

PRION ISLAND

Visitor Management Plan (Restricted Site)

v2015



INTRODUCTION

Prion Island is closed between 20 November and 7 January (inclusive).



PRION ISLAND VISITOR MANAGEMENT PLAN



LOCATION

- Latitude: 54° 1' S
- Longitude: 37° 15' W

Bay of Isles

KEY FEATURES

- Boardwalk access to Wandering albatross nesting sites
- Wandering albatross, South Georgia pipit & burrowing petrels

DESCRIPTION

○ Topography

Relatively low lying island to the eastern entrance of the Bay of Isles. Predominantly rocky coastline with outcrops, small inlets and small lake. One narrow shingle landing beach on the south east coast of the island

○ Fauna

Confirmed breeders: wandering albatross (*Diomedea exulans*), northern giant petrel (*Macronectes halli*), Antarctic prion (*Pachyptila desolata*), blue petrel (*Halobaena caerulea*), white-chinned petrel (*Procellaria aequinoctialis*), common diving petrel (*Pelecanoides urinatrix*), Wilson's storm-petrel (*Oceanites oceanicus*), South Georgia pintail (*Anas g. gerorgica*) brown skua (*Stercorarius antarcticus*), kelp gull (*Larus dominicanus*), snowy sheathbill (*Chionis alba*), Antarctic tern (*Sterna vittate georgiae*), South Georgia pipit (*Anthus antarcticus*), southern elephant seal (*Mirounga leonina*), Antarctic fur seal (*Arctocephalus gazella*), gentoo penguins (*Pygoscelis papua*)

○ Flora

Predominantly tussac, interspersed with areas of moss.

○ Other

Kelp beds, hazardous rocks and reefs lie immediately off shore.



VISITOR IMPACTS

○ **Known Impacts**

None

○ **Potential Impacts**

Disturbance of wildlife (including breeding wandering albatross).

Without correct (mandatory) use of the boardwalk there is a potential to trample vegetation and crush burrows of petrels and prions.

LANDING REQUIREMENTS

○ **Ships ***

Ships carrying 200 or fewer passengers. One ship at a time.

Maximum 2 ships per day (midnight to midnight).

Maximum visit duration 5 hours.

Prion Island is a restricted site. Refer to the date on your visit permit. This date must not be changed without permission from GSGSSI.

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

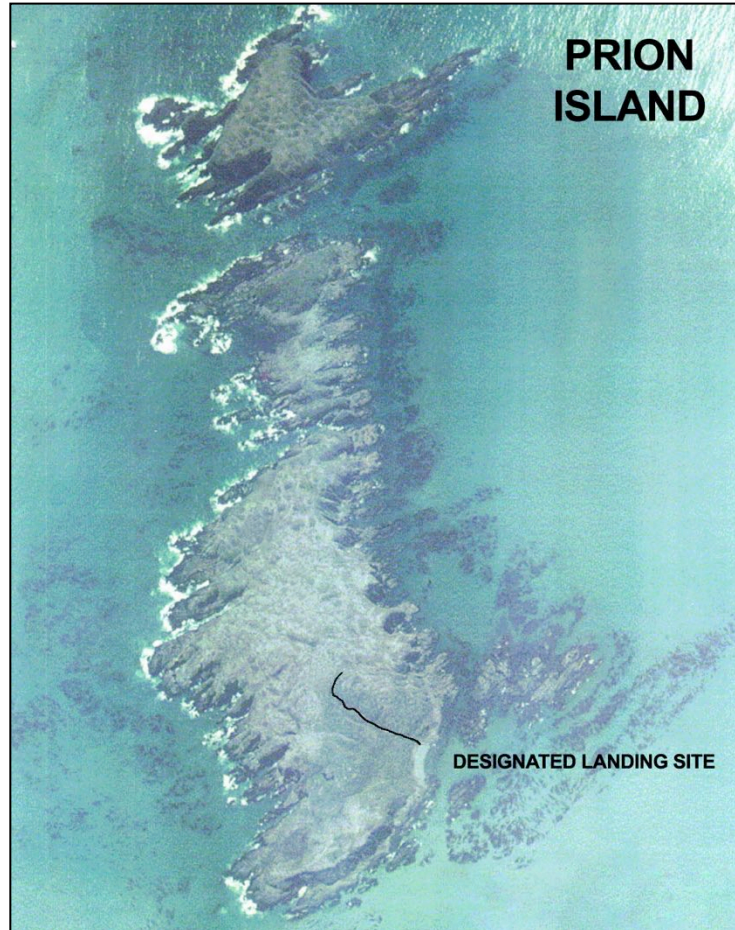
○ **Visitors**

No more than 50 people ashore at any time (including staff and guides).

Visit permit holder must maintain a 1:10 staff to passenger ratio (including supervision on the boardwalk).



VISITOR AREAS



- **Landing Area**

Designated landing beach only on southeast coast (as indicated in photograph).

- **Closed Areas**

All areas other than the landing beach and the boardwalk

- **Guided Walking Areas**

None

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○ Free Roaming Areas

None, movement restricted to the boardwalk.



Lower boardwalk



Upper boardwalk



VISITOR CODE OF CONDUCT

- Behaviour ashore

On landing, all persons must proceed directly up the beach to the boardwalk and thereafter remain on the boardwalk at all times, until returning back to the beach for collection.

Whilst on the boardwalk, visitors must proceed directly and quietly to the viewing platforms.



Upper viewing platform

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○ **Cautionary notes**

The Permit Holder (Expedition Leader on cruise ships) must inspect the landing site and boardwalk before any passengers land and only proceed when satisfied that it is appropriate and safe to do so, without contravening any GSGSSI or IAATO wildlife protection regulations or guidelines.

All persons on the boardwalk must remain quiet at all times and avoid any disturbance to the albatross.

During the peak period of fur seal breeding (20 Nov - 7 Jan inclusive) the site is closed. Outwith this period, never disturb seals on or near to beaches in order to affect a landing.

Visitors should be wary of fur seals in the tussac when on the boardwalk.

Minimise use of ship lights at nightfall to reduce risk of bird strikes and remain vigilant.

○ **Biosecurity**

All landings must comply with GSGSSI biosecurity measures and rigorous self-audit checks carried out prior to landing.

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