

Antarctic Explorer

Aboard *MV Greg Mortimer* | 07 – 15 March 2022





Frei Station, Maxwell Bay

DAY 1 | Monday 7 March 2022

Position at 0600

Latitude: 62°11.902'S

Longitude: 058°55.421'S

Course: 212.6°

Speed: 0.0 knots

Wind Speed: 2 knots, light air from SE

Barometer: 1019

Air Temp: 0°C

Little do you know your own blessedness; for to travel hopefully is a better thing than to arrive, and the true success is to labour.

—Robert Louis Stevenson, *Virginibus Puerisque*, 1881

What a day! We were up very early in the morning in Punta Arenas and somehow, despite fears of a cancelled departure, onto the planes for a short flight away from South America and down to Frei Base on King George Island, Antarctica. As the planes flew over the island and we saw the many small huts of the different bases we realised that at last, we had made it to the southernmost continent.

While our luggage was loaded onto two vehicles, one an enormous camouflaged truck, we walked in two groups, down past the 'totem pole' through the Chilean and Russian bases to the black sand beach where we were welcomed by Expedition Leader Flo, the Aurora staff, a cluster of shags and a few gentoo penguins. We changed into boots, gathered lifejackets and climbed into Zodiacs and travelled to the *Greg Mortimer*, a lovely white expedition vessel, waiting out in the bay.

The Hotel staff made us feel welcome and we worked through the boarding procedures, found our cabins and began to unwind. The luggage arrived soon afterwards. This was really happening.

After lunch in the restaurant, we attended a series of mandatory briefings, IAATO regulations, Zodiac operations and vacuuming our gear. Some of us swapped gear for more comfortable sizes, others explored the ship. The snorkellers and kayakers attended their own briefings and collected specialist gear.

All this time we could see the snow and ice covered islands of the South Shetlands as Captain Oleg Kaptenko guided the *Greg Mortimer* south down the Bransfield Strait. For most of us this is our first trip south.

There are 45 of us including 4 Snorkellers and 8 kayakers and from many nations, including the United States, United Kingdom, France and Australia.

Now we are ready for our adventure.



Enterprise Island, Portal Point

DAY 2 | Tuesday 8 March 2022

Position at 0600 x

Latitude: 64°13.426'S

Longitude: 061°51.305'W

Course: 154.4°

Speed: 7.5 knots

Wind Speed: 2 knots, light air from NW

Barometer: 1020

Air Temp: -2°C

Penguins are beautiful, interesting and funny. They are a pleasure to watch even though they do smell and their voices are not melodious.

—George Gaylord Simpson, *Penguins Past and Present, Here and There*

Oh wow, what a day was our first day in Antarctica. The morning started with a change of plans, as our Zodiac cruise was moved to the shores of Enterprise Island in Wilhelmina Bay. This was a cruise back into history to see some relics from the whaling days of a century ago. First stop was the rusted hulk of the *Guvernøren*, a Norwegian whaling factory ship that was deliberately run aground in an attempt to save lives and the vessel when it caught fire in 1915.

As the first Zodiac approached the *Guvernøren*, we spotted a lone emperor penguin on the steep shoreline close to the shipwreck. Emperors are rare along the Antarctic Peninsula. Who knows what brought this lone penguin to this remote shoreline?

While some Zodiacs visited the shipwreck, the 'Snorks' encountered a frisky leopard seal. Liz radioed the rest of the group to report an 'active' leopard seal close to the shoreline and not far from the ship. Little did we know exactly what she meant by 'active.' This young male leopard seal was fascinated by our Zodiacs, as he swam up to us and lay alongside the rubber hulls with his flipper wrapped around the pontoons. His intentions soon became obvious as he tried his luck with one vessel after another.

Our Snorks continued on their way for a first Antarctic snorkel, while the leopard seal kept the rest of us entertained with his amorous advances. We then went our separate ways; with the kayakers continuing on their way to the shipwreck while the rest of us either headed out further into Wilhelmina Bay or cruised along the coast of Enterprise Island to see chinstrap and Adélie penguins.

After an incredible morning of wildlife experiences, our afternoon objective was to set foot on the continent. Coming to Antarctica has been a dream for many of us, so it was a thrill to step on this most remote land. The location was Portal Point, so named as it was a gateway to inland Antarctica. There, we saw the footings of the tiny Reclus Hut where small groups of men would stay before venturing up on to the Antarctic Peninsula.

This was a great place to celebrate International Women's Day as the male-dominated history of Antarctica is now a thing of the past. Like many modern-day expeditions, ours is led by a woman and comprises roughly equal

numbers of men and women. Congratulations to the women of the world for all of your achievements on this long journey to true equality.



Melchior Island, Neko Harbour

DAY 3 | Wednesday 9 March 2022

Position at 0600

Latitude: 64°21.424' S

Longitude: 062°59.617' W

Course: 007.3°

Speed: 2.1 knots

Wind Speed: 19 knots, gentle breeze from SE

Barometer: 1014

Air Temp: -2°C

“Blue ice can be indicative of very old glacial ice. As more layers of snow are deposited onto a glacier, the snow beneath gradually transforms into ice. The sheer weight of the upper part of the glacier slowly squeezes air bubbles from its lower levels of ice to form clear ice. Light penetrates deeper into clear ice and all but blue wavelengths of light are absorbed. This results in an iceberg with a luminous blue appearance. Deep blue streaks and lines within icebergs may also result from melt water that drained into crevices within the glacier or iceberg and later refroze”

The morning started with exciting news in the wake-up call: The Endurance, Shackleton’s famous ship, had finally been found! Could there be any better place than Antarctica to receive this information and think again about these brave men on their incredible journey?

The morning Zodiac excursion took us around the Melchior Islands, where we cruised through the channels between the islands, marvelling at the beautiful outlines and colours of the ice cliffs around us. Zodiac cruisers and ‘snorks’ were repeatedly entertained by the playful behaviour and acrobatics of fur seals on the surrounding rocks and in the water. Swell and snowfall put our Antarctic spirit to the test, but everybody mastered the challenges very well and high spirits were kept up throughout the adventure and during the well-earned hot chocolates on board afterwards.

In the afternoon we made our way through the impressive passage lined by mountains and ice to Neko Harbour. Here our landing took us into the beautiful setting of a gentoo penguin colony just next to a towering glacier on the Antarctic continent. Climbing the path up the hill allowed us to enjoy beautiful views over the glacier and the bay filled with icebergs.

The site offered perfect conditions to carry out two of our citizen science projects: we recorded a large area of red and green snow algae on the beach and slopes, and our microplastics survey indicated a plastic-free beach. This was great news for us but particularly the Neko Harbour penguin colony, as there aren’t many places on the planet left without contamination by the tiny plastic particles, even in remote locations such as the Antarctic.

Back on board we geared up for the famous Polar Plunge, and many of us took up the challenge of jumping into the icy Antarctic waters of 0°C. The highlight was a joint jump of our oldest and youngest passengers from the marina platform of the *Greg Mortimer*.

The day finished with the opportunity to send off our postcards from Antarctica. These will be dropped off tomorrow at the Port Lockroy post office, and picked up by the next transport ship passing at the station.

A day full of fantastic Antarctic experiences with all our senses!



Polar Plunge

DAY 3 | Wednesday 9 March 2022



Peterman Island, Damoy Point

DAY 4 | Thursday 10 March 2022

Position at 0600			
Latitude: 65°00.034' S	Course: 230.7°	Wind Speed: 20knots, fresh breeze from W	Air Temp: -1°C
Longitude: 063°48.170' W	Speed: 5.1knots	Barometer: 1014	

Birds have it better than we do, in many ways, and here are three, with wings they fly by day and night, and never have a cancelled flight, with feathers they have clothes that always fit, in styles that never change a bit, and what we envy most, I'd say, with bills they never have to pay.

—Anonymous

An early start for a marathon fitting “two days into one” had us up at 6am for a transit through the famous Lemaire Channel, one of the most photographed places in Antarctica and a gateway to the south. We navigated through with relative ease and post breakfast headed to shore at Petermann Island for a snow algae-covered stroll to Port Circumcision. Along the way we sighted Adélie penguins, staking their claim amongst the gentoos and viewed the cross remembering 3 British Antarctic Survey personnel who perished in an accident in 1982. After a brief visit, we boarded our fleet of Zodiacs or continued in our kayaks for an adventurous journey north to Pleneau Bay, home of the “iceberg graveyard.” Along the way we encountered plenty of snoozing crabeater seals and translucent blue glacial ice, as well as a logging humpback whale upon our return to *Greg Mortimer*.

Over lunch we returned through the Lemaire Channel, this time from south to north (and at a more civilised hour) and by early afternoon found ourselves ship cruising through the impressively narrow Peltier Channel. The clouds parted and signaled we would be gifted with our first sunny afternoon on the Peninsula. Not one for a simple operation, expedition leader Ashley organised for us to hand-deliver our postcards to the UK Antarctic Heritage Trust’s Port Lockroy base and then Zodiac cruise to Dorian Bay for a landing at Damoy Point. Here we peeked inside Damoy Hut, previously used by the British Antarctic Survey as a transit station for staff and stores flown south from the skiway on the glacier above the hut, and observed young, fluffy gentoo chicks begging their parent for a feed while opportunistic skuas circled above. Both the kayakers and snorkellers had a fantastic afternoon on and in the water, exploring the marine environment of the Neumayer Channel.

In the early evening we flocked to the Lecture Theatre for a recap and briefing before wrapping up warm and heading to Deck 8 for a polar BBQ! As we slowly sailed north through the Neumayer Channel, we feasted on ribs, burgers, salads, crumble and toasty hot mulled wine. North we go!



Halfmoon Island

DAY 5 | Friday 11 March 2022

Position at 0600

Latitude: 63°34.528' S

Longitude: 061°09.683' W

Course: 034.6°

Speed: 10.3 knots

Wind Speed: 25 knots, strong breeze from NE

Barometer: 1009

Air Temp: -3 °C

I now belong to the higher cult of mortals, for I have seen the albatross.

—Robert Cushman Murphy

Lovely. A relaxed morning after an energetic day. John's calm wake-up call set us all into motion. There was an early (9.30am) lecture from Steve on the fabulous tale of Sir Ernest Shackleton's Trans Antarctic Expedition, 1914-1917. Steve focussed on the dramatic photographs of Australian photographer Frank Hurley, images that have made the survival of this expedition such a well-known story. Later, John gave a lecture on penguins, filling in details of these wonderful birds that had entertained us over the last few days.

And, in the morning, John and Daniel rescued a grey headed albatross that had struck the ship during the night. It had been dazed by the blow and was found on a balcony. When Daniel set it free, the bird glided down to the sea surface. Here's hoping that it survived.

After lunch the *Greg Mortimer* sailed in fine weather up towards Half Moon Bay, our planned destination for the final landing of the voyage. Unfortunately, as we arrived the winds reached up to 50 knots, making any attempt at landing too dangerous to pursue. So, sadly, we set our course farther north through the McFarlane Passage, between Livingston and Robertson Islands and headed into the Drake Passage. Dark skies and a rolling sea reawakened our sense of journey.

As we did so, John delivered another lecture, on seabirds that we'd see over the next couple of days. Albatross, pintados – a beautiful black and white petrel with a checkerboard pattern on their wings and back - whale birds, storm petrels and more. Those willing to brave the winds and rolling ship took up John's offer to do a seabird survey as part of the Citizen Science program. Others took to their cabins to reflect on the activities of the action packed last few days.

Now it's time to unwind, sleep a bit more, attend lectures and other programs and allow the wonderful experiences of the trip to Antarctica begin their own settlement into our memories.



Drake Passage

DAY 6 | Saturday 12 March 2022

Position at 0600

Latitude: 60°01.865' S

Longitude: 062°33.951' W

Course: 335.7°

Speed: 11.6 knots

Wind Speed: 20 knots, fresh breeze from W

Barometer: 1012

Air Temp: 0°C

Drake Passage

Just about the time when things looked their very worst the sky was like ink and water was everywhere and everyone was as wet inside their oilskins as the skins were wet without there came out a most perfect and brilliant rainbow for about half a minute or less and then suddenly and completely went out. If ever there was a moment when such a message was a comfort it was just then: it seemed to remove every shadow of doubt not only as to the present but as to the final issue of the whole expedition. And from that moment matters mended, and everything came all right.

—Edward Wilson

Destiny is really strange, sometimes.

On the Drake Passage, the wind begins to howl, the waves of the sea rise to their feet, the sky turns gray, and the pit of the stomach stiffens until it closes.

Named after one of the most intrepid navigators of all time, who wrote his own rules and thus made history, the passage is now synonymous with storm, risk, but above all, seasickness. Sir Francis Drake's name is scarier than it was then, when he was a corsair. To see the sails of his vessel approaching, men knelt to ask for forgiveness. The Drake Passage leads from the Pacific Ocean to the Atlantic, and vice versa. Yet there is no trace of his passing through this stretch of sea. Indeed, perhaps this was the essence of his seafaring art, avoiding the Passage and sailing the Magellan Straits. And by giving it a name so that the maps remind us of who was Queen Elizabeth I's favorite privateer.

"Hurry up!" - someone will say with his mind darkened by Dramamine - "I can't get out of bed".

And we have to do the Drake by force. Let it be clear, however, we will come out unscathed. If anything, we will have lost a few pounds due to fasting. While it is true that, in times of need, all Saints help, *Greg Mortimer's* inverted bow helps even more. Yes, my dear seasickness, unloved twin brother of the sailor, *Greg Mortimer* rolls, but at least he doesn't jump like before. This reverse bow has overturned the legend of the Drake Passage. Once, those who tried to pass it risked their lives. Now, however, the crux of the Drake question is with which hand to hold the coffee and with which to cling to the ship. Let's not talk about whether there are still gentlemen or gentleladies around, who used to bring coffee in bed to their spouses. Two cups of coffee and a ship, three hands are pressed here.

And it is precisely here that Sir Francis's sardonic smile is shown for the last time in our minds clouded by the rolling: "Three hands? Yes, and then what else do you want? A treasure? You must go look for it at Cape Horn. Where many have been shipwrecked. It's close by. Ah, ah, ah-ah!!".



Beagle Channel

DAY 7 | Thursday 13 March 2022

Position at 0600

Latitude: 55°40.591’

Longitude: 066°00.978’W

Course: 336.1°

Speed: 12.8 knots

Wind Speed: 35 knots, gale from NW

Barometer: 1001

Air Temp: 7°C

We passed Cape Horn at 6am today. After enduring the rocking and swaying of the *Greg Mortimer* during the crossing of the Drake, we were relieved to enter the calmer waters of the Beagle Channel where we picked up our pilot who will escort us to Punta Arenas.

We discovered the musical talent of our kayak guide Russell during our wake-up call as he sang and played guitar. What a lovely way to be woken up! Then those lucky enough to be sitting on the port side of the ship during breakfast saw black and white dolphins leaping through the waves keeping us company.

Our progress up the channel reminded us how much we’d missed the green of forests. It was difficult to spot birds today due to the wind, but during Lauren’s watch, the black browed albatross and giant petrels were seen.

Lauren’s long awaited talk on crime in the Antarctic kept us riveted to our seats. Not surprisingly, alcohol is a major contributing factor. The crimes ranged from a stabbing with an ice axe over a game of chess, to an unexplained death. The latter occurred in 1996 at USA’s Mc Murdo Base where Rodney Marks died at the age of 32. At his autopsy 6 months later it appeared the cause of death was methanol poisoning. His death to this day is shrouded in mystery.

Dan’s talk in the afternoon was on point with winds gusting to 85 knots.

Just before dinner the Beagle Channel was extraordinarily beautiful as we sailed alongside the Darwin Ranges. Waterfalls fell from glaciers that tumbled down the slopes and freshly snow dusted mountains, all bathed in an eerie evening light and viewed to the sound of the howling wind.

After dinner Steve’s fireside chat ranged from personal experiences to the future of Antarctic tourism. The discussions reminded us all (if we needed reminding) how lucky we are to be here in this vast wilderness.

We all departed the “fireside” happy and content that we’d managed to join the voyage and eager to make the most of our remaining time here.

Poem by Sara Vial inscribed on the Cape Horn Albatross Monument

(translated from Spanish)

I am the albatross that waits for you

at the end of the earth.

I am the forgotten soul of the dead sailors

who crossed Cape Horn

from all the seas of the world.

But they did not die

in the furious waves.

Today they fly in my wings

to eternity

in the last trough of the Antarctic winds



Chilean Fjords

DAY 8 | Monday 14 March 2022

Position at 0600

Latitude: 54°20.957'S

Longitude: 071°20.132'W

Course: 095.8°

Speed: 15 knots

Wind Speed: 35 knots, gale from SW

Barometer: 1017

Air Temp: 5°C

Our ability to perceive quality in nature begins, as in art, with the pretty. It expands through successive stages of the beautiful to values as yet uncaptured by language..

—Aldo Leopold, A Sand County Almanac

Today was an earlier start compared to the last two blissful sleep-in days on the drake passage. With curtains still drawn and the morning full of darkness, it was clear that a 0700-wakeup call could only mean an exciting day was ahead of us.

To make for an interesting navigation the captain and his officers took us on a ship cruise through Canal Gabriel.

Canal Gabriel is a flooded glacial valley and part of the Fuegian Andes including Mt Darwin at 2430m. At its narrowest point it measures 700m, carved by glaciers because of cooling from the forming of the Drake passage.

Once through, Ashley and the captain found a weather window for which they had been hoping. The expedition team got their gear on, dropped Zodiacs, and Anne called us down to the mud room for one last chance to explore. YAY!

Due to increasing winds and careful consideration for our safety, the decision of a final bonus Zodiac cruise through the Chilean fjords had to be cancelled. The expedition team joined us back on the board for our group photo outside on deck seven. Afterward, those out on deck enjoyed watching a pod of Peale dolphins swimming at the back of the ship. It is like they knew!

With mid-morning drawing to an end, it was time for last minute photo comp votes, lunch and then our last rapid antigen test for the trip. Doctor Anzor and the testing team got the job done and Anne made the announcement for which we had been hoping. You are all negative!

John filled the afternoon with a lecture on the Impact on eco tourism in Antarctica followed by Citizen Science seabird surveying out on deck.

Before long it was time for Captain's farewell celebrations. We gathered in the lecture theatre with champagne and canapés and toasted to the entire trip.

After dinner Russell and Liz hosted a fantastic fun-filled trivia night in the Observation lounge. Several teams put their heads of knowledge together in hope to take home the title. With an impressive 44 points team Ass Soakers took the crown.

As the city lights of Punta Arenas drew closer and our home away from home nudged up against the wharf it was time to enjoy last drinks with fellow ship mates and prepare for an early start tomorrow.



Punta Arenas

DAY 9 | Tuesday 15 March 2022

Position at 0600

Latitude: 53°10.195' S

Longitude: 070°54.415' W

Course: 072.5°

Speed: 0.0knots

Wind Speed: 25 knots, gale from W

Barometer: 1007

Air Temp: 9°C

Have you gazed on naked grandeur ?
Where there's nothing else to gaze on.
Have you swept the visioned valley ?
Have you strung your soul to silence ?
Hear the challenge, learn the lesson, pay the cost.

—Robert Service

The final day. We spent the night comfortably docked at the wharf in Punta Arenas, and slept well after our final celebrations. We slowly packed bags (or just threw things into bags) double checked the cupboards and under the beds.

Amid the flurry of departing rituals (accounts, passport collection), we are concerned about the immediate plans, tests, flights and goodbyes. We think - must get down to the mudroom for one last check, pick up those photos of the seals, or penguins, or wonderful landscapes.

But what a trip, what days - and so much packed into those landings and cruises. Happy in the knowledge that despite the changes and challenges of covid travel, we'd made it to Antarctica, and seen a lot of what it had to offer within the comforts of the *Greg Mortimer*. And yes, thanks to all at Aurora Expeditions we'd gone close to answers to Service's poem about experience in the wilderness.

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



Kayaking Log

By Eamon Larkin and Russell Henry

Kayak Masters: Russell Henry & Eamon Larkin

Number of Paddlers: 11 Total Paddle Outings: 5 Total Distance Paddled: 22.5kms

Paddlers:

Maureen Pattenden	Mandy Dwyer	Siena Rumbough	Felipe de Q. Francis
Graham Pattenden	Neal Pitman	Kiera Rumbough	Michael Battley
Michael Dwyer	Marianne Pitman	Amelya Grey	

Day 1 pm: King George Island and arrival on the ship.

The new group flew in this afternoon and I very quickly met some of the kayakers on the tarmac at KGI Chile 'Airport'. After all the mandatory ship briefings and drills, we met the rest of our kayakers, and a few more interested people at our presentation.

With all our gear on display we talked through the equipment and covered any concerns. After dinner we quickly fit out everyone into the right sized gear. A fairly capable bunch, they were in and out of the drysuits promptly. Tired from a long day and lots of information, we decided to talk about the kayaks and more in the morning before we depart onto the water.

Day 2 am: Enterprise Island /Foyn Harbour

What an exciting first paddle. After fitting out the four double kayaks we hit the water, with Russell in the kayak and Eamon in the support Zodiac. . A few last instructions on the water with Russ and we were away. Fur seals swimming past was the first sighting, then came the leopard seal. Approaching very carefully and keeping a distance, the group observed the leopard seal getting very intimate with a Zodiac floating nearby. It had an itch it was trying to scratch or something. Leaving the lover seal, the group glided into the super clear waters of Foyn Harbour past the remains of the wooden boats to the wreck of the Norwegian Govenernon whaling ship. It was so calm, the snorkel group was loving the clarity. A very rare species awaited us at the site of the wreck, an emperor penguin! Unbelievable, he was just resting on the ice behind the wreck. Probably on a gap-year type journey before settling down.

On the return to the ship with no Zodiacs around, the amorous leopard seal swam up to Russell's kayak and gave him what looked like a hug - incredible encounter.

Such an amazing day, it will be hard to beat.

Day 2 am: Portal Point

Portal Point never disappoints. It is a great place to paddle amongst the brash ice and admire the glorious icebergs that gather here. Eamon was in the kayak today with Russell manning the Zodiac.

We had our first glimpse of big icebergs although they officially are classed as small bergs 15-60m tall. We negotiated our way gently through the brash ice and made a smooth landing in the little bay at Portal Point. The group trudged to the top of the hill and were met with a spectacular view. It was there I found out it was Marianne's first time ever to experience snow, wow what a spot to do it!

We paddled out of Portal Point and spied a sturdy piece of flat ice. Russell scoped it out and soon with the help of our Zodiac we were all standing on the floating ice stage celebrating our second day in Antarctica.

Day 3 am: Melchior Islands Zodiac cruise

The weather was misty and very cold. The swell was fairly big and it was decided too dangerous to launch kayaks off the ship or even tow them to calmer waters. The group joined the general population and had a memorable Zodiac cruise. Plenty of fur seals and fresh snow was falling.

Day 3 pm: Neko Harbour

A short but beautiful paddle from the ship, and a landing briefly at the site. Russell in the kayak seat and Eamon stalking behind in the Zodiac as support. A lot of brash ice in the water today in Neko, forcing the group to go in single file at times throughout the wintery maze of ice. On approach to the landing site a young elephant seal was spotted on the shoreline, an unexpected sighting here. The group landed with time to spare to walk around the colony of gentoos and be amazed at their behaviour. A short paddle back to the ship and the end to another great day.

Day 4 am: Peterman Island paddle through to Pleneau

Today was always looking like it would be a big day. With a pocket of fine weather hidden amongst the gathering wind forecast, we took advantage.

The morning's outing plan was to paddle from our Peterman Island anchorage along the coastline of the island heading north towards Pleneau.

The kayakers had some real kilometres to cover this morning. Russell was in the kayak, while Dan S made an appearance as the Zodiac support driver. Much wildlife was spotted along the four-mile journey. Most notably was a large female leopard seal resting on ice. Many crabeaters were spotted along the way as well.

Paddling through the thick ice we navigated our way into some narrow, protected channels where we even felt a bit of current. Some of the ice growlers on this stretch were truly beautiful. Deep glass like sculptures in vivid shades of blue. Some white ice with cracks that had filled with water and frozen in place as a translucent blue streak.

On the return to the ship in the last 300m a humpback that had been logging started to move slowly in front of the kayak group giving them a final show and a (tail) wave goodbye as they boarded the ship, weary but very happy.

Day 4 pm: Port Lockroy paddle through to Damoy

After a big morning a slightly easier paddle was planned. We convinced the group it would be worth it and all but one joined us again.

Leaving the ship via Zodiac launch just off Port Lockroy we had some postcards to postpost, with Eamon in the kayak and Russell with our mail in the Zodiac. First destination was the sheltered coves of Jougla Island. A gentoo colony in various stages of moulting and feeding chicks.

We spoke about the whaling activity in the area which was evident with the large whale bones strewn on the shore. Paddling past the Base A at Port Lockroy we spotted a resting Weddell seal on the rock islets. A short but decent paddle around Damoy point gave us some spectacular views of enormous mountains, the biggest of which was Mt Francais, the highest on the peninsula. Just breathtaking. We cruised slowly along the rocky shoreline and watched the penguins come and go, finally arriving in time at the landing site to visit the very cool historic hut at Damoy. We had a short walk, and then jumped onto the last Zodiac back to the ship. R & E collected the kayaks and delivered them back to the GM. A fantastic day.



Snorkel Log

By Liz MacNeil

Snorkel Guide: Liz MacNeil

Number of Snorkels: 6 Total Outings: 6

Snorkellers:

Mikkel Brown	Anouk Francois
Victoria Rose Watson	Janet Davoli
Liam Clennan	Mark Lee

Day 2 am: Enterprise Island & Wilhelmina Bay

Wow, what an amazing first excursion and snorkel! Everyone present and ready to go on time, we loaded up the Zodiac and headed into Wilhelmina Bay. From the very active leopard seal to the stray emperor penguin, it was definitely a morning of firsts. Especially doing our check-out snorkel at the Gouvernørn where everyone explored the remains of a whaling ship wreck, which had caught on fire and was purposely grounded by the captain. Luckily, they all survived and were picked up by a nearby vessel, as were the SNORKS after playing on a piece of ice and dolphin kicking back up into the Zodiac. What a wonderful first snorkel and everyone did great.

Day 2 pm: Portal Point

Icebergs, continental landings, ice floe jump shots and that was all before we even got into the water! What a morning on and in the ice. How many SNORKS can you fit on a growler? Well, depending on the size of the growler and the perseverance of the SNORKS, looks like four! Mikkel and Victoria Rose were so full of emotion, they went in for a hug. Liam found a piece of black ice, which Victoria Rose stole and started licking, Anouk swam around checking out the schools of krill, Janet struck a pose on multiple pieces of ice, and Mark was just laying on his back, meditating, and taking it all in... what a morning and big mark in the win column.

Day 3 am: Melchior Islands

It was hard to say how this excursion was going to pan out, lots of wind and swell greeted us at the Melchiors as our five intrepid SNORKS suited up for the adventure lying ahead. Cruising towards the bay, we were pelted with snow and spray but once we got into the bay, wow! The waters became glassy, fur seals played on the rocks, and we were in the lee surrounded by cliffs and glaciers and then suddenly, it was magical. We turned off the engine to listen in silence to listen to the sounds of nature. Cruising through the channels, snow fell on our heads as we found a calm bay with fur seals hauled out along the rocks. As we readied ourselves to get in the water, other Zodiacs started cruising by in awe of what we were about to do. Once in the water, we snorkelled along the rocks checking out the kelp and seaweed below us. All of a sudden, a curious fur seal started porpoising in front of us and putting on a show, so cool! On our way back, we made our way through the channels, and once outside the

protection of the Melchiors, we tore off the Band-Aid and went full speed back to the ship. What a morning!

Day 3 pm: Neko Harbour

A short cruise amongst the ice and brash checking out the wildlife and icebergs and another continental landing. We only had about a half an hour on shore, but Liam was determined to get to the top of the hike and started running. About 15 minutes later, Liz got a radio call from John K who had just seen Liam summit and let her know he was running back down to make the snorkel Zodiac on time, and he was 10 minutes early. At this point, I think Liam may hold the record for the fastest time up and down (20 minutes). He'll make a great expedition guide one day. Loading back into the Zodiac, Liz found a spot where the gentoos were swimming in and out of the water and that became our snorkel spot. Everyone was in the water as we were waiting for the penguins, "everyone get together!" Liz said, and that was the trick. The penguins came in and everyone saw them swimming up close. At the end of the snorkel, Mark just laid there on his back in total bliss, mind blown!

Day 4 am: Peterman Island

It was an early morning mission to Peterman Island in order to get a snorkel in before our transit to Pleneau Island. RTG at 7:30am, gloves and hoods on, and out the marina loading the Zodiac. First ones out as we made our way towards the island, penguins, limpets, and a Weddell seal joined us in the water, as we made our way through the cove. An early morning mark in the win column, which was followed by a beautiful Zodiac cruise to Pleneau Island. With views of blue icebergs, crabeater seals hauled out on ice, and a less active leopard seal, we ended our morning with a humpback whale sighting, a true whale of a day!

Day 4 pm: Damoy Point / Port Lockroy / Jougla Point

It was an unknown if this would actually be our last snorkel day, but what a beautiful afternoon we had! The sun was out, we had Lauren join us, and we were able to drop off our post cards at the southernmost post office in the world, located in Port Lockroy.. We hope those will be received within the next year, but who knows, it may take longer. No matter though, we have the memories of our amazing snorkel, swimming with penguins, sitting and climbing on bergy bits, and laying in the sun in the back cove of Jougla Point. No one wanted to leave to go back to the ship, but as the excursion came to an end, the STOKE level was high, and Lauren learned why SNORKS have the most fun!



Bird and Mammal Sightings

Bird Species	15 January to 5 April 2022									
	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	
Gentoo Penguin	●	●	●	●						
Chinstrap Penguin		●			●					
Adelie Penguin		●		●						
Macaroni Penguin										
Magellanic Penguin								●		
Unidentified Penguin (swimming)										
Wandering Albatross					●	●				
Royal Albatross					●					
Black-browed Albatross					●		●	●		
Grey-headed Albatross*					●					
Light-mantled Sooty Albatross					●					
Giant Petrel sp. (Northern or Southern)	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	
Antarctic Petrel										
Cape Petrel										
Snow Petrel										
Antarctic Fulmar (=Southern)		●		●						
Blue Petrel										
Grey Petrel										
Prion sp. (probably mostly Antarctic)										
White-chinned Petrel										
Sooty Shearwater										
Great Shearwater										
Wilson's Storm-petrel	●	●	●	●	●	●	●		●	
Black-bellied Storm-petrel						●				
Imperial Cormorant (= South American)								●	●	
Antarctic Cormorant		●	●	●						

Bird Species	15 January to 5 April 2022									
	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	
American Sheathbill (Snowy)								●		
Chilean Skua							●		●	
Brown Skua	●	●	●	●	●					
South Polar Skua										
Kelp Gull	●	●	●	●				●	●	
Dolphin Gull									●	
Tern (probably mostly Antarctic)		●	●	●	●					
South American Tern									●	
Soft-plumaged petrel (dark morph)*				●						
Flightless Steamer Duck								●		



Mammal Species	15 January to 5 April 2022									
	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	
South American Sea Lion									●	
South American Fur Seal								●		
Antarctic Fur Seal		●	●							
Southern Elephant Seal										
Crabeater Seal		●	●							
Weddell Seal										
Leopard Seal		●								
Minke Whale		●								
Sei Whale										
Fin Whale										
Humpback Whale		●	●							
Southern Right Whale										
Orca										
Long-finned Pilot Whale										
Unidentified Whale										
Hourglass Dolphin							●			
Peale's Dolphin								●		
Dusky Dolphin										





1. Frei Station, King George Island
62° 12.0'S 058° 57.9'W
2. Enterprise Island, Gerlache Strait
64° 32.4'S 061° 59.9'W
3. Portal Point, Charlotte Bay
64° 30.1'S 061° 45.5'W
4. Melchior Islands, Dallman Bay
64° 19.6'S 062° 56.6'W
5. Neko Harbour, Andvord Bay
64° 50.7'S 062° 31.6'W
6. Lemaire Channel
65° 04.3'S 063° 56.4'W
7. Petermann Island & Pleneau Bay,
Penola Strait
65° 10.5'S 064° 08.1'W
65° 06.1'S 064° 02.4'W
8. Port Lockroy (Goudier Island),
Damoy Point (Wiencke Island) &
Neumayer Channel
64° 49.5'S 063° 29.6'W
9. Half Moon Is., South Shetlands
62° 35.3'S 059° 54.1'W



Expeditioners:

- Roger Allen

Gaynor Atherton

Michael Battley

Marc Bergeron

Nicolas Bilek

Nicole Brackett

Mikkel Brown

Sacha Bunnik

Inger Bunnik

Richard Chalu

Helen Chalu

Liam Clennan

Janet Davoli

Felipe de Queiroz Francisco

Manon Doucet

Mandy Dwyer

Mike Dwyer

Anouk Francois

Jacob Gresh

Amelya Grey

Shirley Harpham

Michael Heath

Leilani Heath

Martine Hero

Kirsten Little
- Charlie Little

Mark Ly

Andrew Minto

Leah Morton

Graham Pattenden

Maureen Pattenden

Helen Pettitt

Neal Pitman

Marianne Pitman

Bob Rieden

Deanna Rieden

Kiera Rumbough

Siena Rumbough

Shana Sexton

Doris Sweet

Greg Thorn

Chris Watson

Victoria Rose Watson

Warren Woodcox

Charlotte Wren

Expedition Team:

- Expedition Leader: Ashley Perrins

Assistant Expedition Leader: Dan Stavert

Onboard Expedition Manager: Anne Oeyasaeter

Naturalist: John Kirkwood

Naturalist: Annette Scheffer

Historian: Steve Martin

Expedition Guide: Justine Bornholdt

Expedition Guide/Naturalist: Lauren Farmer

Kayaking Guide: Russell Henry

Kayaking Guide: Eamon Larkin

Snorkeling Guide: Liz MacNeil

Photography Guide: Massimo Bassano

Medic: Mari Fleri

Zodiac Master: Sergei Hincu

Mudroom/Shopkeeper: Reza Rusooly

Senior Officers & Heads of Department:

- Master: Oleg Klaptenko

Chief Officer: Alexandru Taraoi

Safety Officer: Goran Goles

Second Officer: Sergii Voina

Bosun: Oscar Antonio Castejon Torres

Deck Cadet: Sander Magi

Deck Cadet: David Bote Martin

Ship Doctor: Anzor Chomakhidze

Ship Nurse: Susara Hendrika Mostert

Chief Engineer: Sergiy Melnyk

First Engineer: Ion Toma

Hotel Director: Franz Wusits

F&B Manager: Miguel Cabanillas Alvarez

Chief Purser: Liza Merillo

Executive Chef: Pierpaolo Fadda
- Sous Chef: Nellan Lewars

Head Waiter: Narendra Seeram

Hotel Controller: Rohmat Nurhidayat

IT Officer: Ihor Yesmieniev

Receptionist: Kateryna Tauzhnianska

Receptionist: Marie Annecy Reynoird

Head Stateroom: Elieser Nunez Almendarez

Spa Manager: Alena Antonova

Able Seaman: Khenette Verzosa

Able Seaman: Bobby Penuliar Payumo

Able Seaman: Yevgen Kotuz

Able Seaman: Maksym Khlivniuk

Able Seaman: Joel Valdevieso Noble

Able Seaman: Giovanni Dela Torre



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- | | | |
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