



Brown Scientific Station (Paradise Bay)

64° 53' S, 62° 53' W

Sanaviron Peninsula – Gerlache Strait

Key features

- Antarctic Station
- Mountain and glacial landscape
- Natural harbour
- Walking trails
- Natural viewpoint



Description

Topography

It is located in the northern area of Sanavirón Peninsula, specifically in Punta Proa coast strip, spreading in two sectors approximately 200 m apart: Ortiz Shelter in Punta Beatriz, original of Brown Station (currently the main house) and the facilities of the old Station (the most densely built area). In between, there is a narrow beach. It is characterized for having around 3-5 m width in low tides condition, limited in its upper area by an ice and snow escarpment of an irregular height of 8-10 m maximum approximately in its central portion and abruptly reducing its slope in its edges.

Fauna

In the Station sector, the reproductive birdlife is comprised by Gentoo Penguins (*Pygoscelis papua*) distributed in three nesting spots, on a staggered shape on outcropping rocks, from a sector close to the coast to the interior; and the presence of some Antarctic pigeon nests (*Chionis alba*) and skuas (*Stercorarius spp.*). In the Peninsula, with nesting in the coastal and rocky sector between Punta Proa and Punta Popa: seagull (*Larus dominicanus*), cape petrel (*Daption capense*), storms petrel (*Oceanites oceanicus*), little gull (*Sterna vittata*), cormorant (*Phalacrocorax bransfieldensis*). For the area extent they represent, the cormorant nets are worth-mentioning, located towards the Station's southern sector, towards Punta Popa.

In the Station area, the presence of young Adelie penguins (*Pygoscelis adeliae*) and chinstrap penguins (*Pygoscelis antarctica*) were detected, as pairs of giant petrels (*Macronectes giganteus*). Occasionally, the following can be spotted on the beach: Weddell seals (*Leptonychotes weddellii*), crabeater seals (*Lobodon carcinophagus*) and leopard seals (*Hydrurga leptonyx*). Very often whales can be spotted from the station along their way and permanence in the interior of Paradise Bay, and through the Argentina Channel. On the other hand, it is worth-mentioning the diversity comprised by the benthic and plankton communities.

Flora

Vegetation is found on the exposed outcropping rocks and, mainly, in places where fine materials build up between rocky blocks and depressions, on the slopes and vertical walls of rocky outcrops. Antarctic hair grass (*Deschampsia antarctica*), a variety of moss and lichens are found (crustose, foliose and fruticose lichens, including endolithic and epiphytes lichens), integrating associations. On the beach area there are macrofits and marine lichens *Verrucaria spp.*





Impacts by visitors

Known impacts

- Damage to vegetation in the area occupied by the station's installations

Potential impacts

- Greater damage to vegetation and substrate by the constant presence of visitors
- Perturbation of fauna
- Minor oil spillages

Requisites for disembarkation*

Ships

- Ships** with less than or 500 passengers on board.
- One ship at the time
- 3 ships per day (Monday through Sunday). No more than two ships with over 200 passengers per day.

Operators

- While the station is open, visits can take place with the previous consent of the Station Chief. Ships shall contact the Station before going into the bay to confirm the visit and disembarkation place. The latter will be determined depending on the activities being developed at the Station and the weather conditions (wind and waves), and the alternative harbour can be turned into the main harbour.
- In the months when the Station is open (December through March), visits can be made during the personnel working time, from 7 am to 7 pm.
- Visit duration shall be coordinated with the Station Chief, in line with the activities that are being developed at that time.

Visitors

- No more than 100 visitors can disembark at a time, not considering expedition guides or leaders.
- One guide every 20 visitors as a minimum.

Areas to visit

Disembarkation site

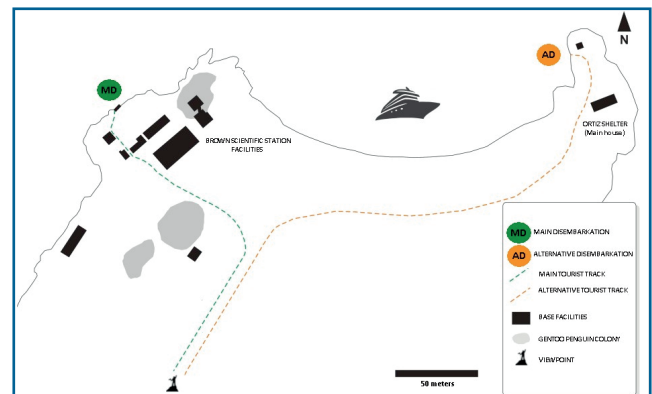
Main disembarkation (MD on the map): Station's dock – sector closest to the areas to visit
Alternative disembarkation (AD on the map): on Ortiz Shelter coast.

Guided visit zones

Hiking towards the panoramic viewpoint shall be made in small groups, supervised by guides as shown in figure 1, as no more than 20 people can stay on top at a time.

Free transit zones

Visitors may walk along the trail shown in figure 1, under supervision.



Behaviour code for visitors

Behaviour on land

- Walk slowly and carefully.
- Respect the privacy of the Station's personnel, and do not interfere with the Station's activities. Behave in line with advice and instructions by the guides and the Station's personnel.
- Do not separate from the group.
- Do not go into the facilities, unless authorized by the personnel. Walking on vegetation is not allowed.
- Keep a precaution distance of 5 metres from fauna and give right of way to animals. Take greater distance if any change in animals' behaviour is observed.
- Keep your way within the authorized track in order to reduce alterations and damage to soil and vegetable surfaces to a minimum. Where there is no trail, take the most direct route and avoid vegetation, brittle soil and wildlife.

Precautionary remarks

- Be extremely careful when going up and moving around the viewpoint, as there may be cracks.

* Only applicable to visitors to Brown Scientific Station.

** Thus are defined those vessels with over 12 people on board.