

Penguin Point, Seymour Island

Possible 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
- HSM 60: Depot from Nordenskjöld
- Density of wildlife (penguins, and fur seals after mid-January).



Description

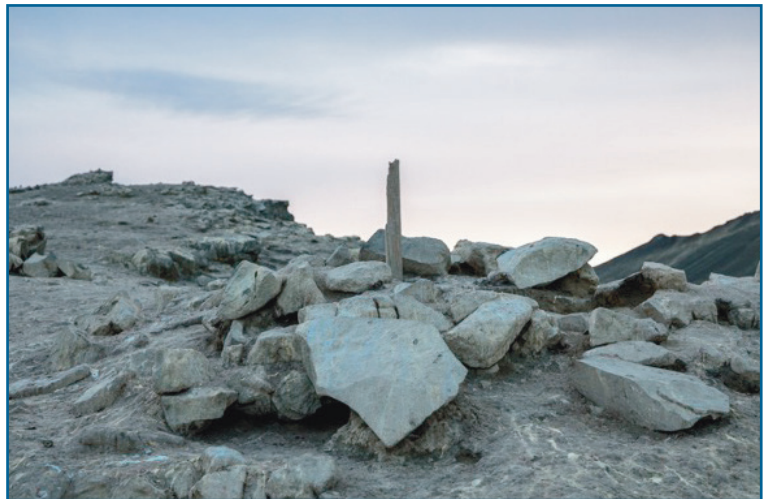
TOPOGRAPHY

This vast, empty, and dry area hosts Adelie penguins nesting in large numbers on a sandy deposit. HSM 60 is 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 is visible by approach from the South. This marks the end of the cretaceous period and beginning of the Paleocene, theoretically being the asteroid impact that wiped out the dinosaurs. (one of the 100 "geological heritage sites" around the world).

The beach between 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 HSM 60, the rockier it gets). Above the elevated beach, an alluvial plain has flattened the whole area while an uneven hilly dry terrain forms away from the plain.

Care should be taken to leave any fossils and other artifacts 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.

OTHER

Penguin Bay monolith, plaques, and remains of depots and cairn are designated as Historic Site and Monument no. 60 under the Antarctic Treaty.

Visitor Impact

POTENTIAL IMPACTS

Soil erosion.

Possible disturbance of wildlife along walking route to historical site.

Removal of fossils and other artifacts.

Landing Requirements

SHIPS'

Maximum passengers on board: 500

Ships per day: 3

Comments: Maximum 3 ships per day (midnight to midnight), of which no more than 1 can carry over 200 passengers.

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

VISITOR NUMBERS

Guide to passenger ratio of 1:15 while walking through the rookeries.

LANDING AREA

Both landings are completely exposed to swell from the Weddell Sea and deep enough so that breakers can occur.

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 HSM 60, there are some sunken rocks.

After landing, reach the elevated beach and then turn left to 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 passing the colonies, continue up to the left and towards the ocean to reach 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 offering great views around before heading back by any appropriate route.



GUIDED WALKING AREA

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

FREE ROAMING

Beach, plain, North and West of the landing site, away from seals.

VISITOR SAFETY

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

The site can be difficult to access due to ice.

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

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

RESTRICTED ZONES

The area is monitored by Argentina for scientific purpose, which is indicated with a wooden pole and a cairn.

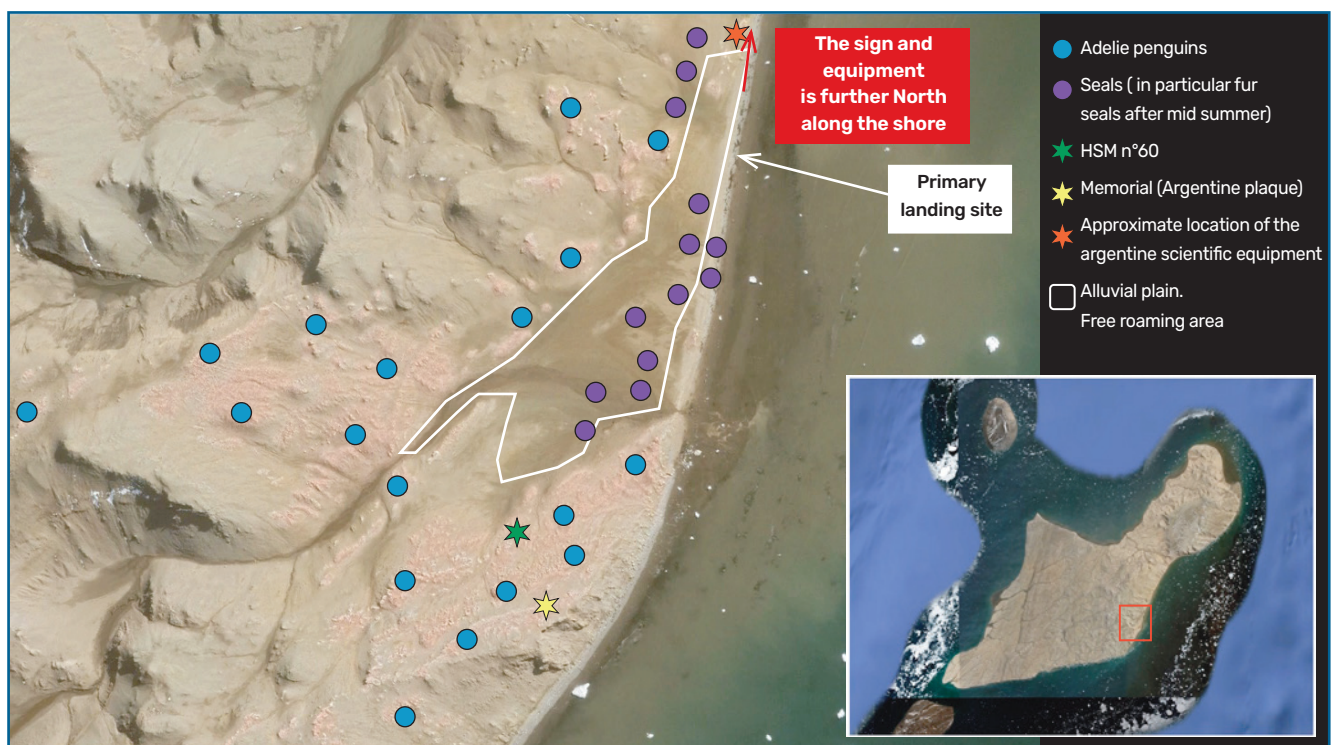
Visitor Code of Conduct

BEHAVIOUR ASHORE

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

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

Swell conditions at the beach can change quickly.



Historical Information

HSM 60 includes Wooden pole and cairn, and wooden plaque and cairn, both located at Penguins Bay, southern coast of Seymour Island (Marambio), James Ross Archipelago.

The wooden pole and a cairn were installed in 1902 during the Swedish South Polar Expedition led by Dr. Otto Nordenskjöld. This cairn used to have attached a 4 m high wooden pole – nowadays only 44 cm high –, guy-lines and a flag, and was installed to signal the location of a well stocked deposit, composed of few wooden boxes containing food supplies, notes and letters saved inside bottles.

The deposit was to be used in case the Swedish South Polar Expedition was forced to retreat on its way to the south. The wooden plaque was placed on 10 November 1903 by the crew of a rescue mission of the Argentinean Corvette Uruguay in the site where they met the members of the Swedish expedition led by Dr Otto Nordenskjöld. The text of the wooden plaque reads as follows: "10.XI.1903 Uruguay (Argentine Navy) in its journey to give assistance to the Swedish Antarctic expedition."

In January 1990, a rock cairn (II) was erected by Argentina in memory of this event in the place where the plaque is located.