

Falkland Islands: Penguins, Albatross, and so much more!
with the
Houston Zoo



Saturday 5th December – Saturday 12th December 2020

Cost per person is \$5,999

Single supplement is \$1,250 per person

The Falkland Islands home to five species of penguins, are one of the last untouched wildlife wonders of the world. Unspoiled beaches, islands and cliffs provide a natural safe-haven for hundreds of species that have made the Falklands their home. Watch albatross soar gracefully through the air against a backdrop of beautiful blue sea and sky. Elephant Seals and Southern Sea Lions breed here, and Killer Whales patrol the waters in pursuit of a meal. The possibilities for enjoying this extraordinary wildlife experience are endless, as are the photographic opportunities.

This is an Ecotour that will make a difference to you, and to the areas we visit.

We will employ local people.

We will use locally owned and operated lodges and outfitters.

We will use local goods and services.

Reserve your space today – email conservation@houstonzoo.org



Day 1: Saturday 5th December – Arrive Falkland Islands to Sea Lion Island

Plan your arrival to Santiago, Chile so that you can join us on the Lan Chile flight # 991 at 7:30am from Santiago, Chile to Mount Pleasant Airport, Falkland Islands. We are met on arrival and immediately transfer to the Falkland Islands Government Air Services (FIGAS) flight to Sea Lion Island. We will settle in on arrival and have time late in the afternoon to wander to the penguin colonies, of which some are so close that they are visible from the dining room! Sea Lion Island is home to Magellanic, Gentoo and Rockhopper penguins. It is a famed breeding site for Southern elephant seals, and has a breeding colony of Southern sea lions as well. Killer whale pods are regularly seen patrolling the shoreline! It is an amazing location, and all is accessible on foot!

Welcome dinner and overnight at Sea Lion Island Lodge

(D)



Day 2: Sunday 6th December 2020 – Sea Lion Island

Today we enjoy an introductory tour of the whole island, and afterwards can stroll back to the lodge from the far end of the island where the King Cormorant and Rockhopper Penguin colonies are located. After lunch explore the beaches close to the lodge where Southern Sea Lions are breeding, and the bull Elephant seals are finishing their annual molt - having now all finished breeding. At high tide, be sure to go to the tidal pool at one end of the beach as this is a known haunt of Killer Whales.

Overnight at Sea Lion Island Lodge

(B, L, D)

Day 3: Monday 7th December 2020 – Sea Lion Island to Bleaker Island

Today we say farewell to Sea Lion Island and hop a short distance north to the nearby and equally remote Bleaker Island. This island is known for its varied coastline and boasts beautiful white sandy beaches! Bleaker Island has nesting populations of Gentoo, Magellanic and Rockhopper Penguins, plus numerous waterfowl such as Silvery Grebe, Chiloe Wigeon, Speckled and Silver Teal, and Ruddy-Headed Geese that nest on and around Big Pond. There are also numerous smaller birds such as Tussacbirds and Magellanic snipe!

Overnight at Bleaker Island Lodge

(B, L, D)



Day 4: Tuesday 8th December 2020 – Bleaker Island

Today we will explore Bleaker Island in more detail. You can visit the Magellanic Penguins, which have several nesting areas, or an unusual Rock Cormorant colony. This is also an exceptional place to watch – and photograph – Rockhopper Penguins returning to their nests, through heaving surf, and up rocky headlands. Possibly the most dramatic site, however, is the noisy and easily accessible King Cormorant colony which numbers over 20,000 birds.

Overnight at Bleaker Island Lodge

(B, L, D)



Day 5: Wednesday 9th December 2020 - Bleaker Island to Carcass Island

Today we take another flight on FIGAS across the eastern and western islands to the lovely Carcass Island. We can settle in on arrival and have time late in the afternoon to wander to the penguin colonies visible from the main house! Carcass Island is home to Magellanic and Gentoo Penguins, as well as Southern Elephant Seals, and perhaps Southern Sea Lions. Being cat-free, rat-free, and mouse-free Carcass Island has an exceptional collection of small birds not seen elsewhere, and is home to two endemic species, the Cobb's Wren, which is particularly tame and approachable, and the Falkland Islands Flightless Steamer Duck. In addition we will see breeding South American Terns, Blackish and Magellanic Oystercatchers, Kelp Geese, Upland Geese, Striated Caracaras, Magellanic Snipe, Black-Throated Finch, Grass Wren and Falkland Thrush.

Overnight at Carcass Island Manager's House

(B, L, D)



Day 6: Thursday 10th December 2020 - Carcass Island to West Point Island

Today we will embark on a special adventure. This morning we take a boat ride to nearby West Point Island, which is still an active sheep farm in addition to being home to an amazing Black-browed albatross colony. West Point Island is also where some of the ashes of Lars Eric Lindblad the famed eco-traveler are scattered, and we can enjoy afternoon tea at the Managers House and garden in the "presence" of this ecotourism pioneer. Late this afternoon we sail back to Carcass island and watch out for both Commerson's and Peale's dolphin that are often seen in this area, and perhaps a Minke whale or two.

Overnight at Carcass Island Manager's House

(B, L, D)



Day 7: Friday 11th December 2020 – Carcass Island to Stanley

Our last full day in the Falklands and we may have saved the best for last! We will aim for an early morning flight back to Stanley and immediately depart for a visit to Seal Bay, on the north coast about a two and half hour drive from Stanley with two hours being an "off-road cross-country" journey, a true Falkland experience! What is truly special is that Seal Bay has ALL 5 species of penguins found in the Falklands – 15,000 + Rockhoppers, Macaroni, Magellanic, Gentoo and a few King penguins as well as King cormorants and occasionally Sea lions. We plan to enjoy our farewell dinner at our hotel tonight after a very full day.

Overnight at Malvina House Hotel

(B, L, D)



Day 8: Saturday 12th December 2020 – Stanley to Punta Arenas, Chile and flights home

This is our departure day - if time allows you should visit the Museum across the road from the Malvina House Hotel as it has a truly impressive series of displays about the history and culture of the Falklands and a very comprehensive coverage of the Falklands War between Argentina and the United Kingdom. Then we return to Mount Pleasant Airport for our Lan Chile flight to Punta Arenas - this Lan Chile flight continues on to Santiago, arriving to Santiago at 9:20pm.

(B)

Cost per person is \$5,999

Single supplement is \$1,250 per person

(B= Breakfast; L = Lunch and D = Dinner)

Included:

Accommodation on twin share basis; Meals as listed; Wildlife entry fees in National Parks / Reserves; Game drives in 4-WD vehicles on a shared basis; inter-island domestic flights.

Not Included:

International airfare; Airport taxes, fees or visas; Meals not mentioned; Gratuities; Liability for change in itinerary due to reasons beyond our control like change in flight schedules; Cancellation of flights, political disturbances, natural phenomenon, etc.; Any other item not specifically mentioned above as 'Included'.

