The Atlantic Odyssey 2014

Wildlife summary by Simon Cook, Tour Leader.

From Ushuaia, Argentina to the Cape Verde Islands
19th March – 29th April

The Atlantic Odyssey is one of the best ocean voyages in the world for wildlife, as the ideally-suited expedition cruise ship MV Plancius repositions from Antarctica to Europe. There are outstanding opportunities to see over 40 species of tubenoses, plus many cetaceans and the chance of endemic landbirds on the remote islands that are visited. This was the sixth Atlantic Odyssey for leader Simon Cook.

The Drake Passage, between Tierra del Fuego and the Antarctic Peninsula, provided many good seabirds – Kerguelen Petrel, Black-bellied Storm-Petrel and albatrosses including Black-browed, Grey-headed, Wandering, Southern Royal and Light-mantled Sooty. Exceptionally, there was a sighting of Rockhopper Penguin. Cetaceans were noted too – Peale’s Dolphin, Antarctic Minke Whale, Fin Whale and Southern Bottlenose Whale. Antarctic sightings were sometimes hindered by poor weather but Leopard Seal, Chinstrap, Gentoo & Adelie Penguin, Antarctic Shag and Snow Petrel were added to the trip list. Exceptionally, a Southern Fulmar and an Antarctic Petrel came onto the ship on the same day. Many more minke and fin whales were seen plus Humpback and Orcas (Killer Whales).

A shortened visit to spectacular South Georgia didn’t disappoint, with dramatic land and icescapes providing a backdrop to King and Macaroni Penguins and the South Georgia Shag. A large fall of birds onto the ship itself included Antarctic and Fairy Prions, Wilson’s and Black-bellied Storm-Petrels, Common and South Georgian Diving-Petrels and a Kerguelan Petrel.

The long journey to Tristan da Cunha via Stanley, Falkland Islands* (Cattle Egret, Magellanic Penguin, Turkey Vulture, Southern Caracara and Variable Hawk) brought many more seabirds, including our first Sooty, Atlantic Yellow-nosed and Tristan Albatrosses, Great, Sooty and Sub-Antarctic Little Shearwaters, Slender-billed Prion, Atlantic, Soft-plumaged, Grey, Spectacled and Great-winged Petrels, Broad-billed Prion, South Polar Skua, White-faced and White-bellied Storm-Petrels plus Long-tailed Skua. Marine mammals included Hourglass, Dusky and Peale’s Dolphins, pilot whale sp., Gray’s Beaked Whale, Hector’s Beaked Whale and a Blue Whale.
Ship and Zodiac cruising plus two landings at the Tristan archipelago produced all the breeding seabirds plus Killer Whales, probable Shepherd’s Beaked Whales, Sub-Antarctic Fur Seal, Northern Rockhopper Penguin, Salvin’s Albatross, Tristan Thrush, Nightingale Bunting and the critically endangered Grosbeak Bunting. Great Shearwaters and almost ready-to-fledge Yellow-nosed Albatross chicks were also seen on Nightingale Island.

On the way to St. Helena the southern, cool-water species were rapidly left behind. They were replaced by warmer water ones such as Bulwer’s Petrel, Madeiran Storm-Petrel, Black and Common Noddies and Masked and Brown Boobies. In the water there were plenty of flying fish plus Rough-toothed and Pantropical Spotted Dolphins. Once ashore on the island we soon had excellent views of the endemic St. Helena Plover.

Two days at sea and two days at Ascension Island added Sperm Whale, Common Bottlenose and Rough-toothed Dolphins, Cory’s Shearwater and Leach’s Storm-Petrel. The offshore Boatswainbird Island was packed with seabirds; thousands of Masked Boobies, Black Noddies and endemic Ascension Frigatebirds were noted, along with small numbers of White-tailed Tropicbird and both Brown and Red-footed Booby. Egg-laying Atlantic Green Turtles were seen ashore and a visit was made to the large Sooty Tern colony, where there were both eggs and chicks.

Our time sailing to the Cape Verde Islands included a transit over the Equator at the Romanche Fracture Zone, an area that combined submarine seamounts (one rising to within 100 metres of the surface) with a trench that at its deepest point was 24,575'/7,728 metres below the surface! The wildlife on this leg was exciting and varied: Portuguese Man-of-war (jellyfish), a Manta Ray, Long-tailed Skuas, more Leach’s and White-faced Storm-Petrels and Cory’s, Cape Verde and Boyd’s Shearwaters. One evening a House Martin flew around the ship but the biggest surprise was a Trindade Petrel! There were many cetaceans too, such as Gray’s Spinner and Clymene Dolphins, Short-finned Pilot Whale, a male Orca (Killer Whale), unidentified beaked whales plus Cuvier’s Beaked and Gervais’ Beaked Whales.

During a short excursion on the island of Santiago the endemic Iago Sparrow, Cape Verde Warbler and Cape Verde Swift were seen, as well as local birds such as Brown-necked Raven, Spanish Sparrow and Grey-headed Kingfisher. Surprisingly, a Bourne’s Purple Heron was seen out in the countryside and the reservoir was very productive for other long-legged birds too, with Spoonbills, Great White Egret, a vagrant Black Heron and a second Bourne’s Purple Heron being present.

By any standards the voyage was an outstanding success and it comes highly recommended from past participants to all potential future participants.

(NB: The ship was diverted to the Falkland Islands due to a medical emergency, she then went back onto planned itinerary with the exception of Gough Island. *)

A separate, full species list is also available. www.wildwings.co.uk
This is the list of all wildlife seen on the voyage from Ushuaia, Argentina to Ascension Island via the Antarctic Peninsula, South Georgia, the Falkland Islands, Tristan da Cunha & Nightingale Island and St. Helena.

**Birds**

King Penguin  
*-- A. patagonicus*

Gentoo Penguin  
*-- Pygoscelis papua*

Adelie Penguin  
*-- P. adeliae*

Chinstrap Penguin  
*-- P. antarctica*

Rockhopper Penguin  
*-- Eudyptes chrysocome*

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*

Salvin’s Albatross  
*-- Thalassarche salvini*

Black-browed Alb.  
*-- T. melanophris*

Grey-headed Albatross  
*-- T. chrysostoma*

Atlantic Yellow-nosed Alb.  
*-- T. chlororhynchos*

Sooty Albatross  
*-- Phoebetria fusca*

Light-mantled Sooty Albatross  
*-- P. palpebrata*

Southern Giant Petrel  
*-- Macronectes giganteus*

Northern Giant Petrel  
*-- M. halli*

Southern Fulmar  
*-- Fulmarus glacialoides*

Antarctic Petrel  
*-- Thalassoica antarctica*

Cape Petrel (Pintado)  
*-- Daption capense*

Snow Petrel  
*-- Pagodroma nivea*

Great-winged Petrel  
*-- Pterodroma macroptera*

Atlantic Petrel  
*-- P. incerta*

Kerguelen Petrel  
*-- P. brevirostris*

Soft-plumaged Petrel  
*-- P. mollis*

Blue Petrel  
*-- Halobaena caerulea*

Broad-billed Prion  
*-- Pachyptila vittata*

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*

Subantarctic Little Shearwater  
*-- P. elegans*

Wilson’s Storm-petrel  
*-- Oceanites oceanicus*

Grey-backed Storm-petrel  
*-- Garrodia nereis*
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Common Name</th>
<th>Scientific Name</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Black-bellied Storm-petrel</td>
<td>Fregetta tropica</td>
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<td>Masked Booby</td>
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<td>Rufous-chested Dotterel</td>
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<td>St Helena Plover (Wirebird)</td>
<td>Ch. sanctaehelenae</td>
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<tr>
<td>Brown Skua</td>
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<td>Kelp Gull</td>
<td>L. dominicanus</td>
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<td>Gygis alba</td>
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<td>Anous minutus</td>
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<td>A. stolidus</td>
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<td>Tristan Thrush</td>
<td>Nesocichla eremita</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nightingale Bunting</td>
<td>Neospiza questi</td>
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<tr>
<td>Grosbeak Bunting</td>
<td>N. wilkinsoni</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>House Sparrow</td>
<td>Passer domesticus</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Long-tailed Meadowlark ------- *Sturnella loafca*

Introductions:
- Red-necked Francolin ------- *Francolinus afer*
- 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
- Fin Whale ------------------ *Balaenoptera physalus*
- Blue Whale --------------- *B. musculus*
- Antarctic Minke Whale ------- *B. bonaerensis*
- Sei/Bryde’s Whale ------------ *B. borealis/edeni*
- Humpback Whale -------- *Megaptera novaeangliae*
- Sperm Whale ------------- *Physeter macrocephalus*
- Southern Bottlenose Whale-Hyperoodon planifrons
- Gray’s Beaked Whale --------- *Mesoplodon grayii*
- Hector’s Beaked Whale ------- *M. hectori*
- Shepherd’s? Beaked Whale
- Killer Whale------------------ *Orcinus orca*
- Long or Short-finned Pilot Whale
- Peale’s Dolphin ---------- *Lagenorhynchus australis*
- Dusky Dolphin -------------- *L. obscurus*
- Hourglass Dolphin ------------- *L. cruciger*
- Pantropical Spotted Dolphin -- *Stenella attenuata*
- C Bottlenose Dolphin -------- *Tursiops truncatus*
- Rough-toothed Dolphin ------- *Steno bredanensis*
- South American Sea Lion ------- *Otaria flavescens*
- South American Fur Seal - *Arctocephalus australis*
- Antarctic Fur Seal -------------- *A. gazelle*
- Subantarctic Fur Seal ---------- *A. tropicalis*
- Crabeater Seal --------------- *Lobodon carcinophaga*
- Leopard Seal ---------------- *Hydrurga leptonyx*
- Southern Elephant Seal ------- *Mirounga leonine*

Butterflies
- African Monarch------------- *Danaus chrysippus*
- Long-tailed Blue ------------ *Lampides boeticus*
**Selected other Wildlife**

Oceanic White-tip Shark  
Atlantic Green Turtle \(\text{Chelonia mydas}\)  
Turtle sp.  
Flying Fish sp  
Blackfish \(\text{Melichthys niger}\)  
Java Gecko (St Helena) \(\text{Hemidactylus frenatus}\)

**Atlantic Odyssey 2014**

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

This is the list of wildlife seen during the second part of the 2014 Atlantic Odyssey expedition cruise from Ascension Island, South Atlantic to the Cape Verde Islands, off West Africa, between 23rd & 29th April 2014. The list covers sightings on the second day at Ascension Island, during the five days at sea and those ashore during the last day of the expedition on the island of Santiago.

### Birds

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Common Kestrel</th>
<th>Falco tinnunculus</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Common Moorhen</td>
<td>Gallinula chloropus</td>
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<tr>
<td>Black-winged Stilt</td>
<td>(\text{Himantopus himantopus})</td>
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<tr>
<td>Greenshank</td>
<td>(\text{Tringa nebularia})</td>
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<tr>
<td>South Polar Skua</td>
<td>(\text{Catharacta maccormicki})</td>
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<td>Long-tailed Skua</td>
<td>(\text{Stercorarius longicaudus})</td>
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<td>Brown Noddy</td>
<td>(\text{Anous stolidus})</td>
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<td>Black Noddy</td>
<td>(\text{A. minutus})</td>
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<tr>
<td>Collared Dove</td>
<td>(\text{Streptopelia decaocto})</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cape Verde Swift</td>
<td>(\text{Apus alexandri})</td>
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<tr>
<td>Grey-headed Kingfisher</td>
<td>(\text{Halcyon leucocephala})</td>
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<tr>
<td>House Martin</td>
<td>(\text{Delicon urbicum})</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cape Verde Warbler</td>
<td>(\text{Acrocephalus brevipennis})</td>
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<td>Blackcap</td>
<td>(\text{S. atricapilla})</td>
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<tr>
<td>Brown-necked Raven</td>
<td>(\text{Corvus ruficollis})</td>
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<tr>
<td>Common Waxbill</td>
<td>(\text{Estrilda astrild})</td>
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<tr>
<td>Spanish Sparrow</td>
<td>(\text{Passer hispaniolensis})</td>
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<tr>
<td>Iago Sparrow</td>
<td>(\text{P. iagoensis})</td>
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</tbody>
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**Trindade Petrel** \(\text{P. arminjoniana}\)  
**Bulwer's Petrel** \(\text{Bulweria bulwerii}\)  
**Cory's Shearwater** \(\text{Calonectris diomedea}\)  
**Cape Verde Shearwater** \(\text{C. edwardsii}\)  
**Boyd's Shearwater** \(\text{Puffinus boydi}\)  
**White-faced Storm-petrel** \(\text{Pelagodroma marina}\)  
**Leach’s Storm-petrel** \(\text{Oceanodroma leucorhoa}\)  
**Madeiran Storm-petrel** \(\text{S. castro}\)  
**White-tailed Tropicbird** \(\text{Phaeton lepturus}\)  
**Red-billed Tropicbird** \(\text{P. aethereus}\)  
**Masked Booby** \(\text{Sula dactylatra}\)  
**Brown Booby** \(\text{S. leucogaster}\)  
**Red-footed Booby** \(\text{S. sula}\)  
**Ascension Frigatebird** \(\text{Fregata aquila}\)  
**Black Heron** \(\text{Hydranassa ardesiaca}\)  
**Cattle Egret** \(\text{Bubulcus ibis}\)  
**Little Egret** \(\text{Egretta garzetta}\)  
**Great White Egret** \(\text{E. alba}\)  
**Purple Heron** \(\text{Ardea purpurea}\)  
**Grey Heron** \(\text{A. cinerea}\)  
**Eurasian Spoonbill** \(\text{Platalea leucorodia}\)
Marine Mammals

Cuvier’s Beaked Whale -------------- *Ziphius cavirostris*
Gervais’ Beaked Whale -------- *Mesoplodon europaeus*
Beaked Whale ---------------------- unidentified
Killer Whale ---------------------- *Orcinus orca*

Short-finned Pilot Whale - *Globicephala macrorhynchus*
Risso’s Dolphin --------------- *Grampus griseus*
Gray’s Spinner Dolphin ------ *Stenella longirostris*
Clymene Dolphin ---------------- *S. clymene*
Common Bottlenose Dolphin - *Tursiops truncatus*
Rough-toothed Dolphin -------- *Steno bredanensis*

Other Wildlife

Portuguese Man-of-war -------- *Physalia physalus*
Manta Ray --------------------- *Manta birostris*
Shark species

Green Turtle --------------------- *Chelonia mydas*
Blackfish ---------------------- *Melichthys niger*
Flying Fish ---------------------- unidentified
Unidentified