

Join Mark on the Festival of Wildlife in the Falklands and South Georgia

13-28 October 2025



Mark is delighted to join the very popular Festival of Wildlife as guest lecturer again, hosted by Wildlife Worldwide. In 2025, it will be in the fabulous and very wildlife-rich sub-Antarctic islands of the Falklands and South Georgia. On this spectacular, exclusive 16-night expedition cruise aboard the *Magellan Explorer*, we'll see a mind-boggling variety of wildlife and wild places. Our journey begins and ends in Punta Arenas, Chile.

First stop is the Falkland Islands, which is home to several species that are unlikely to be encountered elsewhere on the trip. We spend our first couple of days on land exploring the archipelago, observing bustling colonies of rockhopper and gentoo penguins, and scanning the waters for Peale's and Commerson's dolphins. Our journey then takes us further south. Remote by any standards, South Georgia is a mere speck in the immensity of the Southern Ocean. It has an ethereal beauty that is nothing short of breathtaking and, with 50 million seabirds and more than 5 million seals, is home to some of the greatest concentrations of wildlife on the planet. There are animals everywhere – from wandering albatrosses and macaroni penguins to southern elephant seals and endemic South Georgia pipits – and they are so unconcerned by our presence that most of them merely stand and stare or come and take a closer look. We hope to see Antarctic fur seals at picturesque Elsehul, visit Sir Ernest Shackleton's grave at Grytviken, mingle with a mind-boggling 150,000 pairs of king penguins at epic St Andrew's Bay, wander among the myriad wildlife at stunning Gold Harbour, and much, much more. The colour, the noise, the smell and the commotion of these unforgettable seven days guarantees sensory overload at every turn.



HIGHLIGHTS

- Travel on our exclusive departure – the very comfortable and new 96-berth ship (which we are limiting to 88 passengers) – the *Magellan Explorer*.
- All cabins are en suite.
- Outstanding wildlife watching in **spectacular** settings.
- Maximum time ashore.
- Enormous penguin rookeries.
- Wandering, black-browed, grey-headed and light-mantled sooty albatrosses may accompany the ship.
- Wide variety of cetaceans possible, including: southern right, fin, sei, humpback, Antarctic minke, as well as hourglass, Peale's and Commerson's dolphins.
- Good possibility of seeing massive grounded icebergs.
- Fabulous photographic and video opportunities.
- Presentations and lectures from the Festival of Wildlife team.

ITINERARY.

DAY 1: Embark the *Magellan Explorer* in Punta Arenas.

DAY 2: Today we awake in the South Atlantic as we leave behind the tip of the South American continent and sail towards the Falkland Islands. As we head into the deeper waters, off the continental shelf, a greater range of cetaceans become possible with both the striking hourglass and Peale's dolphins likely, as well as a chance of fin or sei whale.

DAY 3: We begin our first day in the Falklands, exploring Saunders Island whose white sandy stretches are busy with Magellanic, rockhopper and sub-Antarctic gentoo penguins. Curious striated caracaras, known locally as 'Johnny rooks' will almost certainly be in attendance alongside marauding Falkland skuas and southern giant petrels. West Point island, meanwhile, at the tip of West Falkland, is perhaps the most photogenic island in the Falklands. Birdlife includes rockhopper penguins, and nesting black-browed albatrosses. There are good chances of encountering Commerson's dolphins, too, which may escort the ship and our Zodiacs.

DAY 4: In the morning, we visit the picturesque and interesting capital, Port Stanley, before heading south for South Georgia.

DAY 5-6: At sea. We'll be accompanied by squadrons of albatrosses of many varieties, Cape and giant petrels, and much more. Mark and the rest of onboard experts will give presentations.

DAY 7: Our first South Georgia landing is at Elsehul Harbour – a beautiful crescent of a bay, with southern elephant and Antarctic fur seals, gentoo and king penguins, and a whole host of seabirds.



DAY 8: At the former settlement and whaling station of Grytviken, we set foot on South Georgia for the first time. Fortuna Bay is where Shackleton finished the final part of his famous walk before arriving at Stromness Harbour in 1916. We land at Grytviken, where passports are stamped. Shackleton's grave is here, as well as massive rusting vats and other haunting remains of the whaling and sealing industries, and a fascinating museum.

DAY 9: A glorious landing at Gold Harbour to see a hundred thousand king penguins, with southern elephant seals fighting turf wars on the sand and in the surf, with spectacular hanging glaciers.

DAY 10: A very special landing at iconic St Andrews Bay, which has the largest king penguin colony in South Georgia (nearly a quarter of a million birds).

DAY 11: Cooper Bay (best accessed by Zodiacs), is a hotspot for macaroni penguins.

Drygalski, meanwhile, is a huge, spectacular fjord often choked with icebergs.

DAY 12: An early start at Right Whale Bay. The dramatic black sand beaches are a great place to photograph penguins being spat from the surf and spume. This is probably one of the favourite landings for any visitor to South Georgia, with its massive concentrations of king penguins stretching across the vast plain and far up the mountain slopes.

DAY 13: We head off to see the king penguins one last time at sunrise. If there is time, we'll visit Prion Island in the afternoon to see nesting wandering albatrosses.

DAY 14/16: Departing South Georgia we retrace our steps back to Punta Arenas. As with the outbound journey encounters with a variety of pelagic bird species and cetaceans are possible and there will also be a programme of workshops and lectures, including the traditional Festival of Wildlife summary film and auction.

DAY 17: Disembark Punta Arenas and transfer to airport.

Please note: this tour is highly weather-, sea- and ice-dependent. Although we will stick to the itinerary as closely as possible, it may change to make the most of local conditions. It's part of the fun of polar exploration!

ABOUT THE SHIP

The new, sleek and very comfortable *Magellan Explorer* (right) has seven categories of accommodation, including dedicated single cabins. All cabins (except Porthole cabins) feature private balconies. All cabins have a wardrobe, individually controlled heating system, a sitting area, and a private bathroom with shower. There is also a glass-enclosed observation lounge, a presentation room with state-of-the-art audio-visual equipment, a spacious and stylish dining room,

a well-stocked bar, a library, a meeting room, a gym, a sauna, and a medical clinic. The forward-facing observation deck leads to the ship's bow, which is accessible to guests. The ship carries 10 inflatable Zodiac boats for disembarking and wildlife watching.

PRICES (excluding flights)

From £11,250 per person. We can arrange flights for you on request.

Price includes: all meals while on the ship; beer and house wine during lunch and dinner; all accommodation; all transport and listed activities; Mark, Wildlife Worldwide expert team and Expedition staff.

Price does not include: return flights from the UK to Punta Arenas unless requested; airport/government arrival and departure taxes; vaccines or visas; excess baggage charges; travel insurance (compulsory); items of a personal nature such as laundry and telecommunications charges; medical expenses; crew and resident expedition staff gratuities; single supplement (available on request).

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