

Site guidelines for land-based tourist-visited sites

JOUGLA POINT (Wiencke Island)

64°49'S, 63°30'W

Located in Port Lockroy at the southwestern end of Wiencke Island

Sensitivity: Low.

Key features

Nesting Gentoo penguins and blue-eyed shags. Glacier scenery.

Description

Jougla Point lies at the southwestern end of Wiencke Island and juts into the small harbour of Port Lockroy, a protected anchorage entered between Flag Point and Lécuyer Point. Goudier Island is located in the harbour immediately north of Jougla Point, and has been designated as Antarctic Historic Site and Monument No. 61. Several large glaciers flow into the harbour, which in November and December may be covered with fast ice. Visitor landings occur on boulders and rocks at the northwestern end of Jougla Point, or slightly east-southeast toward a part of the inner harbour called Alice Creek. Gentoo penguins nest on the flat area just above these landing rocks, on adjacent, exposed rocks and boulders, and on ridges at higher elevations, 100 metres above sea level. Extensive snow cover may last into January. When the snow melts and mixes with the penguins' guano, the site becomes exceedingly wet, muddy, and slippery. Snow cornices rimming the harbour are unstable and treacherous, as are the glaciers and the extensive, steep, and potentially crevassed snowfields above the harbour.

Wildlife

Gentoo penguin (*Pygoscelis antarctica*), blue-eyed shag (*Phalacrocorax atriceps*), kelp gull (*Larus dominicanus*), and skuas (*Catharacta* spp.) are confirmed breeders. Antarctic terns (*Sterna vittata*) are observed regularly and breeding is strongly suspected. Weddell seals (*Leptonychotes weddellii*) regularly haul-out along the Alice Creek shoreline. *Xanthoria* spp., *Caloplaca* spp., *Buellia* spp., other crustose lichen species, and the green alga *Prasiola crispa* are present.

The medium-sized colony of >1,500 gentoo penguins is one of the largest colonies of this species in the Antarctic Peninsula. The small colony of blue

eyed shags declined to as few as 20 breeding pairs in 1997, but has now increased slightly and stabilized at ≤ 29 nests.

Visitor pressure

Jougla Point is frequently visited. Over thirteen years, 1989-02, this site experienced the 2nd highest number of zodiac landings from ship-visits in the Antarctic Peninsula and the 2nd highest number of visitors in such landings, averaging 45 zodiac landings and 4,340 visitors per season. Peak visits occurred in the 2000-01 season, with 94 zodiac landings and 8,675 visitors.

This site has low sensitivity to potential environmental disruptions, except for the northwestern tip of Jougla Point (see Restricted Zone A on the map); however, this zone is easily avoided by proceeding south from the landing rocks and boulders. Otherwise, adequate visitor space, restricted zones, seasonal limitations on visit time per 24 hours and numbers of visitors ashore, and distance and other limitations for approaching wildlife and flora should assist visitors in avoiding disruptions.

The gentoo penguins nesting at the northwestern tip of Jougla Point are easily approached and disturbed, especially in November and early December when adults will be incubating eggs; subsequently, adults will be guarding and feeding chicks at the nest, then in crèche. Gentoo penguins also nest on adjacent, exposed rocks and boulders, and on ridges at higher elevations; in these areas, there is greater space for visitors, but still, the penguins are easily approached and disturbed.

Blue-eyed shags nesting on the northwestern tip of Jougla Point cannot be approached easily; they are wary, restless, and easily disturbed; in November and early December adults will be incubating eggs and, thereafter, guarding and feeding chicks.

Kelp gulls nesting on cliffs at higher elevations are not easily approached, but may be disturbed by visits to nearby, gentoo penguin nesting areas; in November and early December adult gulls will be incubating eggs and, thereafter, guarding and feeding chicks.

Skuas nesting on widely scattered territories are easily approached and disturbed, particularly, later in the season (from mid-January) when adults are fiercely protecting young.

Snow cornices rimming the harbour are unstable and treacherous, as are the glaciers and the extensive, steep, and potentially crevassed snowfields above the harbour. These areas should not be ventured on.

Visitor code of conduct

Preferred landing area. On boulders and rocks at the northwestern end of Jougla Point, or slightly east-southeast, toward a part of the inner harbour called Alice Creek.

Restricted zones.

- A** Gentoo penguin and blue-eyed shag nesting area at the northwestern tip of Jougla Point.
- B** Glaciers and snowfields at higher elevations.

Seasonal limitations. During the penguins' breeding season (November-February), total visit time per 24 hours, all ships included, should not exceed eight hours ashore, where practicable.* Thereafter, the penguins disperse to sea, the risk of disruptions lessens, and the limit on visit time per 24 hours is unnecessary.

Ship limitations. Confined to vessels with visitor capacities of 500 or fewer.

Preferred numbers of visitors ashore. No more than 100 at any time, exclusive of expedition guides and leaders.

Preferred walking routes. Visitors should proceed to the flat area above the landing rocks and boulders, and proceed south.

Distance and other limitations for approaching wildlife and flora, and avoiding potential hazards. Maintain a precautionary distance of 5 metres from nesting penguins, increasing this distance if necessary and as appropriate, to avoid changing the birds' behaviour. At all times, walk slowly and carefully when near nesting, crèching, or molting penguins, and give penguins the right-of-way. Do not impede penguins' access to and from the water. If there is extensive snow cover, avoid — and do not walk in or block — trails penguins have made through the snow.

Avoid blue-eyed shags nesting at the northwestern tip of Jougla Point (see Restricted Zone A on the map).

Avoid and stay clear of skua territories. If subjected to any aerial attacks by skuas, retreat by retracing steps that have been taken.

* The hours ashore provisions apply only to passenger ships. A passenger ship is defined as a vessel which carries more than 12 passengers.

Avoid and stay clear of kelp gull territories.

Visits uphill and to higher ground inland should be strictly controlled by using organised, guided groups, with everyone following the same path. Wandering unsupervised should not be allowed.

Stay clear of — and do not venture on — snowfields, glaciers, or snow cornices.

JOUGLA POINT

-  Gentoo penguins
-  Blue-eyed shags
-  Restricted zones
-  Preferred walking route
-  Antarctic Site Inventory stake
-  Huts, communications towers, cairns, cement blocks, posts

