



Half Moon Island

60°36'S, 59°55'W - 2km long crescent shaped island between Greenwich and Livingston Islands. Guidelines refer to the eastern end of the island as defined in the accompanying map.

Key features

- Chinstrap penguins
- Vegetation
- Wilson's storm-petrels
- Weddell & fur seal haul-out



Description

TOPOGRAPHY

Half Moon island has a series of raised cobbled beaches along the centre and the south-eastern end of the island, which is characterised by a small hill and series of igneous rock outcrops. The north side of the hill comprises steep scree slopes with cliffs to the south and east.

FAUNA

Confirmed breeders: Chinstrap penguins (*Pygoscelis antarctica*), Wilson's storm petrels (*Oceanites oceanicus*) blue-eyed shags (*Phalacrocorax atriceps*) kelp gulls (*Larus dominicanus*), snowy sheathbills (*Chionis alba*) skuas (*Catharacta* spp.) and Antarctic terns (*Sterna vittata*).

Regularly haul out: Weddell seals (*Leptonychotes weddellii*) and fur seals (*Arctocephalus gazella*).

FLORA

Usnea Antarctica and crustose lichen spp. can be found on rock outcrops near penguin colonies. Patches of *Deschampsia antarctica* and small moss growths of moss spp. can be found on the raised beaches and amongst the rocky outcrops.

OTHER

Small rotting dory on the primary landing area.

Towards the west of the site lies the Argentine Antarctic summer station Cámara. The station and its associated structures are excluded from these guidelines. In summer, scientists from Cámara station work in different locations of the island.

Visitor Impacts

KNOWN IMPACTS

Track erosion, trampling of vegetation.

POTENTIAL IMPACTS

Disturbance of wildlife, further trampling of vegetation, damage to breeding burrows, enhanced track erosion.

Landing Requirements

SHIPS*

Ships carrying 500 or fewer passengers. One ship at a time.

Maximum 3 ships per day (midnight to midnight) of which no more than two may be vessels carrying more than 200 passengers.

VISITORS

No more than 100 visitors ashore at any time, exclusive of expedition guides and leaders. 1 guide per 20 visitors.

No visitors ashore between 22:00hrs and 04:00hrs (local time). This is in order to establish a resting period for the wildlife.

Visitor Area

LANDING AREA

Primary: small beach area on the north shore of the south-eastern tip of the island, marked by small rotting dory. (The dory may be covered by snow in the early season).

Secondary: cobbled beach immediately to west of the primary landing site.

CLOSED AREAS

Closed Area A: small coastal beach point immediately to the east of primary landing site where terns and kelp gulls regularly nest.

Closed Area B: small hill crowned by a navigation tower, where chinstrap penguins breed, and in whose scree slopes Wilson's storm-petrels burrow.

Walking around closed area B is discouraged, given the restricted space available on the narrow beach, especially during high tide.

GUIDED WALKING AREAS

Walks to the eastern tip should be guided with careful attention to give right-of-way when crossing the penguin access route above closed area A and between the rock outcrops when crossing towards the eastern shore.

Carefully evaluate access to the eastern tip during certain periods in the summer, given the high level of wildlife activity in this area.

* A ship is defined as a vessel which carries more than 12 passengers.



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FREE ROAMING AREAS

Visitors may roam freely in the immediate primary landing beach area.

They also can roam freely on the southern shore, all along a raised beach, towards the west, taking special care to the likely presence of vegetation and fur seals. Fur seals camouflage themselves in the surrounding landscape.

Deploying a guide between these two areas is recommended.

Visitor Code of Conduct

BEHAVIOUR ASHORE

Walk slowly and carefully. Maintain a precautionary minimum distance of 5 metres from wildlife and give animals the right-of-way. Increase this distance if any change in behaviour is observed.

Take care not to displace penguins along the shoreline at the landing beaches.

Be aware that the terns can shift their breeding location inter-seasonally. Be alert to their presence and keep an appropriate distance.

Walk carefully and do not tread on vegetated areas which are susceptible to trampling.

Respect conduct of scientific activities, if any.

Do not touch, or climb into the dory.

Take particular care with fur seals, they may be aggressive.

CAUTIONARY NOTES

The landing site is susceptible to swells from the east.

Strong winds and tidal variation can bring pack and brash ice quickly onto the beach area.



View of the southeast end of Half Moon Island and landing site



Overview of the south coast of Half Moon Island

Half Moon Island - Eastern end

