

The Falkland Islands

Naturetrek Tour Report

2nd – 19th November 2025



Imperial Shag colony



Carcass Island



Striated Caracara ("Johnny Rook")



Elephant Seal

Tour report and photos by David Spivack



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Summary

The Falkland Islands are without doubt, one of world's must-see wildlife destinations.

Although around eight thousands miles from the UK, it feels as if you are very much in the UK until you start to observe the amazing wildlife that the islands have to offer as well as dramatic landscape and the modes of transport around the islands – all in all a truly wonderful place to spend just over two weeks observing it wildlife.

All of our flights both international and internal ran to time (phew!) and although at times the weather was bad including fog that grounded some flights, we were lucky that our flights proceeded on schedule.

Sea Lion Island provided us with great views of Orca during our stay there, including watching Orca in and around the famous Orca pool. The penguins were as popular as ever with many of the group watching and even naming some (who could forget Bob on Carcase Island) plus we enjoyed “five penguin days” multiple times on different islands during our tour. The huge Elephant Seals and impressive encounters with Sea Lions were equally as impressive. The islands we visited gave us the privileged chance feel like you were on the edge of the world and had the islands to yourself. Cobb's Wren and Tussacbird are numerous and very tame and thrive on islands free of rodents. Our tour to the Falkland Islands made for an absolutely amazing trip that will stay with all of us forever.

Day 1

Sunday 2nd November

Brize Norton to Ascension Island

We gathered on the Sunday evening at the front gate to obtain our passes and then headed by coach to the departure lounge at Brize Norton. The flight was on time fortunately and we departed at 11.35pm to start our long flight south to the Falklands over both the North & South Atlantic.

Day 2

Monday 3rd November

Ascension Island to Stanley

After getting what sleep we could overnight, we arrived on a warm Ascension Island as day broke.

It was early in the day and were guided into the ‘cage’ to wait for the aircraft to be refuelled.

With our binoculars trained towards the coast we had our fingers crossed in the hope of seeing an Ascension Frigatebird. We soon saw a number but at some distance though.

Once back on board our plane, we took off and continued our flight south during which time we had a number of meals & drinks. We landed into a chilly Mount Pleasant mid-afternoon. We collected our luggage and we were met by representatives from Falkland Island Holidays and welcomed to the Islands.

The coach drive to Stanley allowed us to have a look at terrain of East Falkland in the overcast conditions but it did brighten up once we got to Stanley.

We arrived at the very comfortable Malvina Hotel and found our rooms. This was the first chance to see some of the birds. Kelp and Dolphin Gulls were seen along with Upland Goose and Falkland Steamer Duck, also seen were Giant Petrel, Turkey Vulture, Austral Thrush and Imperial Shag were sat on an old jetty.

It had been a very long journey so after dinner at 7pm we all headed off for a good night's sleep.

Day 3

Tuesday 4th November

Stanley to Pebble Island

We woke after our first night in the Falklands and Stanley to a chilly wind and to a light dusting of snow outside the Malvina Hotel and across the far distant hills. After lovely buffet breakfast we were about to make our first internal flight to Pebble Island. The group used a number of flights from Stanley to Pebble Island, a flight time of around 45 minutes.

Once re-untied as a group we were greeted by our host, Ricky, who showed us to our rooms at Pebble Lodge followed by a welcome "Smoko" (Falklands term for 11 o'clock refreshments) and a brief introduction to The Lodge and Pebble Island, followed by lunch. From the lodge window over lunch, we saw Black-chinned Siskin, Falklands Thrush and Turkey Vulture.

After a super lunch and with the weather perking up, we then headed out in our three 4x4s (two driven by Riki & Louis) to start an afternoon of exploring. Our first stop was Small Pond where we picked up Chiloe Wigeon, Speckled Teal and a number of Two-banded Plover before heading off to Big Pond where the highlights were great views of nesting White-tufted Grebe and Silvery Grebe feeding close to the shore. Driving off road and across the dunes we then arrived at vast expanse of Elephant Beach, the longest sandy beach in the Falkland Islands. Here we had flocks of South American Terns, a number of Brown-headed Gulls, our first Gentoo Penguins, a flock of Crested Ducks and a two Snowy Sheathbills feeding along the waters edge with a few White-rumped Sandpipers. While in the tops of the dunes Johnny Rooks (Striated Caracaras) and Turkey Vultures looked down on us. We then headed to Quark Pond where to the delight of us all we had views of our first Black-necked Swans along with further views of Silvery Grebe and Magellanic Snipe.

After a long flight and an afternoon drive on our first day on Pebble Island, we decided a walk was in order, so after driving back along Elephant Beach and over the dunes, we left our 4x4s and headed back to the lodge on foot. It was then time to freshen up, have our wonderful evening meal and then run through the log and once again an early night.

Day 4

Wednesday 5th November

Pebble Island

With the day starting bright & sunny, after a lovely breakfast we headed west out of the settlement in our four trusty 4x4s. Our first stop was the SAS cairn that commemorates the site of the first landing of active British forces at the start of the conflict in May 1982. Here we started the day with a number of Johnny Rooks, along with a number of the ever present Black-throated Finches. Driving on and close to First Mountain, we stopped a wreckage of a number of Argentine aircraft that were either destroyed in the SAS raid or were shot down by the RAF. A sobering sight indeed. In this area we a total of four Rufous-chested Dotterel and then an Upland Goose on its nest. On the way to our next stop, Stinker Beach, we had a number Dark-faced Ground-Tyrants before we arrived at Stinker Beach in bright sunshine but windy. Here we sighted lots of Black-browed Albatross of shore while around 50 pairs of Giant Petrels nest on the sandy slope at one end of the beach and Gentoo Penguins coming ashore on the white sandy beach. After our “Smoko” stop we then viewed a number of wary sealions on top of a tussock topped stack close to the beach. With the sun shining we then headed to view the Gentoo colony at the far end of the beach. What a joy it was to see them as they leap ashore from the surf.

It was then on to the Rockhopper colony at Cape Coventry in the afternoon via an Argentine war grave. These tough birds brave the surf at the bottom of cliffs to then reach their breeding colony which also included Macaroni Penguins. Along the way Magellanic Penguins would appear from their underground burrows. While watching these delightful birds Black-browed Albatross sailed past on a stiff breeze, Rock Shags dived for food from the surface and Brown Skuas hovered over the penguin looking for every opportunity to snatch an unguarded egg.

We drove on with our next stop planned to be the Gentoo colony close to the 700 foot of Middle Peak. We viewed the colony and to our amazement had a single King Penguin on its own close to a fence – hooray five species of penguin in one day. Around the colony skuas and Johnny Rooks were as ever on the lookout for eggs. Tea, coffee biscuits were then served before we started our drive back to the Lodge. On the drive back we had superb views of a Southern Crested Caracara sitting on a roll of rusting fence wire – cameras were clicking away. Around 6pm we passed the HMS Coventry Memorial high on the hill close to the settlement that we arrived at around 6.15pm. After another wonderful day we once again had a great evening meal with the log being run through afterwards.

Day 5

Thursday 6th November

Pebble Island

Another day on Pebble Islands and after breakfast from the settlement and back along the wonderful Elephant Beach. Along the way viewed steamer-ducks on beach and in the surf while a number of Turkey Vultures and Johnny Rooks lined the ridge along the dunes keeping eye on our progress along the beach. By mid-morning (and with the weather improving) we had reached Little Wreck Point and were treated to prolonged and wonderful views of two Peale’s Dolphins drifting slowly through the beds of kelp in the bay. While also in the bay four much smaller Commerson’s Dolphins also were seen to the delight of the group along with South American Terns and three Flying Steamer Ducks that flew in off the sea. Just a short drive away our next stop was to view Swan Pond which lived up to its name as we viewed around 18 Black-necked Swans, plus four Silvery Grebes, Chiloe Wigeon and Ruddy-headed Geese. Here we then stopped of our usual “Smoko” break and were treated to an excellent

view of a Peregrine perched on a fence post – fantastic. With the sun coming out and the wind picking up, our next stop was Wreck Point where as soon as we left the 4x4s we were treated to close views of Black-browed Albatross soaring close inshore along with Giant Petrels while Commerson's Dolphins were once again spotted in the surf. Cape Tamar was our next stop where a single Johnny Rook took a very keen interest in the spare wheel on our 4x4 and provided us all with very close up photo opportunities. With the sun out but with a strong wind we headed down the slope to shelter from the wind for our lunch with great views along the rugged coastline. Whilst here we watched Southern Fulmar, Black-browed Albatross, Dolphin Gull and Brown Skuas in the bay below. After finding the perfect spot for lunch we then headed up the hill in our 4x4s to Cape Evans where two wonderful Rockhopper & Imperial Shag colonies are located and within one of them was a single King Penguin which rather unsocially walked out of the colony to be on its own some distance away. Watching the comings and goings of so many birds in spectacular scenery was a truly wonderful experience which was added to further by a pair of Macaroni Penguins.

After spending time at Cape Evans and as the weather started to turn for the worst we headed to Tamar Point, the most easterly point on Pebble Island. As the weather was so bad we drove as close as we could to the point. Here we viewed large numbers of Black-browed Albatross feeding along with in the channel between Pebble and West Falkland.

With the weather deteriorating we headed back to lodge, arriving back at around 6pm where once again a wonderful evening meal laid ahead.

Day 6

Friday 7th November

Carcass Island

After breakfast at 8am the day had arrived to leave Pebble Island and depart for Carcass Island to the west. With sunny skies, fluffy white clouds and light winds our group departed in two flights to yet another of the Falklands wonderful locations, Carcass Island. The short 30-minute flight took over Saunders Island and The Neck, the narrow sandy stripe of beach with sea on each side. Arriving at around 11am in bright sunshine and blue skies we were greeted by our hosts at the airstrip and in three 4x4s we headed off to the settlement. The settlement with its enclosed vegetation and occasional palm tree giving the area an almost tropical atmosphere. Around the settlement the ever-present Tussacbirds (Blackish Cinclodes) entertained us while lots of Johnny Rooks lurked at the kitchen door hoping for an easy meal.

Once we had found our rooms and had our welcome briefing & buffet lunch we once more boarded our 4x4s again headed off toward Leopard Beach. This wonderful area is home to a wide range of the island's wildlife, so it was here that we spent the rest of the day. Our first mission was as a group was to ascend the 228-foot Ram Paddock Hill in a quest to find Lady Slipper Orchids and a delightful plant called the Pale Maiden. Once on the summit both were found much to the delight of the group although the strong cold wind soon drove us down to lower levels. Once back at sea level we spent the rest of the afternoon in the area close to Leopard Beach. Here we delighted in spend time observing the two Gentoo Penguin colonies. As we walked the area we were treated to Magellanic Penguins peering at us from their burrows while Brown Skuas wheeled overhead looking for opportunities for an easy meal while flocks of Ruddy-headed Geese grazed constantly, Kelp Geese and Steamer Ducks patrolled the beach while small numbers of South American Terns flew offshore.

With such pleasant weather we decided that we would walk back to the settlement so at around 4pm we started the gentle walk back to the settlement. Along the way we added Sedge Wren to the days list along with the brief view of a Peregrine hawking along the ridge of Jason Hill with a number of Turkey Vultures. Nearing the settlement Blackish Oystercatchers called along the rocky shore while we located three Night Heron feeding in the seaweed covered rock pools. All in all a great first afternoon on Carcass Island which was rounded off with a lovely meal and after which we did the checklist reviewing the days amazing wildlife

Day 7

Saturday 8th November

Carcass Island

As the seventh day of our Falklands adventure dawned overcast and after a hearty breakfast, we headed off once again in convoy to explore the north end of Carcass Island. Heading back over an area called The Saddle we headed back past the airstrip and were dropped off on the northwest coast close to Shedder Pond. Here we spent the morning watching the Elephant Seals both on the beach and close inshore. At the same time Giant Petrels and Black-browed Albatross could be seen wheeling offshore while closer in South American Terns patrolled the surface of the sea on the lookout for small fish. Here we also watched a Kelp Gull catch and swallow whole a young Steamer Duck on the wing. We were also treated to a pod of around six Peale's Dolphins slowly swimming around the kelp in the bay hunting for fish – what a wonderful sight. After a few hours here, we then walked past the small ponds only to find a single King Penguin on the pond's shoreline along with flocks of Ruddy-headed Geese. We cut across the peninsular to view the sea where we viewed further Elephant Seals both in the sea and on the rocky shoreline along with a small number of Sealions basking on a small offshore island while flocks of Imperial Shags flew in long lines in front of us.

At around 2pm we then decided to start the walk back to the settlement. This took us back past the King Penguin and the small ponds, back along the fence line close to the tussac and the airstrip. Along the way we saw a number of Falklands Pipits, Black-throated Finches, Magellanic Snipe and Oystercatchers with young on the flat plain between the coast and the slope known as the Saddle. Halfway up the slope and looking towards Mt Byng we spotted on the ground a single Variable Hawk along with a number of Turkey Vultures and a Crested (or Southern) Caracara – we suspected they were around something they were feeding on. As we reached the highest point of The Saddle we saw a number of Dark-faced Ground-Tyrants along the fence line and as we neared the settlement and with it starting to rain, we were once again joined by the ever-present Tussacbirds and the Falkland's endemic Cobbs Wren's. It had been another fantastic day on Carcass Island and after our walk back across over half of the island we were all ready for our evening meal which once again proved to be most enjoyable.

Day 8

Sunday 9th November

Carcass Island

Sunday morning was overcast but it was dry at least and with light winds. After another filling breakfast we headed out by 4x4 to see the large Imperial Shag colony located on the cliff top between Faschine Valley and Hawks Nest Valley. Dropped off at the head of the valley, it was roughly a 30 minute walk to the shag colony down the valley and after crossed the small stream we then headed along the 45 degree slope keeping high to avoid cattle that were in the cliff top fields and one noisy cow in particular that we gave a wide birth.

Along the route Dark-faced Ground-Tyrants followed our path while Tussacbirds were our constant companions. Once at the Imperial Shag colony we all settled down to spend a very enjoyable couple of hours watching the comings & goings of thousands of shags while being Brown Skuas & Kelp Gulls were constantly on the lookout for an opportunity to swoop in for an unguarded egg. In attendance as colony cleaners Sheathbills walked amongst the colony picking for what they could find. Out to see Black-browed Albatross constantly sailed past our position along with a number of Dolphin Gulls. At this point we also observed a two-minute silence as it was Remembrance Sunday. With as wonderful few hours spent here, we then departed but not before some of the group were treated to a fleeting view of a hunting Peregrine.

Once again, we kept high along the slope as we headed back to our pickup point but along the way we located an area with several Lady Slipper Orchids and Pale Maiden plants which were a real treat. Meeting up with our lift back to the settlement, we headed back to the settlement for lunch and a warm drink.

After a lunch & drinks it was a drive along the coastal track back to Leopard Beach to once again enjoy the wide range of species that this area had to offer. The group spread out to spend some free time experiencing this amazing place however but not before taking part in a group activity – a paddle in the sea. So with legs bare below the knee our short customary “paddle” took place given the temperature of the sea!

We then enjoyed a peaceful afternoon back at Leopard beach spending time observing all of the wildlife the area had to offer and especially the Gentoo Penguins. One Gentoo in particular (Bob as he was named) entertained the group with his stone carrying skills or sometimes lack of them as he or she weaved amongst the colony.

With time ticking away it was time to head back for our evening meal at 7pm so a couple of the group decided to walk back while the rest settled for more time with the penguins and took the option of a lift back to the settlement. As usual our evening meal was wonderful and we retired dreaming of all the amazing wildlife we had seen that day.

Day 9

Monday 10th November

Carcass Island to Sealion Island

Our last morning on Carcass island dawned with blue skies, light wind and a flat calm and blue sea.

After breakfast and with staggered transfers, the morning was a leisurely one with five of the group departing at Carcass Island at 9.20am on the first flight with the rest of the group having a morning to spend around the settlement before taking off from Carcass Island to Sealion Island at 12.30pm. For both flights our host Micky was there to greet us, take our luggage to the extremely comfortable Sealion Lodge.

With us all reunited on Sealion Island and having had refreshments we had a short briefing from Lauren & Micky before heading out by 4x4 for a familiarisation drive of the routes and wildlife sites on Sealion.

After crossing the airstrip our first stop was Sealion Point however along the route, we had numerous stops to get good views of Two-banded Plovers, some with chicks along with lots of Upland Geese many of whom also had chicks as well. Arriving at Sealion Point mid-afternoon we walked towards the cliff top in blue skies and fluffy white clouds to view across the sound towards Rum Island. Here we watched Blackish Oystercatcher on the rocky

shore below while Giant Petrels, Black-browed Albatross and occasional Brown Skua flew past us out to sea. We drove on with our next stop being Long Pond, a large shallow area of open fresh water. Here we were had excellent views of Silvery Grebe that also had young which was a real bonus along with Crested Duck, Speckled Teal and Ruddy-headed and Upland Geese while a single Johnny Rook watched us intently from a clump of Diddle Dee. We also had good views of more Two-banded Plovers (again with chicks) and a Grass Wren.

Around late afternoon we arrived at the spectacular cliff top scenery at Rockhopper Point and the HMS Sheffield Memorial, one of the British ships lost in the Falklands conflict of 1982. The weather was breezy but it was dry & sunny. Here we marvelled at the sheer toughness of the Rockhoppers as they braved first the surf & swell but also how they managed to scale the towering cliffs to reach the colony on the cliff top. The other highlight of the area was the colony of Rock Shags that clung to cliff that could be viewed by walking across the natural arch to the cliff top.

After spending a wonderful hour or so with the Rockhopper we then headed back to the lodge via the old airfield where we saw a nice flock of around 15 White-rumped Sandpipers and view of a Peregrine along with several Two-banded Plovers, Rufous-chested Dotterel and a single Crested Caracara. All in all, a wonderful day on Sealion Island.

Day 10

Tuesday 11th November

Sealion Island

The day dawned with low cloud and amazingly not a breath of wind – the windsock hung unusually vertically from its mast – a rare sight indeed. It wasn't long before the fog rounded in, there would not be any flights to Sealion today. After breakfast we made the short walk to the coast via the Gentoo colony. Along the way Black-throated Finch's and Tussacbirds escorted us on our walk while lots of Upland & Ruddy-headed Geese fed on the short grassy areas. Once at the beach a large number of Elephant Seal were hauled out on the beach while others could be seen in the surf. We walked along the path to through the tussac to view the Orca Pool. This natural pool area can be accessed by Orca at high tide and where they endeavour to catch young Elephant Seals. We then spotted four Orca offshore and then another in the channel to the pool itself. A truly spectacular sight that was one of the highlights of the tour. We spent a few hours in the Orca Pool area where we were also delighted to see a family of young Steamer Ducks diving for food.

After an amazing morning we headed back to the Lodge for our lunch but not before seeing two Johnny Rooks tucking into an Upland Goose.

After lunch and warm drink, we headed off to Cow Bay where once again hardy members of the groups went for a knee-high paddle – another island paddle ticked off. Further along the beach were Elephant Seal and families of Steamer Ducks along with the occasional Johnny Rook coming to investigate what we were up to. We then headed through the mist towards North Beach via two areas of fresh water called Big and Small Pond. These areas of fresh water also had Elephant Seal and both Gentoo and Magellanic Penguins along with lots of Two-banded Plovers, Speckled Teal and Crested Duck.

Arriving at North Beach at around 3pm we were greeted by the white sands and fog that gave the whole area a rather unworldly feel. We headed along the beach that was dotted with very large Elephant Seals along with one large bull Sealion. In the distance and through the mist we viewed Giant Petrels, Turkey Vultures and Johnny Rooks feeding on a dead Elephant Seal. We walked on along the beach and then cut across the narrow neck of land to South Beach where we were greeted by the excited calls of Blackish Oystercatchers and a small number of Sheathbills. The gentle walk back to the lodge was lovely in the mist with once again great views of Elephant Seals and Sealions along the views of Giant Petrels and Black-browed Albatross out to see. Along the way we met Simone & Phillipe, two scientists who have been studying Elephant Seals on Sealion Island for decades. They were kind enough to spend some time with us giving us an insight into their important work here. We head back along the beach watching White-rumped Sandpipers along the way and then back close to the Gentoo Penguin colony. Once again a magical day on Sealion Island topped off by a wonderful evening meal.

Day 11

Wednesday 12th November

Sealion Island

Our last full day on Sealion Island dawned overcast with patchy cloud with breakfast at 8am during which we were treated to a good view of a loan Long-tailed Meadowlark from the window perched on the rail. We all had a bit of free time until 10.30am as the incoming plane had to be met so a number went back to the Orca pool while other spent time around the Lodge.

At 10.30am we the headed out by 4x4 back to see the Rockhoppers close to the HMS Sheffield memorial. During the drive we had a Chiloe Wigeon on Long Pond along we a pair of Magellanic Oystercatchers with two chicks. It was great to be back at the Rockhopper colony watching the comings and goings of these hardy birds while out at sea Giant Petrels and Black-browed Albatross wheeled past on the high winds while a Sooty Shearwater was also seen along with Rock and Imperial Shags.

After a few hours at colony we then started the walk back to the Lodge and had our packed lunch in the shelter provided by the tall clumps of tussac grass.

Once again, we had good views of the Silvery Grebes on Long Pond along with Speckled Teal, Chiloe Wigeon and Rufous-chested Dotterel.

As we neared the enclosed garden area about half a mile from the lodge a few of had a close but brief sighting of fast low flying Chilean Swallow, the first for the tour. The garden area also provided us with a wonderful view of a Variable Hawk perched on a low tree and close views of Falklands Thrush. Arriving back at the lodge at around 3pm we enjoyed “Smoko” the islands term of afternoon tea (or a tea break at any time really).

After our refreshments we the headed out with Lauren to track down Sealion Island’s special plant, the Fuegian Violet and with Lauren’s knowledge of the exact location these lovely little plants were soon tracked down and on the list.

With the violets tracked down, there was free for everyone to enjoy the area around the lodge & coast before our evening meal at 7pm.

Day 12

Thursday 13th November

Sealion Island to Bleaker Island

We woke to a slightly windy day and after breakfast it was time to say our goodbyes to our hosts and to Sealion Island and its wonderful wildlife.

Our next destination was Bleaker Island and once again our group departed in two separate flights for the roughly 30-minute flight to Bleaker Island. We arrived to rain & windy conditions and were met by our host Nick and the team to drive us to the settlement where we were in different buildings dotted around the settlement. Just before the settlement is one of the bird spectacles that Bleaker has to offer – the huge Imperial Shag colony that contains thousands of Shags.

The weather soon perked up gave way to brighter but still windy weather. Once settled in and with our room allocated, we explored the area around the settlement.

Meeting Nick once again at 1.30pm we headed off for the short drive to the gate that led to a short path through the Tussac that brought you out on to a low cliff above the Sealion amassed on the stoney beach below. With Sealions on the beach and in the sea & pool below us we spent an enjoyable time watching them at close (but safe) quarters. On the beach with the Sealions were also a number of Shearwaters and Dolphin Gulls plus three Turkey Vultures feeding on a long dead Sealion high up on the beach.

It was then a short drive to Bleaker Islands Rockhopper Penguin colony along the coast where we spent the rest of the afternoon. Here once again we were treated to the wonderful sight of a Rockhopper colony while on the cliff along the well named “Long Gulch” Rock Shags were nesting providing us with excellent views. Just around the corner to the Rockhoppers there was a very accessible Imperial Shag colony in which there was a leucistic Imperial Shag. There were also several Rockhoppers nesting as well in amongst the Shags.

As we departed towards the gate Black-throated Finches and Grass Wrens were calling in the Tussac along the path.

Another wonderful day in the Falklands and another super island to explore. We arrived back at the Lodge for superb dinner at 6.30pm.

Day 13

Friday 14th November

Bleaker Island

After a rainy and windy night, we awoke to the same – wind & rain. After a hearty breakfast we headed off leaving the settlement behind in our 4x4s and headed out through the flocks of Upland & Ruddy-headed Geese and the occasional Two-banded Plovers. Arriving at Small Pond and in persistent rain we birdwatched from the comfort of our 4x4s. Small Pond didn't disappoint as we had a wide range of birds here that included good views of two White-tufted Grebes, two Silvery Grebes along with Silver Teal, Chiloe Wigeon on the water while along the shoreline White-rumped Sandpipers and Brown-headed Gulls fed.

Alongside Small Pond is a Gentoo colony, and in this group of penguins was a single King Penguin, meaning that we had seen King Penguin on every island of the tour, no mean feat.

With the rain still falling we headed across the airstrip and headed towards the beach nesting Giant Petrel colony. These large birds that squabble aggressively at their food are remarkably quiet and nervous on their breeding grounds. They are easily disturbed so are best watched from a distance. Offshore South American Terns and Brown-headed Gulls flew up and down the beach while further out Black-browed Albatross wheeled past. We were also entertained by a very tame Tussacbird walking about on the bonnet of our 4x4s picking at various things including the wipers.

With the rain still falling but easing off a bit, we headed back to the settlement for lunch via the Sealions on the beach. Here we found that there were fewer Sealions today but there were still enough to see to make it a worthwhile stop.

With the rain still coming down some of the group took the opportunity to stay around the settlement, other went to view the large & impressive Imperial Shag colony while three of the group fancied a few hours sea-watching so it was off to the headland overlooking Ghost Island. Here and in strong winds we saw lots of Black-browed Albatross, Giant Petrels, Sooty Shearwaters, South American Terns, Brown Skuas Falkland Steamer Duck with young and highlight, a single Chilean Swallow that flew in off the sea – great.

Our small group then headed back to have another look at the Rockhopper colony at Long Gulch after which it was back to the settlement for a welcome dinner and the calling of the log.

Day 14

Saturday 15th November

Bleaker Island

Saturday morning delivered us less wind & rain although it was still overcast. After breakfast the plan was to walk the length of Sandy Bay but with only one 4x4 available the group was shuttled up to the start of the walk in two groups. Once reunited as group we started our walk along Sandy Bay in the rain that started once again. Along the beach Gentoos walked to & from the sea to their colony in singles and small groups while along the shoreline South American Terns and Brown-headed Gulls flew along the surf line with Kelp Gulls putting an appearance in now and then.

We then turned inland and head along the western shore of Big Pond this path took us across open ground where we saw (in the rain) the occasional Falklands Pipit, Two-banded Plover and Rufous-chested Dotterel. We also had a view over the other Small Pond. The highest point on the walk, Semaphore is only 89 feet above sea level but from here you get a good view of the island. We arrived back at the settlement for the customary “Smoko” and then met Phyll Rendell at 3pm who had agreed to take us to the spot to see Lady Slipper Orchids and Common Violets on the ground above Pebbly Bay – they were great to see, and we spent our time seeing these wonderful plants and taking a few photos. This beach was also home to families of Steamer Duck and a family of Cobb’s Wrens that were busy feeding near, on and within an old tree trunk. We then walked around to a small gully that was home to a number of Night Herons that gave us all close views of their wonderful plumage. This was to be our last day on Bleaker so decided to head back to the Rockhoppers for another look at them along with the Imperial

Shag colony. This is always a real treat but this time and with rough seas we witnessed the Rockies (as their known) coming ashore at the bottom of the cliff. Boy are they tough. Also not to be forgotten was a flock of around 35 Sheathbills that had also gathered on the cliff top as well.

We said our goodbyes to the Rockies & Shags and headed back to the settlement for our evening meal to the sounds of drumming Snipe.

Day 15

Sunday 16th November

Bleaker Island to Stanley

Once again, the day started overcast on the day we were to leave Bleaker Island, taking two flights taking off at 8.30am and 11am, so it was an earlier breakfast for the first group to leave. We said our goodbyes to all of the team on Bleaker and we all headed back to Stanley.

After a smooth flight back to Stanley we were met by representatives from Falkland Island Holidays who took us back to the very comfortable Malvina Hotel. With the whole group back in Stanley after lunch, there was free time to the group to explore Stanley at their own pace and to take time to visit the sites such as the world's most southerly Cathedral. We then all met up in the evening for our delightful evening meal to chat about the wonderful islands & wildlife we had seen.

Day 16

Monday 17th November

Stanley day trip to Volunteer Point

Once again, the day dawned wet but after a great breakfast, we keenly jumped into our waiting land rovers that departed from the hotel at 8.30 for the roughly two and half hour to Volunteer Point (named after a ship that called in to the islands in 1815).

The long drive starts on tarmac road, then moves to compacted gravel and then to the true off-road experience across boggy terrain until finally you reach Volunteer Point, one of the world's more accessible King Penguin colonies. We arrived at around 11am at the portacabins that provide some shelter from the elements which we certainly made use of. There are also toilets which is great given the remoteness of the location.

Volunteer Point is a place to soak up the atmosphere and to just watch the estimated 1,500 breeding adult King Penguins and 600 to 700 chicks. The area is also home to colonies of Gentoo Penguins with areas also dotted with the burrows of Magellanic Penguins so there is lots to see. Out to see the ever present Black-browed Albatross were there along with Giant Petrels and very distant views of Wilson's Storm Petrels.

Our packed lunches were eaten in the portacabin that had a very welcome heater in it.

Although the rain fell hard all day we all agreed that it had been a truly amazing experience and we departed for Stanley at 2.30pm arriving back at around 5pm where we thanked our drivers for their skill in getting us to Volunteer Point.

We then got ourselves dry and enjoyed our last meal together as a group in the very comfortable surroundings of the Malvina Hotel where we thanked Carl and team for looking after us.

Day 17

Tuesday 18th November

The morning (very early morning) had arrived for us to start our long flight home back to the UK via the warm & tropical island of Ascension Island.

We picked up our pre-ordered breakfast, boarded the coach and headed off to Mount Pleasant airbase to the flight home which was on time.

Ascension Island was a brief chance to experience to warmth before getting back to the UK where we also heard to the delight of many that Scotland had made it to the world cup finals.

Day 18

Wednesday 19th November

Once again, the flight home was a smooth one and we landed back in the rather damp and grey UK, slightly ahead of schedule.

We headed to the terminal, collected our luggage and said our fond goodbyes and safe travels with wonderful memories of the amazing islands and its welcoming & friendly people that call the Falklands their home.



Rockhopper Penguin



Lady's Slipper Orchid

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Species lists

E=Endemic, I=Introduced		November 2025															
Common name	Scientific name	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
Black-necked Swan	<i>Cygnus melancoryphus</i>		✓		✓												
Upland Goose	<i>Chloephaga picta</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Kelp Goose	<i>Chloephaga hybrida</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Ruddy-headed Goose	<i>Chloephaga rubidiceps</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Crested Duck	<i>Lophonetta specularioides</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Flying Steamer Duck	<i>Tachyeres patachonicus</i>		✓		✓												
Falkland Steamer Duck - E	<i>Tachyeres brachypterus</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Silver Teal	<i>Spatula versicolor</i>		✓	✓	✓								✓	✓	✓		
Chiloe Wigeon	<i>Mareca sibilatrix</i>		✓		✓	✓	✓				✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Yellow-billed Pintail	<i>Anas georgica</i>		✓										✓				
Yellow-billed Teal	<i>Anas flavirostris</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
White-tufted Grebe	<i>Rollandia rolland</i>		✓										✓	✓	✓		
Silvery Grebe	<i>Podiceps occipitalis</i>		✓		✓				✓		✓		✓	✓	✓		
Snowy Sheathbill	<i>Chionis albus</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
Magellanic Oystercatcher	<i>Haematopus leucopodus</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Blackish Oystercatcher	<i>Haematopus ater</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Rufous-chested Dotterel	<i>Zonibyx modestus</i>			✓	✓				✓		✓			✓		✓	
Two-banded Plover	<i>Anarhynchus falklandicus</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Magellanic Snipe	<i>Gallinago magellanica</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
White-rumped Sandpiper	<i>Calidris fuscicollis</i>		✓	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
Brown Skua	<i>Stercorarius antarcticus</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
South American Tern	<i>Sterna hirundinacea</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Arctic Tern	<i>Sterna paradisaea</i>											✓					
Brown-hooded Gull	<i>Chroicocephalus maculipennis</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓					✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Dolphin Gull	<i>Leucophaeus scoresbii</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Kelp Gull	<i>Larus dominicanus</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
King Penguin	<i>Aptenodytes patagonicus</i>			✓	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	
Gentoo Penguin	<i>Pygoscelis papua</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Magellanic Penguin	<i>Spheniscus magellanicus</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	

E=Endemic, I=Introduced		November 2025															
Common name	Scientific name	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
Macaroni Penguin	<i>Eudyptes chrysolophus</i>			✓	✓				✓		✓	✓	✓	✓			
Western Rockhopper Penguin	<i>Eudyptes chrysocome</i>			✓	✓				✓		✓	✓	✓	✓			
Black-browed Albatross	<i>Thalassarche melanophris</i>			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Southern Giant Petrel	<i>Macronectes giganteus</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
Wilson Petrel	<i>Oceanites oceanicus</i>													✓			✓
Southern Fulmar	<i>Fulmarus glacialis</i>				✓	✓		✓		✓			✓				✓
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>				✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓		✓	
Short-eared Owl	<i>Asio flammeus</i>								✓								
Turkey Vulture	<i>Cathartes aura</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
Variable Hawk	<i>Geranoaetus polyosoma</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓						
Crested Caracara	<i>Caracara plancus</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓					
Striated Caracara	<i>Daptrius australis</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	
Peregrine Falcon	<i>Falco peregrinus</i>				✓	✓		✓	✓				✓				
Dark-faced Ground Tyrant	<i>Muscisaxicola maclovianus</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	
Blackish Cinclodes	<i>Cinclodes antarcticus</i>					✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	
Chilean Swallow	<i>Tachycineta leucopyga</i>										✓		✓				
Grass Wren	<i>Cistothorus platensis</i>					✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓			
Cobb's Wren - E	<i>Troglodytes cobbi</i>					✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			
Austral Thrush	<i>Turdus falcklandii</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
House Sparrow - I	<i>Passer domesticus</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓											
Correndera Pipit	<i>Anthus correndera</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				✓	✓		✓	
Black-chinned Siskin	<i>Spinus barbatus</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	
Long-tailed Meadowlark	<i>Leistes loyca</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓
White-bridled Finch	<i>Melanodera melanodera</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓

Mammals

Common name	Scientific name	November 2026															
		3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
South American Sea Lion	<i>Otaria flavescens</i>			✓	✓		✓			✓		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
Southern Elephant Seal	<i>Mirounga leonina</i>						✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			
Sei Whale	<i>Balaenoptera borealis</i>																✓
Commerson's Dolphin	<i>Cephalorhynchus commersonii</i>				✓			✓									
Killer Whale	<i>Orcinus orca</i>									✓	✓	✓					
Peale's Dolphin	<i>Sagmatias australis</i>				✓		✓										
European Hare - I	<i>Lepus europaeus</i>	✓															
Rat	<i>Rattus norvegicus</i>			✓													