



The Atlantic Odyssey 2016 – voyage summary

by Simon Cook

This year's voyage was affected by the global El Nino event, in both terms of weather, and species and numbers of species seen. The 'new' prion around Gough Island was added to our multi-year list however.

Once aboard the ship highlights included several **Chimango Caracaras** on a fishing boat and a **White-throated Caracara** that flew across the Beagle Channel. Most of the passage to South Georgia was in thick fog but a number of exciting species were seen: **Southern Royal Albatross**, **Common** and **Georgian Diving-Petrel**, **Slender-billed Prion**, **Soft-plumaged** and **Kerguelan Petrel** and the first **Sub-Antarctic Little Shearwater**. Cetaceans were brief but gripping: **Hourglass Dolphin**, three male **Killer Whales** and a **Southern Right Whale**.

Very good weather meant a very productive time at South Georgia. Several landings were made and birds included **Wilson's** and **Black-bellied Storm-petrel**, **Antarctic Prion**, **Antarctic Tern**, **White-chinned Petrel**, **SG Pintail**, **SG Pipit** and **SG Shag**. Colonies of **King**, **Macaroni**, **Gentoo** and **Chinstrap Penguin** were seen, as were nesting **Wandering**, **Grey-headed** and **Black-browed Albatross** but **Light-mantled Sooty Albatross** was only seen in flight. Both species of **Giant-Petrel** were seen at very close range ashore; as was **Pale-faced Sheathbill** and **Brown Skua**.

Just after setting course for Gough Island, **Blue Petrel**, **Grey-backed Storm-petrel**, and **Fin**, **Humpback** and **Sperm Whale** were noted. The passage took several days so numerous exciting species were encountered, including **Sooty** and **Tristan Albatross**, **Fairy Prion**, **Grey**, **Great-winged**, **White-headed**, **Spectacled** and **Atlantic Petrel**, **White-bellied Storm-petrel** and **Hourglass** and **Dusky Dolphin**. Although it was too rough for a zodiac cruise distant views were had of **Northern Rockhopper Penguin** and **Sub-Antarctic Fur Seal**. Better still were the **Broad-billed Prions** and the soon-

to-be-named and recently discovered sub-species of **MacGillivray's Prion**. The Tristan da Cunha archipelago did not disappoint us either, with a plethora of seabirds and landings on both Tristan (with a **Cattle Egret** and **Cory's Shearwater**) and Nightingale Island. The latter rewarded us with lots of tame **Tristan Thrushes**, both of the other endemic landbirds (**Nightingale** and the very rare **Wilkin's Finch**), **Great Shearwaters** and the last few juvenile **Atlantic Yellow-nosed Albatrosses**.

Leaving most of the southern tubenoses behind, we next set course for St. Helena. The number of species seen declined rapidly but there were still new things to note: **False Killer Whale**, **Bulwer's Petrel**, **Red-billed Tropicbird** and **Madeiran Storm-petrel** for example. The approach to the island and trips on a local boat rewarded us with another **Sperm Whale**, several huge **Whale Sharks**, **Pantropical Spotted** and **Rough-toothed Dolphins**, **Brown** and **Masked Booby**, **Brown** and **Black Noddy** and **White Tern**. Dozens of **St. Helena Plovers** were seen in the Deadwood Plain area.

The short passage to Ascension Island yielded more of interest - very close views of **White-bellied Storm-petrel**, a **Hammerhead Shark**, **White-bellied Spinner Dolphins** and the first **Ascension Frigatebirds**. A **White-tailed Tropicbird**, a **Barn Swallow** and a **House Martin** were seen ashore, as were **Sooty Terns**, at their colony. At Boatswainbird Island we saw thousands of frigatebirds and **Masked**, **Brown** and **Red-footed Boobies** as well as two species of noddies and more tropicbirds. The spectacle of all these birds at sunrise was hugely impressive and **Common Bottlenose Dolphin** was seen shortly afterwards.

Another long sea passage followed, to the port of Praia, on the Cape Verdean island of Santiago. More **Cory's Shearwaters** could be compared with **Cape Verde Shearwater**, two **Killer Whales** came close to the ship and **Leach's** plus a probable **Swinhoe's Storm-petrel**, and **Long-tailed** plus **Pomarine Skua** were welcome sights. Cetaceans included **Pantropical Spotted**, **White-bellied Spinner**, **Clymene** and **Common Dolphin**, together with **Melon-headed**, **Short-finned Pilot** and **Cuvier's Beaked Whales**.

As the ship approached Praia **Boyd's Shearwater**, **Cape Verde Shearwater** and **Fea's Petrel** were the highlights. Once ashore and within a few miles of Praia we were very pleased to see **Cape Verde Swift**, **Black-crowned Sparrow-Lark**, **Bar-tailed Desert Lark**, several superb **Cream-coloured Coursers**, **Spanish** and **Iago Sparrow**, **Cape Verde Warbler** plus **Black Heron**, **Intermediate Egret**, **Glossy Ibis**, **Purple Heron**, **Western Reef Egret** and a spotted **Spotted Sandpiper** at the reservoir.

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Wildlife List Part I – Ushuaia to Ascension Island

This is the list of wildlife seen on the voyage from Ushuaia, Argentina to Ascension Island via South Georgia, Gough Island, the Tristan da Cunha archipelago and St. Helena, 23rd March – 20th April.

Birds

King Penguin ----- *Aptenodytes patagonicus*
Gentoo Penguin ----- *Pygoscelis papua*
North. Rockhopper Penguin ----- *E. moseleyi*
Macaroni Penguin ----- *E. chrysolophus*
Magellanic Penguin ----- *Spheniscus magellanicus*
Wandering Albatross ----- *Diomedea exulans*
Tristan Albatross ----- *D. dabbenena*
Southern Royal Albatross ----- *D. epomophora*
Grey-headed Albatross ----- *T. chrystostoma*
Atl. Yellow-nosed A'tross. ----- *T. chlororhynchos*
Sooty Albatross ----- *Phoebetria fusca*
Light-mantled Sooty Albatross ----- *P. palpebrata*
Southern Giant Albatross ----- *Macronectes giganteus*
Northern Giant Petrel ----- *M. halli*
Southern Fulmar----- *Fulmarus glacialisoides*
Cape Petrel (Pintado) ----- *Daption capense*
Great-winged Petrel ----- *Pterodroma macroptera*
Atlantic Petrel ----- *P. incerta*
Kerguelen Petrel ----- *P. brevirostris*
White-headed Petrel ----- *P. lessoni*
Soft-plumaged Petrel ----- *P. mollis*
Blue Petrel ----- *Halobaena caerulea*
Broad-billed Prion ----- *Pachyptila vittata*
MacGillivray's Prion ----- *P. macGillivrayi*
Antarctic Prion ----- *P. desolata*
Slender-billed Prion ----- *P. belcheri*
Fairy Prion ----- *P. turtur*
Bulwer's Petrel ----- *Bulweria bulwerii*
White-chinned Petrel -- *Procellaria aequinoctialis*
Spectacled Petrel ----- *P. conspicillata*
Grey Petrel ----- *P. cinerea*
Cory's Shearwater ----- *Calonectris diomedea*
Great Shearwater ----- *Puffinus gravis*
Sooty Shearwater ----- *P. griseus*
Sub-Antarctic Little Shearwater ----- *P. elegans*
Wilson's Storm-petrel ----- *Oceanites oceanicus*
Grey-backed Storm-petrel ----- *Garrodia nereis*
Black-bellied Storm-petrel ----- *Fregetta tropica*
White-bellied Storm-petrel ----- *F. grallaria*

White-faced Storm-petrel -- *Pelagodroma marina*
Madeiran Storm-petrel ----- *Oceanodroma castro*
Leach's Storm-petrel ----- *O. leucorhoa*
Common Diving-Petrel -- *Pelecanoides urinatrix*
South Georgian Diving-Petrel ----- *P. georgicus*
Red-billed Tropicbird ----- *Phaethon aethereus*
Masked Booby ----- *Sula dactylatra*
Brown Booby ----- *S. leucogaster*
Imperial Shag ----- *Phalacrocorax atriceps*
Neotropical Cormorant ----- *P. olivaceous*
South Georgia Shag----- *P. georgianus*
Ascension Frigatebird ----- *Fregata aquila*
Cattle Egret ----- *Bubulcus ibis*
South Georgia Pintail ----- *Anas georgia*
Pale-faced Sheathbill ----- *Chionis alba*
St Helena Plover ----- *Charadrius sanctaehelenae*
Brown Skua ----- *Catharacta antarctica lonnbergi*
Tristan Skua ----- *C. a hamiltoni*
Chilean Skua ----- *C. chilensis*
Dolphin Gull ----- *Larus scoresbii*
Kelp Gull ----- *L. dominicanus*
Brown-hooded Gull ----- *L. maculipennis*
Antarctic Tern ----- *Sterna vittata*
South American Tern ----- *S. hirundinacea*
Arctic Tern ----- *S. paradisaea*
Sooty Tern ----- *S. fuscata*
White Tern----- *Gygis alba*
Black Noddy ----- *Anous minutus*
Brown Noddy ----- *A. stolidus*
Chimango Caracara ----- *Milvago chimango*
White-throated Caracara - *Polyborus albogularis*
South Georgia Pipit ----- *Anthus antarcticus*

Introductions:

Barred Ground-Dove ----- *Geopelia striata*
Common Waxbill ----- *Estrilda astrild*
Madagascar Fody ----- *Foudia madagascariensis*
Common (Indian) Mynah ----- *Acridotheres tristis*
Java Sparrow ----- *Padda oryzivora*
Yellow Canary ----- *Serinus flaviventris*

Marine Mammals

Southern Right Whale ----- *Eubalaena australis*
Fin Whale ----- *Balaenoptera physalus*
Humpback Whale ----- *Megaptera novaeangliae*
Sperm Whale ----- *Physeter macrocephalus*
Dwarf Sperm Whale ----- *Kogia simus*
Killer Whale ----- *Orcinus orca*
Dusky Dolphin ----- *L. obscurus*
Hourglass Dolphin ----- *L. cruciger*
Pantropical Spotted Dolphin --- *Stenella attenuata*
C Bottlenose Dolphin ----- *Tursiops truncatus*
South American Fur Seal - *Arctocephalus australis*
Antarctic Fur Seal ----- *A. gazelle*
Subantarctic Fur Seal ----- *A. tropicalis*
Southern Elephant Seal ----- *Mirounga leonine*

Butterflies

African Monarch ----- *Danaus chrysippus*
Diadem ----- *Hypolimnas misippus*
Long-tailed Blue ----- *Lampides boeticus*
Southern Painted Lady ----- *Vanessa brasiliensis*

Selected other Wildlife

Whale Shark ----- *Rhincodon typus*
Java Gecko (St Helena) ----- *Hemidactylus frenatus*

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Wildlife List Part 2 – Ascension Island to the Cape Verde Islands

This is the list of wildlife for the second part of the 2016 Atlantic Odyssey expedition cruise (from Ascension Island, South Atlantic to the Cape Verde Islands, off West Africa). The list covers Ascension Island, the five days at sea and those ashore during the last day of the expedition on the island of Santiago.

Birds

Fea's Petrel ----- *Pterodroma feae*
Bulwer's Petrel ----- *Bulweria bulwerii*
Cory's Shearwater ----- *Calonectris diomedea*
Cape Verde Shearwater ----- *C. edwardsii*
Boyd's Shearwater ----- *Puffinus boydi*
Sooty Shearwater ----- *P. griseus*
Leach's Storm-petrel - *Oceanodroma leucorhoa*
Swinhoe's Storm-petrel ----- *O. monorhis*
Madeiran Storm-petrel ----- *O. castro*
Red-billed Tropicbird ----- *Phaeton aethereus*
White-tailed Tropicbird ----- *P. lepturus*
Masked Booby ----- *Sula dactylatra*
Brown Booby ----- *S. leucogaster*
Red-footed Booby ----- *S. sula*
Ascension Frigatebird ----- *Fregata aquila*
Cattle Egret ----- *Bubulcus ibis*
Black Heron ----- *Hydranassa ardesiaca*
Western Reef Egret ----- *Egretta gularis*
Little Egret ----- *E. garzetta*
Intermediate Egret ----- *E. intermedia*
Purple Heron ----- *Ardea purpurea*
Grey Heron ----- *A. cinerea*
Glossy Ibis ----- *Plegadis falcinellus*
Eurasian Spoonbill ----- *Platalea leucorodia*
Common Kestrel ----- *Falco tinnunculus*
Common Quail ----- *Coturnix coturnix*
Common Moorhen ----- *Gallinula chloropus*

Black-winged Stilt ---- *Himantopus himantopus*
Cream-coloured Courser ---- *Cursorius cursor*
Greenshank ----- *Tringa nebularia*
Common Sandpiper ----- *Actitis hypoleucos*
Spotted Sandpiper ----- *A. macularius*
Pomarine Skua ----- *Stercorarius pomarinus*
Arctic Skua ----- *S. parasiticus*
Long-tailed Skua ----- *S. longicaudus*
Arctic Tern ----- *S. paradisaea*
Sooty Tern ----- *S. fuscata*
White Tern ----- *Gygis alba*
Brown Noddy ----- *Anous stolidus*
Black Noddy ----- *A. minutus*
E. Collared Dove ----- *Streptopelia decaocto*
Cape Verde Swift ----- *Apus alexandri*
Grey-headed Kingfisher - *Halcyon leucocephala*
Bar-tailed Desert Lark -- *Ammomanes cincturus*
House Martin ----- *Delichon urbica*
Barn Swallow ----- *Hirundo rustica*
Black-crowned Sparrow-Lark - *Eremopterix nigriceps*
Cape Verde Warbler - *Acrocephalus brevipennis*
Spectacled Warbler ----- *Sylvia conspicillata*
Blackcap ----- *S. atricapilla*
Brown-necked Raven ----- *Corvus ruficollis*
Spanish Sparrow ----- *Passer hispaniolensis*
Iago Sparrow ----- *P. iagoensis*

Marine Mammals

Cuvier's Beaked Whale ----- *Ziphius cavirostris*
Killer Whale ----- *Orcinus orca*
Melon-headed Whale ----- *Peponocephala electra*
Short-finned Pilot Whale - *Globicephala macrorhynchus*
Short-beaked Common Dolphin --- *Delphinus delphis*

White-bellied Spinner Dolphin - *Stenella longirostris*
Clymene Dolphin ----- *S. clymene*
Pantropical Spotted Dolphin ----- *S. attenuata*
Bottlenose Dolphin ----- *Tursiops truncatus*
Rough-toothed Dolphin ----- *Steno bredanensis*

Other Wildlife

Portuguese Man-of-war ----- *Physalia physalus*
Shark species
Hammerhead Shark sp.

Green Turtle ----- *Chelonia mydas*
Loggerhead Turtle ----- *Caretta caretta*
Blackfish ----- *Melichthys niger*
Flying Fish ----- Unidentified