the rocky shore dotted with whalebones. A wave to the workers on shore at the Brazilian Comandante Ferraz Antarctic Station and we were abeam of the whale skeleton assembled by Jaques Cousteau in 1972. The sun shone brightly from a clear blue sky, sparkling on the water and glistening off the snowcapped peaks and glaciers around us.



4 February 2025, PM – Penguin Island/Turret Point 8km

What a spectacular way to finish the sea kayak program! We had an ambitious paddle this afternoon, in an area that is rarely paddled, due to wind and swell conditions. But today was our lucky day – there was still wind and wave conditions, but the sun was out, the sky was blue, and the conditions subsided as the afternoon progressed. We started at the west side of Penguin Island to begin our circumnavigation, following the shoreline and marvelling at the sea cliffs, the dramatic volcanic geology, and,

of course, the penguins. As we rounded the north shore of the island, we found more shelter, and cruised with good speed along and over to Turret Point, where we got our first glimpse at elephant seals! We observed their amusing behaviour as they were hauled out on the beaches along where we paddled. We continued onward, exploring the coves and rocks past Turret Point, and finished off the beautiful day by playing in the sea stacks at the next headland! It was a long and rewarding effort.











Paddling Log

Kayak Guides: Tim Vanhoutteghem, Erin Scott, Anula Jochym, Tim Stredwick

31 January 2025, AM – Palaver Point 1.5km

Three sit-on-top kayaks with six intrepid paddlers aboard were happy to hit the water at Palaver Point for their first experience of Antarctic paddling. The day was overcast but bright and visibility was good. Having launched from the Zodiac a little way offshore, we headed towards the coastal rocks. By the time we were all together next to the shore, all paddlers were controlling their boats like pros. The coast was fringed with chinstrap penguins as we headed southeast, until the ice cliffs turned us out to sea towards a grounded iceberg. Erin picked us up in her Zodiac to return to the *Greg Mortimer*.

31 January 2025, PM – Mikkelsen Harbour 2.2km

What an unexpected and magical afternoon! At lunchtime, few of us expected a stunning afternoon, with fog blanketing everything. However, once we got out onto those glassy waters, we were greeted with a beautiful heavy snowfall! Big fluffy flakes fell from the sky, covering our kayaks with snow, and creating scaly-patterned slush on the surface of the water. The conditions were incredibly calm, and we paddled around d'Hainaut Island, observing the moulting penguins, and checking out the whalebones ashore. We weaved our way through the shallows and the rocks, and started to all get the same idea... snowball fight! We scraped snow off growlers and off our kayaks, collecting ammunition and pelted each other with snow. We returned to the ship with smiles and rosy cheeks.



Number of Paddlers: 6
Total Paddle Outings: 5
Total Distance Paddled: 12 km

Paddlers:
Nicola Blackmore
Graham Blackmore
Jabeen Vasi
Ajay Menon
John Shen
Huang Ling Zun

1 February 2025, AM – Orne Harbour 2.8km

Conditions were extremely calm at Orne Harbour – the dramatic bay ringed with nunataqs and active tidewater glaciers. We started off in a bit of brash ice, which we bashed through and made our way to the rocky headland of the bay, which is filled with chinstrap penguins and shags, both of which had fluffy chicks present! The towering Spigot Peak rose overhead, covered in bright-orange lichen and shimmering mineral deposits. The squawks of various seabirds filled our ears as we poked our heads around the corner of the bay, prior to heading back to the ship, exchanging our footwear, and heading out to explore on land!

1 February 2025, PM – Danco Island 3km

This trip has already showed us how fast the weather can change in the Antarctic Peninsula. We have had fog, rain, wind, and even a snow blizzard. But this day brought us to the other side of the spectrum: open blue skies and incredible sunshine reflecting off the glaciers and icebergs of the Errera Channel. The sun was bright and the sounds were loud – the thunderclaps of decompressing glacial giants, the crackling of melting ice, the slow dripping of water running down the grounded icebergs.

It was incredibly easy to lose track of things, especially since things were moving around us fast! The currents running in all different directions, pulling and swirling ice around made for a very confusing maze to navigate. This ever-changing landscape delivered a wonderful amount of

wildlife: crabeater and Weddell seals. Some of them had not done their tidal planning right and got stranded on a bergy bit way above the water line as a result.

4 February 2025, AM – Martel Inlet 2.44km

We started our paddle with a long Zodiac ride towards the bay adjacent to where the ship was anchored. We passed the Brazilian Comandante Ferraz Antarctic Station on the way, and marvelled at the sleek architecture of this base. We continued past the headland to the inlet, and rounded the corner to find a spectacular vista of active glaciers, as well as even a bit of blue sky! We found a sheltered area to launch our kayaks, and proceeded to have a nice downwind cruise in the glacial turquoise waters. The wind was light on our backs but propelled us quickly, and we paddled until we found ourselves a patch of very crackly brash ice in which to sit for a minute. We followed the line of brash ice westward, picking out the odd piece of black ice, and enjoyed the bright blues surrounding us.







Snorklling Log

Snorkel Guides: Ania Baranek, Richard Devanney

31 January 2025 AM – Palaver Point

Yesterday, to our pleasant surprise, we ended up sailing all the way to the Weddell Sea, and we were treated to a fantastic outing at Kinnes Cove on Joinville Island. We put on the drysuits, and we were ready to give it a go, but due to a sighting of a large leopard seal, combined with strong winds, we had to cancel our first snorkelling session.

Today was our second attempt, and Palaver Point proved to be a perfect place for it! After a hearty breakfast, we headed out on the Zodiacs for a short landing, followed by a snorkel.

It was overcast, but the sea conditions were calm and we were amazed by what a difference it makes when there's no wind. We walked up the hill to gain a good vantage point of the bay, and observed a colony

of chinstrap penguins. They are so noisy! Palaver seems to be the perfect name choice for this place.

Then we climbed back aboard the Zodiacs and headed to the snorkel site, which was just around the corner from the landing spot. Once geared up, we slid off the Zodiac pontoon into the water, and took our time to see how it feels to be wearing a drysuit in the icy cold waters of Antarctica for the first time. There were quite a few chinstrap penguins on the rocks, and we spent some time watching them from the water, which gave a completely different perspective compared with watching them at the landing site. There was also a sleeping Weddell seal on the nearby beach. We finished our first Antarctic outing with a pleasant Zodiac ride among beautiful icebergs.



Number of Snorkllers: 5
Total Snorkel Outings: 3

Paddlers:
Matthew Shields
Mikolaj Jezak
Kun Hu
Hong Su
Nga Yu Chan

1 February 2025 AM – Orne Harbour

As we started to get the hang of putting on the drysuits, we were quite fast to get off the ship for our outing at Orne Harbour. The advantage of this is that we were the first group to land, which felt like we had the place to ourselves. After 45 minutes, Ania picked us up, and we headed to the snorkel site. The bay was filled with icebergs of varying sizes, mostly growlers and bergy bits up to 5 metres in length. There was a current taking the icebergs out of the bay, which was fascinating to watch.

We got in the water up-current of some chinstrap penguins on some rocks, and watched them as we floated by. It didn't take long to see some rafting chinstraps, and

we watched and took video as they swam all around us. They are incredibly graceful in the water. We managed to snorkel for 30 minutes before feeling cold. We had a mini-Zodiac cruise as we made our way back to the ship ready for lunch.

4 February 2025 – Penguin Island & Turret Point

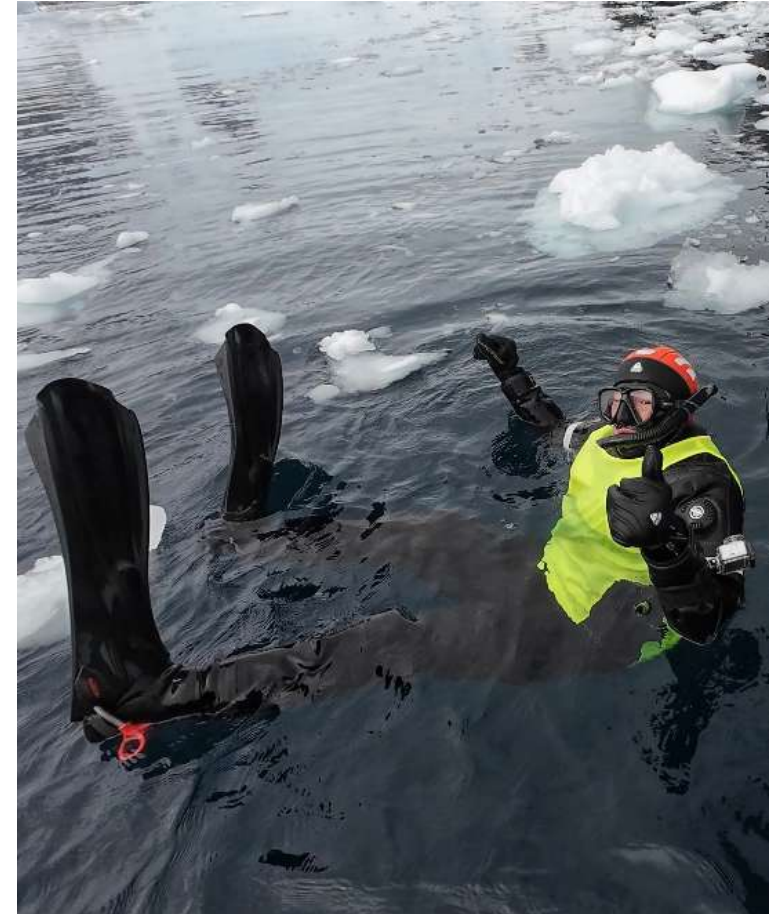
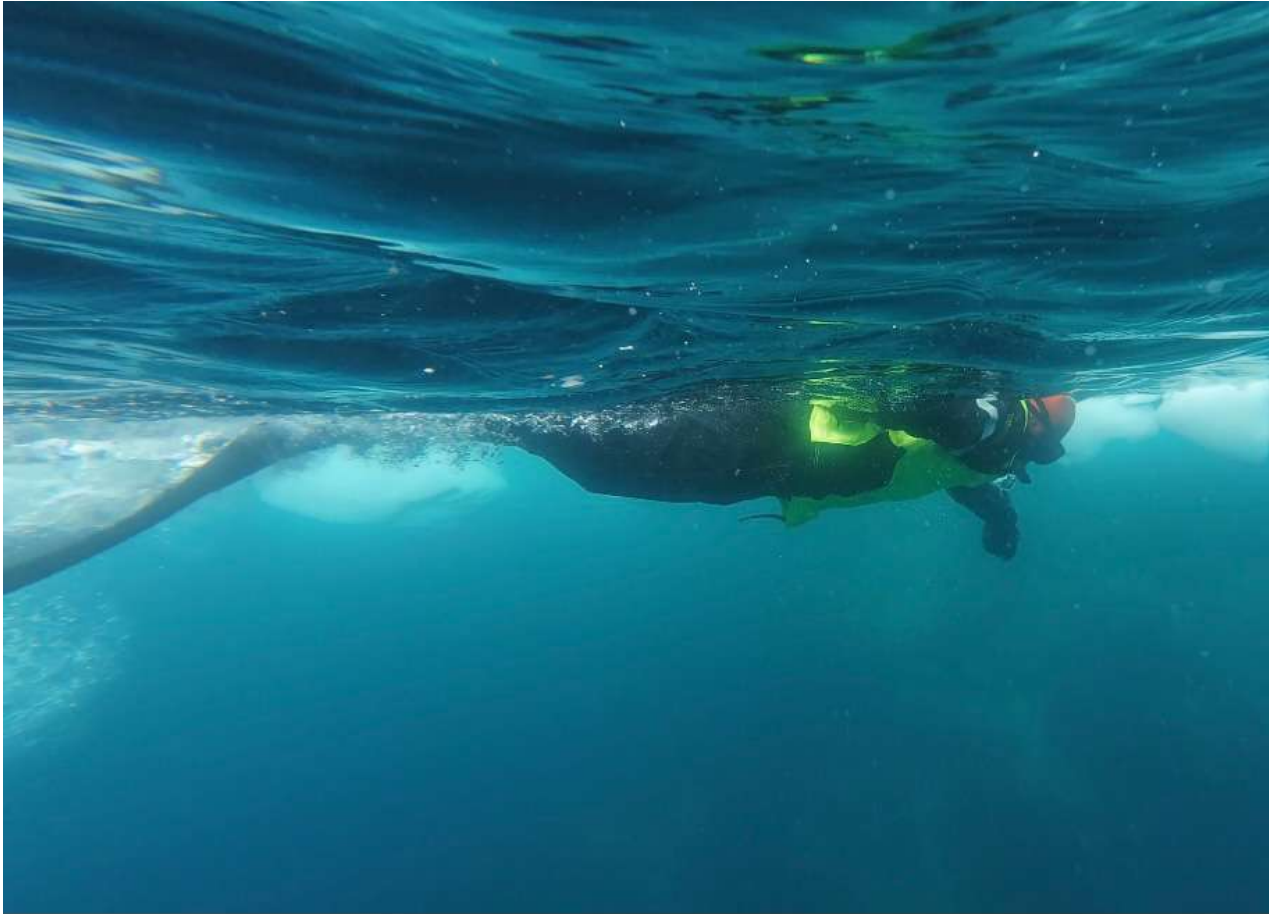
This was our last opportunity to snorkel before making the journey to Ushuaia. The weather was beautiful and sunny with a little wind. As we approached the landing spot we saw quite a few fur seals on the rocks, and two elephant seals were moulting near the edge of the water.

We stepped onto land and had 45 minutes to go for a walk, where we saw numerous chinstrap penguins and a few gentoos. Then Ania and Rich picked us up in the Zodiac, and we started to gear up for the snorkelling. Once we'd had the briefing we got in the water and hoped to get a fur seal to swim near us. The water wasn't as clear as at

other locations, so it was difficult to see any kind of life on the seabed. After around 20 minutes, a large male fur seal swam up to us to check us out. We couldn't easily see him underwater, but observed him on the surface. They look extremely large up close, and it was an amazing encounter, but it was time to get out of the water to warm up a little.

Once back on board, we headed over to Turret Point for a short landing to see some elephant seals on the beach. Then, it was time to head back to the ship and begin the passage to Ushuaia. We're all hoping for fair seas!







Bird & Mammal Sightings

Bird Species	January				February						
	28	29	30	31	01	02	03	04	05	06	07
Snowy Sheathbill		●	●	●							
South Polar Skua		●	●		●						
Brown Skua									●		
Skua (unidentified)	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●			
Kelp Gull		●	●	●	●						●
Antarctic Tern	●	●	●	●		●	●				
Gentoo Penguin	●	●	●		●	●	●	●			
Chinstrap Penguin	●			●	●	●	●				
Adélie Penguin		●	●								
Black-browed Albatross										●	
Southern Giant Petrel	●	●	●		●	●	●	●		●	
Southern Fulmar						●					
Cape Petrel		●	●			●					
Snow Petrel			●			●					
Soft-plumaged Petrel									●		
White-chinned Petrel											
Wilson's Storm Petrel		●	●		●	●	●	●	●		
Antarctic Shag		●	●	●	●		●	●			

[illegible]

Citizen Science Log

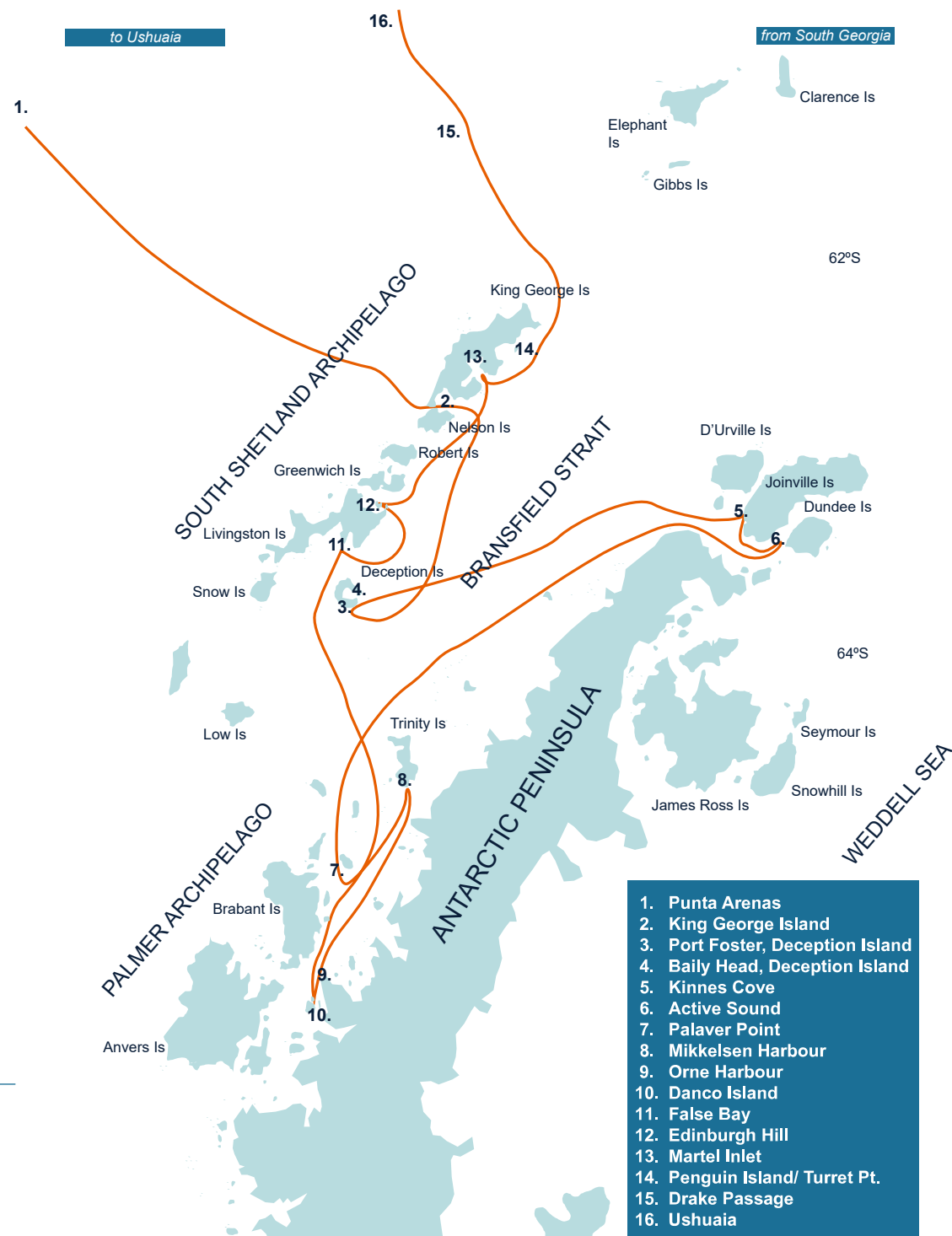
Project	Completed	Overview
Happywhale	3	Kyle served as the project lead for this initiative. We introduced the project on our first sea day heading south to the Antarctic Peninsula and provided additional detail on the project and tips to take the best photos for the program. Most of our whale sightings occurred in the first two days exploring the Antarctic Peninsula. During our time on the peninsula, we were fortunate to experience remarkable encounters, including killer whales and numerous humpback whales. Thanks to the generous contributions of our guests and team members, we captured and submitted four whale sightings to Happywhale, and three of these were new individuals.
eBird	2	T-A served as our project lead, and we successfully completed two eBird surveys while in the Gerlache Strait and Drake Passage. Unfortunately we did not see many species, but involved passengers showed great interest in eBird and continuing the project back home.
Globe Cloud	3	Ed served as our project lead, successfully guiding three cloud surveys during our crossings. Several passengers were particularly enthusiastic about this project and were interested to continue to observing clouds for NASA at home. Our Chinese passengers were very engaged and attended most surveys.
FjordPhyto	2	Tim served as our project lead. At Mikkelsen Harbour eight enthusiastic guests participated in the Zodiac expedition to use scientific equipment, collect data, ask questions, and embraced being Antarctic field scientists for a day. A great sample of phytoplankton was collected, with also great interest in the RBR water quality probe that was deployed by guests to gather important water data. A second sampling expedition was held at Martel Inlet to ensure the remainder of our Chinese-speaking passengers were able to participate in sampling. This is not a sample site according to the FjordPhyto program but was undertaken to ensure participation. A workshop was held with passengers to view some samples under the microscope and engage in meaningful discussion about phytoplankton and its effect on global climate and the Antarctic foodweb.
Secchi Disk	0	Tim served as our project lead. At Neko Harbour, nine enthusiastic guests participated in the Zodiac expedition to use scientific equipment, collect data, ask questions, and embrace the experience of being Antarctic field scientists for a day.
Snow Algae	3	Hannah led the project, and together we successfully conducted three snow algae surveys during different landings on the Antarctic Peninsula. The remarkable abundance of snow algae observed throughout our journey provided an invaluable opportunity to collect data. This information will hopefully contribute to a deeper understanding of its distribution, bloom timing, long-term evolution, and broader implications of this fascinating phenomenon.



Map

Antarctic Explorer

27 January – 7 February 2025





Our Expeditioners

Debra Bayley	Michael Fine	Rosalind Leaming	Greg Pitty	Tsz Chung To
Gerard Bayley	Esme Freedman	Zhiru Liu	Xiaoci Ren	Tesa Totengco
Graham Blackmore	Bart Freedman	Qianxun Liu	Zhen Ren	Jabeen Vasi
Nicky Blackmore	Frank Girman	Wen Liu	Zhen Ruan	Jo-Ann Woods
Liz Bracken	Kerry Greer	Qiancheng Liu	Coleen Sewing	Phoebe Wu
Barry Braund	Hui Gu	Zifei Lu	Qiping Shen	Shuyun Yang
Noel Calveiro Amoedo	Meixin Guo	Stuart Mackellar	John Shen	Yiming Yin
Aden Chan	Maggie Hogan	Bart Mangino	Matthew Shields	Hang Yin
Marge Chandler	Mark Hogan	Kim Mangino	Cecilia Solari Scheck	Min Zhao Zhao
Holden Chang	Denise Hollywood	Darlene Martin	Byron Sonberg	Hongjie Zhu
Yanli Chen	Kun Hu	Alejandra Martinez	June Sonberg	
Q Chen	Lingyun Huang	Donna Mast	Jiali Song	
Patrick Coulson	Mikolaj Jezak	Jiechun Meng	Lisa Stecker	
Jill Coulson	Yvonne Kuvener	Ajay Menon	Jessica Su	
Yuli Dai	Mark Lai	Mary Anne Mercer	Teresa Tan	
Steve Edgar	Margaret Lancaster	Dale Mercer	Zhiqiang Teng	
Yijun Fan	James Lancaster	Jinxian Miao	Shumo Teng	
Yuwei Feng Feng	Eric Leaming	Xiangfei Mu	Shule Teng	

Expedition Team

Expedition Team Manager: Sandrine Erwin-Rose
Expedition Leader: Mario Placidi Spring
Assistant Expedition Leader: Tamsin Both
Onboard Expedition Manager: Samantha Deer
Ornithologist/Naturalist: T-A Hooley
Geologist & Citizen Science Coordinator: Tim Gunns
Historian: Hannah Johns
Expedition First Responder: Meli Pelzmajer
Photography Guide: Fi Wardle
Marine Biologist: Kyle Smith
Expedition Guide: Ed Nolan
Zodiac Master: Sergei Andronov
Onboard Expedition Assistant: Ana Prado
Mandarin Speaking Guide: Rose Luan
Mandarin Speaking Guide: Qing Qu
Lead Kayak Guide: Tim Vanhoutteghem
Kayak Guide: Tim Stredwick
Kayak Guide: Anula Jochym
Kayak Guide: Erin Scott
Lead Snorkel Guide: Ania Baranek
Snorkel Guide: Richard Devanney

Senior Officers & Heads of Department

Master: Oleg Kapko	Spa Manager: Venila Vythilingum
Chief Officer: Andrey Zakalashnyuk	Able Seaman: Angelo San Antonio
Safety Officer: Sergii Voyna	Able Seaman: Roberto Ixtan Mejia
Bosun: Marvin Linga	Able Seaman: Nikola Georgiev
Deck Cadet: Joao Varlos De Souza Lima Filho	Able Seaman: Noel Refugia
Ship Doctor: Javier Martinez Rodriguez	Able Seaman: Joel Noble
Ship Doctor: Nicolas Diaz Rodriguez	Able Seaman: Roberth Herman Presida Enitencio
Chief Engineer: Dimitar Vasilev	
First Engineer: Denys Odrynsky	
Hotel Director: Alex Barkar	
F&B Manager: Rajesh Murao	
Chief Purser: Pia Blanca	
Executive Chef: Edgar Mangalinao	
Sous Chef: Edgar Agnelo Xavier Pereira	
Head Waiter: Neelam (James) Lopes	
Hotel Controller: Christopher Santos	
IT Officer: Ihor Yesmieniev	
Receptionist: Jaica Puyod	
Receptionist: Jonathan Valdez	
Head Stateroom: Roniel Garcia	

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Fiona Wardle, Special Activity guides





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