

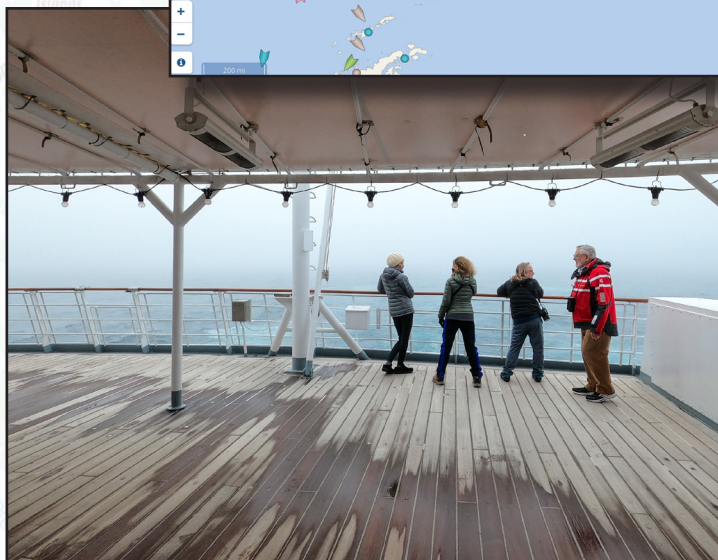
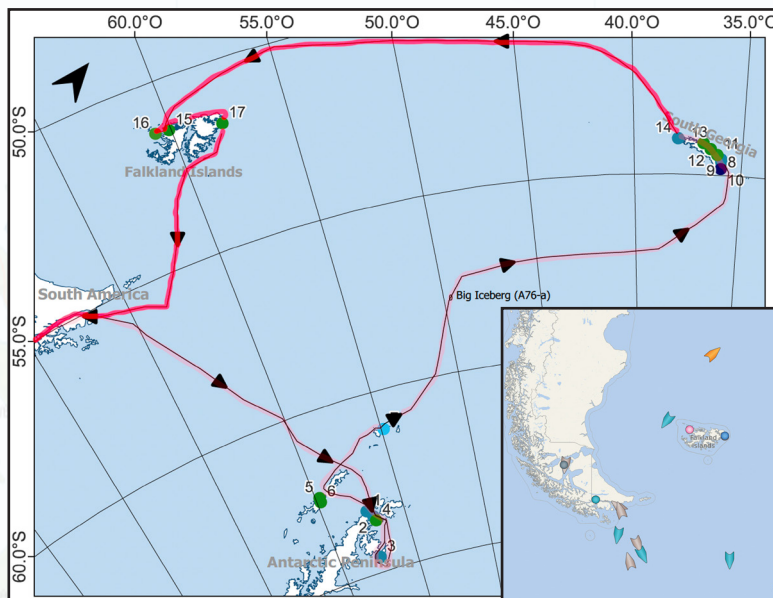
ANTARCTICA

PART IV: FALKLAND ISLANDS

From South Georgia we headed back west towards the Falkland Islands. We spent an extra day or so going north then west in order to avoid yet another storm and rough seas between South Georgia and the Falkland Islands.

The seas were still pretty rough, limited our time outside looking for birds.

We spotted a few whales on the trip such as the Sei Whale below. I did not get any of those great breaching photographs, mostly just fins. Most of the whale species we saw were identified by the fin.



Even though the weather was not very cooperative, we did spend some time on the protected back deck of the ship looking for birds.

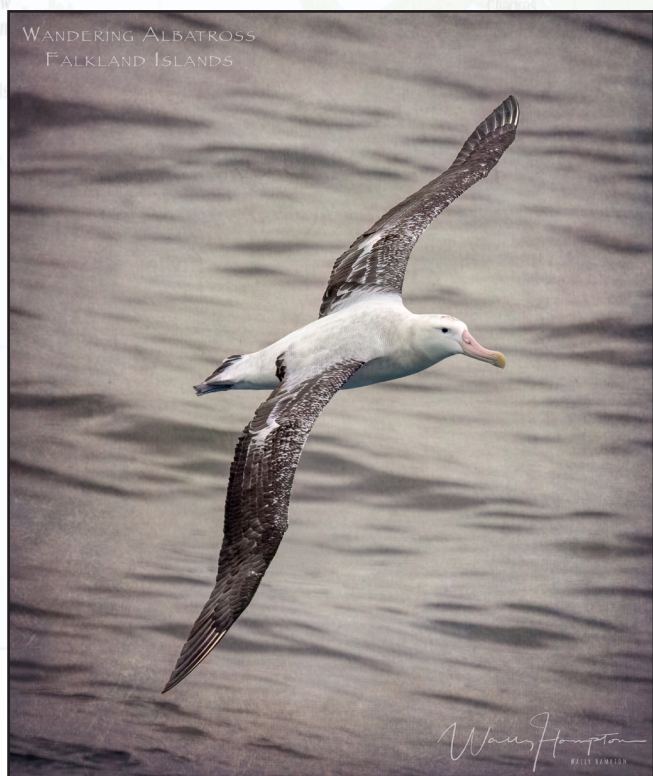


ANTARCTICA

PART IV: FALKLAND ISLANDS

The number of stops we made on the Falkland Islands was shortened some by the extra time we spent avoiding the stormy seas between South Georgia and the Falkland Islands. We made three stops, all Zodiac landings; Sanders Island, West Point and then we back tracked to Stanley for another medical emergency, (stops 15, 16 and 17 on the map to the right).

A fellow birder had a fall on Sanders Island resulting in a serious head injury. The stop in Stanley was for X-rays and examination. Our birder friend had a serious cut and concussion and it will take some time to heal. He joins Wendy in long term recovery efforts.





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PART IV: FALKLAND ISLANDS

We made land on Sanders Island at "The Neck", a narrow beach at the northwest end of the island. Sanders Island is also a working sheep farm of about 6,000 sheep. The island seemed tropical compared to the places we had been on the way here.

A highlight here was one of the Black-Browed Albatross rookeries that are on the Falkland Islands. After landing I followed the flags that had been placed by the expedition crew, staying in between them, and up the hill side to the steep cliffs where the rookery is.

About 2/3 of the about world's 600,000 breeding pairs of Black-Browed Albatross breed on the Falkland Islands.





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PART IV: FALKLAND ISLANDS



Magellanic Penguins / King Penguins



Upland Goose

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PART IV: FALKLAND ISLANDS



Above, a King Penguin checks it's egg. Sadly, we are there some time after the hatching season so this egg is probably not viable.





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PART IV: FALKLAND ISLANDS

Our next stop was on West Point Island and an even larger Black-Browed Albatross rookery. Wendy took the cramped taxi and I took a hike to get there.



The sky was full of the Albatross.... Albatross ATC (Air Traffic Control) was very busy.



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PART IV: FALKLAND ISLANDS



Austral Thrush (the 'Robin' of the area).



Black-Browed Albatross chick



Kelp Geese

Administered by : UNITED KINGDOM
Claimed by : ARGENTINA

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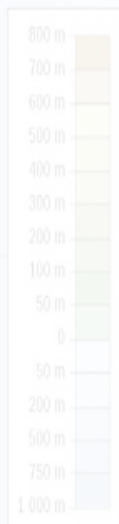
PART IV: FALKLAND ISLANDS

We left West Point Island and headed back east towards Stanley, enjoying a nice sunset on the way. We had not planned to go to Stanley, but our fellow birders injuries incurred on Sanders Island were serious enough to warrant a trip to the Stanley Hospital for further inspection and treatment if necessary.

While at first it was not clear why we were going back, there was riotous approval from other passengers that we were going to visit Stanley. It was never clear to me why that was, but I suspect the British connect had something to do with it.



We arrived the next day and went ashore for a walk around town.





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PART IV: FALKLAND ISLANDS

As Wendy and I came back to the dock where we came ashore we saw an ambulance, our friend being put into it and then driven away. At that point we did not know why and were very concerned but later his wife told us that it was for the further inspection and x-rays I mentioned before. Later when back on the ship we watched from our balcony as they brought him back and got him back on the ship.



Leaving the Stanley harbor was saw remnants of the gun emplacements from the Falklands war. There was still evidence on island of bitter feelings, yet the desire to get along. A common sign in windows said something to the affect that "Argentine people were welcome as long as they respected their right to exist".





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PART IV: FALKLAND ISLANDS

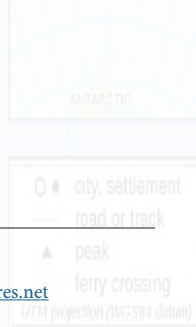
The ship to the right was in the Stanley harbor and was going nowhere.



A group of Peale's Dolphins entertained us as we left Stanley, the Falkland Islands for Ushuaia and our flights back to Buenos Aires.



More sub-antarctic weather greeted us as we entered the Beagle Canal and got closer to Ushuaia.

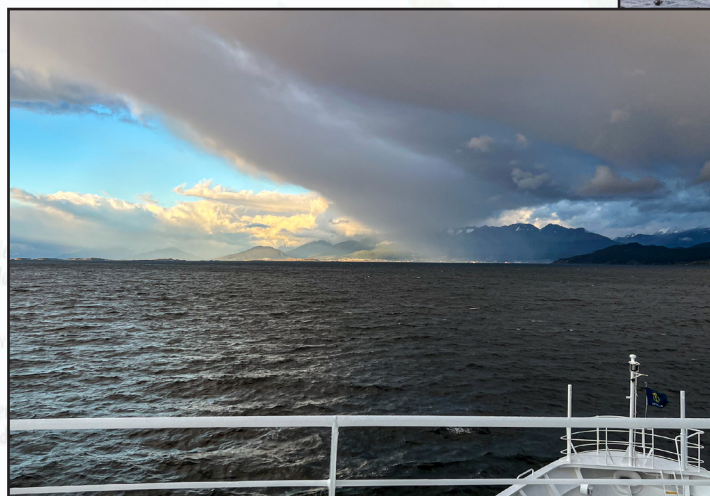


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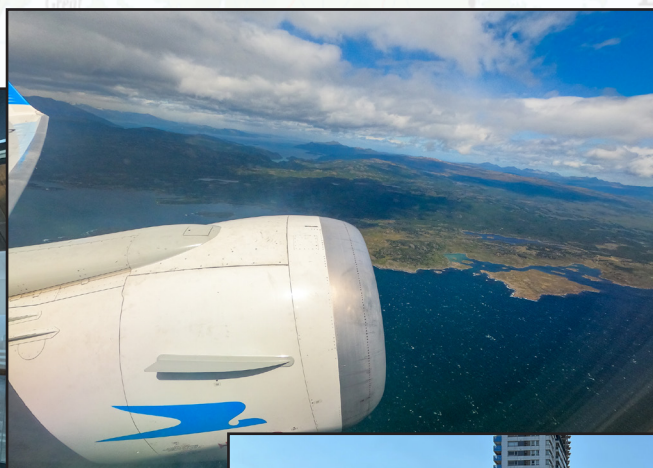
PART IV: FALKLAND ISLANDS

A final mass overload of bird activity was presented to us as we sailed west in the Beagle Canal and onto our final port of call.

As we entered the Ushuaia harbor, various weather conditions were displayed, all at once.



I'm not sure it is a good sign when an alter is the last thing one sees as you get on a plane, but there it was.



After a safe flight back to Buenos Aires we had a very different view from our lodging than the last three weeks. The next day we finished our trip back to Poulsbo via Houston without any major air travel issues where recovery and planning our next adventures are already under way.

.END

