



GOVERNMENT OF SOUTH GEORGIA & THE SOUTH SANDWICH ISLANDS

VISITOR MANAGEMENT

VISITOR CODE OF CONDUCT

When Ashore

South Georgia's ecosystem is unique and fragile, and it is recovering. Decades of work to remove introduced species have given the island's native wildlife and vegetation the chance to return, but that recovery is easily set back. Every visitor going ashore carries a share of the responsibility for protecting it. The following applies to all visitors going ashore.

- Visitors must know their capabilities and also the dangers posed by South Georgia's environment, and act accordingly. Plan activities with safety in mind at all times.
- Visitors should take note of, and act on, the advice and instructions from leaders and staff. Do not stray from the group.
- Be prepared for severe and changeable weather. Ensure that equipment and clothing are of sufficient strength and quality to withstand Antarctic conditions. South Georgia's weather is unpredictable. When ashore, be prepared for the worst, however pleasant it may seem when setting out.
- Do not walk on to glaciers or snowfields without proper equipment and experience. Surface conditions are constantly changing, particularly in the present period of glacial retreat.
- Avoid walking on fragile vegetation. A footprint on a moss bank may remain there a long time. Trampling of vegetation, especially in wet and peaty soils, can cause significant erosion over time. Moss beds and the margins of streams and lakes are particularly fragile.
- Do not collect anything. This includes shells, stones, plants, skulls, bones, teeth and eggs. No items or scientific specimens may be removed from South Georgia without an export permit from GSGSSI. Under the Wildlife and Protected Areas Ordinance the removal of any item without a permit is an offence.
- Be careful when taking photographs or filming. Never disturb plants or animals to get better pictures. Do not use flash photography for animal photographs. A respectful distance from wildlife should be maintained between you and the animal, including the use of selfie sticks and other equipment.
- Always give wildlife the right of way (see wildlife protection guidelines).
- Firearms must not be brought into South Georgia.
- Remove all rubbish.
- Do not pollute lakes or streams.
- Do not remove, disturb or destroy any historical artefacts.
- Do not paint or engrave names or graffiti on rocks or buildings; or deface or vandalise any field huts or other structures.
- Avoid marked sites where scientific experiments are being conducted and do not disturb any scientific equipment.
- Do not smoke. Do not light camp fires.

PLEASE NOTE

South Georgia is accessible by sea only, and there are no onshore accommodation or medical facilities. Assistance can be a considerable distance away. Every visitor is expected to take personal responsibility for their own safety and for the protection of the island's wildlife, vegetation and historical remains.

Issued by the Government of South Georgia & the South Sandwich Islands. This guidance should be read alongside the wildlife protection guidelines and the Visiting South Georgia handbook.