

37. Orne Islands

64°40'00''S, 62°40'00''W

ANTARCTIC TREATY

visitor site guide



Key Features

- Outstanding views of Gerlache Strait, Errera Channel and Cuverville Island.
- Chinstrap and Gentoo penguin colonies

Description

TOPOGRAPHY

A group of small low-lying islands close to Rongé Island at the entrance to the Errera Channel. The largest of the Orne Islands is a moderately sloped low rocky dome rising to around 75 metres, with a rocky central ridge and permanent snow banks. The group includes three other small islets.

FAUNA

Humpback Whale - Seen off-shore, Weddell seal - Seen near-shore, Leopard seal - Seen near-shore, Fur seal - Regularly haul out, Snowy sheathbill - Confirmed breeders, Skua - Confirmed breeders, Kelp gull - Confirmed breeders, Gentoo penguin - Confirmed breeders, Chinstrap Penguin - Confirmed breeders, Antarctic tern - Confirmed breeders

FLORA

Moss species; bearded and crustose lichen species including *Xanthoria* spp., *Buellia* spp., *Caloplaca* spp. and *Usnea* spp. grow on rocky outcrops.

Visitor Impact

KNOWN IMPACTS

None.

POTENTIAL IMPACTS

Disturbance to wildlife and trampling of vegetation.

Landing Requirements

SHIPS

Max pax on board: 500

Ships per day: 3

VISITORS

Maximum number of passengers at any time, exclusive of expedition guides and leaders: 100

Visitors per guide: 20

Visitor Area

LANDING AREA

A low rock platform on the north-west side of the island approximately 250m from the northern end. The other islets are suitable for small boat cruising.

GUIDED WALKING AREA

None.

FREE ROAMING AREA

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Visitors may roam freely.

Visitor code of conduct

BEHAVIOUR ASHORE

Avoid trampling the small patches of moss and lichen which grow on the rocky outcrops. Skuas nest in the rocky outcrops. Be alert to their presence, monitor their behaviour and increase your distance if needed. All visits are to be conducted in accordance with the General Guidelines for Visitors to the Antarctic.

CAUTIONARY NOTES

Hazardous rocks along the shoreline may be exposed, depending on the tide. Note that snow cliffs at the edge of the island are often corniced and unstable. They may not be readily apparent.



View of the island looking south west, with the preferred landing area at the rocky area on the right hand side



The island has several Chinstrap colonies on rocky outcrops



View of small Chinstrap colonies towards the NE of the island

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