

The background features two whales swimming in a deep blue ocean. The whale on the left is smaller and positioned higher, while the one on the right is larger and lower. Large, semi-transparent letters 'IHW' are overlaid on the scene. The 'I' is on the left, 'H' is in the middle, and 'W' is on the right, partially overlapping the whales.

# Science & Education Report

MS FRAM

# MS FRAM

21 Mar – 12 Apr 2026

Antarctica & Falklands  
Expedition – From Punta  
Arenas to Buenos Aires



# History & Culture

Horseshoe Island, located off the west coast of the Antarctic Peninsula, was an important site of British scientific research during the mid-20th century. Established in 1955, Base Y served as a hub for geological surveys and meteorological observations until it was abandoned in 1960, and many of its original structures remain remarkably well preserved today. Visiting the island offered a unique glimpse into the daily lives of early polar researchers, highlighting both their isolation and ingenuity in one of the world's harshest environments.



# History & Culture

Stonington Island, located on the Antarctic Peninsula, became one of the most important hubs of American and British Antarctic research during the 1930s–1970s, with both the East Base (USA) and Base E (UK) operating there. In 1947, Jackie Ronne and Jennie Darlington became the first women to overwinter in Antarctica while part of the Ronne Antarctic Research Expedition. Today, the remains of the bases and artefacts scattered across the island provide a powerful and tangible connection to the challenges and breakthroughs of early Antarctic exploration.



# History & Culture

Melchior Base research station, located in the Melchior Islands off the Antarctic Peninsula, was established by Argentina in 1947 as one of its earliest permanent scientific outposts in Antarctica. Operated by the Argentine Antarctic Institute, the station supported meteorological, geophysical, and oceanographic research, helping to strengthen Argentina's long-term presence in the region. Although now used mainly as a seasonal station, its historic buildings and sheltered harbor reflect the early development of Antarctic science and logistics in this remote archipelago.



# History & Culture

Historian Sandra giving a lecture about the 'Race for the South Pole' – comparing the different approaches between Roald Amundsen and Robert Falcon Scott.



Credit: Sandra Ophrost/HX

# History & Culture

Stanley – Falkland Islands

Stanley revealed the political and maritime heart of the Falklands, where colourful colonial houses, historic shipwrecks, and monuments reflect both its 19th-century British heritage and the lasting impact of the 1982 conflict.



# History & Culture

Our lovely Historian, Jane, decorating the nautical chart of our voyage, which has been auctioned for raising HX Foundation funds.



Credit: Sandra Ophrost /HX

# Knit & Natter

The knitters of the voyage!











Credit: Sandra Ophrost /HX

George VI Sound, 27.03.2026. Credit: Linda Skinner/ HX

# NASA GLOBE Cloud Observer

We collected six observations for NASA during this voyage, while sailing below the Antarctic Circle and back. Beyond the report of global cloud cover to assess atmospheric changes, these observations in icy waters will also help the scientists to calibrate their satellite, discriminating between ice and clouds. This will help better predict ice and cloud coverage in a context of climate change. Don't hesitate to continue looking at the sky back home, since every contribution helps scientists.


[View our data](#) on the global map

Observation	GLOBE	<a href="#">GOES-19 Satellite</a>
Universal Date/Time	2026-04-09 16:32:00	2026-04-09 16:37
Latitude	-41.44	-41.76 to -41.12
Longitude	-60.93	-61.25 to -60.61
Total Cloud Cover	Few (<10%) 	Few 3.70% 
High Clouds	 Cirrus  Cirrostratus Cover: Few (<10%)  Opacity: Transparent	Cover: Few (3.70%)  Altitude: 6.7 (km) Phase: Ice 253.61 (K) Opacity: Transparent
Mid Clouds		No Clouds 
Low Clouds		No Clouds 
GLOBE Cloud		GOES-19

# NASA GLOBE Cloud Observer

Some of these observations were matched to satellites. This table shows how our observation from the ground compared to the satellite's observation from above.

[View our data](#) on the global map



# Thermal Imaging project

MS Fram is on a mission to collect thermal images of ice in the isolated locations we visit.

We collected thermal images of different icebergs and glaciers at 3 different locations during our voyage, at Liard Island, the Gullet, and Red Rock Ridge, Antarctica. This data will support Joe Muise's educational project in British Columbia, where he's raising awareness regarding climate change's impact on icy areas.

[View our data](#) on the thermal image map

# Science Boat

During our voyage, we conducted 5 science boat outings, during which we collected Secchi Disk measurements, CTD data, and plankton samples.

Our CTD data was submitted to the [South Atlantic Environmental Research Institute SAERI \(SAERI\)](#), while our Secchi disk data was uploaded to the [Secchi Disk Project](#). Lastly, the plankton samples collected for [FjordPhyto](#) will be used to improve scientists' understanding of the impacts of climate change on phytoplankton communities.

Thank you for your enthusiasm in joining the science boat and plankton sessions!

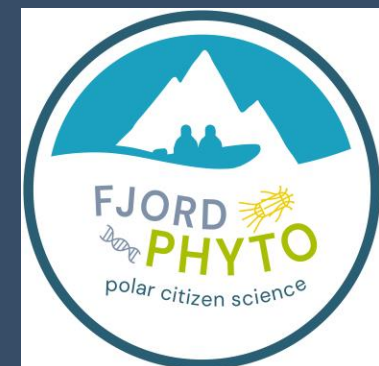




# FjordPhyto

During our voyage, we collected three samples for the FjordPhyto project, along with Secchi Disk and CTD data. These measurements will help scientists gain a better understanding of the variation and dynamics of the phytoplankton community around the Antarctic Peninsula and help sustain this long-term project involving more Citizen Scientists like you. Thank you very much for your enthusiasm and interest in the plankton communities!

To learn more about FjordPhyto, [please click here.](#)

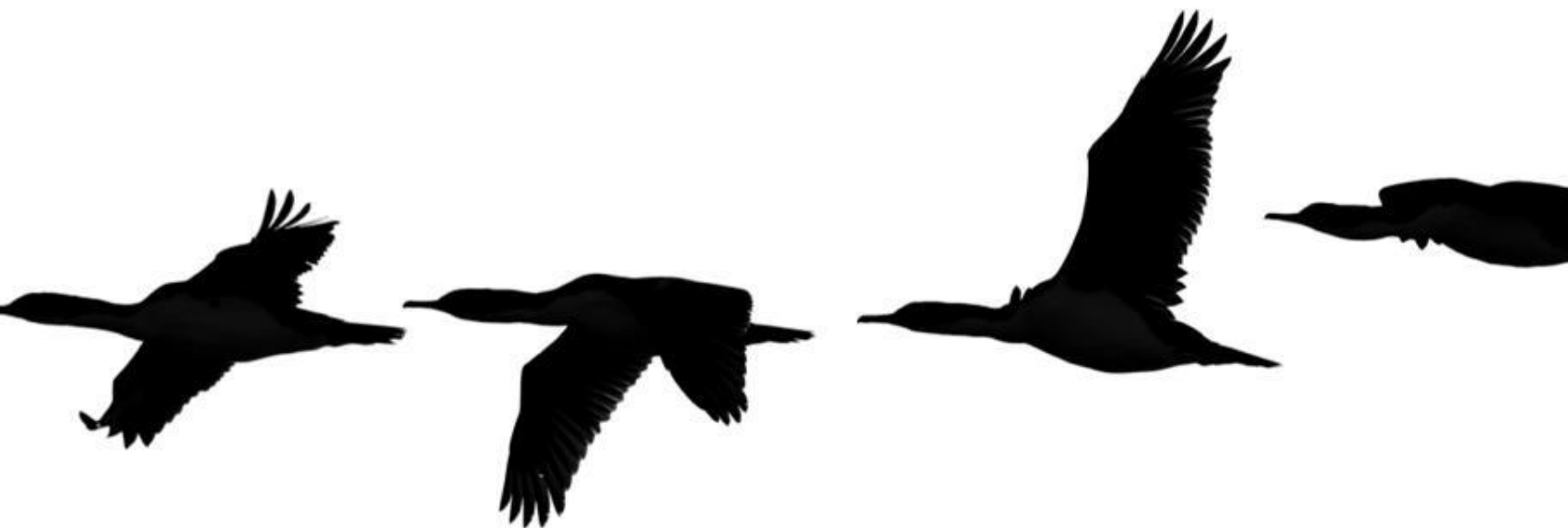




# iNaturalist

Thanks to your efforts, we recorded over 200 opportunistic observations representing almost 90 different species. One remarkable sighting was the spectacled porpoise in the Beagle Channel, a very rare and shy creature, as well as the southern bottlenose whale in the Drake Passage. The observations recorded below the Antarctic Circle are very valuable for the monitoring of the unique Antarctic biodiversity. By sharing this data on iNaturalist, you are helping to build a global, open-access database that supports scientific research, conservation efforts, and species monitoring. Your contributions provide valuable records that researchers and conservationists can use to track species distributions and better understand ecosystem health.

You can view the project and also upload your observations from our voyage [by clicking here.](#)



## eBird

Your onboard Ornithologist Chris completed 53 eBird checklists of 33 different species during our 22-day voyage, mostly conducted at sea. The most abundant species were the southern fulmar followed by the wonderful black-browed albatross. The most frequent species were the black-browed albatross followed by the southern giant petrel. If you want to check the complete records, please use the following link:

[View our data on our e-Bird trip report](#)

# Happywhale

We submitted 13 photos to Happywhale during our voyage, with a match of 2 so far. Particularly special sightings included a spectacled porpoise in the Beagle Channel during the first sea day from Punta Arenas down to Antarctica, which was a first for the area, and one southern bottlenose whale in the Drake Passage. Opportunistic sightings like these show the power of Happywhale as a tool to collect key information on movements patterns of mobile marine animals. Thank you everyone for helping spot wildlife out on deck!



[View our submissions to Happywhale](#)

Credit: Jan Hvizdal/HX

# Guest Scientists

We had the privilege of hosting Meagan Dewar and Sara Santos, Scientists from the PPME Lab. They have been on board carrying out some exciting seabird and pinniped research, a project that examines the changes in microbial communities and pathogen distribution, including avian influenza in seabirds and pinnipeds in the Southern Ocean.

Meagan and Sara have been catching penguins and flying seabirds to collect oral and cloacal swabs to examine the oral and cloacal microbiome and test for HPAI avian influenza. In addition, they have been collecting nasal swabs from seals using a long pole with a swab attached to look at the respiratory microbiome and test for HPAI.

Meagan had a portable lab on board which she used to test for HPAI in real time.

Sign up to the newsletter using the QR code to stay up to date with their research.



# Guest Scientists

We were also privileged to host Eugenia and Maximo, Guest Scientists from the Argentine Antarctic Institute. They are part of the 'Exploring the Unseen' project, led by Manuel Novillo, which aims to document fish biodiversity and identify key spawning grounds. Using our Remotely Operated Vehicle (ROV), the team explored nine different locations, including areas below the Antarctic Circle, with successful ROV deployments at 6 locations including 2 previously unsurveyed sites. Although no spawning grounds were discovered during this expedition, their explorations significantly expanded our understanding of seafloor diversity by characterising filter-feeding organisms commonly seen in these regions.

To follow this pioneering scientific journey, please visit [this link](#) and stay tuned for updates.



Credit: Hélène Dubraquet/HX



# Wildlife List — Marine Mammals

# Wildlife List – Marine Mammals

SCIENTIFIC NAME	ENGLISH	DEUTSCH
<i>Balaenoptera borealis</i>	sei whale	Seiwal
<i>Balaenoptera physalus</i>	fin whale	Finnwal
<i>Megaptera novaeangliae</i>	humpback whale	Buckelwal
<i>Balaenoptera bonaerensis</i>	Antarctic minke whale	Südlicher Zwergwal
<i>Eubalaena australis</i>	southern right whale	Südkaper
<i>Lagenorhynchus australis</i>	Peale's dolphin	Peale-Delfin
<i>Lagenorhynchus obscurus</i>	dusky dolphin	Dunkler Delfin
<i>Stenella frontalis</i>	Atlantic spotted dolphin	Atlantischer Fleckendelfin
<i>Delphinus delphis</i>	common dolphin	Gemeiner Delfin
<i>Orcinus orca</i>	orca (killer whale)	Orca, Schwertwal
<i>Phocoena dioptrica</i>	wpectacled porpoise	Brillenschweinswal
<i>Arctocephalus gazella</i>	Antarctic fur seal	Antartischer Seebär
<i>Arctocephalus australis</i>	South American fur seal	Südamerikanischer Seebär
<i>Hydrurga leptonyx</i>	leopard seal	<i>Leopardrobbe</i>
<i>Lobodon carcinophaga</i>	crabeater seal	Krabbenfresser
<i>Leptonychotes weddellii</i>	Weddell seal	Weddellrobbe
<i>Otaria byronia</i>	South American sea lion	Mähnenrobbe

# Wildlife List — Birds



# Wildlife List – Seabirds

SCIENTIFIC NAME	ENGLISH	DEUTSCH
<i>Aptenodytes patagonicus</i>	Emperor penguin	Kaiserpinguin
<i>Pygoscelis papua</i>	king Penguin	Königspinguin
<i>Eudyptes chrysocome</i>	gentoo Penguin	Eselspinguin
<i>Spheniscus magellanicus</i>	western rockhopper penguin	Westlicher felseninguin
<i>Pygoscelis adeliae</i>	Magellanic penguin	Magellanpinguin
<i>Pygoscelis antarcticus</i>	Adélie penguin	Adeliepinguin
<i>Oceanites oceanicus</i>	chinstrap Penguin	Kehlstreifpinguin
<i>Fregetta tropica</i>	Wilson's storm petrel	Buntfuß-Sturmschwalbe
<i>Diomedea exulans</i>	black-bellied storm petrel	Schwarzbauch-Sturmschwalbe
<i>Phoebetria palpebrata</i>	wandering (snowy) albatross	Wanderalbatros
<i>Thalassarche melanophris</i>	light-mantled albatross	Graumantelalbatros
<i>Diomedea epomophora</i>	black-browed albatross	Schwarzbrauenalbatros
<i>Diomedea sanfordi</i>	southern royal albatross	Südkönigsalbatros
<i>Thalassarche chlororhynchos</i>	northern royal albatross	Nordkönigsalbatros
<i>Thalassarche chrysostoma</i>	Atlantic yellow-nosed albatross	Gelbnasenalbatros
	grey-headed albatross	Graukopfalbatros

# Wildlife List – Seabirds

SCIENTIFIC NAME	ENGLISH	DEUTSCH
<i>Macronectes giganteus</i>	southern Giant petrel	Riesensturmvogel
<i>Macronectes halli</i>	northern Giant petrel	Hallsturmvogel
<i>Fulmarus glacialis</i>	southern fulmar	Silbersturmvogel
<i>Pagodroma nivea</i>	snow petrel	Schneesturmvogel
<i>Aphrodroma brevirostris</i>	Kerguelen petrel	Kerguelensturmvogel
<i>Pterodroma mollis</i>	soft-plumaged petrel	Weichfeder-Sturmvogel
<i>Daption capense</i>	cape petrel	Kapsturmvogel
<i>Halobaena caerulea</i>	blue petrel	Blausturmvogel
<i>Procellaria aequinoctialis</i>	white-chinned petrel	Weißkinn-Sturmvogel
<i>Ardenna gravis</i>	great shearwater	Großer Sturmtaucher
<i>Ardenna grisea</i>	sooty shearwater	Dunkler Sturmtaucher
<i>Puffinus puffinus</i>	Manx shearwater	Schwarzschnabel- Sturmtaucher
<i>Pachyptila belcheri</i>	slender-billed prion	Dünnschnabel-Sturmvogel
<i>Pelecanoides urinatrix</i>	common diving petrel	Subantarktis-Lummensturmvogel

# Wildlife List – Seabirds

SCIENTIFIC NAME	ENGLISH	DEUTSCH
<i>Phalacrocorax magellanicus</i>	rock shag	Felsenscharbe
<i>Leucocarbo atriceps</i>	imperial shag	Kaiserscharbe
<i>Nannopterum brasilianum</i>	neotropic cormorant	Humboldtscharbe
<i>Larus dominicanus</i>	kelp gull	Dominikanermöwe
<i>Leucophaeus scoresbii</i>	dolphin gull	Blutschnabelmöwe
<i>Sterna vittata</i>	Antarctic tern	Antarktikseeschwalbe
<i>Sterna hirundinacea</i>	South American tern	Falklandseeschwalbe
<i>Stercorarius maccormicki</i>	south polar skua	Antarktiskua
<i>Stercorarius antarcticus</i>	brown skua	Subantarktiskua
<i>Stercorarius chilensis</i>	Chilean skua	Chileskua

# Wildlife List – Water and Land Birds

SCIENTIFIC NAME	ENGLISH	DEUTSCH
<i>Tachyeres brachypterus</i>	Falkland steamer duck	Falkland-Dampfschiffente
<i>Chloephaga picta</i>	upland goose	Magellangans
<i>Chloephaga hybrida</i>	kelp goose	Kelpgans
<i>Bubulcus ibis</i>	western cattle egret	Kuhreiher
<i>Haematopus leucopus</i>	Magellanic oystercatcher	Magellanausternfischer
<i>Cathartes aura</i>	turkey vulture	Truthahngeier
<i>Phalcoboenus australis</i>	striated caracara	Falklandkarakara
<i>Muscisaxicola maclovianus</i>	dark-faced ground tyrant	Maskengrundtyrann
<i>Turdus falklandii</i>	austral thrush	Magellandrossel
<i>Leistes loyca</i>	Long-tailed meadowlark	Langschwanzstärling
<i>Pyrope pyrope</i>	fire-eyed diucon	Feueraugen-Nonnentyrann
<i>Vanellus chilensis</i>	southern lapwing	Bronzekiebitz
<i>Mimus triurus</i>	white-banded mockingbird	Weißbinden-Spottdrossel
<i>Chionis albus</i>	snowy sheathbill	Weißgesicht-Scheidenschnabel

# Wildlife List — Flora



# Wildlife List – Flora of the Falkland Islands

SCIENTIFIC NAME	ENGLISH	DEUTSCH
<i>Hierochloe redolens</i>	cinnamon grass	
<i>Poa alopecurus</i>	blue grass	
<i>Luzula alopecurus</i>	native woodrush	
<i>Gunnera magellanica</i>	pig vine	
<i>Armeria macloviana</i>	Falkland thrift	
<i>Cerastium arvense</i>	field mouse-ear	
<i>Oxalis enneaphylla</i>	scurvy grass	
<i>Hebe elliptica</i>	boxwood	
<i>Luzuriaga marginata</i>	almond flower	
<i>Apium australe</i>	wild celery	
<i>Senecio candidans</i>	sea cabbage	
<i>Acaena lucida</i>	native yarrow	
<i>Acaena magellanica</i>	prickly burr	
<i>Symphotrichum vahlii</i>	marsh daisy	
<i>Pernettya pumila</i>	mountain berry	
<i>Empetrum rubrum</i>	diddle-dee	
<i>Baccharis magellanica</i>	Christmas bush	

# Wildlife List – Flora of the Falkland Island

SCIENTIFIC NAME	ENGLISH	DEUTSCH
<i>Caltha sagittata</i>	arrow-leaved marigold	
<i>Senecio littoralis</i>	Falkland wooly daisy (endemic)	
<i>Nassauvia gaudichaudii</i>	coastal nassauvia (endemic)	
<i>Bolax gummifera</i>	balsam bog	
<i>Leucheria suaveolens</i>	vanilla daisy (endemic)	
<i>Blechnum cordatum</i>	tall fern	
<i>Blechnum penna-marina</i>	small fern	
<i>Senecio vulgaris</i>	groundsel (introduced)	
<i>Rumex acetosella</i>	sheep sorel (invasive)	
<i>Ulex europaeus</i>	gorse (invasive)	
<i>Ulva sp.</i>	sea lettuce	
<i>Iridaea cordata</i>	iridescent alga	
<i>Macrocystis pyrifera</i>	giant kelp	
<i>Durvillea antarctica</i>	bull kelp (cochayuyo)	

What Data?	How Much Data?
CTD for SAERI	3 profiles
Secchi Disk depth	2 measurements
Cloud observations for GLOBE NASA	4 observations, 2 matches
iNaturalist	200+ observations
ebird	54 checklists, 33 species
Happywhale	13 submissions
PPME Guest Scientists	2 oral swabs 1,463 samples collected during the whole season onboard HX vessels
Exploring the Unseen Guest Scientists	Spawning grounds found on Damoy Point

## In Summary

Our final Antarctic voyage of the season was a landmark journey, taking us further south than any other vessel this year. As part of the 'Exploring the Unseen' project, our Guest Scientists reached uncharted areas, including Stonington Island and Red Rock Ridge, south of the Antarctic Circle. This also allowed Meagan and Sara to collect samples in rarely visited locations to scan for HPAI. Our Citizen Science initiatives also flourished, as we added new data from below the Antarctic Circle to our species reports, contributing to global biodiversity monitoring. Scientific highlights included the sighting of a spectacled porpoise the Beagle Channel, which was shared with the local scientific community, and the discovery of a non-native vascular plant on Deception Island. The latter led to a direct collaboration with the British Antarctic Survey to monitor the arrival of introduced species with invasive potential.

# Thank You!

The MS Fram Science and Education Team, along with our Guest Scientists, extends heartfelt thanks for choosing HX Expeditions to explore some of the most remote places on Earth. Your participation not only supports the ongoing work of our researchers but also enables them to join our voyages, carry out meaningful studies, and access essential logistical resources that are often difficult to secure.

We are deeply appreciative of your genuine curiosity and shared enthusiasm for the natural world: from birds and marine mammals to ice, lichens, mosses, and even the microscopic life found in a drop of water.

It was a true joy to exchange ideas, reflect on history over coffee, and marvel together at the pristine ecosystems we encountered. We hope this journey will remain among your most treasured memories.





THX

**Thank you for your  
participation!**