

KIN01 – Cape Rosa

54° 01' S, 37° 24' W

Cape Rosa at the head of King Haakon Bay, was the first landfall of the James Caird.

Government of South Georgia & the South Sandwich Islands Visitor Site Guide



Revised 06/2019

Key Features

- Close to historic sites of Peggotty Bluff
- Spectacular scenery at the head of King Haakon Bay
- Cave Cove was the first landfall of Shackleton and his men onboard James Caird.



Description

TOPOGRAPHY

Cape Rosa consists of a series of low bluffs extending out from the southern entrance of King Haakon Bay backed by extensive rock outcrops and scree slopes. Wave-cut platforms fringe the shoreline, which is indented by a series of narrow inlets, of which 'Cave Cove' is one of the most distinctive. Nestling on the cape's plateau area are a number of small lakes. The cove hosts a small cave on its eastern side.



FAUNA

Confirmed breeders: wandering albatross (*Diomedea exulans*), light-mantled sooty albatross (*Phoebastria palpebrata*), northern giant petrel (*Macronectes halli*), Antarctic Prion (*Pachyptila desolata*), blue petrel (*Halobaena caerulea*), white-chinned petrel (*Procellaria aequinoctialis*), common diving petrel (*Pelecanoides urinatrix*), Wilson's storm-petrel (*Oceanites oceanicus*), brown skua (*Stercorarius antarcticus*), kelp gull (*Larus dominicanus*), snowy sheathbill (*Chionis alba*), Antarctic tern (*Sterna vittata georgiae*), South Georgia pipit (*Anthus antarcticus*), elephant seal (*Mirounga leonina*), fur seal (*Arctocephalus gazella*)

FLORA

Predominantly tussac, interspersed with areas of moss and deschampsia grassland and backed by scree slopes above. Rock outcrops support extensive lichen communities.

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HERITAGE

First landfall of the James Caird 10th May 1916 with Shackleton and his companions Worsley, Crean, Vincent, McCarthy and McNeish. There is a commemorative plaque on the rock face near the cave.

OTHER

Extensive kelp beds, hazardous rocks and reefs lie immediately offshore.



View from inside the cave

Visitor Impact

KNOWN IMPACTS

Trampling impact on tussac slope above beach at 'Cave Cove' and on moss at the saddle, compounded by fur seal trampling.

POTENTIAL IMPACTS

Disturbance of wildlife, including crushing of petrel burrows.

Landing Requirements

VESSELS*

Max pax on board: 200

Vessels at a time: 1

Comments: Maximum of 2 ship visits per day

*A vessel is defined as having a load line length of more than 24 metres.

VISITORS

No more than 20 visitors ashore at any time, exclusive of expedition guides and leaders. A minimum of 1 experienced guide per 20 visitors.

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Visitor Area

LANDING AREA

Cobbled beach at back of inlet.

CLOSED AREA

Please note that as of the 2019/20 season access is restricted to the beach only, while further evidence is collected to identify potential risks of trampling of seabird burrows and erosion.

It is therefore prohibited to follow the old route up the gulley to the saddle until further notice.



Cave Cove showing the landing beach and cave

This closure will be reviewed for the 2020/21 season, and we invite comments and feedback on this management measure. Please email ross.james@gov.gs if you would like to comment or have any questions.

GUIDED WALKING AREA

There are no guided walks.

FREE ROAMING AREA

Visitors may roam freely on the pebble beach and cave.

Visitor code of conduct

BEHAVIOUR ASHORE

WILDLIFE: Walk slowly and carefully. Maintain a precautionary distance from wildlife and give animals the right-of-way. Increase this distance if any change in behaviour is observed.

CAUTIONARY NOTES

King Haakon Bay is exposed to the west. Strong winds, swell and katabatic winds can make landings difficult.

Minimise use of ship lights at nightfall to reduce risk of bird strikes and remain vigilant.