

GALAPAGOS OF THE SOUTHERN OCEAN

SUBANTARCTIC ISLANDS OF
NEW ZEALAND & AUSTRALIA

EXPEDITION DOSSIER
30 NOVEMBER – 12 DECEMBER 2020



Heritage Expeditions

Antarctica • Western and South Pacific
Subantarctic Islands • Russian Far East





© G Riehle



© T Bickford



© J Kirk-Anderson



This is without doubt one of the most inspirational and informative journeys or expeditions into the Southern Ocean ecosystem that one can make anywhere in the world. Long recognised for their rich biodiversity, the Subantarctic Islands lying to the south of New Zealand are UNESCO World Heritage sites. This places them in a select group of only 180 natural sites that have been designated as 'the most important and significant natural habitats' on the planet. They are also afforded the highest conservation status and protection by the Australian and New Zealand governments and access to these islands is by permit only. On this expedition we offer you the unique chance to explore, photograph and understand these wonderful places in the company of some of the most knowledgeable and passionate guides.

As a young biologist, Heritage Expeditions founder Rodney Russ first visited these islands in 1972 with the New Zealand Wildlife Service. He organised New Zealand's first commercial expedition there in 1989 and it was only natural that his family should travel with him, what wasn't predicted was that they would join him in the business and be as passionate about the conservation of this region as he is. Now, many years and over 100 expeditions later, Rodney's sons Aaron and Nathan continue their father's enthusiasm and legacy for this region with Heritage Expeditions. As the original concessionaire we enjoy good relationships with the conservation departments and some of the access permits we hold are unique to these expeditions.

The name we have given to this voyage 'Galapagos of the Southern Ocean' reflects the astounding natural biodiversity and the importance of these islands as a wildlife refuge. (The book 'Galapagos of the Antarctic' written by Rodney Russ and Aleks Terauds and published by Heritage Expeditions describes all of these islands in great detail.) The islands all lie in the cool temperate zone with a unique climate and are home to a vast array of wildlife including albatross, penguins, petrels, prions, shearwaters and marine mammals like sea lions, fur seals and elephant seals. The flora is equally fascinating; the majority of it being like the birds and endemic to these islands.

This renowned expedition includes four of the Subantarctic Islands, The Snares, Auckland, Macquarie and Campbell. Each one is different, and each one is unique – just like this expedition.

ITINERARY

Day 1: Dunedin

Passengers should make their way to the Distinction Dunedin Hotel in the central city where our group will spend the first night of the expedition. This evening there will be an informal get-together at the hotel for dinner; an excellent opportunity to meet fellow adventurers on your voyage and some of our expedition team.

Day 2: Otago Harbour

Take breakfast at your leisure in the hotel restaurant before transferring to the port to embark the *Spirit of Enderby*. You will have the opportunity to settle into your cabin and familiarise yourself with the ship; we will also take the opportunity to conduct a number of compulsory safety briefings. You are invited to join the expedition team and captain on the bridge as we set our course to The Snares and our adventure begins. As we leave the harbour we will sail alongside the wildlife rich Otago Peninsula, Northern Royal Albatross breed here and they can often be observed overhead. Turning the bow south we may start to encounter our first cetaceans of the voyage.

Day 3: The Snares – North East Island

The closest Subantarctic Islands to New Zealand, they were appropriately called The Snares as they were once considered a hazard for sailing ships. Comprising of two main islands and a group of five islands called the Western Chain; they are uninhabited and enjoy the highest protection as Nature Reserves. It is claimed by some that these islands are home to more nesting seabirds than all of the British Isles together.



We plan to arrive mid-morning and as landings are not permitted we will Zodiac cruise along the sheltered eastern side of the main island if the weather and sea conditions are suitable. In the sheltered bays, we should see the endemic Snares Crested Penguin, Snares Island Tomtit and Fernbirds. Cape Pigeons, Antarctic Terns, White-fronted Terns and Red-billed Gulls are also present in good numbers. There are hundreds of thousands of Sooty Shearwaters nesting on The Snares; the actual number is much debated. The Buller's Albatross breed here from early January onwards.



Day 4: Auckland Islands – Enderby Island

The Auckland Islands group was formed by two volcanoes which erupted some 10-25 million years ago. They have subsequently been eroded and dissected by glaciation creating the archipelago as we know it today.

Enderby Island is one of the most beautiful islands in this group and is named for the same distinguished shipping family as our own vessel. This northern most island in the archipelago is an outstanding wildlife and birding location and is relatively easy to land on and walk around. The island was cleared of all introduced animals (pests) in 1994 and both birds and the vegetation, especially the herbaceous plants, are recovering both in numbers and diversity.

Our plan is to land at Sandy Bay, one of three breeding areas in the Auckland Islands for the Hooker's or New Zealand Sea Lion, a rare member of the seal family. Beachmaster bulls gather



© S Gutowsky

on the beach defending their harems from younger (ambitious) males, to mate with the cows shortly after they have given birth of a single pup. Hookers or New Zealand Sea Lion numbers are in a slow decline, for reasons which are not obvious but most probably connected with a nearby squid fishery.

During our day ashore there will be several options, some longer walks, some shorter walks and time to spend just sitting and enjoying the wildlife. The walking is relatively easy, a board walk traverses the island to the dramatic western cliffs from there we follow the coast on the circumnavigation of the island.

Birds that we are likely to encounter include the following species: Southern Royal Albatross, Northern Giant Petrel, Auckland Island Shag, Auckland Island Flightless Teal, Auckland Island Banded Dotterel, Auckland Island Tomtit, Bellbird, Pipit, Red-crowned Parakeet, Yellow-eyed Penguin and Light-mantled Sooty Albatross. There is also a

very good chance of seeing the Subantarctic Snipe. Other more common species we will see include the Goldfinch, Song Thrush, Blackbird, European Starling, Red-billed Gull and Redpoll. On Derry Castle Reef we will look for migratory waders which could include Bar-tailed Godwit, Turnstone and possibly vagrants.

Day 5: Auckland Islands – Carnley Harbour

In the south of the archipelago there is a very large sheltered harbour it is rich in human history including shipwrecks, treasure hunters, Coastwatchers and

of course scientific parties. We plan to arrive early morning from our anchorage at Enderby Island. We enter the harbour through the eastern entrance which is guarded on both sides by dramatic cliffs and rugged tussock covered hills.

Our activities here today are totally weather dependent. We have a number of options. If the weather is OK there will be an opportunity for the more energetic expeditioners to climb to the South West Cape and visit the Shy Mollymawk colony. Above the colony we occasionally see Gibson's Wandering Albatross breeding. This climb provides magnificent views in all directions, especially over the western entrance to Carnley Harbour, Adams Island and Western Harbour. For those not able to make the climb (it is reasonably difficult) there will be an opportunity to Zodiac cruise along the coast of Adams Island and Western Harbour, with landings in the later.

Other options include the Tagua Bay Coastwatcher's hut and lookout (the former is derelict) which was occupied during the Second World War. We could visit Epigwatt and the remains of the 'Grafton' which was wrecked here in 1864. All five men aboard



© K Ovsyanikova

survived and lived here for 18 months before sailing their modified dinghy to New Zealand to get help. Two of the survivors wrote books about their ordeal. Their first hand accounts tell us a lot about their time here. Alternatively we may visit the Erlagan clearing where a German Merchant ship cut firewood to fire its boilers after slipping its moorings in Dunedin on the eve of the Second World War. Another potential site is Camp Cove where we can see the remains of the castaway depots established and maintained by the New Zealand government between the 1860s and early 1900s.

We depart this afternoon for Macquarie Island.

Day 6: At Sea

As we make our way south through the Furious Fifties also known as the Albatross latitudes, the birding especially south of the Auckland Islands should be good. We will have a series of informal lectures on the biology and history of the Subantarctic Islands. We will also prepare you for our visit to Macquarie Island.

Species that we may see include the Wandering Albatross, Royal Albatross, Black-browed Albatross, Light-mantled Sooty Albatross, Salvin's Albatross, Grey-headed Albatross, Northern and Southern Giant Petrel, Sooty Shearwater and Little Shearwater. There should be plenty of prions including Fairy, Fulmar and Antarctic, identifying them is not easy – but we should get some great views.

Other species to be on the lookout for include the Soft-plumaged Petrel, Mottled Petrel, White-headed Petrel, Grey-faced Petrel, White-chinned Petrel, Grey-backed Storm-Petrel, Wilson's Storm-Petrel and Black-bellied Storm-Petrel.



Days 7 to 8: Macquarie Island

The great Australian Antarctic Explorer Sir Douglas Mawson once called Macquarie Island "One of the wonder spots of the world." You are about to discover why as we spend two days exploring this amazing Island. It was one of the first of the Subantarctic Islands to obtain World Heritage Status and that was largely due to its unique geology. It is one of the few places on earth where mid-ocean crustal rocks are exposed at the surface due to the collision of the Australian and Pacific Plates.

The island was discovered in 1810 and was soon ravaged by sealers

who introduced various animals including rats, mice, cats and rabbits. The native bird population was virtually eliminated and plants destroyed. The Tasmanian National Parks and Wildlife Service which administered the island recently embarked on a very ambitious eradication program which appears to have been successful. The island is now predator free and both the birds and plants are responding. It is amazing to witness the regeneration and the increase in the number of birds.

Macquarie Island is home to four species of penguin, Kings, Royals,



Gentoo and Rockhopper. The Royal Penguin occurs nowhere else in the world. During our visit we will land at two sites (subject of course to weather and sea conditions) and you will get a chance to see, observe and photograph all four species, although the Rockhopper is much harder to capture than the others.

Macquarie also has a large population of Southern Elephant Seals. Pups are born in October and weaned in November when the breeding adults return to sea. The weaners and sub adults lie around on the beaches. The weaners go to sea sometime in January, running the gauntlet of Orcas or Killer Whales who are waiting offshore.

We plan a landing at the Australian Antarctic Research Base at Buckles Bay where you will be able to meet with scientists and base staff. The original base was established in 1947 and the island has been 'manned' since then. It is one of the longest continuously occupied bases in the Subantarctic.

We depart for Campbell Island on the afternoon of the second day.

Day 9: At Sea

Today is very similar to Day 6 except we are north bound and hopefully running with the prevailing weather which should make it a bit more comfortable. There will be briefings and lectures on Campbell Island in preparation for our visit there and opportunities for pelagic birding and/or simply relaxing.

Days 10 to 11: Campbell Island – Perseverance Harbour

We have plenty of time to explore Campbell Island, New Zealand's southernmost Subantarctic territory. Its history is as rich and varied as



© T Bickford

the other islands we have visited. Discovered in 1810 (by the same sealing captain who discovered Macquarie Island) it too was soon occupied by sealers who introduced rats and cats.

In 1895 the New Zealand government advertised the island as a pastoral lease. The lease was taken up by an entrepreneurial New Zealand sheep farmer who stocked the island with sheep and cattle. The farming practices, which included burning the scrub, modified the island considerably. The farming lasted until 1934 when it was abandoned. Coastwatchers were stationed on the island during the war, at the end of the war the station was taken over by the New Zealand Metrological service and they maintained a manned weather/research station on the island until 1995.



© A Fergus

In the early 1970s the island was fenced in half and stock was removed off the northern half. The impacts of the remaining animals were monitored and they were all eventually removed in 1990. The vegetation recovered quickly and the cats died out naturally. In a very ambitious (and never before attempted on such a large scale) eradication programme the New Zealand Department of Conservation successfully removed the rats. With the island declared predator free, the way was clear to reintroduce the endangered Campbell Island Flightless Teal which had been rediscovered on an offshore island in 1975. Snipe, which were formerly unknown from the island but were discovered on another offshore island, recolonised the islands themselves. The vegetation which the great English botanist, Sir Joseph Hooker described in 1841 as having a "Flora display second to none outside the tropics" is flourishing and is nothing short of spectacular.

We will offer a number of options which will enable you to explore the island. There will be extended walks to Northwest Bay and possibly Mt Honey. There will also be an easier walk to the Col Lyall Saddle. All of these options will allow you the opportunity and time to enjoy the Southern Royal Albatross which nest here in large



numbers. We also visit areas of the island which contain outstanding examples of the megaherbs for which the island is renown.

Other birds which we will search for include the teal and snipe, although the later is what we would refer to as a 'luck' bird. The endemic shag can be seen on the harbour, but unfortunately the nesting colonies of Rockhopper Penguins, Grey-head, Black-browed and Campbell Island Albatross are outside of the permitted areas and we will have to look for these species at sea.

Other birds we should see include Light-mantled Sooty Albatross, Northern Giant Petrel, Southern Skua, Red-billed Gull, Black-backed Gull, Antarctic Tern, Redpoll, Dunnock and New Zealand Pipit.

Day 12: At Sea

At sea en route to the Port of Bluff, take the opportunity to relax and reflect on an amazing experience. We will recap the highlights of our expedition and enjoy a farewell dinner tonight as

we complete the last few miles of our journey.

Day 13: Invercargill

Early this morning we will arrive in the Port of Bluff. After a final breakfast and completing Custom formalities we bid farewell to our fellow voyagers and take a complimentary coach transfer to either a central city point or to the airport.

In case of unexpected delays due to weather and/or port operations we ask you not to book any onward travel until after midday today.

Note: During our voyage, circumstances may make it necessary or desirable to deviate from the proposed itinerary. This can include poor weather and opportunities for making unplanned excursions. Your Expedition Leader will keep you fully informed. Landings at the Subantarctic Islands of New Zealand are by permit only as administered by the Government of New Zealand. No landings are permitted at The Snares.

DATES

Voyage #SOE2062
30 November – 12 December 2020

PRICES

Heritage Suite \$11,400 pp*
Large lounge area, separate bedroom with double bed and a single bed in the lounge, writing desk, wardrobe and drawers. Private bathroom with shower, toilet and washbasin. Large forward and side facing windows allow great views.

Mini Suite \$10,700 pp*
Separate bedroom with a double bed and a single bed or sofa in the lounge, writing desk, wardrobe and drawers. Private bathroom with shower, toilet and washbasin. Mini Suites have windows.

Superior Plus \$10,400 pp*
Two lower berths, writing desk, wardrobe and drawers. Private bathroom with shower, toilet and washbasin. These cabins have windows.

Superior \$9,600 pp*
One bunk (one upper and one lower berth), writing desk, wardrobe and drawers. Private bathroom with shower, toilet and washbasin. These cabins have windows.

Main Deck \$9,100 pp*
Two lower berths, writing desk, wardrobe and drawers. Private washbasin. Nearby shower and toilet facilities are shared with other Main Deck cabins. These cabins have a porthole.

Main Deck Triple \$8,550 pp*
One bunk (one upper and one lower berth) and one additional lower berth, writing desk, wardrobe and drawers. Private washbasin. Nearby shower and toilet facilities are shared with other Main Deck cabins. These cabins have a porthole.

* The price listed includes the additional landing fee of \$800 pp. (All prices are per person in US\$)

PRICE INCLUDES

Landing fees, pre/post cruise transfers, one night hotel accommodation in a twin share room (incl. dinner/breakfast), all on board ship accommodation with meals and all expedition shore excursions.

PRICE EXCLUDES

All items of a personal nature, laundry, drinks, gratuities. International/domestic flights, visas and travel insurance.

20/02/2021

GALAPAGOS OF THE SOUTHERN OCEAN

SUBANTARCTIC ISLANDS OF
NEW ZEALAND & AUSTRALIA

EXPEDITION DOSSIER
11 – 23 DECEMBER 2020



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ITINERARY

Day 1: Invercargill

Passengers should make their way to the Ascot Park Hotel where our group will spend the first night of the expedition. This evening there will be an informal get-together at the hotel for dinner; an excellent opportunity to meet fellow adventurers on your voyage and some of our expedition team.

Day 2: Port of Bluff

Today we enjoy breakfast in the hotel restaurant and take the opportunity to explore some of the local Southland scenery and attractions before heading to the Port of Bluff to embark the *Spirit of Enderby*. You will have time to settle into your cabin and familiarise yourself with the ship; we will also take the opportunity to conduct a number of safety briefings. You are invited to join the expedition team and captain on the bridge as we set our course to The Snares and our adventure begins.

Day 3: The Snares – North East Island

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We have plenty of time to explore Campbell Island, New Zealand's southernmost Subantarctic territory. Its history is as rich and varied as the other islands we have visited. Discovered in 1810 (by the same sealing captain who discovered Macquarie Island) it too was soon occupied by sealers who introduced rats and cats.

In 1895 the New Zealand government advertised the island as a pastoral lease. The lease was



taken up by an entrepreneurial New Zealand sheep farmer who stocked the island with sheep and cattle. The farming practices, which included burning the scrub, modified the island considerably. The farming lasted until 1934 when it was abandoned. Coastwatchers were stationed on the island during the war, at the end of the war the station was taken over by the New Zealand Metrological service and they maintained a manned weather/ research station on the island until 1995.

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(and never before attempted on such a large scale) eradication programme the New Zealand Department of Conservation successfully removed the rats. With the island declared predator free, the way was clear to reintroduce the endangered Campbell Island Flightless Teal which had been rediscovered on an offshore island in 1975. Snipe, which were formerly unknown from the island but were discovered on another offshore island, recolonised the islands themselves. The vegetation which the great English botanist, Sir Joseph Hooker described in 1841 as having a "Flora display second to none outside the tropics" is flourishing and is nothing short of spectacular.

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experience. We will recap the highlights of our expedition and enjoy a farewell dinner tonight as we complete the last few miles of our journey.

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DATES

Voyage #SOE2064
11– 23 December 2020

PRICES

Heritage Suite \$11,000 pp*

Large lounge area, separate bedroom with double bed and a single bed in the lounge, writing desk, wardrobe and drawers. Private bathroom with shower, toilet and washbasin. Large forward and side facing windows allow great views.

Mini Suite \$10,400 pp*

Separate bedroom with a double bed and a single bed or sofa in the lounge, writing desk, wardrobe and drawers. Private bathroom with shower, toilet and washbasin. Mini Suites have windows.

Superior Plus \$10,000 pp*

Two lower berths, writing desk, wardrobe and drawers. Private bathroom with shower, toilet and washbasin. These cabins have windows.

Superior \$ 9,300 pp*

One bunk (one upper and one lower berth), writing desk, wardrobe and drawers. Private bathroom with shower, toilet and washbasin. These cabins have windows.

Main Deck \$ 8,950 pp*

Two lower berths, writing desk, wardrobe and drawers. Private washbasin. Nearby shower and toilet facilities are shared with other Main Deck cabins. These cabins have a porthole.

Main Deck Triple \$ 8,300 pp*

One bunk (one upper and one lower berth) and one additional lower berth, writing desk, wardrobe and drawers. Private washbasin. Nearby shower and toilet facilities are shared with other Main Deck cabins. These cabins have a porthole.

* The price listed includes the additional landing fee of \$800 pp. (All prices are per person in US\$)

PRICE INCLUDES

Landing fees, pre/post cruise transfers, one night hotel accommodation in a twin share room (incl. dinner/breakfast), all on board ship accommodation with meals and all expedition shore excursions.

PRICE EXCLUDES

All items of a personal nature, laundry, drinks, gratuities. International/domestic flights, visas and travel insurance.

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FORGOTTEN ISLANDS OF THE SOUTH PACIFIC

SUBANTARCTIC ISLANDS
OF NEW ZEALAND

EXPEDITION DOSSIER
23 – 30 DECEMBER 2020



Heritage Expeditions

Antarctica • Western and South Pacific
Subantarctic Islands • Russian Far East





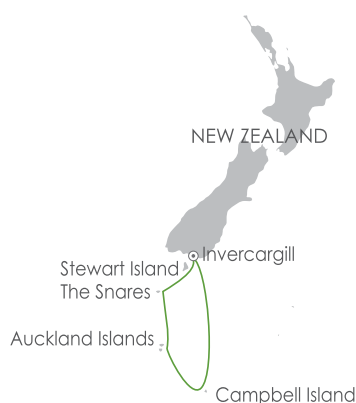
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You won't find them mentioned in a travel brochure on your high street; you won't find them in most guidebooks, you probably don't know anyone that has ever been there and they don't even appear on some maps of the New Zealand's South Pacific – these are the 'forgotten islands'. Despite their low profile, they are among the most remarkable wildlife reserves in the Southern Ocean, designated UNESCO World Heritage sites and afforded the highest protection of any nature reserves in New Zealand. Remote, uninhabited and on no regular shipping route, access is further restricted by a strict Management Plan which limits the number of people allowed ashore each year.

Departing the Port of Bluff, Invercargill, the first of these islands we visit are The Snares. No landings are permitted because the islands are honey-combed with seabird burrows. Of particular interest are the Snares Crested Penguin, a Snares Island Tomtit and Fernbird – all of which

are endemic. We should see them all as we enjoy the dramatic coastline and tree daisy forest from our Zodiac cruise.

In the Auckland Islands, the largest of the island groups, we will have the chance to spend the day ashore on Enderby Island, arguably the most amazing Subantarctic Island. Here you can hike through the windswept Rata forests, and along the exposed coastal cliffs. The wildlife is never far away and its lack of fear means close encounters, great for photography and observations. In Carnley Harbour in the south of the Auckland Islands there are a number of fascinating sites, including a Shy Albatross colony, abandoned Coastwatcher's huts, a shipwreck and castaway depots that we can visit. The weather will dictate what we do.

Campbell Island, the southernmost island of this expedition, is an example of what can be achieved in restoring islands. In recent years sheep, cattle, cats and rats have all been eliminated and the island is rapidly recovering. The great English botanist Sir Joseph Hooker, a friend of Charles Darwin, visited Campbell Island in the 1840s and described the flowering fields of 'megaherbs' to be "second to none outside of the tropics". We can say the same now, because of the removal of these introduced animals. This island is also the home of the majestic Southern Royal Albatross, the endemic Campbell Island Flightless Teal and Snipe.

These islands represent a priceless ecosystem. Joining this expedition redefines natural history travel and will leave you wishing you could have spent more time there.



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ITINERARY

Day 1: Invercargill

Make your way to the Ascot Park Hotel, from where we will transfer you to the Port of Bluff. (Reporting times and the departure time of the transfer will be confirmed with your voyage documents). The township of Bluff is situated on the north-eastern side of Bluff Hill, an extinct volcanic cone which forms a knoll at the southern end of the Bluff Peninsula which extends into Foveaux Strait.

The captain and expedition team will be waiting for your arrival at the ship to greet you and show you to your cabin. You will have the opportunity to familiarise yourself on board and there will be formal introductions to the team followed by safety briefings.

Join the captain on the bridge or fellow travellers on deck as we set sail for The Snares Islands. We will sail past Ruapuke Island, formerly a local Maori stronghold supporting a population of over 200 people. We will also be able to see Stewart Island. Despite appearing quite small on most

maps it is really quite large and has a 700 kilometre coastline. Seabirds that we may encounter at this early point in the voyage include: albatross, petrels, cormorants, gulls and Little Blue Penguins.

Day 2: The Snares – North East Island

The closest Subantarctic Islands to New Zealand, they were appropriately called The Snares as they were once considered a hazard for sailing ships. Comprising of two main islands and a group of five islands called the Western Chain; they are uninhabited and enjoy the highest protection as Nature Reserves. It is claimed by some that these islands are home to more nesting seabirds than all of the British Isles together.

We plan to arrive early in the morning and as landings are not permitted we will Zodiac cruise along the sheltered eastern side of the main island if the weather and sea conditions are suitable. In the sheltered bays, we should see the endemic Snares Crested

Penguin, Snares Island Tomtit and Fernbirds. Cape Pigeons, Antarctic Terns, White-fronted Terns and Red-billed Gulls are also present in good numbers. There are hundreds of thousands of Sooty Shearwaters nesting on The Snares; the actual number is much debated. The Buller's Albatross breed here from early January onwards.

Day 3: Auckland Islands – Enderby Island

The Auckland Islands group was formed by two volcanoes which erupted some 10-25 million years ago. They have subsequently been eroded and dissected by glaciation creating the archipelago as we know it today.

Enderby Island is one of the most beautiful islands in this group and is named for the same distinguished shipping family as our own vessel. This northern most island in the archipelago is an outstanding wildlife and birding location and is relatively easy to land on and walk around. The island was cleared of all introduced animals (pests) in 1994 and both birds



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and the vegetation, especially the herbaceous plants, are recovering both in numbers and diversity.

Our plan is to land at Sandy Bay, one of three breeding areas in the Auckland Islands for the Hooker's, or New Zealand, Sea Lion, a rare member of the seal family. Beachmaster bulls gather on the beach defending their harems from younger (ambitious) males, to mate with the cows shortly after they have given birth to a single pup. Hookers or New Zealand Sea Lion numbers are in a slow decline, for reasons which are not obvious but most probably connected with a nearby squid fishery.

During our day ashore there will be several options, some longer walks, some shorter walks and time to spend just sitting and enjoying the wildlife. The walking is relatively easy. A board

walk traverses the island to the dramatic western cliffs from there we follow the coast on the circumnavigation of the island.

Birds that we are likely to encounter include the following species: Southern Royal Albatross, Northern Giant Petrel, Auckland Island Shag, Auckland Island Flightless Teal, Auckland Island Banded Dotterel, Auckland Island Tomtit, Bellbird, Pipit, Red-crowned Parakeet, Yellow-eyed Penguin and Light-mantled Sooty Albatross. There is also a very good chance of seeing the Subantarctic Snipe. Other more common species we will see include the Goldfinch, Song Thrush, Blackbird, European Starling, Red-billed Gull and Redpoll. On Derry Castle Reef we will look for migratory waders which could include Bar-tailed Godwit, Turnstone and possibly vagrants.

Day 4: Auckland Islands – Carnley Harbour

In the south of the archipelago there is a very large sheltered harbour, rich in human history including shipwrecks, treasure hunters, Coastwatchers and of course scientific parties. We plan to arrive early morning from our anchorage at Enderby Island. We enter the harbour through the eastern entrance which is guarded on both sides by dramatic cliffs and rugged, tussock-covered hills.

Our activities here today are totally weather dependent. We have a number of options. If the weather is OK there will be an opportunity for the more energetic expeditioners to climb to the South West Cape and visit the Shy Mollymawk colony. Above the colony we occasionally see Gibson's Wandering Albatross breeding. This climb provides magnificent views in all directions, especially over the western entrance to Carnley Harbour, Adams Island and Western Harbour. For those not able to make the climb (it is reasonably difficult) there will be an opportunity to Zodiac cruise along the coast of Adams Island and Western Harbour, with landings in the later.

Other options include the Tagua Bay Coastwatcher's hut and



© E Bell



lookout (the former is derelict) which was occupied during the Second World War. We could visit Epigwatt and the remains of the 'Grafton' which was wrecked here in 1864. All five men aboard survived and lived here for 18 months before sailing their modified dinghy to New Zealand to get help. Two of the survivors wrote books about their ordeal. Their firsthand accounts tell us a lot about their time here. Alternatively we may visit the Erlagan clearing where a German Merchant ship cut firewood to fire its boilers after slipping its moorings in Dunedin on the eve of the Second World War. Another potential site is Camp Cove where we can see the remains of the castaway depots established and maintained by the New Zealand government between the 1860s and early 1900s. We depart Carnley Harbour for Campbell Island this afternoon.

Days 5 to 6: Campbell Island

We have two days to explore Campbell Island, New Zealand's southernmost Subantarctic territory. Its history is as rich and

varied as the other islands we have visited. Discovered in 1810, it was soon occupied by sealers who introduced rats and cats.

In 1895 the New Zealand government advertised the island as a pastoral lease. The lease was taken up by an entrepreneurial New Zealand sheep farmer who stocked the island with sheep and cattle. The farming practices, which included burning the scrub, modified the island considerably. The farming lasted until 1934 when it was abandoned. Coastwatchers were stationed on the island during the war and at the end of the war the station was taken over by the New Zealand Metrological service. They maintained a manned weather/research station there until 1995.

In the early 1970s the island was fenced in half and stock was removed off the northern half. The impacts of the remaining animals were monitored and they were all eventually removed in 1990. The vegetation recovered quickly and the cats died out naturally. In a very ambitious (and never before attempted on such a large scale) eradication programme the New Zealand Department of Conservation successfully removed the rats. With the island declared predator

free, the way was clear to reintroduce the endangered Campbell Island Flightless Teal which had been rediscovered on an offshore island in 1975. Snipe, which were formerly unknown from the island but were discovered on another offshore island, recolonised the islands themselves. The vegetation which the great English botanist, Sir Joseph Hooker described in 1841 as having a "Flora display second to none outside the tropics" is flourishing and is nothing short of spectacular.

We will offer a number of options which will enable you to explore the island. There will be extended walks to Northwest Bay and possibly Mt Honey. There will also be an easier walk to the Col Lyall Saddle. All of these options will allow you the opportunity and time to enjoy the Southern Royal Albatross which nest here in large numbers. We also visit areas of the island which contain outstanding examples of the megaherbs for which the island is renown.

Other birds we will search for include the teal and snipe, although the later is what we would refer to as a 'luck' bird. The endemic shag can be seen on the harbour, but unfortunately the nesting colonies of Rockhopper Penguins, Grey-head, Black-





© S Gutowsky

browed and Campbell Island Albatross are outside of the permitted areas and we will have to look for these species at sea.

Other birds we should see include Light-mantled Sooty Albatross, Northern Giant Petrel, Southern Skua, Red-billed Gull, Black-backed Gull, Antarctic Tern, Redpoll, Dunnock and New Zealand Pipit.

Day 7: At Sea

We are at sea en route to the Port of Bluff. We will take the opportunity to recap the many experiences we have had on this expedition. This is also a good opportunity to download and edit any remaining photos while they are fresh in your mind and you have the experience of our expedition team on board for questions. There will also be some good pelagic birding opportunities.

Tonight we enjoy a farewell and celebratory dinner with new found friends with time to reflect on a wealth of new experiences.

Day 8: Invercargill

We arrive at the Port of Bluff early in the morning. After breakfast, Customs formalities and a last minute opportunity to bid farewell to your expedition team you disembark and board our complimentary coach transfer to either a central city point or to the airport. Our adventure ends but memories will last long beyond this.

In case of unexpected delays due to weather and/or port operations we ask you not to book any onward travel from Invercargill until after midday today.

Note: During our voyage, circumstances may make it necessary or desirable to deviate from the proposed itinerary. This can include poor weather and opportunities for making unplanned excursions. Your Expedition Leader will keep you fully informed. Landings at the Subantarctic Islands of New Zealand are by permit only as administered by the Government of New Zealand. No landings are permitted at The Snares.

DATES

Voyage #SOE2066
23 – 30 December 2020

PRICES

Heritage Suite \$ 6,900 pp*

Large lounge area, separate bedroom with double bed and a single bed in the lounge, writing desk, wardrobe and drawers. Private bathroom with shower, toilet and washbasin. Large forward and side facing windows allow great views.

Mini Suite \$ 6,400 pp*

Separate bedroom with a double bed and a single bed or sofa in the lounge, writing desk, wardrobe and drawers. Private bathroom with shower, toilet and washbasin. Mini Suites have windows.

Superior Plus \$ 6,000 pp*

Two lower berths, writing desk, wardrobe and drawers. Private bathroom with shower, toilet and washbasin. These cabins have windows.

Superior \$ 5,600 pp*

One bunk (one upper and one lower berth), writing desk, wardrobe and drawers. Private bathroom with shower, toilet and washbasin. These cabins have windows.

Main Deck \$ 5,400 pp*

Two lower berths, writing desk, wardrobe and drawers. Private washbasin. Nearby shower and toilet facilities are shared with other Main Deck cabins. These cabins have a porthole.

Main Deck Triple \$ 5,000 pp*

One bunk (one upper and one lower berth) and one additional lower berth, writing desk, wardrobe and drawers. Private washbasin. Nearby shower and toilet facilities are shared with other Main Deck cabins. These cabins have a porthole.

* The price listed includes the additional landing fee of \$400 pp. (All prices are per person in US\$)

PRICE INCLUDES

Landing fees, pre/post cruise transfers, all on board ship accommodation with meals and all expedition shore excursions.

PRICE EXCLUDES

All items of a personal nature, laundry, drinks, gratuities. International/domestic flights, visas and travel insurance.

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IN THE WAKE OF SCOTT & SHACKLETON

ROSS SEA, ANTARCTICA

EXPEDITION DOSSIER

13 JANUARY – 11 FEBRUARY 2021



Heritage Expeditions

Antarctica • Western and South Pacific
Subantarctic Islands • Russian Far East





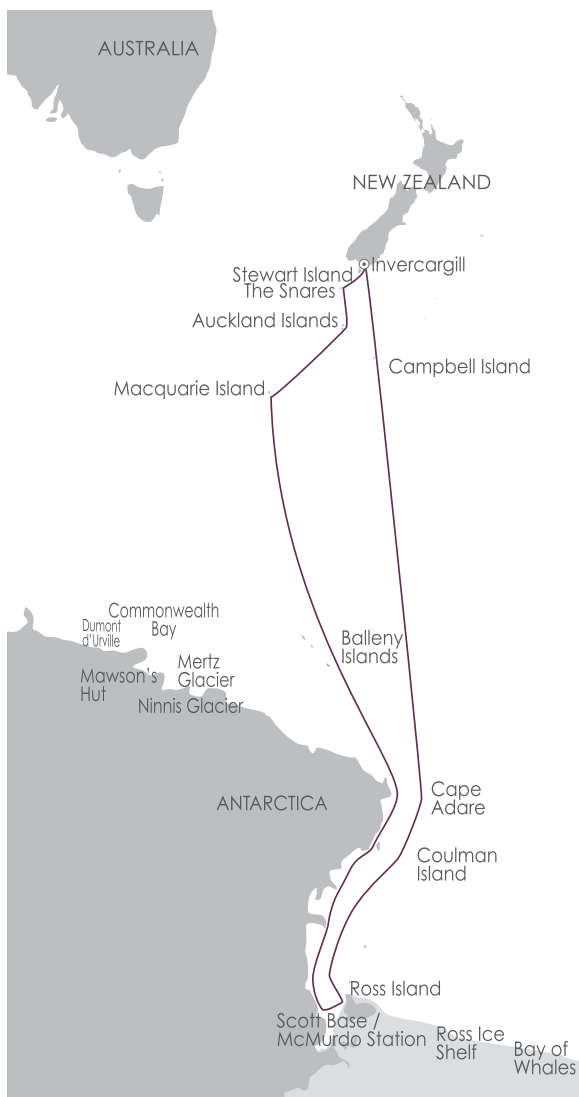
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The Ross Sea region of Antarctica is one of the most remote places on Planet Earth and one of the most fascinating places in the continent's human history. With shipping restricted by impenetrable pack ice to just two brief months each austral summer, few people have ever visited this strange and beautiful territory, with opportunities for non-scientific personnel limited to a handful of tourist expedition ships. Heritage Expeditions offers such a voyage on its own fully equipped and ice-strengthened ship *Spirit of Enderby*, crewed by some of the most experienced officers and sailors in the world and staffed by a passionate and knowledgeable expedition team. This is a unique opportunity to experience nature on a scale so grand there are no words to describe it.

The Ross Sea takes its name from Sir James Clark Ross who discovered it in 1841. The British Royal Geographical Society chose the Ross Sea for the now famous British National Antarctic Expedition in 1901-04 led by Robert Falcon Scott. That one expedition spawned what is sometimes referred to as the 'Race to the Pole'. Ernest Shackleton almost succeeded in 1907-09 and the Japanese explorer Nobu Shirase tried in 1910-12. Scott thought it was his, but was beaten by his rival, Norwegian Roald Amundsen in the summer of 1911. Shackleton's Trans- Antarctic expedition in 1914-17 marked the end of this 'heroic' or 'golden age' of exploration, but many of the relics of this era, including some huts, remain. The dramatic landscape described

by these early explorers is unchanged. Mt Erebus, Mt Discovery and the Transantarctic Mountains are as inspiring today as they were 100 years ago. The penguin rookeries described by the early biologists fluctuate in numbers from year to year, but they still occupy the same sites. The seals, which are no longer hunted for food lie around on ice floes seemingly unperturbed. The whales, which were hunted so ruthlessly here in the 1920s, are slowly coming back, but it is a long way back from the edge of extinction, and some species have done better than others. Snow Petrels, Wilson's Storm-Petrels, Antarctic Prions and South Polar Skuas all breed in this seemingly inhospitable environment.

There is so much to do and so much to see here, from exploring historic huts and sites to visiting penguin rookeries, marvelling at the glacial ice tongues and ice shelves, and understanding the icebergs and sea ice. Then there are all the seabirds, seals and whales to observe and photograph, modern scientific bases and field camps to visit and simply the opportunity to spend time drinking in the marvellous landscape that has always enthralled visitors.

Lying like stepping stones to the Antarctic continent are the little known Subantarctic Islands. Our journey also includes The Snares, Auckland, Macquarie and Campbell Islands. They break our long journey, but more importantly, they help prepare us for what lies ahead, for these islands are part of the amazing and dynamic Southern Ocean ecosystem of which Antarctica is at the very heart. It is the powerhouse which drives this ecosystem upon which the world depends.



ITINERARY

Day 1: Invercargill

Arrive at Invercargill, New Zealand's southernmost city. Established by Scottish settlers, the area's wealth of rich farmland is well suited to the sheep and dairy farms that dot the landscape.

Passengers should make their way to the Ascot Park Hotel where our group will spend the first night of the expedition. This evening there will be an informal get-together at the hotel for dinner; an excellent opportunity to meet fellow adventurers on your voyage and some of our expedition team.

Day 2: Port of Bluff

Today we enjoy breakfast in the hotel restaurant and take the opportunity to explore some of the local Southland scenery and attractions before heading to the Port of Bluff to embark the *Spirit of Enderby*. You will have time to settle into your cabin and familiarise yourself with the ship; we will also take the opportunity to conduct a number of safety briefings. You are invited to join the expedition team and captain

on the bridge as we set our course to The Snares and our adventure begins.

Day 3: The Snares – North East Island

The closest Subantarctic Islands to New Zealand, they were appropriately called The Snares because they were probably considered a hazard by their discoverer Lieutenant Broughton in 1795. Comprising of two main islands and a smattering of rocky islets, they are uninhabited and highly protected.

North East Island is the largest of The Snares and it is claimed that this one island is home to more



nesting seabirds than all of the British Isles together. We will arrive early in the morning and cruise along the sheltered eastern side of the rugged coastline by Zodiac if weather and sea conditions are suitable (landings are not permitted). In the sheltered bays, we should see the endemic Snares Crested Penguins, Snares Island Tomtit and Fernbirds. Cape Pigeons, Antarctic Terns and Red-billed Gulls are also present in good numbers. There are hundreds of thousands of Sooty Shearwaters nesting on The Snares; the actual number is much debated. Around Christmas time each year the Buller's Albatross return here to nest. Out on the Western Chain (considered part of The Snares island group) the Salvin's Albatross will already be nesting. Other nesting seabirds include Cape Petrel (or Pigeon), Mottled Petrel, diving-petrel and Broad-billed Prion.

Day 4: Auckland Islands – Enderby Island

The Auckland Islands group was formed by two volcanoes which erupted some 10-25 million years ago. They have subsequently been eroded and dissected by glaciation creating the archipelago as we know it today.

The group is one of the largest in the Subantarctic and has a

most colourful history of discovery and attempted settlement. Characterised by towering cliffs and rugged sea stacks, these islands have borne witness to many a shipwreck in days gone by.

Enderby Island in this group is a great place to view birds and wildlife and is perhaps the most beautiful of all the Subantarctic Islands. Located at the northern end of this cluster of islands, it offers a varying landscape with a low plateau of scrubland and cushion bog. We will enjoy the extensive areas of regenerating patches of megaherbs especially the *Anisotome latifolia* and *Stilbocarpa Polaris*. Introduced cattle, rabbits and mice were removed from this island in the mid 1990s and the plants and birds are responding, increasing in numbers and diversity.

The island enjoys a much milder climate than most Subantarctic Islands because of its location. Our plan is to land at Sandy Bay, one of three breeding areas in the Auckland Islands for the Hooker's or New Zealand Sea Lion, a rare member of the seal family. Beachmaster bulls gather on the beach defending their harems from younger (ambitious) males, to mate with the cows shortly after they have given



birth of a single pup. Hookers or New Zealand Sea Lion numbers are in a slow decline, for reasons which are not obvious but most probably connected with a nearby squid fishery. As we explore further inland it is not unusual to encounter a sea lion relaxing in the gnarled and windswept rata forest.

In the forest behind the beach we find Bellbirds, Red-crowned Parakeets and the friendly Tomtits. Yellow-eyed Penguins also nest in the forest and under the tangled divaricated shrub *Myrsine divaricata*. You can see them as they travel backwards and forwards across the beach to their nests, especially in the evenings. On the more open terrain beyond the Rata forest we find nesting Royal Albatross and the endemic Auckland Island Dotterel. There is also a good chance of seeing the endemic Auckland Island Flightless Teal and the Subantarctic Snipe. Migratory waders (if there are any) congregate at Derry Castle Reef, and it is not unusual to observe Bar-tailed Godwit and Turnstone here.

As we explore further we should also have the chance to see the following species: Northern Giant Petrel, Auckland Island Shag, Tomtit and Pipit and the





© O Liodden

Light-mantled Sooty Albatross. Other more common species we will see include the Goldfinch, Song Thrush, Blackbird, European Starling, Red-billed Gull and Redpoll.

Day 5: Auckland Islands – Carnley Harbour

We arrive in Carnley Harbour, once the caldera of the Carnley volcano. The walls of the caldera have been breached on both the eastern and western sides, separating Adams Island to the south. The eastern entrance is navigable for smaller vessels such as ours. The extensive harbour is rich in history and in opportunities. Our activities are totally weather dependent as the wind often funnels down the harbour making anchoring and some landings impossible.

We have a number of options including a reasonably difficult scramble to a Shy Albatross colony on South West Cape. For those not able to manage this there will be the option to Zodiac cruise the pristine shores of Adams Island and Western Harbour. If

wind and weather prevent us from doing this, other options include a relatively easy walk to an abandoned Coastwatcher's hut and lookout used during the Second World War. If landing on the shores on the north arm of Carnley Harbour where the *Grafton* was wrecked in 1865, the remains of the vessel and their castaway hut can still be seen. There are two other sites of interest that if we can't land at the above sites we might consider. They are Camp Cove, site of the official Government Castaway depots constructed in the late 1800s and the 'Erlangen' clearing where the German merchant ship of the same name cut firewood on the eve of the Second World War which allowed it to leave New Zealand undetected.

Day 6: At Sea

At sea, learn more about the biology and history of the Subantarctic Islands and the Southern Ocean through a series of lectures and presentations. We will be at sea all day, so it is another opportunity to spot pelagic species including (but not limited too) the Wandering Albatross, Royal Albatross, Shy and White-capped Albatross, Light-mantled Sooty Albatross, Grey-headed Albatross, Black-browed Albatross, White-chinned

Petrel, Mottled Petrel, White-headed Petrel, Cape Petrel, diving-petrel, Grey-backed and Black-bellied Storm-Petrels. This is potentially some of the best pelagic 'birding' on the expedition and for those with country lists (of birds) we will be passing from New Zealand into Australian waters.

Days 7 to 8: Macquarie Island

Australia's prized Subantarctic possession, it supports one of the highest concentrations of wildlife in the Southern Ocean. Millions of penguins of four different species – King, Rockhopper, Gentoo and the endemic Royal – breed here. We plan to spend our time divided between the two approved landing sites, Sandy Bay and Buckles Bay as well as a Zodiac cruise at Lusitania Bay if weather conditions permit.

At Sandy Bay a Royal Penguin rookery teems with feisty little birds trotting back and forth, golden head plumes bobbing as they march to and from the shore. All three million of the world's Royal Penguins breed on Macquarie Island. There is also a substantial King Penguin Colony. Some of the best observations will be had by quietly sitting and letting the birds come to you. They are both unafraid and inquisitive – the combination is unique.



© N. Russ



At Buckles Bay we will have a guided tour of the Australian Antarctic Division Base which was established in the late 1940s and has been manned continuously since then. There is a range of scientific research being undertaken here as well as a very strategically important weather station.

Large groups of Southern Elephant Seals slumber on the beaches and in the tussock at both of our landing sites. These giant, blubbery creatures will barely acknowledge our presence, lying in groups of intertwined bodies, undergoing their annual moult. Younger bulls spar in the shallow water,

preparing for their mature years when they will look after their own harems.

The King Penguin rookery at Lusitania Bay is noisy and spectacular. A welcoming committee will likely porpoise around our Zodiacs as a quarter of a million King Penguins stand at attention on shore. In the centre of the rookery, rusting condensers are grim reminders of a time when scores of penguins were slaughtered for their oil. Now their offspring have reclaimed this territory.

In 2011 the Tasmanian National Parks and Wildlife Service

undertook one of the most ambitious eradication projects anywhere in the world. Their plan was to rid the island of all introduced species including rabbits, rats and mice. It looks like it has succeeded and the island and its wildlife is responding. The vegetation is re-establishing and petrel and prion numbers are increasing.

It is an amazing island, in addition to the penguins and elephant seals, there are three species of fur seals to be found there and four species of albatross, Wandering, Black-browed, Grey-headed and Light-mantled Sooty.

Days 9 to 12: At Sea

Soaring albatross and petrels circle the vessel as we steam ever southward through the Southern Ocean. Lectures now concentrate on Antarctica and the Ross Sea region. We will pay attention to water temperatures so that we know when we cross the Antarctic Convergence into the cold but extremely productive Antarctic waters. Drifting icebergs carry vivid colours and come in extraordinary shapes. Each is a unique, natural sculpture. The captain will manoeuvre the ship in close for your first ice photography and announce a special celebration as we pass the Antarctic Circle and into Antarctica's realm of 24-hour daylight!

Relax in the ship's bar and catch up with some reading in the library. If you have brought your laptop with you there will be time to download and edit photos while they are fresh in your mind.

Days 13 to 22: Antarctica's Ross Sea Region

During our time in the Ross Sea region, we will visit the highlights



of Antarctica's most historic region. Due to the unpredictable nature of ice and weather conditions, a day-by-day itinerary is not possible. The captain and Expedition Leader will assess daily conditions and take advantage of every opportunity to make landings or send you out in the Zodiacs. Our program emphasises wildlife viewing, key scientific bases and historic sites, as well as the spectacular scenery of the coastal terrain, the glaciers and icebergs of the Ross Sea. Whilst specific landings cannot be guaranteed, we hope to visit the following as well as seek out new, perhaps previously unvisited areas.

We hope to visit the following areas:

Cape Adare

Cape Adare's bold headland and the Downshire Cliffs greet us as we approach Cape Adare – ice conditions permitting – at the tip of the Ross Sea, the site of the largest Adelie Penguin rookery in Antarctica. Blanketing the large, flat spit which forms the cape is the huge rookery which now, at the height of summer, numbers over one million birds – an absolutely staggering sight. You will never forget your first experiences in a ceaselessly active and noisy 'penguin city', where the dapper inhabitants show no fear of their strange visitors. Our naturalists will point out various aspects of their lifestyle and, by sitting down quietly, one may observe the often comical behaviour of the penguins, courtship displays, feeding ever-hungry chicks, territorial disputes and the pilfering of nest material. Curious penguins often come very close, presenting superb photographic opportunities. Surrounded by a sea of penguins, we will find Borchgrevink's Hut, the oldest in Antarctica, an



© S Blanc

overwintering shelter for the first expedition to the continent in 1899. It is a fascinating relic of the 'Heroic Age' of Antarctic exploration and we are able to inspect the interior, which still contains artefacts of the early explorers. One thousand feet up in the hills behind Cape Adare is the oldest grave in Antarctica, that of 22-year-old Nicolai Hansen, a member of Borchgrevink's expedition.

Cape Hallett

The enormous Admiralty Range heralds our arrival at Cape Hallett, near the head of the Ross Sea. The scenery here is wild and spectacular; mountains rear up towering out of the sea to over 4,000-metres high and giant glaciers course down from the interior to the water's edge. We land next to the site of the abandoned American/New Zealand base, home to large

numbers of Adelie Penguins and Weddell Seals.

Franklin Island

This rugged island, deep in the Ross Sea, is home to a large Adelie Penguin colony and other nesting seabirds. We will attempt a Zodiac landing near the rookery as well as exploring the coastline. If a landing is achieved and weather conditions are suitable there will be an opportunity for those who are feeling fit to climb to the summit of the island.

Possession Islands

These small, rugged and rarely visited islands lie off the shore of Cape Hallett. An Adelie Penguin rookery, numbering tens of thousands of birds, blankets Foyen Island. Observe their busy and sometimes humorous activities, with the Admiralty Mountains forming a superb backdrop across the water.



© D Brown



© O Belonovich



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Ross Ice Shelf

The largest ice shelf in Antarctica, the Ross Ice Shelf is also the world's largest body of floating ice. A natural ice barrier, at times it creates hazardous weather conditions, with sheets of snow blown at gale force by the katabatic winds coming off the polar ice cap. Just 800 miles from the South Pole, this daunting spectacle prevented many early Antarctic explorers from venturing further south. From the Ross Ice Shelf we cruise eastward along the shelf front, with its spectacular 30-metre high ice cliffs, which sometimes calve tabular icebergs.

Ross Island – Mount Erebus/ Cape Bird/Shackleton's Hut/ Scott's Hut

At the base of the Ross Sea we arrive at Ross Island, dominated by the 13,000ft high volcano, Mt Erebus. The New Zealand Antarctica programme maintains a field station at Cape Bird, where scientists study many aspects of the region's natural history, including the large Adelie Penguin colony. Scientists may be at the field station

when we arrive. At Cape Royds we visit Sir Ernest Shackleton's hut, built during the Nimrod polar attempt of 1907-1909. Lectures explain many facets of Shackleton's amazing expeditions. He was possibly one of the greatest, and certainly one of the most heroic of the Antarctic explorers. Though the legendary explorers are long gone, the area around the hut is far from deserted, having been reclaimed by the original inhabitants of the area – thousands of Adelie Penguins in the world's southernmost penguin rookery.

Also found on Ross Island is Cape Evans, the historic site of Captain Scott's second hut, erected in



© J.J.L. Heures

1911 and beautifully preserved by the Antarctic Heritage Trust. It stands as testimony to the rigours faced by pioneering explorers. Inside the hut we will witness the living conditions almost exactly as they were when Scott, Wilson and Ponting occupied these quarters. Behind the hut, Mt Erebus looms above with its plume of white smoke spiralling up from the still-active inferno in its bowels.

McMurdo and Scott Base (including Scott's Discovery Hut)

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© E Whitehead

Days 27 to 28: Campbell Island – Perseverance Harbour

New Zealand's southernmost Subantarctic territory, the Campbell Island group lies approximately 660km south of Bluff. We visit Campbell Island, the main island in the group, and spend the day exploring the island on foot from Perseverance Harbour, a long inlet cutting into the undulating landscape. Campbell Island is a truly magnificent place of rugged scenery, unique flora and abundant wildlife. Perseverance Harbour where we drop anchor is an occasional refuge for Southern Right Whales who come here to calve. Here we will find a now abandoned New Zealand meteorological station as well as Campbell Island Shags, penguins, fur seals and rare Hooker's Sea Lions.

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Voyage #SOE2170
13 January – 11 February 2021

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IN THE WAKE OF SCOTT & SHACKLETON

ROSS SEA, ANTARCTICA

EXPEDITION DOSSIER

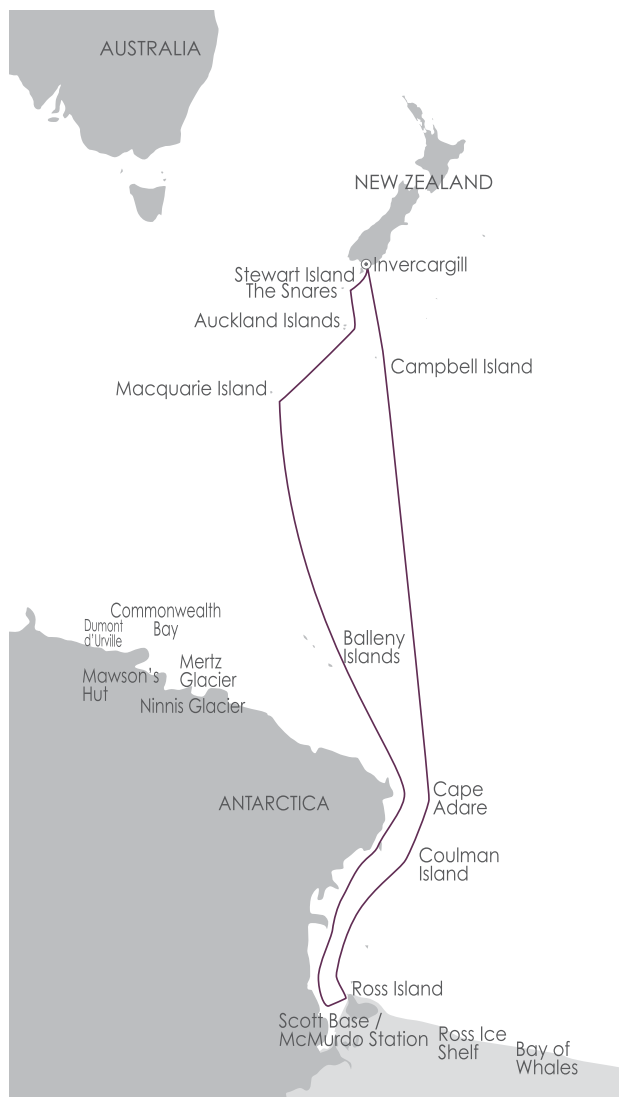
11 FEBRUARY – 12 MARCH 2021



Heritage Expeditions

Antarctica • Western and South Pacific
Subantarctic Islands • Russian Far East





The Ross Sea region of Antarctica is one of the most remote places on Planet Earth and one of the most fascinating places in the continent's human history. With shipping restricted by impenetrable pack ice to just two brief months each austral summer, few people have ever visited this strange and beautiful territory, with opportunities for non-scientific personnel limited to a handful of tourist expedition ships. Heritage Expeditions offers such a voyage on its own fully equipped and ice-strengthened ship Spirit of Enderby, crewed by some of the most experienced officers and sailors in the world and staffed by a passionate and knowledgeable expedition team. This is a unique opportunity to experience nature on a scale so grand there are no words to describe it.

The Ross Sea takes its name from Sir James Clark Ross who discovered it in 1841. The British Royal Geographical Society chose the Ross Sea for the now famous British National Antarctic Expedition in 1901-04 led by Robert Falcon Scott. That one expedition spawned what is sometimes referred to as the 'Race to the Pole'. Ernest Shackleton almost succeeded in 1907-09 and the Japanese explorer Nobu Shirase tried in 1910-12. Scott thought it was his, but was beaten by his rival, Norwegian Roald Amundsen in the summer of 1911. Shackleton's Trans-Antarctic expedition in 1914-17 marked the end of this 'heroic' or 'golden age' of exploration, but many of the relics of this era, including some huts, remain. The dramatic landscape described

by these early explorers is unchanged. Mt Erebus, Mt Discovery and the Transantarctic Mountains are as inspiring today as they were 100 years ago. The penguin rookeries described by the early biologists fluctuate in numbers from year to year, but they still occupy the same sites. The seals, which are no longer hunted for food lie around on ice floes seemingly unperturbed. The whales, which were hunted so ruthlessly here in the 1920s, are slowly coming back, but it is a long way back from the edge of extinction, and some species have done better than others. Snow Petrels, Wilson's Storm-Petrels, Antarctic Prions and South Polar Skuas all breed in this seemingly inhospitable environment.

There is so much to do and so much to see here, from exploring historic huts and sites to visiting penguin rookeries, marvelling at the glacial ice tongues and ice shelves, and understanding the icebergs and sea ice. Then there are all the seabirds, seals and whales to observe and photograph, modern scientific bases and field camps to visit and simply the opportunity to spend time drinking in the marvellous landscape that has always enthralled visitors.

Lying like stepping stones to the Antarctic continent are the little known Subantarctic Islands. Our journey also includes The Snares, Auckland, Macquarie and Campbell Islands. They break our long journey, but more importantly, they help prepare us for what lies ahead, for these islands are part of the amazing and dynamic Southern Ocean ecosystem of which Antarctica is at the very heart. It is the powerhouse which drives this ecosystem upon which the world depends.



ITINERARY

Day 1: Invercargill

Arrive at Invercargill, New Zealand's southernmost city. Established by Scottish settlers, the area's wealth of rich farmland is well suited to the sheep and dairy farms that dot the landscape.

Passengers should make their way to the Ascot Park Hotel where our group will spend the first night of the expedition. This evening there will be an informal get-together at the hotel for dinner; an excellent opportunity to meet fellow adventurers on your voyage and some of our expedition team.

Day 2: Port of Bluff

Today we enjoy breakfast in the hotel restaurant and take the opportunity to explore some of the local Southland scenery and attractions before heading to the Port of Bluff to embark the *Spirit of Enderby*. You will have time to settle into your cabin and familiarise yourself with the ship; we will also take the opportunity to conduct a number of safety briefings. You are invited to join the expedition team and captain

on the bridge as we set our course to The Snares and our adventure begins.

Day 3: The Snares – North East Island

The closest Subantarctic Islands to New Zealand, they were appropriately called The Snares because they were probably considered a hazard by their discoverer Lieutenant Broughton in 1795. Comprising of two main islands and a smattering of rocky islets, they are uninhabited and highly protected.

North East Island is the largest of The Snares and it is claimed that this one island is home to more



nesting seabirds than all of the British Isles together. We will arrive early in the morning and cruise along the sheltered eastern side of the rugged coastline by Zodiac if weather and sea conditions are suitable (landings are not permitted). In the sheltered bays, we should see the endemic Snares Crested Penguins, Snares Island Tomtit and Fernbirds. Cape Pigeons, Antarctic Terns and Red-billed Gulls are also present in good numbers. There are hundreds of thousands of Sooty Shearwaters nesting on The Snares; the actual number is much debated. Around Christmas time each year the Buller's Albatross return here to nest. Out on the Western Chain (considered part of The Snares island group) the Salvin's Albatross will already be nesting. Other nesting seabirds include Cape Petrel (or Pigeon), Mottled Petrel, diving-petrel and Broad-billed Prion.

Day 4: Auckland Islands – Enderby Island

The Auckland Islands group was formed by two volcanoes which erupted some 10-25 million years ago. They have subsequently been eroded and dissected by glaciation creating the archipelago as we know it today.

The group is one of the largest in the Subantarctic and has a most colourful history of discovery

and attempted settlement. Characterised by towering cliffs and rugged sea stacks, these islands have borne witness to many a shipwreck in days gone by.

Enderby Island in this group is a great place to view birds and wildlife and is perhaps the most beautiful of all the Subantarctic Islands. Located at the northern end of this cluster of islands, it offers a varying landscape with a low plateau of scrubland and cushion bog. We will enjoy the extensive areas of regenerating patches of megaherbs especially the *Anisotome latifolia* and *Stilbocarpa Polaris*. Introduced cattle, rabbits and mice were removed from this island in the mid 1990s and the plants and birds are responding, increasing in numbers and diversity.

The island enjoys a much milder climate than most Subantarctic Islands because of its location. Our plan is to land at Sandy Bay, one of three breeding areas in the Auckland Islands for the Hooker's or New Zealand Sea Lion, a rare member of the seal family. Beachmaster bulls gather on the beach defending their harems from younger (ambitious) males, to mate with the cows shortly after they have given birth of a single pup. Hookers or



New Zealand Sea Lion numbers are in a slow decline, for reasons which are not obvious but most probably connected with a nearby squid fishery. As we explore further inland it is not unusual to encounter a sea lion relaxing in the gnarled and windswept rata forest.

In the forest behind the beach we find Bellbirds, Red-crowned Parakeets and the friendly Tomtits. Yellow-eyed Penguins also nest in the forest and under the tangled divaricated shrub *Myrsine divaricata*. You can see them as they travel backwards and forwards across the beach to their nests, especially in the evenings. On the more open terrain beyond the Rata forest we find nesting Royal Albatross and the endemic Auckland Island Dotterel. There is also a good chance of seeing the endemic Auckland Island Flightless Teal and the Subantarctic Snipe. Migratory waders (if there are any) congregate at Derry Castle Reef, and it is not unusual to observe Bar-tailed Godwit and Turnstone here.

As we explore further we should also have the chance to see the following species: Northern Giant Petrel, Auckland Island Shag, Tomtit and Pipit and the Light-mantled Sooty Albatross.



© R Robinson



Other more common species we will see include the Goldfinch, Song Thrush, Blackbird, European Starling, Red-billed Gull and Redpoll.

Day 5: Auckland Islands – Carnley Harbour

We arrive in Carnley Harbour, once the caldera of the Carnley volcano. The walls of the caldera have been breached on both the eastern and western sides, separating Adams Island to the south. The eastern entrance is navigable for smaller vessels such as ours. The extensive harbour is rich in history and in opportunities. Our activities are totally weather dependent as the wind often funnels down the harbour making anchoring and some landings impossible.

We have a number of options including a reasonably difficult scramble to a Shy Albatross colony on South West Cape. For those not able to manage this there will be the option to Zodiac cruise the pristine shores of Adams Island and Western Harbour. If wind and weather prevent us

from doing this, other options include a relatively easy walk to an abandoned Coastwatcher's hut and lookout used during the Second World War. If landing on the shores on the north arm of Carnley Harbour where the *Grafton* was wrecked in 1865, the remains of the vessel and their castaway hut can still be seen. There are two other sites of interest that if we can't land at the above sites we might consider. They are Camp Cove, site of the official Government Castaway depots constructed in the late 1800s and the 'Erlangen' clearing where the German merchant ship of the same name cut firewood on the eve of the Second World War which allowed it to leave New Zealand undetected.

Day 6: At Sea

At sea, learn more about the biology and history of the Subantarctic Islands and the Southern Ocean through a series of lectures and presentations. We will be at sea all day, so it is another opportunity to spot pelagic species including (but not limited too) the Wandering Albatross, Royal Albatross, Shy and White-capped Albatross, Light-mantled Sooty Albatross, Grey-headed Albatross, Black-browed Albatross, White-chinned Petrel, Mottled Petrel, White-

headed Petrel, Cape Petrel, diving-petrel, Grey-backed and Black-bellied Storm-Petrels. This is potentially some of the best pelagic 'birding' on the expedition and for those with country lists (of birds) we will be passing from New Zealand into Australian waters.

Days 7 to 8: Macquarie Island

Australia's prized Subantarctic possession, it supports one of the highest concentrations of wildlife in the Southern Ocean. Millions of penguins of four different species – King, Rockhopper, Gentoo and the endemic Royal – breed here. We plan to spend our time divided between the two approved landing sites, Sandy Bay and Buckles Bay as well as a Zodiac cruise at Lusitania Bay if weather conditions permit.

At Sandy Bay a Royal Penguin rookery teems with feisty little birds trotting back and forth, golden head plumes bobbing as they march to and from the shore. All three million of the world's Royal Penguins breed on Macquarie Island. There is also a substantial King Penguin Colony. Some of the best observations will be had by quietly sitting and letting the birds come to you. They are both unafraid and inquisitive – the combination is unique.





© S Blanc

At Buckles Bay we will have a guided tour of the Australian Antarctic Division Base which was established in the late 1940s and has been manned continuously since then. There is a range of scientific research being undertaken here as well as a very strategically important weather station.

Large groups of Southern Elephant Seals slumber on the beaches and in the tussock at both of our landing sites. These giant, blubbery creatures will barely acknowledge our presence, lying in groups of intertwined bodies, undergoing their annual moult. Younger bulls spar in the shallow water,

preparing for their mature years when they will look after their own harems.

The King Penguin rookery at Lusitania Bay is noisy and spectacular. A welcoming committee will likely porpoise around our Zodiacs as a quarter of a million King Penguins stand at attention on shore. In the centre of the rookery, rusting condensers are grim reminders of a time when scores of penguins were slaughtered for their oil. Now their offspring have reclaimed this territory.

In 2011 the Tasmanian National Parks and Wildlife Service

undertook one of the most ambitious eradication projects anywhere in the world. Their plan was to rid the island of all introduced species including rabbits, rats and mice. It looks like it has succeeded and the island and its wildlife is responding. The vegetation is re-establishing and petrel and prion numbers are increasing.

It is an amazing island, in addition to the penguins and elephant seals, there are three species of fur seals to be found there and four species of albatross, Wandering, Black-browed, Grey-headed and Light-mantled Sooty.

Days 9 to 12: At Sea

Soaring albatross and petrels circle the vessel as we steam ever southward through the Southern Ocean. Lectures now concentrate on Antarctica and the Ross Sea region. We will pay attention to water temperatures so that we know when we cross the Antarctic Convergence into the cold but extremely productive Antarctic waters. Drifting icebergs carry vivid colours and come in extraordinary shapes. Each is a unique, natural sculpture. The captain will manoeuvre the ship in close for your first ice photography and announce a special celebration as we pass the Antarctic Circle and into Antarctica's realm of 24-hour daylight!

Relax in the ship's bar and catch up with some reading in the library. If you have brought your laptop with you there will be time to download and edit photos while they are fresh in your mind.

Days 13 to 22: Antarctica's Ross Sea Region

During our time in the Ross Sea region, we will visit the highlights



© J Jones

of Antarctica's most historic region. Due to the unpredictable nature of ice and weather conditions, a day-by-day itinerary is not possible. The captain and Expedition Leader will assess daily conditions and take advantage of every opportunity to make landings or send you out in the Zodiacs. Our program emphasises wildlife viewing, key scientific bases and historic sites, as well as the spectacular scenery of the coastal terrain, the glaciers and icebergs of the Ross Sea. Whilst specific landings cannot be guaranteed, we hope to visit the following as well as seek out new, perhaps previously unvisited areas.

We hope to visit the following areas:

Cape Adare

Cape Adare's bold headland and the Downshire Cliffs greet us as we approach Cape Adare – ice conditions permitting – at the tip of the Ross Sea, the site of the largest Adelie Penguin rookery in Antarctica. Blanketing the large, flat spit which forms the cape is the huge rookery which now, at the height of summer, numbers over one million birds – an absolutely staggering sight. You will never forget your first experiences in a ceaselessly active and noisy 'penguin city', where the dapper inhabitants show no fear of their strange visitors. Our naturalists will point out various aspects of their lifestyle and, by sitting down quietly, one may observe the often comical behaviour of the penguins, courtship displays, feeding ever-hungry chicks, territorial disputes and the pilfering of nest material. Curious penguins often come very close, presenting superb photographic opportunities. Surrounded by a sea of penguins, we will find Borchgrevink's Hut, the oldest in Antarctica, an



overwintering shelter for the first expedition to the continent in 1899. It is a fascinating relic of the 'Heroic Age' of Antarctic exploration and we are able to inspect the interior, which still contains artefacts of the early explorers. One thousand feet up in the hills behind Cape Adare is the oldest grave in Antarctica, that of 22-year-old Nicolai Hansen, a member of Borchgrevink's expedition.

Cape Hallett

The enormous Admiralty Range heralds our arrival at Cape Hallett, near the head of the Ross Sea. The scenery here is wild and spectacular; mountains rear up towering out of the sea to over 4,000-metres high and giant glaciers course down from the interior to the water's edge. We land next to the site of the abandoned American/New Zealand base, home to large

numbers of Adelie Penguins and Weddell Seals.

Franklin Island

This rugged island, deep in the Ross Sea, is home to a large Adelie Penguin colony and other nesting seabirds. We will attempt a Zodiac landing near the rookery as well as exploring the coastline. If a landing is achieved and weather conditions are suitable there will be an opportunity for those who are feeling fit to climb to the summit of the island.

Possession Islands

These small, rugged and rarely visited islands lie off the shore of Cape Hallett. An Adelie Penguin rookery, numbering tens of thousands of birds, blankets Foyen Island. Observe their busy and sometimes humorous activities, with the Admiralty Mountains forming a superb backdrop across the water.





Ross Ice Shelf

The largest ice shelf in Antarctica, the Ross Ice Shelf is also the world's largest body of floating ice. A natural ice barrier, at times it creates hazardous weather conditions, with sheets of snow blown at gale force by the katabatic winds coming off the polar ice cap. Just 800 miles from the South Pole, this daunting spectacle prevented many early Antarctic explorers from venturing further south. From the Ross Ice Shelf we cruise eastward along the shelf front, with its spectacular 30-metre high ice cliffs, which sometimes calve tabular icebergs.

Ross Island – Mount Erebus/ Cape Bird/Shackleton's Hut/ Scott's Hut

At the base of the Ross Sea we arrive at Ross Island, dominated by the 13,000ft high volcano, Mt Erebus. The New Zealand Antarctica programme maintains a field station at Cape Bird, where scientists study many aspects of the region's natural history, including the large Adelie Penguin colony. Scientists may be at the field station when we arrive. At Cape Royds we

visit Sir Ernest Shackleton's hut, built during the Nimrod polar attempt of 1907-1909. Lectures explain many facets of Shackleton's amazing expeditions. He was possibly one of the greatest, and certainly one of the most heroic of the Antarctic explorers. Though the legendary explorers are long gone, the area around the hut is far from deserted, having been reclaimed by the original inhabitants of the area – thousands of Adelie Penguins in the world's southernmost penguin rookery.

Also found on Ross Island is Cape Evans, the historic site of Captain Scott's second hut, erected in 1911 and beautifully preserved by the



Antarctic Heritage Trust. It stands as testimony to the rigours faced by pioneering explorers. Inside the hut we will witness the living conditions almost exactly as they were when Scott, Wilson and Ponting occupied these quarters. Behind the hut, Mt Erebus looms above with its plume of white smoke spiralling up from the still-active inferno in its bowels.

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