

8. Paulet Island

63°35'00''S, 55°47'00''W
Northwestern Weddell Sea,
southeast of Dundee Island

ANTARCTIC TREATY

visitor site guide



Key Features

- Extensive Adélie Penguin colony
- Stone hut, grave and cairn (Historic Site and Monument No. 41)
- Outstanding volcanic scenery



Description

TOPOGRAPHY

This circular island is 1.6 km in diameter. It has a distinct volcanic cone that rises to a height of 350 metres. A flat terrace forms an apron around the north and northeast side of the island. At high tide, sections of the terrace are largely submerged, severely restricting visitor space.

FAUNA

Confirmed breeders: Adélie penguin, Blue-eyed shag, Kelp gull, Snowy sheathbill.

Hauled out: Antarctic fur seal, Weddell seal.

Offshore: Leopard seal.

Suspected Breeders: Skua, Snow petrel, Wilson's storm petrel.

FLORA

Moss and Lichen

OTHER

Stone hut on Paulet Island built in February 1903 by survivors of the wrecked vessel Antarctic under Captain Carl A. Larsen, members of the Swedish South Polar Expedition led by Otto Nordenskjöld. A grave of a member of the expedition and the rock cairn built by the survivors of the wreck at the highest point of the island to draw the attention of rescue expeditions (Historic Site and Monument No. 41).

Visitor Impact

KNOWN IMPACTS

None.

POTENTIAL IMPACTS

Disturbance of wildlife, particularly Adélie penguins, and damage to the historic site.

Landing Requirements

SHIPS*

Max pax on board: 200

Ships per day: 2

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

VISITORS

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

Visitors per guide: 20

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Curfew time period (from/to), in order to establish a rest period for wildlife: 22:00-04:00

Comments: No more than 100 visitors at any time. However, at high tide, no more than 50 visitors at any time in the area around the northern coast landing site (below the Historical Site and Monument No. 41).

Visitor Area

LANDING AREA

Cobble landing beaches on either the northern or northeastern coast. Landing may be impossible late in the season, if wildlife is present in large numbers. The landing site on the northeastern coast should not be used during the point in the season when significant numbers of fledging Adélie penguins are present on the shoreline. The northern landing site should be used as the primary site later in the season subject to the presence of wildlife.

CLOSED AREA

The entire island is densely packed with wildlife (particularly Adélie penguins). Beyond walking routes, the rest of the area is considered closed because of wildlife.

GUIDED WALKING AREA

Because of restricted visitor space, all walks at this site should be carefully controlled in guided groups of no more than 15-20 visitors. Groups should be well-spaced and follow the designated paths along the northern coast, or towards the historic hut and the volcanic, ovoid lake.

In the late part of the season, it is likely to be impossible to follow the long walking route due to concentrations of Adélie penguins. Visitors should only use the walk along the beach from northern landing beach to the HSM. Exact routes will need to be carefully selected to avoid encroaching too close to wildlife.

FREE ROAMING AREA

None.

Visitor code of conduct

BEHAVIOUR ASHORE

- Stay clear of — and do not venture on — loose scree slopes.
- Walk slowly and carefully. Maintain a precautionary distance of 5 metres from wildlife and give animals the right-of-way. Increase this distance if any change in behaviour is observed.
- Be careful near Antarctic fur seals, they may be aggressive.

CAUTIONARY NOTES

- Ensure the protection of the Historic Site and Monument. Maintain a distance of at least 1 metre from the walls of the hut, as trampling immediately next to the loose walls may cause damage.
- Ice conditions on approach to the beach can change rapidly - extreme caution should be used in approaching and departing the island.

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Paulet Island from above



Northern landing area



HSM 41 Paulet Island Hut

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