

Hannah Point

62°39'S, 60°37'W - South coast of Livingston Island

ANTARCTIC TREATY

visitor site guide



Key features

- High concentration of diverse wildlife: nesting gentoo, chinstrap, and a small number of macaroni penguins; nesting southern giant petrels; southern elephant seals
- Diverse vegetation
- Geological features



Description

TOPOGRAPHY

Hannah Point (the Point) is a narrow peninsula undulating upward to knife-edged ridges and vertical cliff edges 30-50 metres above sea level. There is loose scree on higher slopes and ridges, evidence of rock falls, and a Jasper mineral vein. Ash-covered slopes link the Point to the flat open beach area of Walker Bay.

FAUNA

Confirmed breeders: Chinstrap (*Pygoscelis antarctica*), gentoo (*Pygoscelis papua*), and macaroni penguins (*Eudyptes chrysolophus*), blue-eyed shags (*Phalacrocorax atriceps*), snowy sheathbills (*Chionis alba*), kelp gulls (*Larus dominicanus*), Antarctic terns (*Sterna vittata*), Wilson's storm-petrels (*Oceanites oceanicus*), Black-bellied storm-petrels (*Fregetta tropica*), pintado petrels (*Daption capense*), skuas (*Catharacta*, spp.), and southern giant petrels (*Macronectes giganteus*).

Regularly haul out: southern elephant seals (*Mirounga leonina*), Weddell seals (*Leptonychotes weddellii*) and Antarctic fur seals (*Arctocephalus gazella*).

FLORA

Vegetation covers the upper slopes of the Point. *Deschampsia antarctica*, *Colobanthus quitensis*, *Xanthoria*, spp. and other crustose lichens are present. The green alga *Prasiola crispa* is widespread. Large moss patches cover Walker Bay.

OTHER

Some fossil and rock specimens may be observed towards the eastern end of the flat open beach area of Walker Bay.

Visitor Impact

KNOWN IMPACTS

The erosion of a footpath between the Point and Walker Bay.

POTENTIAL IMPACTS

Erosion and disturbance of vegetation and wildlife, especially as visitor space is limited on the Point.

Landing Requirements

SHIPS*

Ships carrying 200 or fewer passengers. One ship at a time. The Point: Given the limited space at this site, visits are strongly discouraged from the start of the breeding season (October) until after early penguin incubation phase (mid-January). After then, maximum 1 ship per day (midnight to midnight). Visits to last no longer than 6 hours. Walker Bay: a maximum of 2 ships per day (midnight to midnight).

VISITORS

No more than 100 visitors at any time, exclusive of expedition guides and leaders, with not more than 50 on the Point. 1 guide per 20 visitors. No visitors on the Point between 22:00hrs and 04:00hrs (local time).

Visitor Area

LANDING AREA

Primary: The small cobble beach on the northern coast of Hannah Point.

Secondary: If conditions permit, an alternative landing area is the flat open area of Walker Bay, to the north of the Point.

CLOSED AREAS

Closed Area A: Cliff area with nesting southern giant petrels.

Closed Area B: Rocky outcrops with nesting southern giant petrels, including a 50 metre buffer zone.

GUIDED WALKING AREAS

Because of restricted visitor space, all walks around the Point should be strictly controlled in guided groups of no more than 15-20 visitors, which are well spaced and which follow the same path. Visitors walking between the Point and Walker Bay should proceed in single file in small groups, avoiding wildlife and other sensitive features.

FREE ROAMING AREAS

Visitors may roam freely, but under supervision, on the beach in Walker Bay, avoiding Closed Area B.

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

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Visitor Code of Conduct

BEHAVIOUR ASHORE

Walk slowly and carefully. Maintain a precautionary distance of 5 metres from wildlife and give animals the right-of-way. Increase this distance if any change in behaviour is observed. When on the same level as, or higher than, nesting southern giant petrels maintain a precautionary distance of at least 50 metres. Increase this distance if any change in the birds' behaviour is observed. Be careful near Antarctic fur seals, they may be aggressive. Do not walk on any vegetation.

CAUTIONARY NOTES

The primary landing beach may be crowded with wildlife – under such circumstances it would be not possible to make a landing and maintain the required precautionary distances. Both landing beaches are prone to swells. Be careful near the jasper dyke. It is brittle and may crumble. Exercise particular caution not to disturb animals near cliff edges. If they are disturbed, they may retreat and fall.



Hannah Point from above



Hannah Point landing beach



Caution - restricted visitor space and dense concentrations of wildlife

