

Skontorp Cove – Marine Only (Draft)

Central position of the cove:
64° 54' 39" S 062° 51' 55" W

Peer Sites: Punta Vidt, Brown Station

IAATO

visitor site guide



Key Features

- Small boat cruising and watersports only
- Glacial landscape
- Nesting Antarctic shags and Gentoo penguins
- HSM no. 30 in vicinity (4.5nm)



Description

TOPOGRAPHY

A large (1.5x1.5 nm) cove lined by tall tidewater glaciers spilling off the Antarctic mainland.

Nesting Antarctic shags and Gentoo penguins can be seen in the vicinity of Base Brown in the northwest sector of the cove.

The small, protected cove in the northwest quadrant of Skontorp Cove is a common anchorage for yachts.

The steep cliffs above the overhang sheltering the nesting shags are hard andesite, the result of explosive volcanism in the Jurassic period. These lava flows and tuffs have green epidote providing evidence of metamorphism. The softer rocks below are metamorphosed deep sea sediments, and the original sedimentary layering can be seen in places. A bright green/blue copper stain can be seen in the cliffs to the south of the shags.

FAUNA

Confirmed breeders: Gentoo penguin, Antarctic shag, Cape petrel

Present: Snowy sheathbill, Antarctic tern, Brown skua, Kelp gull, Wilson's storm petrel, Weddell seal

Occasional visitors: Humpback whale, Minke whale, Leopard seal, Crabeater seal

FLORA

Base Brown is known for extensive mosses and other plants.

Visitor Impact

POTENTIAL IMPACTS

Disturbance of wildlife.

Possible disturbance of scientific or monitoring programme when Brown Station is occupied.

Activity Requirements

SHIPS*

Maximum passengers onboard: 500

Ships per day: 3

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

VISITOR SAFETY

Snow, ice and rocks have been observed falling from above the nesting shags and landing in the water. Boat drivers should be aware of this when viewing the birds.

Small boats cruising in the vicinity of tide water glaciers should keep at least 200 metres (600 ft) from tide water glaciers to avoid effects of calving events. For high activity glaciers this should be increased to 400 metres (1200 ft).

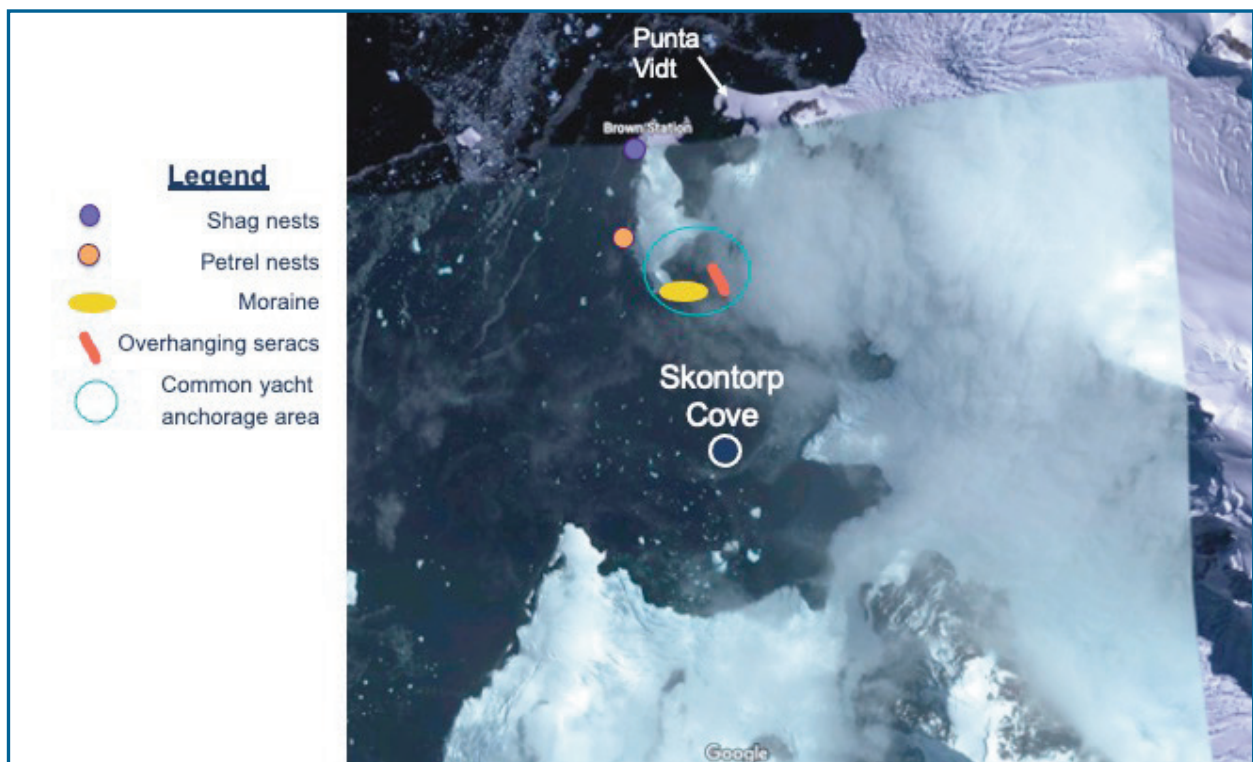
The 200 metres (600 ft) distance should be increased in narrow fjords, in shallow fjords, or locations with ice cliffs higher than 40-50 metres (120-150 ft).

When operating amongst sea ice or icebergs, be vigilant to local sea and wind currents. Be alert to ice movement in relation to your operation and how it may affect operations for both the parent vessel and small boat/watersport activities. Strong west to east currents in Ferguson Channel can change the concentration of ice within Paradise Bay and Skontorp Cove very quickly.

Visitor code of conduct

BEHAVIOUR

Maintain a quiet and slow speed and appropriate distance in the vicinity of all bird nesting areas.



Historical Informaton

Named for Edvard Skontorp, a gunner for Salveson and Co.