

Antarctic Peninsula in Depth

Aboard *Greg Mortimer* | 7 – 20 November 2024





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Ushuaia

DAY 1 | Thursday 7 November 2024

Latitude:
54° 48.28' S

Longitude:
68° 17.59' W

Wind Speed:
10 knots W

Barometer:
1009 hPa

Course:
108°

Speed:
Alongside

Air Temp:
3°C

Today we are in the charming town of Ushuaia, 'the end of the world'.

Our morning was spent leisurely in Ushuaia before we made our way to the optional catamaran cruise in the afternoon. Many of us enjoyed sailing through the Beagle Channel towards the city's iconic Les Eclaireurs Lighthouse, where we observed local wildlife against panoramic views of the surrounding mountain range.

Upon our arrival at the wharf, members of the Expedition Team greeted us and accompanied us on foot along the

pier to the ship. After a brief walk, we found ourselves standing in front of the *Greg Mortimer*. First, we met Expedition Leader, Mario, and Assistant Expedition Leader, Leo, followed by Onboard Expedition Manager, Justine, and Photographer, Adrian, who checked us off and took a memorable photo for the photo board.

Welcome refreshments awaited us in the Elephant Island Bar, then our hotel team helped us navigate the decks to our cabins and settle us into our 'home away from home' for the next 14 days'.





Drake Passage

DAY 2 | Friday 8 November 2024

Latitude:
55° 51.2' S
Longitude:
65° 08.7' W

Course:
138°
Speed:
9.7 knots

Wind Speed:
3 knots SSE
Barometer:
1011 hPa

Air Temp:
3°C

As we left the protected waters of the Beagle Channel last night, the rolling motion of the ship told us that we were officially on our way to Antarctica. We met calmer waters in the morning, and since then our Drake crossing has been smooth. At sea, we have to appreciate the simple things like walking down a hallway without feeling like we're walking on the moon, or somewhere else without gravity.

Our day started with the mandatory IAATO and biosecurity briefings, where we learned about the precautions we take in order to travel safely and responsibly in Antarctica. We also got to try on our gear, ranging from Muck Boots to lifejackets to dry suits. The kayak, ski, and snowshoe

groups met for orientation sessions to help prepare for the next couple of weeks of activities.

Even though there was a lot happening inside the ship, there was also a whole world unfolding outside. Seabirds dipped and twisted among the rolling waves of the Southern Ocean. It was mesmerising, and I'm sure more than one of us envied the way those birds surfed the waters. Now and then, whale blows were spotted in the distance – the perfect introduction to the wild world awaiting us down south.



Drake Passage

DAY 3 | Saturday 9 November 2024

Latitude:
58° 35.8' S
Longitude:
59° 54.5' W

Course:
131°
Speed:
10.4 knots

Wind Speed:
5 knots W
Barometer:
1021 hPa

Air Temp:
-2°C

This morning, we found ourselves on day two of our Drake Passage crossing. In another Drake Lake setting, we started with a delicious breakfast. We had a lecture ready to go when the bridge informed us that we had some unexpected visitors. A few humpback whales were cruising next to the *Greg Mortimer*! The ship slowed down, and we decided to enjoy the show for a couple of minutes, and resume with the presentation afterwards. During the talk about polar photography given by our guest photographers Martin Gregus Jr. and Martin Gregus Sr., they shared their excitement and passion about photography in these extreme regions.

After a brief coffee break, naturalist, Jay, delighted us with his lecture, 'Introduction to Antarctica' where he presented a general glimpse to the remote area that we will spend the next week exploring. He explained some interesting facts about the natural history of this frozen continent, the ocean currents around it, and its extreme climate factors and implications for the global dynamic.

To take advantage of the nice weather conditions, Linda invited us out on the deck to participate in an eBird survey, one of our Citizen Science core projects. During the half-hour recording, we did not only sight 53 cape petrels, some fulmars, prions and blue petrels, but also some whale blows towards the end.



Elephant Island: Point Wild, Walker Point

DAY 4 | Sunday 10 November 2024

Latitude:
61° 05.5' S

Longitude:
54° 52.1' W

Course:
Various courses

Speed:
5.3 knots

Wind Speed:
7 knots W

Barometer:
1017 hPa

Air Temp:
-2°C

We visited Point Wild on Elephant Island and were able to see the statue honouring the *Yelcho* rescue expedition. It truly was a profound experience. The rescue, led by Captain Luis Pardo and the Chilean ship *Yelcho*, is such an incredible part of the Shackleton story. After being here ourselves, and witnessing the environment, it is hard to imagine anyone surviving the harsh conditions for as long as they did. Between the sunshine, indescribably blue-hued icebergs, chinstrap penguin colonies, and dizzying glacial fronts, we had an exceptional start to the trip.

Walker Point in the afternoon, with more sunshine and rich wildlife, was a delight. Gentoos and chinstrap penguins, Weddell seals and fur seals; what more could we ask for? We saw the beginnings of penguin nests and a few pairs getting right into the mating season. Signalling the start of the Antarctic summer. (Our sweat from each activity in the hot sun was also signalling summer.)

Fearless skuas were everywhere we looked, already prowling and plotting their egg-snatching shenanigans. Everyone who joined this incredible landing enjoyed a lovely walk, snowshoe, ski, or paddle.









Fort Point, Deception Island

DAY 5 | Monday 11 November 2024

Latitude:
62° 35.0' S
Longitude:
59° 08.0' W

Course:
239°
Speed:
10.0 knots

Wind Speed:
4 knots NE
Barometer:
1013 hPa

Air Temp:
-2°C

This morning greeted us with more classic Antarctic weather – a shift from yesterday's sunshine and warmth to snow, wind, and a chill in the air. Perfect expedition conditions! We arrived at Fort Point on Greenwich Island, where our morning was a flurry of activity. The skiers tackled the hill, enjoying a few rounds of up-and-down runs with great snow underfoot, while the snowshoers explored nearby trails. The local gentoo penguins were busy, too, preparing for breeding season, with a couple of fur seals lounging nearby as well. Some of us took a slower pace, simply strolling and taking in the sights, savouring the fresh Antarctica air.

On our way back to the ship, the Zodiac ride took us around the rugged, rocky shores of Fort Point. The vibrant lichens growing on the rocks painted a surprising array of colours against the snowy landscape – a true Antarctic palette that seemed almost unreal. After the exploration, we returned to the ship to warm up, change into dry clothes, and enjoy a delicious lunch that restored our energy for the afternoon.

In the afternoon, we made our way to the theatre for Kelsey's gripping tale of whaling-era history that made us itch to see the ruins ourselves. Meli followed up with a fascinating presentation on Deception Island, where she brought the history of this incredible landscape to life.





Orne Harbour, Chiriguano Bay

DAY 6 | Tuesday 12 November 2024

Latitude:
64° 33.0' S
Longitude:
060° 26.4' W

Course:
Various
Speed:
6.7 knots

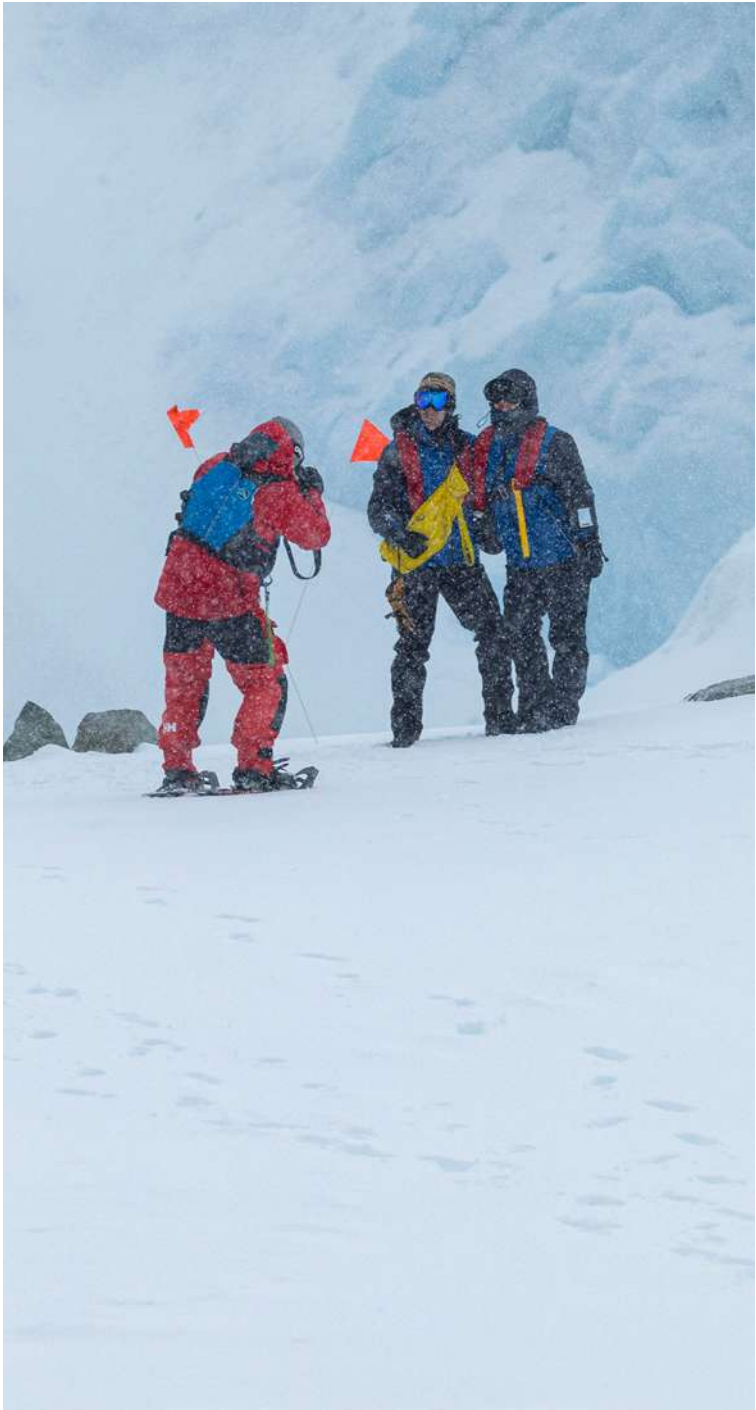
Wind Speed:
5 knots NE
Barometer:
1008 hPa

Air Temp:
-3°C

When we woke up this morning, we had our first glimpse of the coastline of the icy continent of Antarctica. The weather was truly Antarctic, with heavy snow and gusts of wind up to 40 knots, but that was not going to stop us from our Zodiac exploration. We cut through the icy waters, wind biting our exposed faces while snowflakes swirled around the boat like nature's own confetti. We marvelled at towering glaciers, icebergs in all shapes and sizes, and we saw beautiful wildlife; antarctic terns, snow petrels, gentoo penguins and fur seals. But the highlight for many of us was the short stop, where we were able to set foot on the Antarctic continent. What an amazing experience!

In the afternoon more activities were awaiting us. We went out in Chiriguano Bay, which was protected from the wind, and full of brash ice, bergy bits and enormous icebergs. Amid this icy expanse, gentoo penguins added a touch of life and charm, their playful behaviour a stark contrast to the cold environment. While some of us enjoyed a Zodiac exploration and learned everything about nature photography, others collected phytoplankton for Citizen Science projects. The daredevils among us went skiing the fresh powdery slopes or snowshoeing over treacherous terrain. And the kayakers enjoyed a wonderful afternoon paddling amid the breathtaking scenery.







Neko Harbour, Paradise Bay

DAY 7 | Wednesday 13 November 2024

Latitude:
64° 48.6' S
Longitude:
062° 41.4' W

Course:
107°
Speed:
6.7 knots

Wind Speed:
5 knots NE
Barometer:
1008 hPa

Air Temp:
-3°C

Neko Harbour was our destination this morning, and what a morning it was! It was warm, slightly cloudy, but still ideal Antarctic weather. After Mario gave us the green light, we started disembarkation operations. First off were skiers, then snowshoers, kayakers, and anyone else who was keen to set foot on the Antarctic continent.

Zodiac drivers navigated us among the icebergs and brash ice as we made our way to the shore. We witnessed gentoo penguins arriving and marching their way up the penguin highways to rookeries located high above! The route was flagged, the guides were in position and the views were amazing! Skiers and snowshoers got climbing while kayakers paddled in the distance through the ice. The sounds of calvings and avalanches echoed from the

various glaciers that feed these frozen waters of Antarctica.

At 2.45pm the Zodiacs were back in the water. Only one kayaker joined this afternoon at Paradise Bay, where the beautiful Argentinian base, Brown Station, is located.

Some of us hiked up the hill while others kept the gentoos company around the station. Our special activity groups got underway and as always, we even had time for a Zodiac exploration!

Around the corner from the landing, blue-eyed shags were bringing kelp and seaweed to build their nests on the cliff face. While there were no chicks yet, we spotted some juveniles from last season, along with antarctic terns fishing and playing.









Lemaire Channel, Deloncle Bay, Jougla Pt, Damoy Pt

DAY 8 | Thursday 14 November 2024

Latitude:
65° 01.9' S
Longitude:
063° 52.3' W

Course:
Ice navigation
Speed:
6.5 knots

Wind Speed:
6 knots NE
Barometer:
995 hPa

Air Temp:
-1°C

In Deloncle Bay we enjoyed time exploring the area by Zodiac. The kayakers also explored the harbour and icebergs. We even made our way into the Lemaire Channel (not a common experience). There were reports of beautiful deep-emerald icebergs that had recently flipped, accompanied by a serene silence broken only by the sound of popping ice and the slosh of water.

After lunch we really got our 'big boots' on and went ashore at Jougla Point. Although small, there was a lot to see here. Numerous penguin colonies, one very mobile and speedy Adélie, and some Weddell seals on the sea ice. There was even a seal pup, which some of us managed to

catch feeding! Another highlight of our Jougla Point landing was landing the Zodiacs straight onto the fast ice. A new experience for many.

Our exciting day, however, was not yet over, as 18 adventurous Expeditioners, including some of the E-Team, chose to go camping overnight. After dinner, they wandered down to the mudroom wearing multiple layers of clothing, put on their 'big boots', and headed off to Damoy Point for a scenic bivouac. The sound of distant penguins and the sea lapping the shore was a memorable highlight.







Damoy Point, Neumayer Channel, Portal Point

DAY 9 | Friday 15 November 2024

Latitude:
64° 48.2' S
Longitude:
063° 30.3' W

Wind Speed:
9 knots N
Barometer:
995 hPa

Course:
Drifting
Speed:
0.00

Air Temp:
-1°C

Today's adventure was a transit through the scenic Neumayer Channel back to the Gerlache Strait. Meli presented her 'Frosty Chronicles' lecture, a very interesting run-through of what, when, where, how and why ice and glaciers exist in our world. It was great to finally clarify the confusion of glacial terminology, particularly between ice sheets, caps and fields.

After lunch a continental landing at Portal Point was enjoyed by all, with a humpback whale cruising past. The skiers and snowshoers climbed high on to the Reclus Peninsula, following the route used by early British scientists who travelled inland using dog sled teams to

map and explore the peninsula area. It was a survival skiing experience on the way down, with the snow quality being less than ideal. Returning to the ship on the Zodiac was an amazing experience, exploring towering iceberg formations and catching a glimpse of a crabeater seal, along with a couple of relaxed Weddell seals keeping an eye on us.

After a relaxing drink and catch-up, Mario began the recap. We reminisced about our incredible journey thus far as he briefed us on the upcoming days. Tonight, we head north to Curtiss Bay.





Curtiss Bay, At Sea

DAY 10 | Saturday 16 November 2024

Latitude:
63° 58.0' S
Longitude:
060° 51.0' W

Course:
Various courses
Speed:
3.9 knots

Wind Speed:
12 knots W
Barometer:
983 hPa

Air Temp:
-2°C

On the east side of the bay, Cape Andreas seemed to guard the entrance - named for Karl Andreas Andersson, the zoologist on the Swedish Antarctic Expedition. A couple of humpback whales seemed to greet the ship as we navigated deeper into the bay, the wind continued to abate and the brash ice smothered the chop. We excitedly loaded into the Zodiacs to set off and explore all the nooks and crannies of the bay, while relishing the warmth of the sun on the black pontoons of the Zodiacs.

The skiers' morning began with a steep bootpack onto the main glacier as they climbed up towards Boulton Peak in the fresh snow. The snowshoers were led to a

hidden, sheltered landing site. From here they zigzagged an uptrack to the top of Phil's Knob. The kayakers wound their way through islands and channels, pulling their way through the brash ice and past icebergs.

After lunch, Leo gave us a fascinating insight into his other life and a project that he led through the Argentinian Antarctic Division. Kelsey continued today's lecture series by recounting the epic tale and remarkable luck of the 1901-1904 Swedish Antarctic Expedition.



Antarctic Sound, Bransfield Strait, Drake Passage

DAY 11 | Sunday 17 November 2024

Latitude:

63° 16.2' S

Longitude:

056° 51.8' W

Course:

Various courses

Speed:

5.5 knots

Wind Speed:

7 knots SSE

Barometer:

997 hPa

Air Temp:

-2°C

Our last day in Antarctica was truly magical. We had arrived at the famous Antarctic Sound, after sailing all night avoiding the Antarctic ice.

Throughout the morning we tried to explore the sound by Zodiac, but Antarctica showed us how wild it is. Ice conditions were constantly changing due to the strong currents of the Antarctic Sound and the unpredictable winds that at one point exceeded speeds of 20 knots. Carrying out a Zodiac exploration under these conditions was not safe, therefore the decision was made to remain aboard the *Greg Mortimer* and continue our journey north. During lunch the wind calmed, and the *Greg Mortimer*

found an ice-free space in the middle of Bransfield Strait.

This is where we took advantage of putting the Zodiacs in the water for one last exploration in perfect conditions, glassy sea and huge icebergs around us. There was a lot of peace in the cold air; Antarctica is pure peace. An ideal way to say goodbye to the white continent. We also took the opportunity to take an incredible aerial group photo, with all of us on the Zodiacs in front of the imposing *Greg Mortimer*. Another great memory of this fruitful trip to the end of the world. The exploration in the Zodiacs did not end without first toasting with a delicious champagne all together in the middle of the immensity!





Drake Passage

DAY 12 | Monday 18 November 2024

Latitude:
61° 06.0' S
Longitude:
060° 36.0' W

Course:
335°
Speed:
10.8 knots

Wind Speed:
32 knots WSW
Barometer:
1015 hPa

Air Temp:
-2°C

The first exciting activity of the day was Linda's plankton workshop up in the library. Makeshift gimbals were being discussed so the microscope could be busted out to see these amazing crustaceans.

After doing his very best Mario impersonation over the Bing Bong, Jay presented an amazing lecture on Tides that wowed everyone in the room, and generated much conversation afterwards.

Then, for those that were not afternoon napping, Meli did a wonderful presentation on what you can't see in Antarctica.

The afternoon then ramped up a gear with Tarn running a game called 'Dick, How BIG Is It?'

This was a fantastic team game that required folks to put on a silly hat, and answer questions about size of various Antarctic wildlife by putting a peg on a line with their best guess of size. No measuring tape allowed! The rules were few, the score keeper was able to take bribes, and Doctor Dick was the master of the final answer. There were some bonus rounds at the end that really spiced things up. Chris from the Buggies performed a very funny impersonation of Mario's morning wake up but was pipped at the post by the Captains. The most hilarious bonus question was the interpretive penguin mating dance... Debbie's dance stole the show for sure, however the Buggies took the title by going straight to the business of mating! Much hilarity was had by all, and thanks to all the participants.





Drake Passage, Beagle Channel

DAY 13 | Tuesday 19 November 2024

Latitude:
57° 12.4' S
Longitude:
64° 17.8' W

Course:
326°
Speed:
10.1 knots

Wind Speed:
27 knots NNW
Barometer:
1022 hPa

Air Temp:
-4°C

Our morning started with a presentation from some members of the Expedition Team, who told us about their previous adventures around the globe. Their stories transported us to Svalbard, the Grand Canyon, South Georgia, and beyond. Our guides have been around!

After lunch, we enjoyed the last eBird survey of the voyage, and it was great to get out on deck in the fresh (and warmer) air. We also got a chance to go behind the scenes with a tour of the *Greg Mortimer's* bridge. The officers on watch told us about the navigational equipment and proudly pointed out their favourite device: the coffee machine.

It was an afternoon of goodbyes and shared laughs: a bittersweet feeling. The ski, snowshoe, and kayak groups had their final get-togethers, and eventually it was time for the Captain's Farewell festivities, where we heard from our lovely Captain, Alex, and our intrepid Expedition Leader, Mario. We settled in to watch the voyage slideshow: a wonderful celebration of our entire journey together. What a way to wrap things up!





Ushuaia

DAY 14 | Wednesday 20 November 2024

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



BBQ





Polar Plunge







Kayaking Log

Kayak Guides: Peter Wainwright, Eduardo Larranaga, Pablo Passera

10 November 2024, AM Point Wild 2.7km

Elephant Island is renowned, with good reason, for being an inhospitable place. However, we arrived (with good planning from Mario) on a freakishly good weather day that completely belied the name and reputation of this place. Even so, with 1 to 1.5 metres of swell, getting off the ship was not for the faint-hearted, and the booming of the swells erupting over submerged rocks and against the shoreline made it quickly apparent we could not land. We were, however, able to kayak, and getting from the Zodiac into the kayaks proved much easier than getting from the ship into the Zodiac! Once on the water the huge icebergs, dense brash ice, and regular calving events from the unstable and active glacier front provided an intimidating

backdrop and constantly demanded our attention. It took all our willpower to put down the cameras in order to focus on some coaching and then start paddling. To avoid the swell, we paddled around the outer side of the peninsula to get closer to the bust of Piloto Luis Pardo. After contemplating our fortune at not only being able to visit this place but also to kayak, we loaded back into the Zodiac and returned to the ship as the last passengers back on board.

10 November 2024, PM Cape Walker 8.9km

We left the ship from the Zodiac in the direction of Walker Point, where we boarded the kayaks. It was an exceptional afternoon for this location in the middle of the Southern Ocean; almost no wind and a small swell in a day of full sunshine.



Number of Kayakers: 10
Total Paddle Outings: 10
Total Distance Paddled: 57.8 km

Kayakers:
Paul Altschwager
Nona Barker
Steve (Richard) Barker
Sarthak Dasadia
Debbie Hardwick
Jeannine Jacobson

Kari Klein
Guido Pouillon
Keith Short
Julian Thomas

The kayakers started looking into some small channels between rock formations in the water to be able to observe some chinstrap penguins, before continuing along the south coast towards the west, maintaining some distance from the shore due to the rocks and the swell.

We passed the area where the landing was, named Chinstrap Camp, and we continued around two more headlands, paddling past a huge iceberg where Cape petrels were abundant. A falling tide meant we would have had to surf our way over a terminal moraine reef, so we abandoned the idea of a landing and just enjoyed the unbelievable paddling conditions. After the view of a glacier along the coast we returned in the direction of the *Greg Mortimer*. A great afternoon kayaking in sublime conditions in this wild, remote island.

11 November 2024, AM Fort Point, Greenwich Island 4.1km

On arrival at 7 am the conditions were glassy and looked perfect for kayaking but by breakfast the winds were picking up, and by the time we were in our drysuits, conditions were borderline and required an adjustment to our initial plan. We towed into the lee of the dramatic teeth-like rock formations that lend this headland its name. Given the wind we decided to adapt our plan again (now Plan C) and just stick to the lee of the peninsula, rather than doing a downwind paddle. We crept our way along the inside of the rock needles, admiring the lichens and mosses, the snowy sheathbills, kelp gulls, and chinstrap penguins. Fortunately as we paddled the wind abated slightly, and so we paddled further around the bay in the lee of the spit, watching the skiers descend and the penguins coming and going

from the beach. Eventually we turned around and paddled over to the landing site to spend a little time exploring this peninsula on foot.

12 November 2024, PM Chiriguano Bay

The stormy weather in the morning had dropped around 10 centimetres of fresh snow, and now in the very sheltered waters of Chiriguano Bay that 10 centimetres of snow had formed a layer of porridge-like slush near the surface of the water. In autumn, rather than spring, this might have been the start of newly forming pancake ice, which in turn might freeze into pack ice in continued cold temps. But for us it made for a unique paddling experience. Not only did the slush cushion any wave activity, but it also muffled any lapping sound from waves and the result was blissfully calm waters and a surreal Antarctic peacefulness that made for wonderful kayaking. We did,

however, notice the extra resistance as it felt like the kayaks were moving through treacle, as we pulled our kayaks along through slush and brash ice. Eventually we found more open water and took advantage of the calm conditions to practice some draw strokes. After some inevitable distraction of a bunch of gentoo penguins we began weaving and negotiating our way through a maze of grounded icebergs, all the while marvelling at this natural sculpture park.

13 November 2024, AM Neko Harbour 7.3km

In the calm and partly cloudy morning we did a wonderful kayaking outing among icebergs, penguins and spectacular views of the mountains. From the Zodiac close to the *Greg Mortimer* we boarded the kayaks, seven kayakers in total. The paddling started along the south coast towards the east, getting into some brash



ice, but easy enough to go through. The clouds were low for the moment covering the mountains, but as the morning went on the clouds began to clear and the views were incredible, with endless glaciers and steep rock walls.

We saw the Moser Glacier and Rudolph Glacier at the end of the bay and Forbes Point on the other side of the shore. Once we turned back, we went into more brash ice, around small icebergs, and on one flow we saw a Weddell seal, several skuas, and two snow petrels flying very close to our kayaks. Once we were almost free from the brash ice the Zodiac picked us up to go for a landing at Navarrete Point in Neko Harbour.

13 November 2024, PM Paradise Harbour 6.3km

After a long and sublime paddle this morning, we only had one taker sign up for the afternoon's outing. With just Paul, Peter and Edu in single

kayaks we were able to forgo the Zodiac support and relish the silence and peacefulness of this wonderful natural harbour. We paddled first into a shallow, sheltered cove half-covered in fast ice and saw a half-dozen Weddell seals and one crabeater hauled-out and snoozing. Then we paddled past Almirante Brown Station, getting very close to the penguins coming and going up and down the rocks. Quickly we found ourselves paddling under 150' cliffs and beneath a colony of impressive Antarctic shag nests with incoming birds flying overhead, often with nest-building material in their beaks. A little further along, among the wavy, layered striations in the rock, we came across antarctic tern nests, and we sat watching the adults return with small fish in their mouths. There were also a few pairs of Cape petrels feeding noisily in the water, and looking below the surface we could clearly see kelp and limpets dotting the rocks. We rounded the corner to have our breath taken away

by the stunning glacial scenery of Skontorp Cove. After feasting on and savouring the sight before our eyes, we reluctantly turned our kayaks around and paddled back to the waiting ship.

14 November 2024, AM Deloncle Bay/Lemaire Channel 7.9km

With a huge iceberg blocking the southern end of the Lemaire Channel and preventing our passage through to Port Charcot and our planned operations for the day, we decided to take advantage of the opportunity and do something we very rarely get to do - go kayaking in the Lemaire Channel! As luck would have it the weather was also on our side and instead of 15 knots we had glassy smooth conditions and stunning light, and what was predicted to be a fairly short outing turned into an extended paddle! We paddled first into the north end of Deloncle Bay, awestruck by the sheer glacier fronts

and huge alpine headwalls all around us. Taking care to avoid getting close to Booth Island and the exposure to ice collapses and avalanches off its steep mountainsides, we headed into the Lemaire Channel itself. It began hailing or snowing fairly heavily so we turned away from the wind and paddled over to a small gentoo colony where these hardy little penguins were climbing up an impressively steep slope, zig-zagging their way up just like the ski-tourers do - they must have been doing it for the view! With some bursting bladders we paddled briskly back through the ice to the ship.

14 November 2024, PM: Jougla Point 4km

From the Zodiac we boarded the kayaks right from the *Greg Mortimer*. The kayaking started in the direction of Lecuyer Point, where we saw gentoo penguins building their nests and swimming in the water, and some whales ribs on top of a rock.



Continuing to the north we saw more penguins swimming and porpoising; and coming back and forth to the waters. Once we passed Jougla Point we found some fast ice, so we couldn't go completely around Goudier Island, so instead we went in the other direction, where we saw the Port Lockroy Museum and Post Office and learned more about the history of the place.

Once again in the fast ice we could get into some shallow waters and observe three Weddell seals resting on the ice.

Before we finished the outing we went around some of the little islands in the bay, with the extraordinary view of the Sierra du Fief, or Seven Sister mountain range, with Mount Luigi as the tallest.

15 November 2024, PM: Portal Point 6.3km

Dark clouds and reduced visibility lent an eerie tone to this afternoon's

outing. Some of the kayakers were understandably tired after spending the night camping ashore, so a smaller group assembled suited and booted in the kayak garage. Within yards of the ship we were treated to a humpback surfacing about 50 metres in front of us. After watching the whale for a few minutes, we were alerted to the presence of a fur seal on an ice flow – we could actually smell it before we could see it, but we were able to get very close and the seal was completely unconcerned with our presence. We then found a Weddell seal in a similar situation that took a little more interest in us but still in an unconcerned fashion. But the star attractions of this paddle near Portal Point were the icebergs. While paddling over to one pinnacle-shaped iceberg we came across a group of gentoos that were diving and feeding all around us. From here we paddled over towards the tip of the Reclus Peninsula, where there was a stunningly sculpted dry-dock iceberg

with two symmetrical towers. We circumnavigated the iceberg, taking many photos, and then made our way back to the ship.

16 November 2024, AM: Curtiss Bay 5.9km

Curtiss Bay is located south of Cape Andreas, in the entrance of the Orleans Strait, south of Trinity Island and on the mainland of the Antarctic Peninsula.

We boarded the Zodiac and Peter took us to the south of Cape Andreas, where we got into the kayaks and began exploring the channels between the islands, some filled with brash ice and others blocked by icebergs. With a little swell it made for exciting but perfect paddling conditions. The kayaking continued towards Seaplane Point, where we were surrounded by magnificent glaciers and tall peaks poking out of the ice. From here we encountered more brash ice, slowing further

progress. We managed to paddle along the border of this brash ice all the way back to the *Greg Mortimer*. With a small stop to watch the skiers from a distance, it was awesome to see them descending among such marvellous scenery. It was another beautiful kayaking outing and maybe one of the last, which made us all think how magical this place was and how lucky we got with such a perfect sunny day.







Snowshoeing Log

Guides: Tarn Pilkington, Marius Bron, Paula Roberts, Bronwen Waters

10th November 2024, PM: Walker Point, Elephant Island

What a wild place for our first snowshoe! The Zodiacs shuttled up from the ship, behind a small reef to our snowy landing. It was an incredible day, sunny and warm, which contradicted with the weather conditions many imagine getting in Antarctica. Elephant Island was stunning, with glaciers and snowy peaks extending from the ocean. We wove a line up the hill behind the penguin colonies, and as we reached the glacier, we used the rope for the first time, slowly walking in line to our viewpoint. It was then a quick, direct descent down to the beach to ensure we left the shore well before the tide went out.

11th November 2024, AM: Fort Point, Greenwich Island

An atmospheric day at Fort Point this morning. The cloud was low and moody as we walked past gentoo penguin colonies, snowy sheathbills and a lone leopard seal! We reached the bottom of the glacier, roped up, and started a zig-zag trail up the glacial hill. It was a great view of the point as we returned, looking down on the narrow strip of land, filling up with penguin colonies as the season progresses, and the towers of rock pinnacles on the headland.



Number of Snowshoers: 12

Total Outings: 9

Snowshoers:

James Basinger

Jennifer Basinger

Katie Cosby

Adrian Fitzpatrick

Rick Little

Sue Little

Andrew Lok

Eleanor Mackie

Brent Macomber

Kate McCombie

Graham Ramsdale

Kelvin Ramsdale

12th November 2024, AM: Selvik Cove, Arctovski Peninsula

Our first continental landing! The weather was wild today, but we still got out! It was snowy with low cloud and limited visibility. We decided to do an adapted route from our original plan and walked along the snowy shore as far as we could until rocky gullies blocked our progress. We found an amazing blue ice wall, protruding from the front of the glacier and overhanging right by the seaside. It was an atmospheric continental landing.

12th November 2024, PM: Chiriguano Bay, Brabant Island

Today's snowshoe saw us making a circuit over the top of an isolated island, far from the ship. We took a long Zodiac weaving through the bergy bits and arrived at our island. It was a calm and still afternoon, and it was awesome to take in the remote feeling of this island jutting out into the bay. We reached a point where we could view the seracs and ice cliffs of the glacier on Brabant Island, cracking and threatening to fall into the bay.

13th November 2024, AM: Neko Harbour, Andvord Bay, Antarctic Continent

We started today's snowshoe under a low cloud ceiling, and as we slowly but steadily made our way up the long slope above the landing site, the cloud the sun started to become visible through the cloud, and soon enough, we popped out above the cloud. It was incredible! We were walking on a glacier above a flat sea of clouds, with broken glaciers and peaks all visible breaking through the cloud. As we reached our high point the cloud started to break up and burn off with the heat of the sun, revealing the harbour, bergs and ship way below us. Today was a magical snowshoe outing.

13th November 2024, PM: Brown Station, Paradise Bay, Antarctic Continent

This landing site was quite different to all the others, in that there was a concrete staircase and also a handrail up from the rocky bench where the Zodiac dropped us. We had been dropped at an Argentinian base, and while it was currently unoccupied, it is populated annually in the summer. We first made our way up a short but steep hill behind the bright base buildings, and then reached an alpine plateau where we made a loop around the top, stopping at a scenic viewpoint along the way, high up above the bay. We were amazed at the stillness on the other side of the plateau from the base, with just the occasional voice drifting up from the kayakers way down on the water below.



14th November 2024, PM: Jougla Point, Port Lockroy, Wiencke Island

Jougla Point is a small area of land extending off Wiencke Island, but while small, it packs a punch and has a lot of features. The Zodiacs were landed onto the fast ice, which was a first for many to walk on sea ice. We then left the main landing group behind as we wandered around the gentoo colonies, glad for our snowshoes as the snow was deep. We could see the wooden buildings of Port Lockroy on the nearby island and were amused by a single Adélie penguin that was moving about the place, it's pace and abruptness in stark contrast to the relaxed gentoos we were used to. We had a spectacular view of the Seven Sisters mountain range, and finished our walk back onto the sea ice, this time spotting seals on the ice, and even a seal pup! It was a great landing spot.

15 November 2024, PM: Portal Point, Antarctic Continent

Another snowy 'Antarctican' morning this morning, with low visibility due to cloud, but we could still make our landing at Portal Point - another continental snowshoe. Although it was cloudy, the cloud was high enough to be able to see the awesome feature that this point of land has, as we snowshoed over what felt like a giant natural bridge between two small bays. Big glacier fronts sat on either side - it was spectacular.

16 November 2024, AM: Curtiss Bay, Antarctic Continent

Our last snowshoe was fantastic - what a great place to finish! We had our own snowshoe landing today in a little isolated bay. The landing site required a short section of rope handline to assist the snowshoers onto the snow. We then zig-zagged up a reasonably steep slope to gain the glacier neve. Tarn led us up onto the top of a ridge where we could see further into Curtiss Bay. We then looped back across the glacier to meet our original track down to the water's edge. A great day out!

Many thanks to all of our snowshoe team, who showed care and teamwork towards each other, and were always up for an adventure!







Skiing Log

Guides: Tarn Pilkington, Marius Bron, Paula Roberts

10th November 2024, PM: Walker Point, Elephant Island

Beautiful blue skies and amazing views. We completed our avalanche safety training here, learning how to use the avalanche transceiver, shovel and probe in case of an avalanche incident.

It was such a breathtaking place to be. We felt extremely lucky to be here skiing! The snow quality was pretty fantastic. Everyone was getting used to how to skin with the rope on, where pacing is key to keeping a tight rope in case of a crevasse fall. This was new to most folk. What an amazing day to start the trip with!

11th November 2024, AM: Fort Point, Greenwich Island

We woke to a calm day, with light snow. As we got closer to Fort Point, the wind picked up a little. What a different day to yesterday!

On landing, the wind had calmed down a little, and it was quite pleasant. It was great to see so many gentoo penguins going about their day. We shouldered our skis through the gentoo penguins to avoid getting guano on our skins, Then, got ourselves geared up to glide our way up the slope. The goal of today was a short skin/ski so we would have time for a couple of laps. The snow was nice supportive corn, so a second run was certainly welcomed with big smiles! Team Snowshoe were also in the area, so it was great to say hi to them on our way down. The light was a little flat, but the snow quality made up for that! Great morning had by all.



Number of Skiers: 5
Total Outings: 9

Skiers:
Brian Singer
Naomi Singer
Sara Roy
Graeme Bryant
Chris Chua

12th November 2024, AM: Selvik Cove, Arctovski Peninsula

After a short overnight reposition, we arrived in Orne Harbour early morning. As things are dynamic on an expedition, so must we be! The landing site we wished to go to had too much ice around it to operate safely, so we were onto Plan B... Around the other side to Selvik Cove.

The weather today meant that skiing down was going to be challenging due to the light. Enthusiasm was pretty high; however, the snow and visibility were not on that same page. We did a short skin up and ski down in fairly challenging weather conditions. It was great to have the chance to operate in these conditions, just in case we got more!

12th November 2024, PM: Chiriguano Bay, Brabant Island

What an amazing place! The ice in the bay and the views of surrounding mountains, simply breathtaking! Some of the team decided to make the most of other options this afternoon, meaning we had just one keen skier for the afternoon adventure! Mario decided to join us as well. Our team of four set out on a great adventure. The terrain was quite crevassed, and the light a little flat, so ensuring a safe skin line was paramount. We roped up, and made our way up through the amazing terrain. Skinning conditions got a bit tricky near the top, so we decided to call this our high point.

The light improved just at the right time to allow us good surface definition. Tight terrain management in the upper half due to crevasses, gave way to more relaxed lower

slopes. The snow quality was fantastic, and we were able to ski nice pitches of consistent angle. Everyone was buzzing and had big smiles! What a day.

13th November 2024, AM: Neko Harbour, Andvord Bay

Everyone was well rested and chomping at the bit for a great morning ski at Neko Harbour! The weather forecast promised sunshine and low winds... PERFECT!

The landing put us right in the middle of a penguin colony with the backdrop of huge ice cliffs that regularly crash into the ocean. It is simply beautiful.

The skin up was a lovely gradual climb, with many opportunities to take some fabulous pictures. The views were incredible above the crazy fog cloud.

13th November 2024, PM Leith Cove, Leith Peak right (unnamed peak)

The afternoon skiing was our first opportunity to summit a peak! The team was excited about this. The skinning was a little steep at times, but the views were well worth it from the top. We could see the other passengers at Brown Station from the summit.

Martin Jr. was out with the drone, so we were able to do some formation skiing and get filmed by the drone. The snow was nice and consistent, with great fall line turns had by all. This put large smiles on everyone's faces at the bottom.



14th November 2024, PM: Jougla Point, Port Lockroy

Although the weather was a bit inclement, we skinned up a nice, pleasant slope to get some fantastic views of the Seven Sisters and Port Lockroy. The snow conditions on the ski down were pretty nice corn, until the bottom where we hit the deep porridge snow! A shorter outing this afternoon, as we also did a Zodiac cruise to see the building at Port Lockroy and have a landing on fast ice. A couple of Adélie penguins were spotted here too!

15 November 2024, PM: Portal Point

The cloud base was pretty low for our afternoon outing at Portal Point. But the chance to set foot on the continent proper again was definitely worth it. The skin up was very unique as we moved up across the 'portal' on the Reclus Peninsula. The ski down was our most challenging yet, as the snow was very heavy and a crust under the surface. The bonus of a pickup in a different location was appreciated by all involved.

16 November 2024, AM: Curtiss Bay

Well, what a stunning location!! The promise of sunshine and low wind was delivered! The initial route to gain the glacier involved going into hiking mode and putting our skis on our pack to go up a boot pack that allowed us access to the route we wanted. Marius kindly did the hard work out the front, step plugging! For many in the team, this was a new experience having skis on their backpack. Very cool. With skis back on our feet, we began an amazingly scenic skin past beautiful crevasses to our highpoint. We had visions of going higher, but Mother Nature decided to put a large crevasse in the way that we could not negotiate, so we were forced to take skins off and head down.

The snow on the top pitch was fantastic and pitch perfect for some great turns. Naomi caught some fantastic images on camera of folks skiing with the breathtaking back drop.

The last slope down to the landing provided some good avalanche education, as we were able to kick off a small loose, wet avalanche to make it safe for us to ski down. Mario had the best entry to the final stopping point by double ejecting just a few metres out from our shore bags!!

The vote was that this ski outing was the best one of the trip! Beautiful scenery, interesting crevasses and some great skiing!!



Citizen Science Log

Project	Completed	Overview
Happywhale	3	Jay was our project lead. We encountered whales during our crossing on the Drake Passage to Antarctica, near the South Shetland Islands and in the Antarctic Peninsula. We managed to get two good fluke photos of two different individuals. We uploaded them on the Happywhale website. One resulted in an immediate match: Humpback Whale Ojos! The other one might be a new individual. We also uploaded three individual Weddell Seals on the Happywhale website.
eBird	4	Linda was our project lead, and we managed to do four eBird surveys. All surveys were done on the Drake Passage to and from the Antarctic Peninsula. We had beautiful weather on the way in and saw an amazing number of Cape petrels and five large albatross species. On the way back to Ushuaia, the ship was moving and we encountered waves up to 4 metres in height, but we still managed to find moments that it was safe to go on deck and see these magnificent birds soar on the open ocean. In total we recorded nine different bird species.
Globe Cloud	1	Melina was our project lead, conducting one cloud survey on the Drake Passage. Because of the early season, we mainly identified low-lying clouds.
Secchi Disk	3	Linda was our project lead and we managed to do three Secchi disc measurements. One measurement was done in Chiriguano Bay where we also conducted a plankton tow to collect phytoplankton. The other two Secchi disk measurements were done at Brown Station and Curtiss Bay. The average depth was about 12 metres for these three surveys, indicating a lower level of phytoplankton in these areas. On the way back to Ushuaia we had a plankton workshop on board where we looked at the phyto- and zooplankton under the microscope.
Snow Algae Survey	1	Linda was our project lead and we did one Snow Algae survey at Neko Harbour, as this is a prime site for recording data, even when there is no snow algae present.

Map

Antarctic Peninsula in Depth

7 – 20 November 2024





Our Expeditioners

Paul Altschwager

Richard Barker

Nona Barker

Joady Barnes

Jennifer Basinger

James Basinger

Graeme Bryant

Christopher Chua

Katie Cosby

Sarthak Dasadia

Adrian Fitzpatrick

Mary Geiger

Mike Geiger

Martin Gregus

Martin Gregus

Elena Gregusova

Jenny Griffiths

Debbie Hardwick

Vincent Hoekveld

Geoffrey Howell

Jeannine Jacobson

Kari Klein

Sue Little

Rick Little

Andrew Lok

Eleanor Mackie

Brent Macomber

Mandy Marshman

Chris Maxwell

Katherine McCombie

Jeffrey Mckerihan

Sod Hwa Merg

Kathleen Michelsen

Chris Michelsen

Mindert Mulder

Phillipa Neads

Dave Peirce

Brony Peirce

Plug Piehl

Guido Pouillon

Graham Ramsdale

Kelvin Ramsdale

Sara Roy

Klaus Schindhelm

Anne Schindhelm

Wei-Don Shih

Keith Short

Naomi Singer

Brian Singer

Julian Thomas

Kristel Van de Pol

Mark White

Expedition Team

Expedition Leader: Mario Placidi Spring

Assistant Expedition Leader: Leo Soibelzon

Onboard Expedition Manager: Justine Bornholdt

Naturalist & Citizen Science Coordinator: Linda Steutel

Geologist/Glaciologist: Melina Pelzmajer

Historian: Kelsey Camacho

Expedition First Responder: Laura Boenish

Photography Guide: Adrian Wlodarczyk

Expedition Guide/Naturalist: Jean-Baptiste (Jay) Verniest

Zodiac Master: Ignacio (Nacho) Marino

Onboard Expedition Assistant: Ari Benzo Ciria

Kayaking Master: Peter Wainwright

Kayaking Guide: Edu Larranaga Garcia

Kayak Guide: Pablo Passera

Alpine Guide: Tarn Pilkington

Alpine Guide: Marius Bron

Alpine Guide: Bronwen Waters

Alpine Guide: Paula Roberts

Senior Officers & Heads of Department

Master: Alexandru Taraoi

Chief Officer: Andrey Zakalashnyuk

Safety Officer: Sergii Voina

Bosun: Bobby Payumo

Deck Cadet: Joao Varlos De Souza Lima Filho

Ship Doctor: Eliana Caro Garzon

Support Doctor: Juan Nicolas Diaz Rodriguez

Chief Engineer: Dimitar Vasilev

First Engineer: Denys Odrynsky

Hotel Director: Alex Barkar

F&B Manager: Rajesh Murao

Chief Purser: Pia Blanca

Executive Chef: Edgar Mangalinao

Sous Chef: Edgra Angelo Xavier Pereira

Head Waiter: Neelam (James) Lopes

Hotel Controller: Christopher Santos

IT Officer: Gerry Dcunha

Receptionist: Joy Acelar

Receptionist: Jonathan Valdez

Head Stateroom: Roniel Garcia

Spa Manager: Venila Vythilingum

Able Seaman: Angelo San Antonio

Able Seaman: Iwan Setiawan

Able Seaman: Hardik Dipakbhai Rao

Able Seaman: Noel Refugia

Able Seaman: Joel Noble

Able Seaman: Francis Marvin Linga

Photography thanks to:

Adrian Wlodarczyk

Special Activity guides





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