



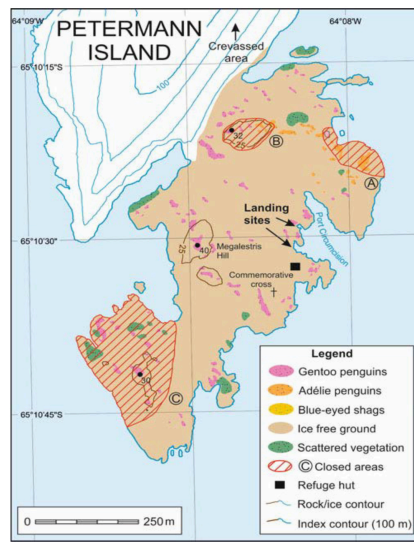
MV Plancius. Antarctica Deep South Trip PLA32. 20th March to 1st April 2023.



Dive Team: Leader Michael Green. Dive Guides: Rick Gannon, Roman Frischknecht, Lotte Bisgaard.

Divers. Susan Crowe, Peter Liem, Timothy Yeo, Jameel Al-Aziz, Elizabeth Sparks, John Kim, Eldad Cohen, Donna Webster, Steve Newmaster, Brian Constantine, Thomas Roubinet, Mario Tienda, Luis Sanchez Chavez, Angel Leonardo Estrada San Miguel, Jose Perez Badillo and Mariana Fuentes Lozano.

On the 20th of March, Plancius left a very windy Ushuaia and set out to sea. The Drake Passage showed us her full fury and the ship was soon locked down. On the two day crossing the dive team gave us a briefing and assisted the team with their equipment and weight setup. Soon we passed the Antarctic Convergence and were in Antarctica proper. Our diving would begin the next morning.



24th of March 2023. Port Circumcision, Peterman Island. 65 10 00''S, 64 08 00'W Penola Strait, south of Hovgaard Island. Depth 12m Time 43 minutes Temperature zero degrees centigrade.

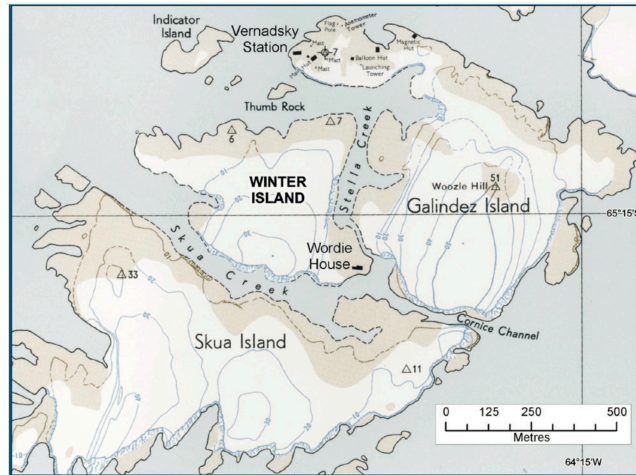
We made our check dive in the harbour used by Jean Baptiste Charcot and once this was complete we made a dive on this historical site. All were amazed by the visibility and the amount of small wildlife on the rocks in the water. Some were lucky enough to find artefacts from Charcots vessel making this a very interesting beginning to our adventure. We would make only one dive today as we are aiming for our goal of getting to the South as quickly as possible. Making this a relaxed start to our voyage. We watched the Penguins for a while then went back to the ship to head South.



25th of March 2023. Pourquoi Pas Island. 67 47S 68 55W Margaritte Bay, Antarctica. Depth 16m Time 42 minutes. Water Temperature minus one degree centigrade.

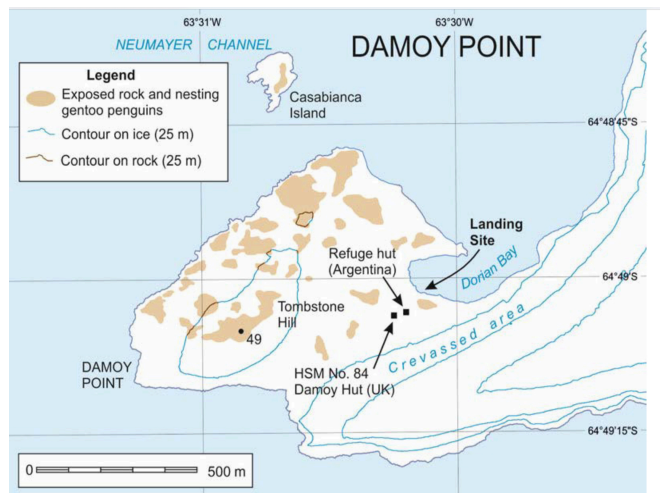
Our second dive was made on a gravel slope we looked amongst the gravel to find small invertebrates and isopods amongst the rocks. Again the visibility was very good at over ten meters. We kept looking into the blue to check for Leopard Seals but no luck. We did see remnants of penguin carcasses so they must be around. Once we became chilly we surfaced and went back into the zodiac to return to the ship. Having made a good dive.





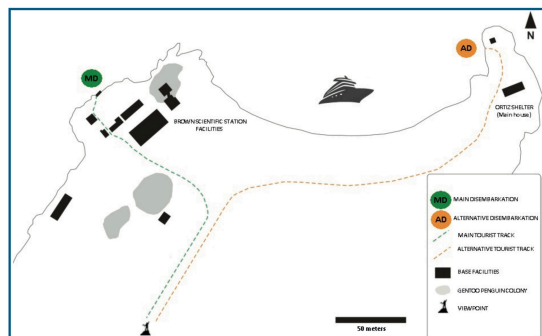
27th of March 2023; Vernadsky Station, Argentine Islands, Antarctica and 65° 15'S, 64°16'W. Depth 8-10m Water Temperature minus one degree centigrade.

We were not allowed to visit the station due to covid restrictions being still in place so we went diving by Wordie House on a small grounded iceberg. The colours in the ice were astonishing. We swam around the ice for a few minutes and then out of the blue came a huge leopard seal. It stayed and performed for us, a second seal appeared a few moments later and we all enjoyed seeing this top end predator, close up. Some who had already finished the dive took the opportunity to swim with these wonderful creatures. Steve chose his moment well by proposing to Donna underwater, she said yes so that was a perfect end to a perfect day. Michael said he had never witnessed two seals together so playful before, and had not had a wedding proposal on one of his trips before either. CONGRATULATIONS Steve and Donna.



28th of March 2023. Damoy Point Casablanca Island. 64 49 00" S, 63 30 00" W Dorian Bay, Wiencke Island Depth 18m+ Water Temperature minus two degrees centigrade.

The dive team took us to a small island off Damoy Point which still had around 20 penguins left on it. We kitted up and entered the water hoping for more Leopard Seal adventures but no such luck. However with the visibility being so good we could enjoy the vistas. We saw lots of small worms and limpets. Along with several large purple starfish. Also a few giant seventy legged starfish, they were all waiting for penguin carcasses to drop from above. Once we became chilly we headed back to the zodiac to get warm and replenish our tanks.



28th of March 2023. Base Brown. Paradise Harbour Shag Rock. 64°53'S, 62°53'W

Sanaviron Peninsula –Gerlache Strait Depth up to 20m Water Temperature zero degrees.

When we arrived at this stunning place the scientists had left so could make activities here. The dive team went off to enjoy a wall dive at Shag Rock. We entered the water by the cliff for a reference point and then descended to enjoy the garden like wall. Keeping the wall to our left we slowly checked out the nooks and crannies along the wall looking for creatures. We saw many nudibranchs of different sizes, they are not as colourful as in the tropics but grow quite large in this cold water. After our dive time finished we ascended to make a zodiac cruise around the bay where we saw many Humpback Whales who had been around the ship during our dive. A perfect end to a great diving day, we got back to the ship in time for dusk and recap.



29th of March 2023. Neko Harbour IceBerg 64 51'00" S, 62 32'00" W Located in Andvord Bay, Antarctica. Depth 12m Water Temperature minus three degrees centigrade.

We left the ship to hunt for a 'safe' piece of ice, Michael had warned us that there was no such thing and we must keep our wits about us, adding that if the ice moved at all we must swim away from the berg. Soon the team had found a suitable piece of ice and we made a dive. The walls of the ice looked like the walls of a Cathedral and were quite beautiful with stunning hues of blue and amazing light. Krill were feeding on the surface of the ice. We swam with the ice to our left shoulder and moved clockwise around this magnificent lump of ice. Too soon it was time to surface and make our way back to the ship.



29th of March 2023. Danco Island. Errera Channel 64 44'00" S, 62 36'00" W Depth 1 to 6 Meters. Water Temperature Minus Two Degrees Centigrade.

We decided to try to see penguins coming out of the water, however when we tried the penguins must have been able to see us in the great visibility as they came to the water's edge but no further. A few saw some at the start of the dive, and a few saw the Leopard Seal ripping a penguin to pieces on the surface. We enjoyed the clear water and explored in the shallows seeing various and different types of life. We then went for a tour around Danco Island where we found many seals including three Leopards asleep on the ice. A great end to our day.



30th of March 2023. Half Moon Island 62°35'24''S, 59°55'13''W 2km long crescent shaped island between Greenwich and Livingston Islands.

The ship had aimed to take us to dive at Whalers Bay, the dive team had briefed us on this site the night before. During the night we could hear the wind and feel the movement of the ship so it came as no surprise when the Expedition Leader announced at Breakfast that we were heading to Half Moon Island. The majority decided to see Chinstrap Penguins on land, with just two divers going diving. Our luck finally ran out as our weather prayers had not worked and we were soon recalled to the ship, Due to weather closing in. A shame for all, but we have had such good weather on this trip we cant grumble at all.

Thank you for choosing to Dive with Oceanwide Expeditions and the four of us in the Dive Team. Safe travels and we hope to see you again soon. Either in the North or back here in the South!