

Penguin Point, Seymour Island (Draft)

Primary Landing Site:

64°17'36.98"S 56°41'20.84"W

Possible Ship Anchorage:

64°18'33.95"S 56°39'42.76"W

HSM n°60:

64°17'47.18"S 56°41'30.90"W

IAATO

visitor site guide



Key Features

- Unusual dry landscape, geology
- Adelie penguins
- Depot from Nordenskjöld
- Density of wildlife (penguins, and fur seals in February)



Description

TOPOGRAPHY

This vast, empty, and dry area hosts Adelie penguins nesting in numbers (16 000 pairs as of 2022) on a sandy deposit. The area is also of historical interest where Nordenskjöld placed a depot under a cairn marked with a pole in 1902 during the Swedish Antarctic Expedition. Remains of the depot can still be visible.

The K-Pg boundary (very defined end of the cretaceous period and beginning of the Paleocene. The most held theory being the asteroid impact that wiped out the dinosaurs) is visible by approach from the South (one of the 100 "geological heritage sites" around the world).

The beach bounded by two hilly formations is around 400m/1200ft long in an axis North-South, mostly sandy on the half North of the landing site, and rocky/pebbly with a few sunken rocks on the second half South of the landing site (the closer proximity to HSM60, the rockier it gets).

It is completely exposed to swell from the Weddell Sea and deep enough so that breakers can occur quickly.

A long and flat beach, where sand is mixed with pebbles. Once on land the ground is covered with pebbles all along the shore just behind an elevated beach. An alluvial plain has flattened the whole area while an uneven hilly dry terrain forms as you move away from the plain.

Possibility of fossils – none known – care should be taken to leave any fossils found in situ.

FAUNA

Common breeders: Brown skua and Adelie penguins.

Suspected breeders: South polar skua.

Visitors at the end of the season: Antarctic fur seal (after mid-January) and Weddell seal.



Visitor Impact

POTENTIAL IMPACTS

Soil erosion.

Possible disturbance of wildlife along walking route to historical site.

Mummified penguin/seals bodies should not be touched or moved.

Landing Requirements

SHIPS*

Ships per day: Maximum 3 ships per day, of which only 1 may be Category 2.

*A ship is defined as a vessel which carries more than 12 passengers.

VISITOR NUMBERS

Recommend a guide to passenger ratio of 1:15 while walking through the rookeries.

LANDING AREA

Landing to the northern end of the beach, it is steep enough without rocks or boulders. The seabed is mostly sandy or/and with small pebbles.

Landing to the South, closer to HSM60, there are some sunken rocks.

After landing, reach the elevated beach and then turn left and go through the alluvial plain until the first rookeries. From this point, the memorial should be easily visible. Up on the ridge to the left towards the ocean, the pole from the Depot is visible.



The route between the colonies should be determined based on wildlife, giving the way to penguin traffic, with small, guided groups. After clearing the colonies, continue up to the left and towards the ocean for reaching the historical site. In returning to the landing, create a "loop" with a different route i.e. walking up on some of the ridges to less populated penguin places offer great views around before heading back by any appropriate route.



GUIDED WALKING AREA

Each group should follow the same route. Visitors need to be guided in groups of no more than 15 and very closely supervised when leaving the plain between the rookeries of Adelies to reach different viewpoints and in particular the historical site.

Free roaming: beach, plain, North and West of the landing site, away from seals of course.

VISITOR SAFETY

The beach can have some swell, and breakers can form rapidly.

The site can be difficult to access when the Weddell Sea in that area is still full of sea ice.

Be aware of boot sucking muck especially when tide is out.

When going up on the small hill, the terrain can be slippery due to wind erosion and penguin guano.

RESTRICTED ZONES

The place monitored by Argentina for scientific purpose, that you can identify with a wooden pole and a cairn.

Visitor code of conduct

BEHAVIOUR ASHORE

Walk slowly and carefully in the vicinity of the dense rookeries.

Take care to the swell condition at the beach that can change quickly.

Spread visitors around the landing to avoid erosion and formation of a clear track.

