

SEA LION ISLAND

Home to elephant seals, southern sea lions –
and three species of penguin



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IMPORTANT
BIRD AREA



www.falklandsconservation.com

SEA LION ISLAND



The Falkland Islands archipelago lies 350 km (280 miles) to the east of the South American continent. It consists of two large islands, East and West Falkland, and more than 750 small islands and islets.

Sea Lion Island lies 17 km (10 miles) to the south of mainland East Falkland. Sea Lion Island is reached by a 40 minute flight from Stanley or Mount Pleasant Complex with the Falkland Islands Government Air Service (FIGAS), or by Zodiac beach landings from visiting cruise ships.



About Sea Lion Island

Sea Lion Island, 905 ha (2,236 acres), is owned by the Falkland Islands Development Corporation. For many years it was a sheep farm but due to the decline of the wool market this became uneconomic. It is now the premier wildlife tourism site in the Falkland Islands. The Island has the most southerly hotel in the Falkland Islands and is run by Wild Falklands Ltd. For further information:

www.sealionisland.com

The Sea Lion group also includes Brandy, Whisky, and Sea Lion Easterly islands. These are owned by the Antarctic Research Trust. www.antarctic-research.de

The Island is made up of two flat, rocky plateaux joined by a broad sandy beach. It has large stands of **tussac grass** around the coastline.

With the reduction in grazing, 56 species of flowering plants now thrive here including the endemic **vanilla daisy** and **coastal nassauvia**. It is the only known site in the Falklands for the **Fuegian violet**. There are no invasive mammals to predate ground-nesting birds, which thrive here. It is notable as the most important breeding site for elephant seals in the Falklands.

Its wildlife status is formally recognised under the international Ramsar Convention and it qualifies as an Important Bird Area (FK15), a global standard set by BirdLife International. Sea Lion Island is a National Nature Reserve.



Please follow the guidelines

MAINTAIN A DISTANCE of **6m (20ft)** between you and any wildlife at all times.



WILDLIFE HAVE RIGHT OF WAY AT ALL TIMES. Do not block wildlife from returning or entering the sea.



no smoking

TAKE CARE on steep slopes and slippery rocks.



no fires

BE AWARE of biosecurity. Do not introduce invasive species to the area.

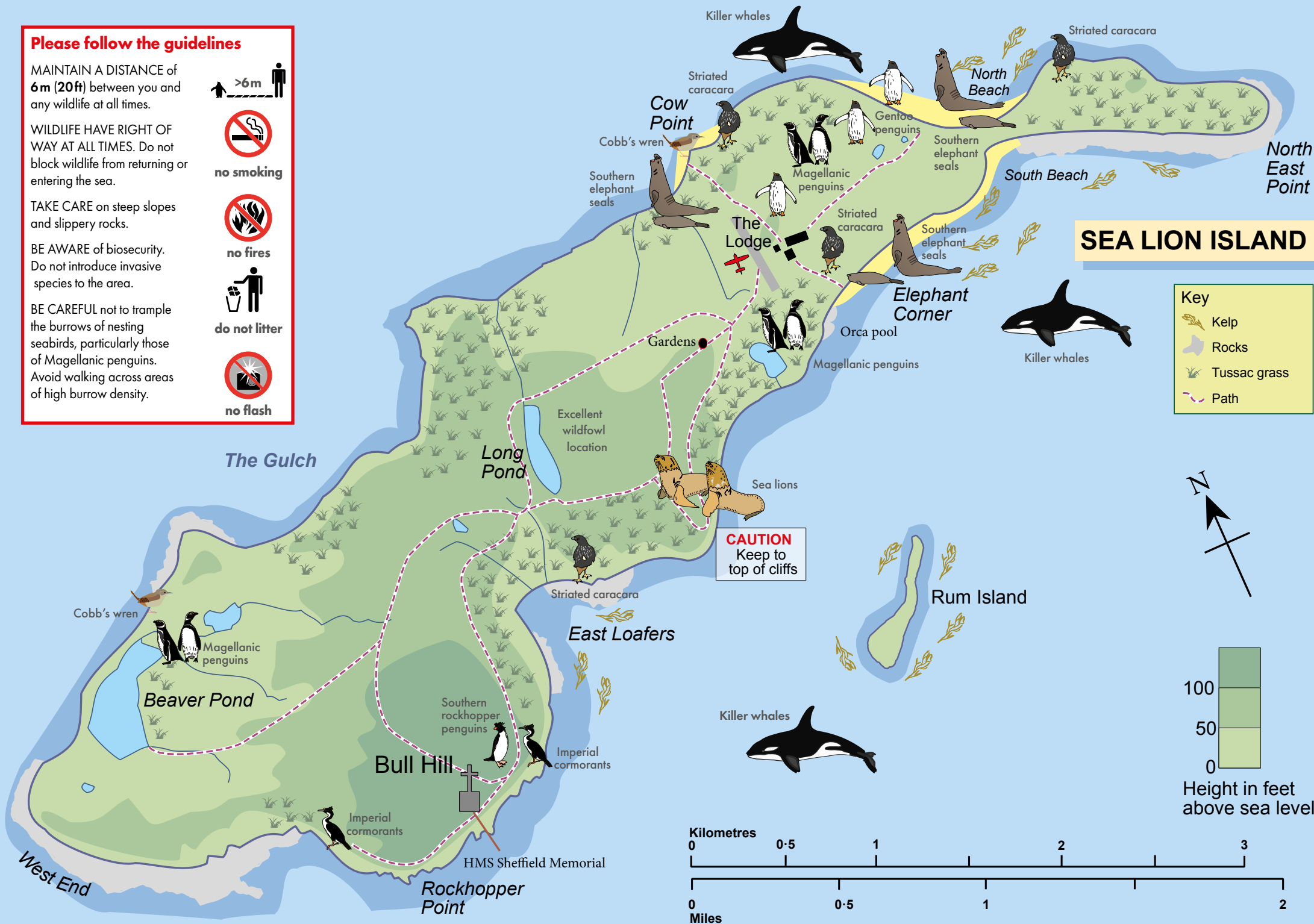


do not litter

BE CAREFUL not to trample the burrows of nesting seabirds, particularly those of Magellanic penguins. Avoid walking across areas of high burrow density.



no flash



Elephant Seals and Sea Lions

Sea Lion Island holds 95% of the Falklands southern elephant seal breeding population. Over 1,000 individuals may be found here at the height of their breeding season in October. Adult bulls are huge – growing up to 4.5 m (15ft) long and weighing up to 3.5 tonnes.

The breeding season begins when the adult bulls arrive in the second week of September. The cows arrive about a week later and form harem groups. Around 500–550 pups on average are born on Sea Lion Island each year in early October. The female feeds her pup on very rich milk for about 23 days during which time the pup will quadruple in weight. The female then mates and leaves for sea again. After moulting, most of the adult bulls will have left by the end of November.

From late November yearlings and non-breeders come ashore to moult, and some animals can be seen here until April. In the winter months most adults stay at sea. They have been known to travel as far away as the Antarctic Peninsula, Argentine coast and are occasionally seen on the coast of Brazil.

Sea Lion Island has long been an important site in the Falklands for breeding southern sea lions. Sea lions have suffered steep declines throughout the Falklands – in the 1930s over 80,000 pups were born each year in the Islands, compared with only 2,000 in the early 1990s.

On Sea Lion Island they still breed in small numbers around the coast. They sometimes prey on penguins, but their main food is octopus, squid, lobster krill and fish. Be especially alert when walking through tussock grass where these large animals often haul out.

The Elephant Seal Research Group currently run long-term monitoring of the seals and killer whales at Sea Lion Island: www.esrg.org



Elephant seal pup

Southern sea lions



Southern elephant seals



Killer whales and penguins

Killer whales are annual visitors seen here from October to February. Because of the deeply shelving coastline, this is one of the best places in the Falklands to see them. They hunt penguins and seals at the edge of kelp beds just offshore. They can travel at up to 55 kmh (35 mph). It is one of the most wide-ranging mammals on earth.

The killer whale is the largest member of the dolphin family. It has distinctive jet-black, brilliant white and grey markings with a huge dorsal fin on the male. They are typically seen in close-knit family groups known as pods. Members of a pod stay together for life. Two pods of killer whales have been identified off Sea Lion Island. The first consists of three large females, two juveniles and a small calf. The second pod includes two large males with three to four females. You can often see them at very close range, on the seaward side of outcropping rocks. There is an on going photo identification project at Sea Lion Island recording the killer whale activities.

Gentoo penguins live on Sea Lion Island all year round. The Falkland Islands are one of the most important locations in the world for this species. Two large round eggs are laid from late October. The chicks will be ready to go to sea by the end of March.

Magellanic penguins are known in the Falklands as the jackass penguin because of their braying call. They arrive here in September, but have left by April to migrate north as far as Brazil. They breed in underground burrows.

Southern rockhopper penguins

are the smallest of the Falkland penguins and come here to breed on cliff tops in October. They feed on fish and squid. Their numbers have declined globally over many years, but the Falkland Islands still hold important breeding populations.



Gentoo penguin



Magellanic penguin



Southern rockhopper penguin



Killer whales

Bird checklist for Sea Lion Island

Sea Lion Island is especially important for small ground-nesting birds that thrive due to the lack of introduced predators. Cobb's wren, unique (endemic) to the Falklands, and tussacbird are especially common and easy to spot.

- | | | |
|---|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> King penguin | <input type="checkbox"/> Silver teal | <input type="checkbox"/> Tussacbird (FI ENDEMIC) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Gentoo penguin | <input type="checkbox"/> Turkey vulture | <input type="checkbox"/> Dark-faced ground-tyrant |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Macaroni penguin | <input type="checkbox"/> Variable hawk | <input type="checkbox"/> Correndera pipit |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Southern rockhopper penguin | <input type="checkbox"/> Southern caracara | <input type="checkbox"/> Austral thrush |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Magellanic penguin | <input type="checkbox"/> Striated caracara | <input type="checkbox"/> Sedge wren |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Southern silvery grebe | <input type="checkbox"/> Peregrine falcon | <input type="checkbox"/> Cobb's wren (FI ENDEMIC) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Southern giant petrel | <input type="checkbox"/> Snowy sheathbill | <input type="checkbox"/> Black-chinned skink |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sooty shearwater | <input type="checkbox"/> Magellanic oystercatcher | <input type="checkbox"/> White-bidled finch |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Rock shag | <input type="checkbox"/> Blackish oystercatcher | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Imperial cormorant | <input type="checkbox"/> Two-banded plover | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Black-crowned night-heron | <input type="checkbox"/> Rufous-chested dotterel | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Kelp goose | <input type="checkbox"/> White-rumped sandpiper | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Upland goose | <input type="checkbox"/> South American snipe | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ruddy-headed goose | <input type="checkbox"/> Brown skua | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Falkland steamer duck (FI ENDEMIC) | <input type="checkbox"/> Kelp gull | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Crested duck | <input type="checkbox"/> Dolphin gull | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Chiloë wigeon | <input type="checkbox"/> Brown-hooded gull | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Speckled teal | <input type="checkbox"/> South American tern | |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Short-eared owl | |



Cobb's wren, unique to the Falklands

To prevent the spread of invasive species and diseases, you are asked to comply with a few simple measures when travelling around the islands: make sure all of your clothing, equipment and luggage is free from soil, animal faeces, seeds, insects and rodents, and scrub your footwear before each visit to a new wildlife site or seabird colony. If you have any questions about biosecurity, or wish to report diseased wildlife, please speak to the landowners or call the Department of Agriculture 27355 / Falklands Conservation 22247 for advice.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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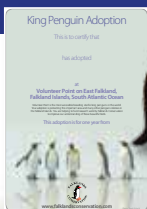
Falkland Office: Jubilee Villas, Ross Road, Stanley FIQQ 1ZZ | UK Office: The Gatehouse, The Lodge, Sandy, Beds SG19 2DL

Falklands Conservation works to conserve the wildlife of the Falkland Islands. To find out more about us and how you can support what we do, visit us at Jubilee Villas, Ross Road, Stanley or go to our website:

www.falklandsconservation.com

Information about other areas of outstanding wildlife and scenery, can be found in *A Visitor's Guide to the Falkland Islands*.





PENGUIN ADOPTION FORM

- Adopt a king penguin at the remote colony of Volunteer Point in the Falkland Islands for £25/US\$40 for 12 months.
- Help conservation efforts to protect the penguins of the Falklands.
- Receive an adoption pack by post comprising a personalised adoption certificate, king penguin photo, king penguin pin badge, postcard, Volunteer Point leaflet and FC magazine.
- Receive your adopter's newsletter by post with your renewal request.
- Receive an invitation to renew by post or by email if provided to the person named below.

☐ **Yes, I would like to Adopt a Penguin!** (payment form overleaf)

You may wish to Adopt a Penguin as a gift or on behalf of someone else, if so just let us know the details.

☐ **I would like the adoption pack to be sent to:**

PLEASE WRITE IN BLOCK CAPITALS

Name: _____

Recipient's date of birth (if aged 16 and under): _____

Address: _____

Postcode: _____ Tel: _____

Email: _____

Penguin Name: _____

MEMBERSHIP



- Join Falklands Conservation and help to protect the spectacular wildlife of the Falkland Islands. We will keep in touch about our conservation, campaigning, fundraising and research work that supports Falklands Conservation.
- Receive a joining pack comprising welcome letter, FC magazine, newsletter, and member's pin badge.
- Receive two magazines and two newsletters a year (if you provide an email address we will send your newsletter by email) and information on our AGM and members' evening held in the UK.
- Receive an invitation to renew by post to the person(s) named overleaf.

☐ **I would like to become a member of Falklands Conservation** (payment form overleaf)

Membership category (please tick)

☐ Individual (UK, EU or FI) £30/\$50

☐ Individual (overseas) £50/\$80

☐ Household/family £50/\$80

☐ Gold £100/\$170

☐ Life (one-off payment) £1,000/\$1,700

☐ Student £15/\$20

To adopt a penguin and/or become a member please complete both sides of this form.

You can also purchase securely online at **www.falklandsconservation.com**

GIFT AID With Gift Aid on every £1 you give us we can claim an extra 25p back from HM Revenue & Customs. To qualify, what you pay in UK Income and/or Capital Gains Tax must at least equal the Gift Aid all your charities will reclaim in the tax year.

☐ **YES: I would like Falklands Conservation to treat all the donations I have made in the last four years, and all I will make until I notify you otherwise as Gift Aid donations. I am a UK taxpayer and understand that if I pay less Income Tax and/or Capital Gains Tax than the amount of Gift Aid claimed on all my donations in that tax year it is my responsibility to pay any differences.**

Signed: _____

Dated: _____

DATA PROTECTION

All details provided will be retained securely for the duration of your membership/adoption. Providing an email address or phone number enables us to contact you should we need to in order to service your membership/adoption. We will retain or use this information only during the duration of your membership/adoption..

All financial information will be securely destroyed on successful completion of the transaction.

Our promise to you: we will keep your data safe and our communications with you relevant. We will never sell your personal details to a third party. If you have signed a gift aid declaration we do use the information you provided to claim back gift aid from HMRC. You can change how you hear from us or unsubscribe from emails at any time, just let us know by contacting ukdirector@conservation.org.fk For more information, please see our privacy policy at www.falklandsconservation.com

RETURN COMPLETED FORM TO:

**Falklands Conservation,
The Gatehouse, The Lodge, Sandy,
Beds, SG19 2DL, UK**

Please use this form for both Penguin Adoption and Membership purchase, completing the relevant sections. Thank you.

Name: _____

Address: _____

Postcode: _____ Tel: _____

Email: _____

☐ Please tick this box if you would like to receive your newsletter /renewal by email.

PURCHASE INFORMATION

*** Please indicate £ sterling or US\$**

Penguin adoption for a year – £25 / \$40

 *

Membership fee payable

(see overleaf for categories)

 *

Donation

 *

**Please make cheques payable to
Falklands Conservation.**

Total

 *

☐ I wish to pay by Visa/Mastercard (please tick)

My card number is

Expiry date /

Signature _____

Cardholder's name _____

Cardholder's address (if different from applicant)

_____ Postcode _____

Have you considered a Standing Order?

(UK BANK ACCOUNT HOLDERS ONLY)

This helps us keep our administration costs down. Either download the form from our website or set up your own using the following details: **Falklands Conservation**, Barclays Bank, King George Street, Yeovil, Somerset BA20 1PX.
Sort code: 20-99-40 / Account Number 90442542.

You can also purchase securely online at www.falklandsconservation.com