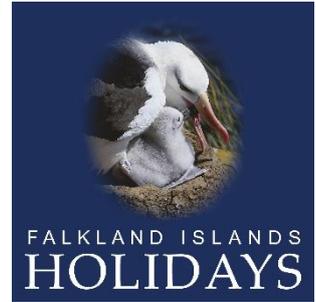


Ensuring the safety and well-being of our clients is of paramount importance to us at Falkland Islands Holidays. In order to assist visitors with taking sensible precautions/making appropriate decisions in unfamiliar territory, we have collated the following advisory. Please do be aware that trips to the Falkland Islands will involve viewing wildlife in their natural environment in often remote locations. As such, the unexpected can happen and these events fall outside of our remit as your Tour Operator. Please heed the advice provided and be aware that although we have made the information as comprehensive as possible, the list is not exhaustive.



### **Visitor Safety Information**

The Falkland Islands are a remote and natural destination and ultimately provide an unforgettable experience of being immersed in nature. They are an extremely safe travel destination where very little crime occurs.

However, there is some risk from wildlife and the natural environment in the Falklands. Incidents can occur when people do not follow the advice and guidelines given for their own safety which must be followed due to the unique wildlife and special habitats found here.

The islands have some natural physical hazards, such as cliffs, rocks and water areas. In general, care must always be taken as areas are left as 'natural habitat' and in most cases are not fenced or cordoned off. Wildlife is as its states - wild; birds and animals are free to roam and are not enclosed so their behaviour can be unpredictable. Please be aware that there are no signs to tell you where the wildlife is located as these can change depending on environmental conditions and the animal's instincts. However, maps of the most common areas visited are available to indicate the general location of breeding colonies. Visitors are always asked to respect the habitats and wildlife to avoid stress to wildlife. If animals become stressed or frightened, they may decide to protect themselves or their young by reacting defensively.

Your safety is paramount, as is the safety of the wildlife. By simply following the guidelines and keeping your distance (6m between yourself and an animal), you can ensure everyone has a safe and enjoyable visit. Remember that the sea lions, seals, penguins and birds do not know the rules – so sometimes they approach you! In such cases, be careful and try to maintain your distance.

### **Points to note before you book a trip**

As previously mentioned, the Falkland Islands are extremely remote, isolated and in general remain a natural untouched environment. This poses its own risk to travellers not familiar with local conditions. The only primary medical care facilities are in the capital, Stanley. You should be aware that travel in areas which are remote from medical facilities involves an additional element of risk. In the event of a serious injury or illness, it could be many hours or even days before evacuation is possible.

All visitors must have sufficient medical/travel insurance including coverage for medical evacuation by airlift to a third country, as well as repatriation and air ambulance costs to the value of at least of US\$200,000. This requirement is mandatory and you may be asked to give proof of such insurance at Immigration. Failure to have such insurance cover may mean refusal by the Immigration Authorities for cleared entry into the Islands.

Bring prescriptions with you – Over-the-counter medicine is available in Stanley. But you should ensure you have sufficient supplies of your prescription medication for the duration of your trip (plus a week or so).

Most locations and tours will involve an off-road journey, normally conducted in a 4x4 vehicle; tours vary in lengths of time and can be a full day. If you experience discomfort from being seated for periods of time in bumpy terrain, please advise at the time of booking.

It is your responsibility to ensure that you obtain proper and detailed medical advice at least two months prior to travel for the latest health requirements and recommendations for the Falkland Islands and any countries

you may visit en-route. Where you do not do so and suffer personal injury or death as a result, we have no liability to you for any cost, loss or damage which you suffer, nor will we refund you the cost of any unused portion of your travel arrangements.

If you have any medical problem, disability or allergy which may affect your holiday, you must tell us before you confirm your booking. In any event, you must give us full details in writing at the time of booking. If we reasonably feel unable to properly accommodate the particular needs of the person concerned, we reserve the right to decline their reservation or, if full details are not given at the time of booking, cancel when we become aware of these details.

Standards of accommodation, transport, safety, hygiene, medical facilities and other infrastructure may, at times, be different to those you would normally expect/are accustomed to.

You should consider the characteristics of the environment you will be in, such as unfamiliar natural environment, with challenging terrain, rapidly changing weather conditions, distance from help, and how these factors may affect the ease of rescue in the event of an emergency.

Your booking is accepted on the understanding that you realise the hazards involved in this kind of holiday, including potential injury, disease, loss or damage to property, inconvenience and discomfort.

While this should not dissuade people from visiting, it should encourage visitors to exercise caution and make a realistic evaluation of their own abilities when choosing a trip.

Falklands Conservation have developed and request your following of the codes of conduct to ensure your own welfare and safety of the wildlife and habitats: -

#### **Falkland Islands Countryside Code**

- The majority of land in the Falklands is privately owned. Always ask permission before visiting private land.
- Keep to paths and tracks wherever possible. Leave gates open or shut as you find them.
- Be aware of the high fire risk throughout the islands. Smoking and the lighting of fires for any reason is strictly prohibited unless permission has been given in writing by the landowner.
- Do not drop litter\*. Take your rubbish home with you.
- Do not disfigure rocks or buildings.
- Do not touch, handle, injure or kill any wild bird or other wild animal.
- Never feed any wild animals.
- Always give animals the right of way. Remember not to block the routes of seabirds and seals coming ashore to their colonies.
- Please prevent any undue disturbance to wild animals. Stay on the outside of bird and seal colonies. Remain at least 6m (20ft) away. When taking photographs or filming stay low to the ground. Move slowly and quietly. Do not startle or chase wildlife from resting or breeding areas.
- Some plants are protected and should not be picked\*. Wildflowers are there for all to enjoy.
- Whalebones, skulls, eggs or other such items may not be exported from the Falkland Islands\*. They should be left where they are found.

\* Such actions (with a few special exceptions) may constitute an offence in the Falkland Islands and could result in fines up to £3,000.

In addition to the countryside code we have put together a list of some of the potential hazards and controls. Falkland Islands Holidays cannot be liable for your actions which may lead to the injury of yourself or others.

## Potential Hazards

- Injury from contact with wildlife and domestic/farm animals; ranging from (and not limited to) minor incidents such as bites, pecking, scratching to more serious incidents such as severe injury and death
- Swooping birds, injury to head, removal of objects e.g. lens caps, glasses. Flying birds will swoop at you for two reasons; that you are near their nesting site and they are defending it, or for food.
- Infection, disease, sickness, parasites and allergic reactions from direct contact with wildlife and domestic/farm animals or animal waste.
- Slips and trips due to uneven ground and impacted vision (such as when navigating through areas of tussock), potholes and rocks. Weather conditions can cause surfaces to become slippery due to being wet or icy.
- Fall and injury from cliffs, bridges, climbing over walls or fences, potentially causing cuts, bruises sprains, broken bones, unconsciousness from head trauma and death.
- Unpredictable weather conditions. There is always a risk of sunburn, due to low pollution, little shade and strong UV rays in combination with prevailing windy conditions often result in people not being aware that skin is burning. Winds can be harsh and directional and can take you off balance, with the additional risk of being hit by a blown object.
- Drowning and sickness, from ponds, lakes and sea. Wild swimming and water activities may be tempting but the waters are very cold and currents are strong in the Falklands. Water based activities should not be attempted without supervision and consultation with your driver/guide or host.
- Minefields. Though most sites have been cleared of landmines any remaining areas will be clearly marked and fenced.
- Unexploded ordnance can still be found. If located do not touch, mark it and report it to the guide/host, landowner or Police.
- Fire, there is a lot of peat in the Falklands and peat fires can burn underground and spread easily due to the wind. Controlling these fires can take weeks and use up scarce resources.

## Controls

- All wildlife is potentially dangerous. You must not make any attempt to stroke, touch, handle, feed, or approach. Please remain at least 6m (20ft) away.
- Always give animals the right of way. Remember not to block the routes of seabirds or mammals coming ashore to their colonies. Similarly, do not come between an animal or seabird and the sea, this is their escape route.
- Stay on the outside of seal and seabird colonies.
- Move slowly and quietly
- Give animals and birds space. Move away at the first sign of disturbance or agitation.
- Do not go into tussock grass (unless your host/guide has advised this is an acceptable route) to avoid startling wildlife; Sea Lions & Seals often rest in these areas.
- If a flying bird starts swooping at you, they will go for the highest part of your body usually your head, raise an object above your head for example, tripod, a walking pole, water bottle etc.
- Be aware of your surroundings and don't take risks, e.g. climbing down rocks or standing too close to the water's edge from a height.
- Listen to your host or guide. If they give you instructions or advice – please follow them.
- If you are exploring on your own, think about the impacts of your activities. Be aware of your surroundings and the weather conditions. Be prepared for the weather to change.
- Wash your hands thoroughly with soap and water or use hand sanitizer before handling food or eating. Avoid touching your face especially, eyes, nose and mouth.
- Dress appropriately with multiple thin layers and a water and wind proof outer jacket. Sturdy ankle type walking boots are recommended to mitigate against uneven terrain.

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- Protect yourself against sun and UV damage and wind; wear a hat, loose breathable clothing and sunscreen, wear sunglasses and always keep a bottle of water with you.
- Smoke only in allocated areas and take your cigarette ends with you.
- If you're travelling with children, please ensure they are always supervised.
- Biosecurity; please ensure that outdoor clothing, footwear and equipment is free from seeds, soil and animals before arriving in the Falklands and when moving to a new location. This helps in preventing the spread of diseases and invasive species.
- Follow the Falklands Countryside Code.

Walking in the Falklands is a wonderful activity and is relatively safe. Hiking does, however, carry a risk of injury or worse, especially if you are planning to explore the hills and mountains. You should be aware of, and accept these risks, and be responsible for your actions. Adequate preparation before you head out is essential. Ensure you have enough food and water. International mobiles may not have coverage and a local mobile may have limited, fluctuating or no signal. Always check the number of daylight hours and the weather forecast, conditions can change dramatically even in a short space of time. Avoid steep and exposed ground if storms and /or high winds are forecast. High rainfall can result in rivers becoming impassable and rocky ground slippery underfoot. All extremes of temperature can be hazardous. Be aware of farm animals especially, cattle and horses, do not approach, leave a good distance and leave gates as you find them. Tell someone where you are going and leave details of the route of your planned walk and your estimated time of completion. Remember to let them know once you are safely back.

Whilst enjoying the countryside, you may discover wildlife or animals that appear to be in distress, injured or abandoned. For example, seal pups and chicks, which may be left alone while the adult hunts for food. Please do not approach them, instead please report the information to your guide/driver/host or Falklands Conservation.

In addition to being aware of your surroundings and the potential risks whilst exploring and enjoying the great outdoors, it is important to focus upon interiors too. Most itineraries include multiple destinations that involves staying in different accommodation for a few nights, meaning you could become unfamiliar and disoriented. Please ensure you apply the same care to the inside surroundings; for example, slips and trips can be a common hazard, so please familiarise yourself with different flooring levels and coverings, steps and slopes. Take notice of fire exits and firefighting equipment and protection, obtain instruction from your host on equipment you may not be sure of using.

The Falkland Islands offer the opportunity for visitors to explore the islands' rich and diverse flora and fauna, independently and at leisure without being overseen by tour guides or wardens. This enables each person to have a unique one on one experience with nature. The islands are brimming with birdlife, including five species of penguin, the striking black-browed albatross which nest here, giant petrels and the endangered striated caracara. There are endemic species and native plants to spot, too, such as the Falklands flightless steamer duck and the Cobb's wren. The islands' sandy white beaches with crisp blue bays and the dark deep seas are home to enchanting penguins, sea lions, elephant and fur seals, whales and two species of dolphin.

The Falkland Islands remain one of the best kept wildlife secrets in the world. These guidelines will aid your safety and the protection of wildlife and plant life, aiding sustainable tourism for generations to come.

I have read and understood the safety guidelines in visiting the Falkland Islands as a potential visitor via Falkland Islands Holidays. Please sign below and initial each page.

Name

Signature

Date

Thank you, we look forward to welcoming you.

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