

# The Falkland Islands

Naturetrek Tour Report

6th - 27th November 2024

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King Penguins



Magellanic Penguins



Elephant Seal



Port Stanley

Tour report by Matthew Capper & Christine Taylor, photos by Matthew Capper

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## Summary

The Falklands is one of the world's best wildlife destinations, combining seabird spectacles of an Antarctic nature with land birds that more closely match the nearby South American mainland. Dramatic open landscapes are enjoyed, especially on the inter-island flights and despite the isolated and small population, it retains an air of localness with everyone more than happy to pass the time of day. The close links to the UK are always apparent and make it a unique experience down at the other end of the world.

Despite a few issues with timings, it is fair to say we enjoyed all of these aspects during a fabulous tour this year. What's more, Sea Lion Island delivered Orca on every day of our stay, including watching the female enter the famous orca pool. The penguins were universally popular, and we enjoyed intimate encounters with all five-regular species. The Elephant Seals were intimidatingly large, although close encounters with Sea Lions were equally impressive. The offshore islands provide a privileged opportunity to really feel like you have the place to yourself, and the lack of rats, mice and cats means the small birds such as the Cobb's Wren and Tussacbird are abundant and incredibly tame. All in all, it made for a truly memorable trip that will live long in the memory.

## Day 1

**Wednesday 6th November**

### Brize Norton to Ascension Island

We assembled early evening in the departure lounge at Brize Norton. The cancellation of the flight the previous Wednesday had caused knock on effects and we were now three days late setting off. Thankfully, today's news was just that we would be leaving an hour earlier than planned and none of us were going to complain about that!

We were up and away on time and soon flying south over the Atlantic.

## Day 2

**Thursday 7th November**

### Ascension Island to Stanley

Most of the group got a bit of sleep overnight and we were well looked after by the flight crew. It was still early in the day when we arrived into Ascension Island and were shepherded into the 'cage' to wait for the plane to refuel and the crew to change over. It was warm, breezy and overcast so we sat outside or stood with binoculars in the hope of picking up an Ascension Frigatebird. We soon picked one up, eventually logging three or four, although none of them were that close. Our actions were enough to pique the interest of several other passengers who came over to ask what we were looking at. Binoculars were passed round and it was nice to see the enthusiasm of our fellow travellers.

Once back aboard, we resumed our southward migration, arriving into a sunny but chilly Mount Pleasant mid-afternoon. The arrivals process was slightly chaotic but good natured and we were met by Lucille from Falkland Island Holidays and officially welcomed to the Islands.

The journey to Stanley allowed us to have a look at the landscape and find our first birds. Kelp Gull was the first, soon followed by a more familiar House Sparrow.

The extensive White Grass with areas of Diddle Dee and Tall Fern held a few birds such as Correndera Pipit, Long-tailed Meadowlark and Rufous-chested Dotterel but the one that stood out was Upland Goose – they were everywhere and proved to be the ubiquitous bird of the trip.

We settled in to our rooms at the Malvina Hotel and several of us headed out for a short walk along the front in Stanley and our first chance to really get a feel for the place. Kelp and Dolphin Gulls were loafing about and Kelp Goose and Falkland Steamer Duck were dotted along the shore. We stopped in at the Cathedral and added Austral Thrush and could hear Black-chinned Siskin. Rock Shag were sat on an old jetty and we had a bonus as four Commerson's Dolphin made their way steadily eastwards just offshore. Two of the group made it down to the harbour and found eight South American Sea Lion hauled out on a pontoon.

It had been a long day, so we retired shortly after dinner in order to get a good night's sleep.

## Day 3

Friday 8th November

### Stanley to Sea Lion Island

Most of us seemed to still be on UK internal time clocks and so it wasn't surprising to see a few people out for a pre-breakfast walk. The birds were much the same as the day before although the sea lions were no longer in residence. The Turkey Vultures seemed to have been roosting in the trees by the cathedral and we counted a dozen floating around in the stiff breeze.

After breakfast, we transferred to Stanley Airport and our first FIGAS flight to Sea Lion Island in the Britten Norman Islander planes. Everyone was clearly excited to be able to see the islands from 4,000 feet and the weather was kind, allowing us to take in the landscape and various features of note. Fiona and Anne went on the second plane, but their direct flight meant they were settled in and enjoying smoko (the Falklands term for tea and cake) by the time the rest of the group arrived via Port Howard.

Micky took some time to give us an introduction to the island but we kept getting distracted as new birds appeared outside the window. The only negative news was that an Elephant Seal had tested positive for avian flu and so South Beach had been cordoned off. Having said that, it was still easy to observe the beach from the adjacent ground and so it didn't really impede our movements or enjoyment.

Once we were all suitably refreshed, we spent the rest of the afternoon exploring, taking the track to the North Beach, although we diverted slightly and ended up at the far end of South Beach.

This first afternoon was magical with a clear sense of excitement as we added new species after new species and began to take in the various spectacles. As we walked the path through the dense Tussac Grass, the island took on a completely different feel and birds kept appearing around every bend. White-bridled Finches, Austral Thrushes, Ruddy-headed Goose, Magellanic Penguins around their burrows and some very tame Magellanic Snipe that, like everything else, posed for photos.

The Gentoo Penguins were dotted around in small colonies and there was a crowd of Striated Caracara fighting over a carcass. Brown Skuas and Southern Giant Petrels were cruising past and on the large seasonal pond there was a mix of ducks, Magellanic Oystercatcher, White-rumped Sandpiper and Two-banded Plover.

Down at the beach, more plover wandered around our feet, along with the Tussacbirds and we got to appreciate the size of the Elephant Seals for the first time. Careful scrutiny of the Southern Giant Petrels revealed at least one, much rarer Northern bird that we were all able to get on to.

Our second walk of the afternoon was to the area overlooking South Beach and the Orca Pool. There was another large Gentoo Colony by the fence line and plenty more birds to see on route. However, we had been given news that just two days before had seen the first Orca sightings of the autumn and we were on tenterhooks to know if they would still be around. We crested the rise and the bay opened up in front of us and Anne exclaimed the magical words “Orca!”

This was major highlight territory for everyone, and we spent a good couple of hours watching them out in the bay – five in total of various ages. There was plenty of other stuff to see too including a bloody fight between two bull Elephant Seals that we got in the scope for everyone. A couple of dead seals were being ripped apart by the caracaras and petrels and we saw our first Snowy Sheathbills of the trip – 14 of them wandering around the rocks and beach, picking up any bits of detritus that might be lying around.

It was getting chilly and quite late and so we wandered back via the garden area where we had displaying snipe and good views of Cobb’s Wren and Black-chinned Siskin. Anne chased a moth around for a bit in the hope of an ID but with no success.

The wind had gradually dropped as the day went on and it was now dry and calm. Micky pointed us to the best spot for Short-eared Owl and after dinner, several of us headed out for last light. Magellanic Snipe were still displaying over the boggy ground beyond the airstrip and we picked up a Crested Caracara in the gloom, on top of a distant bush. We put it in the scope but to be fair, it was so dark it didn’t really make much of a difference. However, a little wait was rewarded when not one but two Short-eared Owls got up and began hunting over the Diddle Dee and grasses.

It had been a fabulous first full day from start to finish.

## Day 4

Saturday 9th November

### Sea Lion Island

We were out and about early this morning in order to get to the Orca pool. In the half light, we could hear the braying of the penguins and a Cobb's Wren sang from the top of a clump of gorse. After the excitement of yesterday afternoon, we were hopeful that the Orcas would still be present. And we were delighted to find that they were.

It was still early in the season and so there were just a few weaner Elephant Seals around the edge of the pool and none of them seemed too keen to fully immerse themselves. The Orca cruised up and down the bay for a while before the female decided she would squeeze herself into the narrow channel that marks the entrance to the pool. As she entered, you could see her looking around and confirming that there was nothing to hunt. So instead, she turned tail and made her way back out. It was all rather sinister but also incredibly exciting. There was a definite split in the group between those relieved that there were no weaners in the pool and those offering to head down and push a couple in!

There was plenty of other stuff to keep us entertained with Elephant Seals on the beach, several Black-crowned Night Heron around the pool, and plenty of Snowy Sheathbill and Kelp Geese along the rocky shore.

A couple more seal carcasses were being rapidly stripped by squabbling Giant Petrels and the Magellanic Penguins were making their way back and forth from the sea to their burrows. It was all very atmospheric. After breakfast we headed out with Micky and Sheila (a volunteer who was staying on the island whilst her husband was working for FIGAS). Our destination was the penguin colony at Rockhopper Point. The vehicle tracks were not at their best after a period of heavy rain and protracted use the previous year, when a lightning strike had started a serious fire in the Tussac Grass and had needed considerable effort to contain. Still, with a little care, we bumped our way steadily northwards, seeing our first Dark-faced Ground-tyrant on the airstrip and then stopping to look for sea lions. We had no joy but did add our first Blackish Oystercatcher and shortly after, a Peregrine cruised past.

It was windy but sunny and the Rockhoppers were a delight. There were several small colonies containing both the penguins and Imperial Shags, plus a single Macaroni Penguin too. We also were able to spend a little bit of time in quiet reflection at the memorial to HMS Sheffield, the victim of an Exocet missile during the 1982 conflict. Offshore, Black-browed Albatross were wheeling above the waves and there was a single Southern Fulmar and a few Sooty Shearwaters further out.

Micky took us on a tour of the rest of the island and there were flocks of White-rumped Sandpiper, plenty of Two-banded Plover and a couple of Rufous-chested Dotterel. A Correndera Pipit showed only fleetingly though. Over at Beaver Pond there were plenty of gulls and terns and we were surprised to find a single White-tufted Grebe; a new arrival following a couple of drought years where the ponds had dried out along with the invertebrate life it would normally contain.

After lunch back at the Lodge, we decided to head for North Beach, with the intention of properly making it there this time! The FIGAS flight was due in though, so we waited a couple of minutes to watch it land and take off first.

North Beach was a delight. Lots of young Elephant Seals amongst the dunes with some large males and attendant females on the beach. Best of all were the Gentoo Penguins that we watched returning from the ocean, porpoising through the water before being disgorged in a heap onto the beach. Despite this being a regular feature of penguin life, they always looked rather surprised as they made landfall.

We had been tipped off about a couple of King Penguins in amongst the Gentoos so we visited these next and sure enough, there they were, our first of the trip. One was in heavy moult but the other was still looking suitably smart. We could see the sea out from South Beach and the sight of five fins had us headed closer for better views of the Orca. At one point the sea was beneath the level of the dune tops but the fins could still be seen moving slowly from right to left. More than one of us were playing the theme tune to Jaws in our heads.

We wandered back via the King Penguins again and had a welcome smoko and break before dinner. In the evening, Micky joined us and we had an interesting conversation about local life and attitudes towards the conservation of land and species on the Islands.

## Day 5

## Sunday 10th November

### Sea Lion Island

Another early start but, with everyone now knowing the way, it was left to individuals to decide just what time they wanted to arrive at the pool. To be fair, it didn't really make much difference as this morning, there was no sign of an Orca at all.

Instead, we watched the sun rise and the sea was flat calm. The usual stuff was present including Black-crowned Night Herons, Falkland's Steamer Ducks and Kelp Geese. A young male Elephant Seal was bullying the weaners and pushing them into the pool. Where were the Orca when you needed them!

Some of the group went for a wander back across towards north beach and watched the King Penguins again, seeing a flock of siskins on route. The rest stayed to watch the spectacle on South Beach before returning for breakfast.

For the morning, we took the short walk to Cow Point and had a lovely potter along the lovely sandy beach. The weather was a little chilly and grey but we were wrapped up nice and warm. A few Elephant Seals were present including a large male and hareem that we approached closely but cautiously. Sheathbills were wandering in amongst them, Falkland's Steamer Ducks were cresting the waves, Tussacbirds were feeding on the strandline and a Cobb's Wren was taking food back a nest. At the far end there was a pair of Striated Caracara that were building a nest and were very territorial. You could see where the Magellanic Penguins were making little highways up the beach and into the Tussac Grass and we stopped for a group photo

with the grass as a backdrop. It really was incredible how tall it grows when left ungrazed. A single Brown-hooded Gull was only seen by John.

By 11.30 the rain was starting to fall so we headed back to the Lodge for an early lunch and to let the shower blow over. Having been to all the main spots at least once, the afternoon was a case of choosing your favourite and revisiting it for a final time before we moved on the next day.

Four of the group were given a lift to the Rockhopper colony and walked back. They enjoyed the spectacle of the cliffs and colony, including seeing the lone Macaroni again. Two of the group were still hungry for more Orca action and as they had returned to South Beach, spent the afternoon watching them. And one decided that the Gentoos making their afternoon landings on North Beach was just too good to miss and so headed back there. It was breezy but not too bad and crucially it was sunny with excellent light. The King Penguins had been joined by a third bird today and along with the sighting of the Macaroni, it meant it had been a five penguin species day.

## Day 6

**Monday 11th November**

### Sea Lion Island to Carcass Island

Today we were heading off on another flight, this time to Carcass Island.

Again, we left it to individuals to choose what time they wanted to arrive at the Orca Pool. Matthew was first down a little before 4.30am and others joined in ones and two's over the next hour or so.

On arrival, four fins could be seen cruising offshore - a good start. But Matthew and John watched as the Orcas gradually headed down to the far end of the beach and followed the headland until they had disappeared out of sight. Hmm, not what we were hoping for and we worried that the group was going to be disappointed. However, there was the usual selection of birds around including six Black-crowned Night Herons around the pool and we also saw a lone sea lion climb up the rocks and disappear out of sight.

We watched a large male Elephant Seal see off a rival and then we were pleased to pick up the four Orca, back again just offshore, providing a final opportunity for everyone to enjoy them one more time.

There was a large group of Striated Caracaras in the Tussac Grass and a chunkier Crested Caracara flew in, allowing a nice side by side comparison.

People pottered back to the lodge via different routes, two of us walking across to see the three King Penguins again, watching Black-chinned Siskin on the way. The moulting King Penguin was proving that three is a crowd as the other two shunned it and slapped it with their flippers if it got too close.

Our flights were the first of the day and the two planes arrived one after the other, just after breakfast. We were soon on our way and 40 minutes later, after another excellent experience, we landed on a sunny, calm and dare we say it, warm Carcass Island.

Carcass was immediately very different to the largely flat Sea Lion Island. Derek and Bonita met us and we drove up the hillside where the rest of the island unfolded beneath us. It was stunning in the nice weather. Having seen a Crested Caracara on route, we arrived at the settlement and were welcomed by several Striated Caracaras, the usual thrushes and several Tussacbirds. Of note were the large number of Siskins in the trees that provide shelter to the lodge.

After a quick familiarisation, we decided to walk to Leopard Beach and back. Flowers were immediately more evident than on Sea Lion Island, with plenty of Scurvy Grass and some Common Violet in bloom. Halfway along the track we picked up a couple of fins offshore and watched a pair of Commerson's Dolphin slowly make their way along the coast. Surprisingly, Long-tailed Meadowlark are absent on Sea Lion Island so we enjoyed our first really good looks at what is a stunning bird.

Leopard Beach in the sunshine was truly idyllic with turquoise waters and penguins and geese dotted along the sand. The Gentoo and Magellanic Penguins could be seen swimming in the clear water.

We sat in the dunes, ate our packed lunches and had a wander along the beach or a chance to sit and watch the penguins come and go. As we reluctantly walked back to the Lodge, a scan of one of the ponds revealed a Yellow-billed Pintail along with the usual Crested Duck and Yellow-billed Teal. We had been told that there had been an Ashy-headed Goose on the island but there was no sign in amongst the Upland and Ruddy-headed Geese.

We were back for 5pm allowing some time to relax before dinner. Those that took a short wander to the jetty were rewarded with South American Sea Lion, lots of Kelp Geese and both species of Oystercatcher.

## Day 7

**Tuesday 12th November**

### Carcass Island

Our first full day on Carcass Island started with damp ground after overnight rain but the weather was now grey but dry. The garden was again full of birds with siskin being particularly prevalent. A scaffold tower had a slightly bedraggled Turkey Vulture roosting on it, with a second bird close by on the top of a tree.

We wandered slowly round to the jetty where a recently weaned Elephant Seal was resting up. A few Rock Shags were close by along with a pair of Magellanic Oystercatcher. As we walked back, the comment 'we haven't seen a Cobb's Wren yet' was immediately followed by one then two, then six in the gorse around us.

Our destination for the morning was the north end of the island and Derek and Bonita drove us up after breakfast, leaving one of the vehicles parked up for us to use as a base to store bags etc.

The shedder pond had plenty of Yellow-billed Teals and Crested Ducks along with a pair of White-tufted Grebe on the far side. We found a few whale bones and wandered along the edge of the beach to ensure we didn't get too close to the Bull Elephant Seals. A male and female Southern Sea Lion were equally close.



A Blackish Oystercatcher showed very well and there was a further pair alongside some Magellanic Oystercatchers later on.

Just offshore some breaking fins revealed themselves as a couple of Peale's Dolphins, our first of the trip. Eventually they moved on and we watched another first – a female Variable Hawk which perched up allowing good scope views. We collected our packed lunches from the vehicle and took them down to the beach to eat, sitting on driftwood, surrounded by more whale bones.

We returned to the lodge early afternoon and Derek and Bonita gave us a behind the scenes tour of the settlement. The shearing shed, dating back 1879 is the oldest on the Falklands and very little seemed to have changed since. It was a real privilege to learn all about the local ways of doing things and then contrast some of that older history with the latest solar, wind and battery technology that Derek was updating to provide all of the power for the settlement.

## Day 8

Wednesday 13th November

### Carcass Island

Pre-breakfast excursions were much the same as yesterday although breakfast was interrupted by fins in the bay. They were attached to more Peale's Dolphins and so a little extra time was added to give people time to get out and see them. There was a cruise ship due in mid-afternoon and the morning was therefore frenetic with baking by Bonita and her team of two. However, she and Derek very kindly took the time to drive us down to Leopard Beach so that we could explore and then wander back later.

Our first task was a challenge – to find the rare and endemic Lady Slipper flower. Fiona was the one who struck gold and the more we looked, the more we found. They are a strange flower and we decided that they looked rather like a Wallace and Gromit character! Fiona's reward was a penguin - of the chocolate biscuit variety.

There were a couple of Dark-faced Ground-tyrants around us and a pair of Crested Caracara were holding territory close by. We sat and looked out over the Needles and watched the albatrosses that were cruising past offshore. A helicopter was spotted in the distance and we worked out it was probably the MOD. Eventually we headed back towards the beach and took in the two Gentoo colonies on the way. The birds were still incubating and there was a Brown Skua close to a recently plundered egg.

As before, the beach was full of geese and a smattering of penguins. Sadly, there was also a very emaciated young Elephant Seal which we alerted Derek and Bonita to when we got back.

We sat in the dunes and had our packed lunch and watched as a stream of Imperial Shags appeared from round the headland. There must have been a thousand or more and they just kept on coming – an incredibly impressive sight. The cruise ship that we were expecting appeared in the distance and steamed past the needles and into Port Pattison behind us.

We pottered about for an hour or so, some along the beach to peer in rock pools and paddle in the waves and others to immerse themselves in penguin life. Once we reconvened, Ian and Christine called us over to alert us to a King Penguin that they had found. Initially, it had been lying in the grass but then got up and decided to walk over and check them out. We were delighted to have another to add the ones on Sea Lion Island.

We made our way back along the track. The cruise ship had nearly finished disgorging its passengers and they were starting to make their way from the settlement towards us. The guides were marking a route and lining the way and we stopped to chat and let them know what was around. Carcass Island is truly a little bit of paradise and part of that is just how remote and uninhabited it is. Already, we had become used to having the place to ourselves and whilst we enjoyed chatting and meeting people, dare we say, it felt a little like an invasion.

Back at the Lodge, much cake was being consumed so we felt it would be rude not to indulge in a little smoko ourselves.

## Day 9

Thursday 14th November

### Carcass Island to Bleaker Island

Another cruise ship was due in and had moored in the bay overnight. We continued our immersion into island life by joining Derek and Bonita for the morning milking of the cows. It really did feel like we had taken a step back in time with our stay on Carcass Island and if there was one feeling we all had as we prepared to leave, it was 'don't change a thing!'

Most of us were due out on the first flight and Derek gave us a prod mid breakfast to say the flight had left early and we needed to be prompt. Ian and Christine were due out later and so took great pleasure in having another bit of toast as the rest of us hastened to gather our stuff.

We drove back up through the hills and stopped to admire the view before we dropped back down towards the airstrip. Dark-faced Ground-tyrants flitted from the fence posts and meadowlarks and thrushes were ever present. As we made it down to the coast again, there were a few Elephant Seals to be seen near the Shedder Pond plus the usual wildfowl such as Crested Duck and Yellow-billed Teal. Derek was pretty sure which airstrip the pilot would use but needed to cover all eventualities, so we drove up and down both in order to clear the many geese.

We watched the plane arrive with Derek and Bonita's ten-year-old son on board. He was home for a long weekend as the islanders celebrate the King's Birthday with a Bank Holiday. A quick swap over and we were away, watching the landscape unfurl beneath us and enjoying another journey from one side of the Falklands to the other.

Nick and Paula met us on Bleaker Island and gave us a quick tour of some of the main spots. Our first Flying Steamer Duck was on Big Pond and we stopped briefly at the Rockhopper colony so that Nick could point out where the Macaroni Penguin was lurking.

We settled in to the lovely accommodation with its spacious rooms and underfloor heating and ate our lunches as we awaited the arrival of Ian and Christine. Nick had handed over the keys to a Landrover for us to use for the duration of our stay so once they had arrived, we headed up to the Rockhoppers at Long Gulch. We enjoyed the comings and goings of the penguins and both species of shag. Three Southern Fulmars were a nice find offshore and Sooty Shearwaters were going by in small numbers in amongst the many albatrosses.

The wind was starting to pick up so we made our way back via the large Imperial Shag colony near the settlement. It was particularly impressive with 4,000 pairs of birds in a very tightly packed area but with the weather now closing in, we didn't stay too long.

Dinner was a delicious dish that included lamb and accompanying greens, all produced on the island. During dinner John and Matthew both happened to be looking out to sea as a distant blow went up. It was too far to see any detail but could only have been a whale, most probably a Sei.

With dinner out of the way, Matthew and Fiona went out to photograph the Sei Whale skeleton on the shore at sunset, whilst the rest of the group made themselves comfortable for the evening.

## Day 10

**Friday 15th November**

### Bleaker Island

As had been predicted, today was incredibly windy, by far the most challenging conditions that we encountered of the whole trip.

Most of us were up and out before breakfast, John being the earliest and getting the furthest – adding White-rumped Sandpipers and a single Sanderling along the shoreline. Most of us headed round to the jetty and back, enjoying the usual selection of birds such as Magellanic Oystercatcher, Tussacbird, and Austral Thrush. The Rock Shags were perched on the remains of the jetty but more impressive was the morning commute of Imperial Shags flying low towards us from the nearby colony and away out to sea.

After breakfast it was so windy, it was becoming hard to stand upright. Our plan therefore, was to head to the very north of the island, taking advantage of the Landrover and using it as a mobile hide.

We drove via the small pond and there were a number of South American Terns and the first Brown-hooded Gulls for everyone. Best of all was a Black-necked Swan on Small Pond along with a couple of Chiloe Wigeon. The swan proved to be pretty wary and flew off as soon as we drove further along the track.

The wind meant there were lots of albatrosses offshore and little flocks of White-rumped Sandpipers along with plenty of Two-banded Plovers in the Diddle-Dee.

Dark-faced Ground-tyrants were seen a few times and as we drove through first and second neck, there were more terns offshore and we saw Southern Giant Petrels sat on their nests. We followed this up with a couple of Rufous-chested Dotterels and then excellent views of a pair of Crested Caracaras on the ground that were throwing their heads back in a courtship display.

We parked up at the fence just short of North Point and stretched our legs for a bit. Fiona impressed us by leaning into the wind, which held her as she bent ever backwards. Of course, it then died momentarily and dropped her onto her back!

There were a few Magellanic Penguins amongst their burrows and some Rock Shag snesting on the low cliffs. A couple of Dark-faced Ground-tyrants completed the scene and given the weather, we didn't wander too far and returned to the vehicle for a wind battered group photo.

The drive back was much the same as the way out – good views of dotterel, more petrels sitting tight on their nests, plenty of sandpipers and plovers and the Black-necked Swan was back on the pond, now with five Chiloe Wigeons.

After lunch, two of the group took a walk up to Long Gulch to see the Rockhoppers and another group took a short walk across to Pebbly Beach to look at the Lady Slippers and Violets that were growing on the barren ground between the two beaches. The albatrosses were nice and close and there were three young Elephant Seal and a South American Sea Lion in the water.

It was definitely a day for smoko, so we happily obliged before driving out to Sandy Bay to end the afternoon. Everyone wandered where they wanted, some sitting on the rocks and watching the terns, oystercatchers and albatross and some walking to the other end to enjoy the Gentoos which come ashore at this time of day.

Eventually we all reconvened around the vehicle, which we could use as a shelter and allow the scope to be used. A large feeding frenzy of shag, albatross and terns was happening offshore, making an impressive spectacle.

We drove back via the Imperial Shag colony and freshened up for dinner where we were joined by an additional guest – Fiona, an environmental consultant from Scotland. A couple of us went back out for sunset, whilst the rest chose to watch it from the comfort of the lounge with a drink in hand. It really did feel like we had made the best of difficult day weather wise.

## Day 11

Saturday 16th November

### Bleaker Island

A rain shower brought the early risers back to the Lodge and it was followed shortly after by hail. Some of us went across to Pebbly Bay and checked out the flowers. There were still a couple of recently weaned Elephant Seals present and a Cobb's Wren was feeding amongst the pebbles and returning to a nest in the Tussac. This was great to see as only five years before, the island had gone through a rodent eradication programme and the positive impact on the small birds has been dramatic.

After breakfast, Nick took us down to BBQ beach and the Southern Sea Lion colony. This was a definite highlight of the trip, and we just sat quietly for a couple of hours. A few showers blew through but we had decent cover in the Tussac Grass and weren't bothered in the slightest.

There must have been a good 100 Sea Lions below us. A dominant male was snoozing lightly, only to roar into action every time a young pretender got too close. Snowy Sheathbills and Dolphin Gulls were wandering around, picking through any detritus and a few Elephant Seals were dotted in amongst the sea lions. Just in the water, a couple of younger male sea lions were intercepting every female that tried to come ashore and generally causing mischief. Two young male Elephant Seals completed the scene, preparing for more serious battles in the future by rearing up and sparring with each other.

It took a bit of effort to drag ourselves away, but we finally did, taking a trip south to Dolphin Bay and Ram Paddock Pond. There were no dolphins, despite the name and no grebes on the pond either. However, we had our best views of Rufous-chested Dotterel and our second Variable Hawk of the trip.

The afternoon was another greatest hits tour with a chance to revisit a favourite spot from the previous couple of days. Some went back to the Sea Lions, some to Long Gulch and the Rockhoppers and one to Sandy Bay and the Gentoos. It was an afternoon of wind and squally showers but the wildlife did not let us down. The Sea Lions were gradually making their way out to sea but still provided plenty of entertainment. At the Rockhoppers, the Macaroni Penguin had finally headed out to sea after three weeks ashore but lots of Black-browed Albatrosses were soaring above the waves with Sooty Shearwaters in amongst them. Up at Sandy Bay, the Gentoos and Magellanic Penguins were coming ashore and at the far end of the beach there was a lone King Penguin, looking a little incongruous, stood with a couple of cows.

As we all made our ways back, we collectively added photogenic snipe, Black-necked Swan and good views of a couple of Brown-hooded Gulls.

Day 12 was the day our merry band of Naturetrekkers parted. With the cancellation of our tickets on the original flight out, we had set off three days late. This meant that we had lost our stay on Pebble Island but five of the clients had been able to rejig things and make this an extension to the end of the tour. One client, accompanied by Matthew, would be making their way back on the original date as planned.

This therefore meant that there were two parallel trips going on for the final few days and so both elements are written up here separately. The first account by Matthew covers the early returning pair and the second, by Christine covers the five remaining clients who went on to Pebble Island.

## Day 12

Sunday 17th November

### Bleaker Island to Stanley

Most of us were up and out before breakfast, Sara taking the longest route and finding a Crested Caracara on the radio mast. We were also joined by three Striated Caracaras close to the accommodation, a bird that we had largely not seen whilst on Bleaker. The usual stuff was in Pebbly Bay including Elephant Seal, Chiloe Wigeon and the nesting pair of Cobb's Wren.

After breakfast, we said our farewells to the five who were off to Pebble Island. We were incredibly sad to see them go but pleased that they had been able to arrange the extension and not miss any of the original itinerary. The remaining two of us were heading back to Stanley around lunch time. This meant we had the morning to potter about and Fiona decided to return to the Sea Lion colony and enjoy their antics one last time. She was accompanied by our extra guest, and so the two Fiona's spent a happy morning just enjoying the play fighting and jostling. At one point, one of the young males decided to climb up to the viewing area and gave them quite a shock! Luckily he decided he wasn't about to turf them from their spot and heading back the way he came.

Once back at the accommodation, we heard that the flight had been delayed an hour and so decided that now would be a good time to enjoy our packed lunches.

Nick and his mum came down and picked us up and we managed to find three Black-necked Swans, Brown-hooded Gulls and lots of sandpipers on the way to the airstrip.

With only three passengers on the flight, the pilot was happy to have someone in the front and so Fiona got to enjoy a co-pilot's view of the islands as we flew back. The flight was notable for a sighting of Sei Whale close to Stanley, but only seen by Matthew.

The afternoon was spent dodging the rain, wandering around the museum and visiting various shops for souvenirs.

## Day 13

Monday 18th November

### Cape Bougainville

We had a wander along the front before breakfast and it was a nice sunny morning. The petrels were wheeling offshore and the Turkey Vultures were soaring on the breeze. A couple of South American Sea Lions were hauled out on a pontoon and a couple of Brown-hooded Gulls were noteworthy.

After breakfast, we were met by our guide Carrot and set off inland. Correndera Pipit were much more common on the mainland, as were Crested Caracara and Variable Hawk. The road gradually transitioned from tarmac to gravel to off road and we stopped at the gate to the latter to disinfect our boots and admire the Pale Maiden flowers which was growing in profusion. We also picked up a couple of Brown Hares, our first of the trip.

Carrot took us for a walk around Cape Bougainville to get our bearings and then left us to explore the cliff tops at our leisure. A few rain showers blew through, but it was largely dry with some sunny spells. The Imperial Shag and Rockhopper colonies were relatively small but there were several of them and it made for a more intimate experience than at some of the other sites. Another feature of the colonies here is the high number of Macaroni Penguins and we found five, plus two hybrids.

We spent time watching the Black-browed Albatross and Southern Fulmar offshore and they were coming nice and close, allowing for some of the best views of the trip. A young Peregrine was patrolling along the cliff top. Down at the base of the cliffs, we could see Rockhoppers coming and going and there were at least a dozen South American Sea Lions hauled out on the rocks.

We chatted to Carrot and he kindly offered to drive us back slightly early and call in at Cape Pembroke on the way back. Recent news suggested that Sei Whales had been sighted and so we felt this was worth a last chance to try our luck.

We therefore retraced our steps, driving through Teal Inlet and stopping to wander around the remains of an Argentine Chinook helicopter that had been shot up by Harriers during the conflict. And we also took the opportunity to stop and take in the mountains that have formed such a key part of the history of the Falklands War – Mount Harriet, Two Sisters, Tumbledown, Kent... It was sobering to see just how open and barren the landscape was that the soldiers had to cross whilst under enemy fire.

Mount Pembroke was relatively windy and we sadly drew a blank on the whale front. However, it is an excellent seawatching site and there were hundreds of Sooty Shearwaters going by close in, along with South American Terns, Albatrosses and our last new bird of the trip – a few White-chinned Petrel.

Carrot returned us safely to the hotel and we enjoyed our final Falklands meal before leaving early the next morning.

**Day 14****Tuesday 19th November**

## Stanley to Ascension Island

With strong northerly winds predicted, the MOD moved the flight time forward to allow the plane to take off before our return home could be jeopardised. We were therefore up at 2am and the drive to Stanley was in darkness, with our only wildlife being a Brown Hare that was illuminated by the headlights.

The flight left promptly and we added another hare and our final Falklands bird – a Two-banded Plover on the runway as we taxied. The flight to Ascension was uneventful and we got our passports stamped during the two hours we spent waiting for the plane to refuel. With all that done, we continued overnight, taking the opportunity to grab what sleep we could.

**Day 15****Wednesday 20th November**

## Arrival in UK

We arrived back in the UK at 6.30am to be greeted by snow, cold and cars that were frozen solid. Once we'd got the ice cleared, we said our final farewells and headed home, accompanied by the memories of a fabulous place with some amazing wildlife spectacles.

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**Day 12****Sunday 17th November**

## Bleaker Island to Pebble Island

Following a quick walk before breakfast and the spectacle of Imperial Shags in the morning sky we said 'farewell' to Matthew our knowledgeable and wonderful guide and also one of our group as they were headed towards Port Stanley for a couple of days before the long trip back to the UK.

The remainder of the group had managed to arrange to travel on to Pebble Island.

The trips between the islands by small aeroplane have been real highlights of the holiday, being able to glimpse the Falkland Islands by air. During the short drive to the air strip, we spotted Tussacbirds, Chiloe Wigeon, Gentoo Penguins, Crested Caracara and White-bellied Finch.

After a short flight of 30-40 minutes, we arrived at a wet and windy Pebble Island, where we were greeted by our host, Ricky, who showed us to our rooms at Pebble Lodge followed by a welcome smoko.

Following a brief introduction to the island, the group set out for an orientation walk around the settlement. We walked past various farm buildings and paraphernalia towards Fish Creek and Ram's Head, passing by two juvenile Night Herons, a large family of Upland Geese and their sub-adult offspring, a flock of South



American Terns, Steamer Ducks, Oystercatchers, a Striated Caracara and a Turkey Vulture, until we reached a spit of land with several Magellanic Penguins.

We retraced our footsteps back to Pebble Lodge for a hot lunch of homemade pizza and salad.

After lunch, Rick and one of his team dropped the group off at Victor Creek to make our way back to Pebble Lodge along the shore. We saw lots of White-rumped Sandpipers, Magellanic Oystercatchers, Two-banded Plovers and Steamer Ducks at the creek. In the near distance numerous Black-browed Albatross flew above the waves with Kelp Gulls, Southern Giant Petrels. Further along the very pebbly shoreline, which gave the island its name, were Rock Shags, Brown-hooded Gulls and Kelp Geese. Just above the pebbles, Magellanic Penguins retreated into their burrows to shelter from the heavy rain and we skirted around an Upland Goose on a nest. We walked through the bright yellow flowered Gorse, Diddle-Dee and Balsam Bog, with the scent of the Button Weed filling the air.

We finally reached Elephant Beach, the longest sandy beach in the Falkland Islands, before heading through fields towards the settlements, taking in a small cemetery where generations of the Betts and Murphy families lie.

## Day 13

**Monday 18th November**

### Pebble Island

Following breakfast where we watched Siskins and Sparrows darting around the garden, we left in two 4x4s to explore the east side of the island with a guide. John from our group volunteered to drive one of the vehicles, following Louis, our guide for the day.

We drove through the fields to Elephant Beach and continued along the strand line. Two Commerson's Dolphins were spotted close to the shore and then another small pod of four were spotted near the water's edge leaping and splashing their tail flukes. We carried on driving along the edge of the beach, with the sound of air bladders of Kelp popping under the tyres. We spotted Turkey Vultures, Steamer Ducks, Oystercatchers, Kelp Gulls and Striated Caracaras. We turned off the beach watched by a Long-tailed Meadowlark.

Through the Diddle Dee plants and a glimpse of a Correndera Pipit we drove on until we reached Swan Pond. Here we saw seven Black-necked Swans, six Yellow-billed Teal and a Magellanic Snipe.

After the pond we drove through the fields, spotting Magellanic Penguins as they popped up from their burrows until we reached a rookery of Gentoo Penguins. Many of their eggs had hatched and we spent some time watching chicks through our binoculars while being served tea, coffee and biscuits. Most of the adults had two chicks of between two and five days old and we delighted in their 'peep peep' calls. Overhead, Turkey Vultures, a Southern Giant Petrel and a Black-browed Albatross circled.

We carried on to Cape Evans where there were colonies of Rockhoppers and Imperial Shags. A single Macaroni Penguin was spotted in the first rookery. Sadly, there was evidence of predation of eggs which were cast aside by Brown Skuas. A few Dolphin Gulls were also seen along the perimeter of the colonies. We spent some time watching the Imperial Shags collecting Kelp and bringing it back to their partners.

We drove a little further over to the cliffs where a Peregrine Falcon was in full view perched on the edge of the cliff. It briefly flew off before returning to the same spot. Further down the cliff were Rock Shags on tiny ledges, Night Herons, Sheathbills and a lone Sea Lion clutching an octopus which it thrashed backwards and forwards on the water before finally consuming it.

Lunch was eaten in the car where we watched Kelp Gulls, a Dark-faced Ground-tyrant and several Austral Thrushes.

Following lunch, we drove through the Diddle Dee, spotting Magellanic Penguins, a Correndera Pipit, Two-banded Plovers and Upland Geese, before reaching Tamar Point. The sound of hundreds of South American Terns filled the air, Imperial Shags flew backwards and forwards with marine algae, penguins porpoised through the water and Albatrosses flew among the gulls and Turkey Vultures. On the cliff we spotted a family of Upland Geese and several Night Herons.

Driving to our next destination we saw another pipit and Two-banded Plover.

We arrived at the only spot where South American Sea Lions haul up and counted 23 basking in the sun. One was spotted swimming through a narrow channel in the rocks. Around them were the ever-present Turkey Vultures, Rock Shags, Kelp Gulls, Crested Duck and Snowy Sheathbills. We also found plenty of Thrift in flower.

Heading back along the field edge of Elephant Beach we came across over 20 skulls of cetaceans plus vertebrae and ribs, which we thought might be Pilot Whales. Driving along the sands of the beach now that the tide was out, we spotted both species of Oystercatchers, sandpipers and Two-banded Plovers.

We finished our trip by Big Pond with White-tufted Grebe, Silvery Grebe and two Black-necked Swans.

## Day 14

## Tuesday 19th November

### Pebble Island

After breakfast, we set off in two 4x4s to explore the west side of the island. First stop was the SAS cairn, one of several monuments commemorating the Falklands Conflict. We turned north to look at the remains of a Short Skyvan. We headed towards the HMS Coventry memorial, set at the foot of First Mountain. Along the way, Correndera Pipits and Meadowlarks were seen among the vegetation. We carried on through the Diddle Dee, which was the main ground cover mixed with Tall Fern, Scurvy Grass and Falklands Strawberry, spotting Kelp Gulls, Upland Geese, Dotterel and White-bridled Finches. We stopped at the remains of a Dagger fighter jet which was shot down.

We then headed towards Stinker Beach (the local name for the Giant Petrel) coming across Turkey Vultures, a Variable Hawk and a snipe. Our guide identified Cinnamon Grass for us.

At Stinker Beach we were thrilled to see lots of Commerson's Dolphins racing and porpoising through the waves very close to the beach. Dolphin Gulls, Kelp Gulls and Southern Giant Petrels flew overhead. Further along the beach, Gentoo Penguins assembled following their forage in the sea and Turkey Vultures, Striated Caracara and Magellanic Oystercatchers completed the scene.

We turned south towards Middle Peak, driving over very rough terrain, before turning west towards Marble Mountain, stopping at an inland Gentoo Penguin rookery, over 2km from the sea. The chicks were several days older than the previous day. We continued west, looking out for and finding Woolly Falkland Ragwort, Fachine and Field Mouse-ear. As we headed towards the sea, we had magnificent views of nearby Kepple Island and Small Pebble Island, passing by Marble Shanty, a tin building used as a radio station during the conflict. Caracaras and Meadowlarks were seen as we approached our lunchtime destination, Bernie Beach. We ate our sandwiches in the car (it was rather windy) in front of a large Gentoo Penguin rookery, many bird with chicks. Skuas, Striated Caracara and Albatross were also sighted.

From there we headed along the coast to Cape Coventry, spotting Meadowlarks, Turkey Vultures, Correndera Pipit and several Magellanic Penguins.

At Cape Coventry was a large Rockhopper rookery with a single Macaroni Penguin. Rock Shags and a Barn Swallow were also seen.

We drove on, pausing by the scattered remains of a Lear jet taken down by HMS Exeter. Further along a clump of Lady's Slippers were located.

The return journey took us past the inland Gentoo Rookery and then along the north coast to Ariana Beach where a solitary sea lion lay dozing in the sun and several Snowy Sheathbills in attendance. Carrying on with our trip we spotted more Magellanic Penguins, Striated Caracara, Dotterels and Oystercatchers.

Our last port of call was a Dagger plane crash site where we stopped for a few minutes before heading back to Pebble Lodge.

## Day 15

**Wednesday 20th November**

### Pebble Island to Port Stanley

Our last day on Pebble Island. Over breakfast we spotted Siskins and an Austral Thrush and were greeted with the news that our return flight home on Friday had been cancelled due to persistent and strong northerly winds.

A very windy day and as our Islander flight wasn't scheduled until 1pm we were offered the loan of a 4x4 to head to Elephant Beach.

John again offered to drive and we headed off. The tracks on the island are tricky to follow so we ended up driving past Long Pond several times where we stopped to look at the wildlife. We were thrilled to get up close to several Silvery and White-tufted Grebe, having seen them from a distance previously. Also on the lake were Chiloe Wigeon, Yellow-billed Teal, terns and Steamer Ducks, on the bank we spotted Two-banded Plover (one with chicks), Upland Geese, Kelp Gulls, sandpipers, oystercatchers, a skua and Meadowlarks.

We finally reached the beach at high tide, so Christine and Sara took the opportunity to go paddling in the chilly water. Anne spotted some dolphins, while Ian focussed on photography. A few Turkey Vultures sat on the sand dunes eyeing up the waves.

## Day 16

## Thursday 21st November

### Stanley to Volunteer Point

The group were very fortunate to visit Volunteer Point, a peninsula in East Falklands, about 50 miles from Port Stanley (as it is known locally) which had just opened following a bird flu outbreak. We set off in two 4x4s noting Austral Thrush, House Sparrows and Turkey Vultures around Stanley. We drove, initially along a tarmac road, passing the former capital, Port Louis, before turning onto a gravel track. After travelling along the dusty track for several miles we reached a small settlement, Johnson's Harbour, where passing through a gate we travelled for several miles across country over rough terrain and through several peat bogs until we reached the wardens house at Volunteer Point where we stopped to disinfect our boots before proceeding.

We carried on for a short distance until we reached the largest King Penguin rookery in the Falkland Islands. After been given instructions of where we could and could not go (the Gentoos were off limits) we then had four hours of penguin watching. The King Penguin rookery holds about 2,000 – 3,000 birds and there were adults, adults still feeding chicks and chicks of various ages and different stages of moult. Overhead, skuas and Turkey Vultures patrolled, although very few descended into the rookery. This was the first time that most of the group had heard King Penguins vocalising which became the background track for the day. The centre of the rookery were mainly adults, outside of this circle large, fluffy inquisitive chicks approached visitors who tried their best to keep their distance.

A short distance away a smaller group of adult King Penguins were undergoing their moult, during which all of their feathers are shed over a month.

Nearby Magellanic, Gentoo and King Penguins were entering and leaving the sea which, in the sunshine, was a beautiful azure blue casting up onto fine white sands. Several Magellanic Penguins were observed collecting nesting material from other burrows and transferring them to their own.

A small cabin with a display of bird skulls and a few penguin eggs was provided so that we could eat our packed lunch out of the wind. Many of the usual species were spotted during the four hours spent looking at penguins which were later listed in the checklist.

After disinfecting our boots, we climbed back into the 4x4s for the two-hour trip back to our hotel.

## Day 17

**Friday 22nd November**

### Port Stanley

This was our original day of departure which had now been put back until Tuesday. Instead, we had an opportunity for the group to explore the small city at their own pace. John headed towards Gypsy Cove, Sara and Ann explored the sites and Christine and Ian headed towards Falklands Conservation to see if they could look at their herbarium of Falkland Plants. Conservation Manager, Andy Stanworth, kindly showed them the collection and allowed Christine to look through the plant specimens. The herbarium had been mounted by the Royal Botanical Gardens, Kew who also kept duplicate plant sheets for their overseas territory collection.

Most of the group visited the local landmark – the whalebone arch which was erected in 1933 to mark 100 years of continuous British administration in the Falklands. The arc comprises two pairs of jawbones from blue whales.

That evening four members of the group saw 'Paddington in Peru' at the cinema within the hotel.

## Day 18

**Saturday 23rd November**

### Port Stanley to Kidney Cove

Today we opted to visit Kidney Cove, a tour on privately owned land, led by the owner.

We set off in two 4x4s, heading north of Port Stanley to Murrell Farm to disinfect our boots (and play with the owner's dog) before heading to Kidney Cove. On the drive we saw Dotterels and Siskins among the Balsam Bog, Pale Maiden, Tall Fern and Diddle Dee. We passed by Stone Runs of quartzite.

Adrian, our driver pointed out Mount Lowe (named after a whaler) and Mount 12 o'clock - so called as when seen by the cathedral in Port Stanley at Midday, the sun is directly overhead.

We arrived at Kidney Cove, a lovely cliff with a clear water pool of Kelp below. The Rockhopper rookery were still on eggs but seemed calmer than previous rookeries as they were not being harassed by predators. Penguins returning from the sea found freshwater pools to splash and wash themselves in. Nearby we spotted Turkey Vultures, Upland Geese, Austral Thrush, Kelp Geese, Rock Shags, Skuas and White-brindled Finches. The aromatic aroma of buttonweed filled the air as we walked across the ground. We also spotted Thrift, Sheep's sorrel, Tussac (along the cliff margins) and Strawberry and Woolly Ragwort. Anne spotted several Ladybirds with 1-spot.

We walked along to a second Rockhopper rookery before reaching a rookery of Imperial Shags intermingled with Rockhoppers. The Shags were still building their nests and gathering materials.

We got back into the vehicles and drove along to our destination for lunch - Hells Kitchen, passing by a Meadowlark. We were unsure why the spot got its name as it was a beautiful beach of white sand, with an azure, blue sea beyond. Gentoos, Magellanic and King Penguins could be seen entering and leaving the water. Nearby were Oystercatchers, Steamer Ducks and Upland Geese. Along the shore we found 13 stranded Lions Mane Jellyfish, a Chilean Snow Crab and shells of Keyhole Limpets, Blue Mussels, Ribbed Mussels, Striped Clams and Giant Barnacles cast up onto the beach. We also spotted our first non-domestic land mammals - two European Hares.

We headed over to the nearby Gentoo rookeries - many were on eggs, but others had young chicks - often two in a clutch. Further over was a rookery of about 100 King Penguins, several sitting on eggs and three juveniles.

On the way back to Port Stanley, Adrian pointed out some distant buildings which were frequented by their cat which enjoyed roaming and riding back in a 4x4.

## Day 19

**Sunday 24th November**

### Port Stanley

A free morning exploring the city before the group headed to the nearby Historic Dockyard Museum which is managed by the Falkland Islands Museum and National Trust. We had been given free tickets to the museum as part of our welcome pack. The museum was packed full of objects covering the social, maritime and natural history of the island, the 1982 Falklands War and its Antarctic heritage. Downstairs the local history displays depicted room settings, Victorian fashion and artefacts from past everyday life. Further along was an overview of the 1982 Falkland War, with a poignant film of Falklander's reminiscences and a room of remembrance.

Upstairs was a large natural history diorama of local birds and a display on its now extinct local mammal, the Warrah. The geology of the islands was depicted through maps, rocks and fossils, including two Devonian fossils of a starfish and a trilobite.

Other displays featured the many ships that visited the islands and sections of the fishing industry and FIGAS – the local islander airline.

We ended the day in one of the local restaurants near the jetty where we spotted several Commerson's Dolphins and Turkey Vultures spreading their wings. Walking over to the jetty we came across five sea lions, Dolphin and Kelp Gulls.

**Day 20****Monday 25th November**

## Port Stanley

Our last day in the Falklands and most of the group spent their time packing and shopping for last minute souvenirs. Although we had been delayed by three days, it did provide us some time exploring this lovely little city at our own pace. We also enjoyed chatting to the very friendly locals in the shops and visitor information centre who gave us more of an insight into living in an overseas territory.

**Days 21****Tuesday 26th November**

## Stanley to Brize Norton

The group were finally able to take the flight back to the UK, after the three-day delay. Following a two hour stop in Ascension Island, everyone arrived home in the early morning of the next day and headed homewards after a longer than planned, but truly wonderful trip.



Gentoo Penguin



Orca



Sei Whale skeleton sunset



Long-tailed Meadowlark

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## Species lists

### Birds

E = Endemic		November 2024															
Common name	Scientific name	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22
King Penguin	<i>Aptenodytes patagonicus</i>			2	3	3		1			1			1		✓✓	✓
Gentoo Penguin	<i>Pygoscelis papua</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
Southern Rockhopper Penguin	<i>Eudyptes chrysocome</i>			✓	✓				✓	✓	✓		✓	✓			✓
Macaroni Penguin	<i>Eudyptes chrysolophus</i>			1	1				1				6	1			
Magellan Penguin	<i>Spheniscus magellanicus</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
White-tufted Grebe	<i>Rollandia rolland</i>			1									✓		✓		
Silvery Grebe	<i>Podiceps occipitalis</i>						2						✓		✓		
Black-browed Albatross	<i>Thalassarche melanophrys</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓✓	✓	✓	✓		
Southern Giant Petrel	<i>Macronectes giganteus</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Northern Giant Petrel	<i>Macronectes halli</i>		1														
Southern Fulmar	<i>Fulmarus glacialis</i>			1					3+				6+				
White-chinned Petrel	<i>Procellaria aequinoctialis</i>												4+				
Sooty Shearwater	<i>Ardenna grisea</i>			✓					✓		✓		✓✓				
Rock Shag	<i>Leucocarbo magellanicus</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				
Imperial Shag	<i>Leucocarbo atriceps</i>			✓	✓		✓	✓✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓
Black-crowned Night Heron	<i>Nycticorax nycticorax</i>		3	✓	✓	✓	3	✓	✓		1	✓	✓				
Black-necked Swan	<i>Cygnus melancoryphus</i>									1	1	3	9				
Upland Goose	<i>Chloephaga picta</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Kelp Goose	<i>Chloephaga hybrida</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
Ruddy-headed Goose	<i>Chloephaga rubidiceps</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Flying Steamer Duck	<i>Tachyeres patachonicus</i>				1				1	1		1			✓		
Falkland Steamer Duck - E	<i>Tachyeres brachypterus</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Chiloe Wigeon	<i>Mareca sibilatrix</i>		✓	✓	2		✓			7+	✓	1	✓		✓		

E = Endemic		November 2024															
Common name	Scientific name	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22
Yellow-billed Teal	<i>Anas flavirostris</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		
Crested Duck	<i>Lophonetta specularioides</i>	✓	1	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
Yellow-billed Pintail	<i>Anas georgica</i>					1					1		5				
Turkey Vulture	<i>Cathartes aura</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Variable Hawk	<i>Geranoaetus polyosoma</i>						1					✓	5+	✓			
Striated Caracara	<i>Phalcoboenus australis</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	1	2	3	✓	✓	✓		
Crested Caracara	<i>Caracara plancus</i>		1			3		1	✓	2		✓	c15	✓	✓		
Peregrine Falcon	<i>Falco peregrinus</i>			1									✓				
Magellanic Oystercatcher	<i>Haematopus leucopodus</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Blackish Oystercatcher	<i>Haematopus ater</i>			1	1		✓	✓	✓	2	✓		✓	✓			✓
Two-banded Plover	<i>Charadrius falklandicus</i>		✓	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Rufous-chested Dotterel	<i>Charadrius modestus</i>	1		2						4	2		6+	✓		✓	✓
Magellanic Snipe	<i>Gallinago magellanica</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	1	4	✓	✓	✓		✓	
Sanderling	<i>Calidris alba</i>									1							
White-rumped Sandpiper	<i>Calidris fuscicollis</i>		✓	✓						✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Snowy Sheathbill	<i>Chionis albus</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			
Brown Skua	<i>Stercorarius antarcticus</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Dolphin Gull	<i>Leucophaeus scoresbii</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Kelp Gull	<i>Larus dominicanus</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Brown-hooded Gull	<i>Larus maculipennis</i>				1				2	✓	2	✓	3+				
South American Tern	<i>Sterna hirundinacea</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓✓	✓	✓	✓✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Short-eared Owl	<i>Asio flammeus</i>		2								1						
Tussacbird (Blackish Cinclodes) - E	<i>Cinclodes antarcticus</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓					
Dark-faced Ground-tyrant	<i>Muscisaxicola maclovianus</i>			1		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓
Barn Swallow	<i>Hirundo rustica</i>													✓			
Correndera Pipit	<i>Anthus correndera</i>	2		1		1							✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Grass Wren	<i>Cistothorus platensis</i>		3	1	2	✓	✓	✓	✓				2				
Cobb's Wren - E	<i>Troglodytes cobbi</i>		✓	1	✓		✓	✓	✓		1	1					

E = Endemic		November 2024															
Common name	Scientific name	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22
Austral Thrush	<i>Turdus falcklandii</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
White-bridled Finch	<i>Melanodera melanodera</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓
Long-tailed Meadowlark	<i>Leistes loyca</i>	2				✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Black-chinned Siskin	<i>Spinus barbatus</i>	h	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	2	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
House Sparrow	<i>Passer domesticus</i>	✓	✓	✓							1	✓	✓			✓	✓

## Mammals

I = Introduced		November 2024															
Common name	Scientific name	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22
European Hare - I	<i>Lepus europaeus</i>												4				✓
South American Sea Lion	<i>Otaria flavescens</i>	8				2	2		4	2	c100	c100	14+	1			
Southern Elephant Seal	<i>Mirounga leonina</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	3	✓	4	c12	c8					
Peale's Dolphin	<i>Sagmatias australis</i>						2	4	2								
Commerson's Dolphin	<i>Cephalorhynchus commersonii</i>	4				4							6	✓✓	✓	✓	
Killer Whale	<i>Orcinus orca</i>		5	5	5	4								•	•	•	
Sei Whale	<i>Balaenoptera borealis</i>											1					

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## Selected plants

Selected Plant Species (alphabetical order)

Bluebell (Hybrid) - I - *Hyacinthoides x massartiana*

Buttonweed - *Leptinella scariosa*

Cinnamon-grass - *Hierochloa redolens*

Common Ramping Fumitory - I - *Fumaria muralis*

Common Storksbill - I - *Erodium cicutarium*

Daisy - I - *Bellis perennis*

Dandelion - I - *Taraxacum officinale*

Diddle-dee - *Empetrum rubrum*

Fachine - *Chilodactylus diffusum*

Falkland Strawberry - *Rubus geoides*

Falklands Woolly Ragwort - *Senecio littoralis*

Field Mouse-ear - *Cerastium arvense*

Common Violet - *Viola maculata*

Gorse - I - *Ulex europaeus*

Groundsel - I - *Senecio vulgaris*

Lady's Slipper - E - *Calceolaria fothergillii*

Marram - I - *Ammophila arenaria*

Monterey Cypress - I - *Cupressus macrocarpa*

Native Stonecrop - *Crassula moschata*

Native Wood-rush - *Luzula alopecurus*

Notched Moss-Bog - *Abrotanella emarginata*

Pale Maiden - *Olsynium filifolium*

Pigvine - *Gunnera magellanica*

Prickly-burr - *Acaenia magellanica*

Sand cat's-ear - *Hypochaeris arenaria*

Scurvygrass - *Oxalis enneaphylla*  
Sea Cabbage - *Senecio candidans*  
Sheep's Sorrel - I - *Rumex acetosella*  
Small-fern - *Blechnum penna - marina*  
Tall Rush - *Marsippospermum grandiflorum*  
Tall-fern - *Blechnum magellanicum*  
Teaberry - *Myrteola nummularia*  
Thrift - *Ameria maritima*  
Tussac-grass - *Poa flabellata*  
Whitegrass - *Cortaderia pilosa*  
Wild Celery - *Apium australe*



Gentoo Penguins