

2. Barrientos Island (Aitcho Islands)

62°24'00''S, 59°47'00''W
North entrance to English Strait
between Robert and Greenwich
Islands.

ANTARCTIC TREATY

visitor site guide



Key Features

- Gentoo and Chinstrap Penguins
- Southern Elephant Seals
- Geological features
- Southern Giant Petrels
- Vegetation



Description

TOPOGRAPHY

This 1.5km island's north coast is dominated by steep cliffs, reaching a height of approximately 70 metres, with a gentle slope down to the south coast. The eastern and western ends of the island are black sand and cobbled beaches. Columnar basalt outcrops are a notable feature of the western end.

FAUNA

Confirmed breeders: chinstrap Penguin, Gentoo penguin, Kelp gull, Skua, Southern giant petrel.
Regularly haul out: Antarctic fur seal, Southern elephant seal, Weddell seal.
Suspected Breeders: Blue-eyed shag, Wilson's storm-petrel.

FLORA

The entire centre of the island is covered by a very extensive moss carpet. Lichens *Xanthoria spp.*, *Caloplaca spp.* and other crustose lichen species are present. The green alga *Prasiola crispa* is widespread.

Visitor Impact

KNOWN IMPACTS

The erosion of multiple footpaths through vegetation between the eastern and western ends of the island.

POTENTIAL IMPACTS

Further damage to the vegetation and disturbance of wildlife, particularly southern giant petrels.

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

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

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Visitor Area

LANDING AREA

Primary: eastern end of the island; landing either on the sand beach to the north, or on the cobbled southern beach.
Secondary: northern shore of the western end of the island, with easiest access at high water.

CLOSED AREA

Closed Area A: Monitoring sites for chinstrap penguins above and southeast of the eastern landing area.

Closed Area B: Central part of the island covered by a very extensive moss carpet and the northern cliffs where southern giant petrels nest.

Closed Area C: Knoll on the southwestern tip of the island where southern giant petrels nest.

FREE ROAMING AREA

Visitors can roam freely, but under supervision, anywhere except the closed areas.

Visitor code of conduct

BEHAVIOUR ASHORE

- 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.
- Do not walk on any vegetation.
- When on the same level as, or higher than, nesting southern giant petrels, maintain a precautionary distance of at least 50 metres. Increase this distance if any change in the birds' behaviour is observed.
- Do not walk on any vegetated areas. Elsewhere, tread gently to avoid disturbing ground surfaces which may host inconspicuous biota.
- 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

Stay clear of cliffs and vertical walls and stacks as these are prone to rock falls and slides.



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Barrientos Island western landing area



Barrientos Island eastern landing area



Only walk through Closed Area B if you can clearly recognise the route



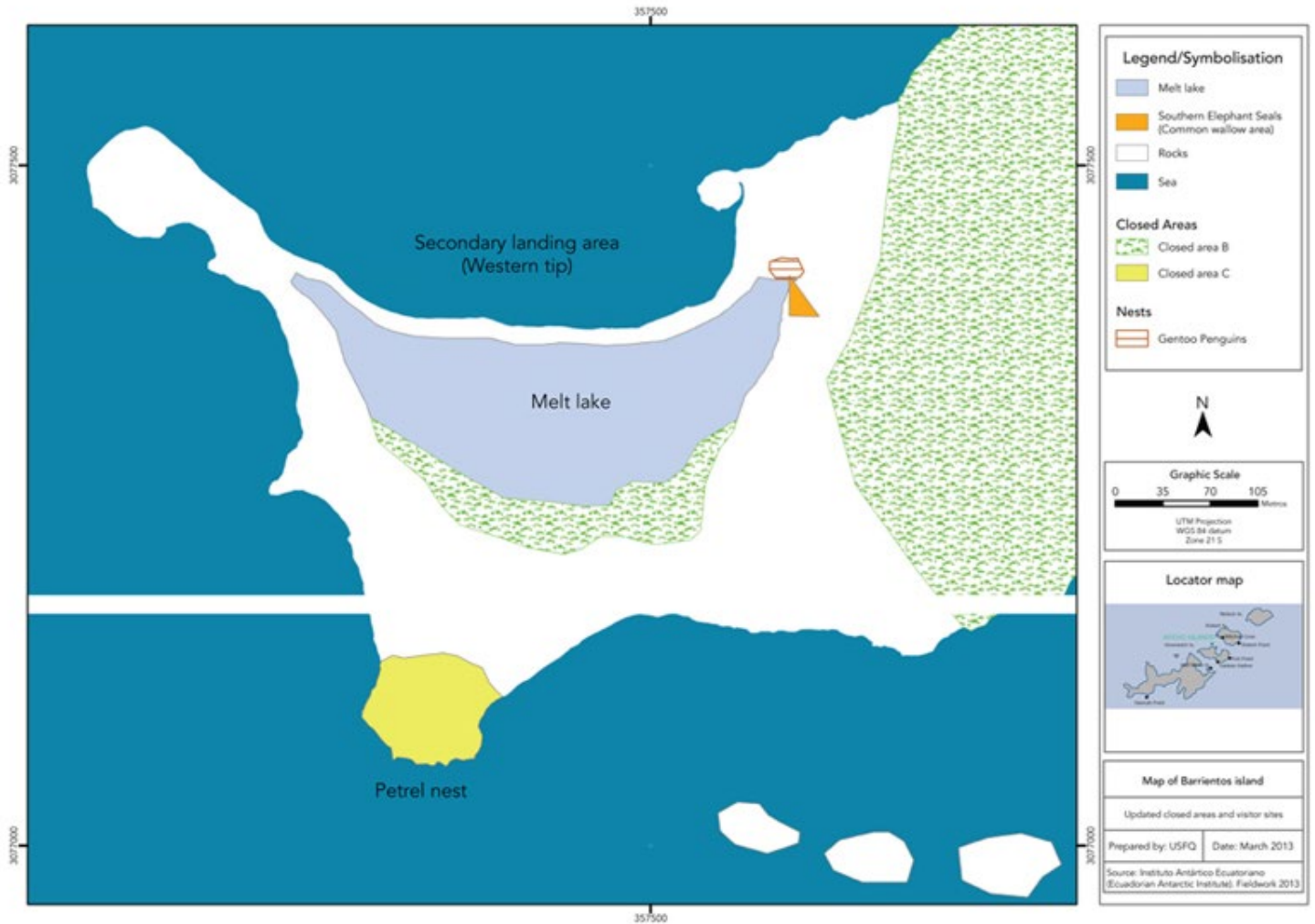
View from the south beach

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