

# Shackleton Walk



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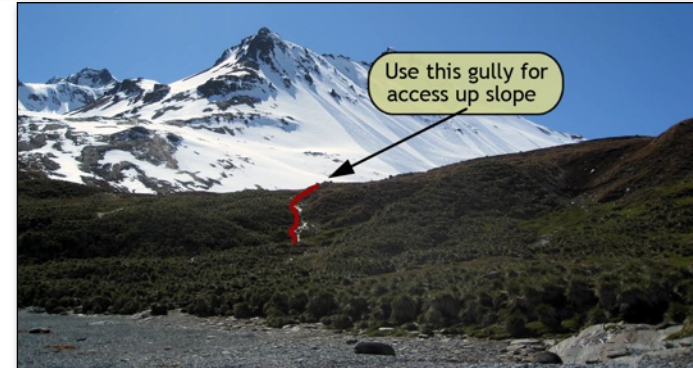
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# Shackleton Walk



Route from landing site at Fortuna



Route from landing site at Fortuna Bay



# Shackleton Walk



## Description

### • Topography

The southern section of the western shore of Fortuna Bay is marked by a series of prominent scree ridges comprising sedimentary sandstone and shale. The two most conspicuous ridges lead up towards 'Crean Lake'. The pass lies at approximately 300m altitude. Conspicuous folding in the rocks, typical of the Cumberland Formation, is visible in the cliffs at the head of Shackleton Valley and at the east entrance of Stromness Bay. Shackleton Valley is dominated by a braided gravel river bed.

### • Fauna

Confirmed breeders: Fortuna Bay side - light-mantled sooty albatross (*Phoebetria palpebrata*), southern giant petrel (*Macronectes giganteus*), white-chinned petrel (*Procellaria aequinoctialis*), Wilson's storm-petrel (*Oceanites oceanicus*), South Georgia diving petrel (*Pelecanoides georgicus*), kelp gull (*Larus dominicanus*), brown skua (*Catharacta lonnbergi*), elephant seal (*Mirounga leonina*) and fur seal (*Arctocephalus gazella*).

Stromness Bay side - gentoo penguin (*Pygoscelis papua*), light-mantled sooty albatross (*Phoebetria palpebrata*), South Georgia diving petrel (*Pelecanoides georgicus*), kelp gull (*Larus dominicanus*), brown skua (*Catharacta lonnbergi*), Antarctic tern (*Sterna vittate georgiae*), elephant seal (*Mirounga leonina*) and fur seal (*Arctocephalus gazella*).

Introduced land mammals: Norway rat (*Rattus norvegicus*) and reindeer (*Rangifer tarandus*).

### • Flora

Vegetation cover between Fortuna Bay and Stromness Harbour extends from sea level to approximately 100 - 150 metre altitude.

Fortuna Bay slopes - lower slopes predominantly tussac, merging into Festuca grassland with scattered mossy seepage gullies. Moss patches on lower scree slopes and at stream edges.

Shackleton Valley - inland fellfield communities merge with Festuca grassland, with bog and mire communities on the lower slopes. In the area of rolling hills behind Stromness whaling station Festuca grassland, short mixed grassland and bog and mire communities are mixed with moss communities and areas of reindeer-grazed tussac.

### • Other

Last section of the route Shackleton, Crean and Worsley took across South Georgia. 1914.

# Shackleton Walk



Crean Tarn is often still frozen in early spring



Route down from Stromness viewpoint



Descent down into Shackleton Valley

# Shackleton Walk



## Route Description Continued - page 3/3

Description of Point	Comments	Latitude/ Longitude
	Head in the direction of the whaling station and after descending another c. 100m, cross a scree gully to join a curved <i>Festuca</i> covered ridge that descends to the foot of the waterfall.  Follow this ridge to the valley floor and then walk over to view Shackleton waterfall.	54°09.111/ 036°44.458
Base of Shackleton waterfall	When viewing the waterfall, remain on the valley floor and keep off the bog and mire slope adjacent to the waterfall. It hosts a locally rare fern that is easily damaged by trampling.	54°09.017/ 036°44.324
Shackleton Valley down to the beach.	Follow the braided gravel stream bed down to the Stromness beach area. Please stay on the gravel bed as this avoids the bog and mire communities on the lower slopes on the south side of Shackleton Valley, the moss communities around the small lakes and the moss easily trampled plant communities situated in the hills behind the station. On the beach, avoid intersecting gentoo penguin colony access routes.	



Crossing the stream between ridges on route up from Fortuna Bay

# Shackleton Walk



## Key Features

- Historical interest
- Mountain scenery

## Visitor Impacts

### • Known Impacts

Track starting to form on some scree sections; divots on bog and mire slope adjacent to Shackleton waterfall.

### • Potential Impacts

Disturbance of wildlife, particularly diving petrel burrows and trampling of vegetation.

## Landing Requirements

### • Ships \*

Ships carrying 500 or fewer passengers. One ship at a time.

Maximum 2 ships per day (midnight to midnight) of which no more than 1 vessel carrying more than 200 passengers.

### • Visitors

Walking groups of no more than 100 visitors exclusive of expedition guides and leaders. 1 experienced guide per 20 visitors. If the number of walkers exceeds 100 then they should be divided into distinct groups of no more than 100 passengers, maintaining the ratio of 1 guide to 20 visitors with each group. It is strongly advisable that the hike be led by someone with previous experience of the route using the waypoints provided.

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

# Shackleton Walk



## Visitor Areas

- **Landing Area**

Fortuna Bay: gravel beach area to the south of Hodson Point.

Stromness: beach area between the ships' propellers (200m from station) and mouth of the Shackleton Valley river.

- **Closed Areas**

Closed Area A: burrowing petrel sites on scree slopes above Fortuna Bay and adjacent to Shackleton waterfall.

Closed Area B: the area of small rolling hills behind station comprising moss beds and bog and mire communities.

Closed Area C: staked area surrounding Stromness whaling station, incorporating the station and any jetties to a boundary of 200m including to the seaward side.

Closed Area D: bog and mire slope adjacent to south side of Shackleton waterfall, containing numerous locally rare ferns.

- **Guided Walking Areas**

The specified route should be followed (see below) to avoid creation of multiple tracks, potential disturbance of wildlife and damage to sensitive vegetation communities.

- **Free Roaming Areas**

The immediate landing beaches at Fortuna Bay and Stromness Harbour, the braided river bed area in Shackleton Valley and the level area behind the whaling station between the staked area and the rolling hills.

# Shackleton Walk



## Route Description Continued - page 2/3

Description of Point	Comments	Latitude/ Longitude
Route skirting northwest edge of 'Crean Lake' towards pass	Leave 'Crean Lake' and skirt around its northwest shore, climbing gravel/shale ridge to an outcrop/low bluff overlooking the lake.	54°09.201/ 036°45.671
	From the outcrop / low bluff continue uphill towards the pass.	54°09.228/ 036°45.529
The Pass	Two small tarns are located at the western section of the pass.	54°09.210/ 036°45.178
	The highest point of the pass is approximately 300m asl. From the highest point follow the gentle downhill slope in an east-northeast direction towards the Stromness Bay viewpoint.	54°09.167/ 036°44.833
Stromness Bay & whaling station viewpoint.	Two rocky knolls mark the first viewpoint of Shackleton Valley and Stromness whaling station.	54°09.158/ 036°44.761
Descent from viewpoint down to Shackleton Valley	From the rocky knolls, head north, skirting the knoll to commence the steep descent on scree. Great care is required in the descent. If slope has snow, please be aware snow small slab avalanches are possible. The route initially follows the gorge leading to the Shackleton waterfall in a northerly direction.	54°09.085/ 036°44.693
	After descending c. 50m, turn northeast towards a conspicuous rocky outcrop that appears on the skyline with Shackleton Valley and Stromness Harbour below.	54°09.047/ 036°44.651
	Take care to keep to the south side of this outcrop to avoid straying into the diving petrel burrows area located at 54°09.009'S 036°44.608`W.	54°09.049/ 036°44.575

# Shackleton Walk



## Route Description - page 1/3

Description of Point	Comments	Latitude/ Longitude
Beach - Fortuna Bay		54°08.850`S/ 36°47.110`W
Route up through tussac slope (See photo)	Use short, steep gully with water seepage in it. This avoids the extensive moss banks in alternative gullies and the area of breeding southern giant petrels nesting on the <i>Festuca</i> grassland slopes above the beach.	54°08.900`S/ 036°47.125W
Start of <i>Festuca</i> grassland area and route up first ridge.	Use the ridge to gain elevation. Keep to the upper slopes of the ridge to avoid more sensitive vegetation on the lower slopes. Be alert to roosting or nesting skuas and nesting giant petrels.	54°08.894/ 036°47.018
Leave first ridge and make way E towards stream crossing	Leave the upper slopes of the ridge where lower slope vegetation finishes and bare scree commences, heading E down slope towards the stream at the base of the gully	54°09.017/ 036°46.776
Stream crossing point	Cross the stream at a rocky area. Avoid moss patches.	54°09.029/ 036°46.734
Diagonal route up second ridge towards 'Crean Lake'	Take a long gentle route heading up towards the crest of the second ridge crossing a series of vegetated rock seepages.	54°09.070/ 036°46.586
	Take care to skirt to the south of the rocky knoll to avoid straying into the diving petrel burrows area located at 54°09.116`S 036°46.496`W.	
	At the crest of the second ridge follow the waypoints heading eastwards towards 'Crean Lake'	54°09.114/ 036°46.418
'Crean Lake' Overview	Be aware 'Crean Lake' surface is usually frozen in winter.	54°09.240

# Shackleton Walk



## Visitor Code of Conduct

- **Behaviour ashore**

Walk slowly and carefully. Maintain a precautionary distance of from wildlife and give animals the right-of-way. Increase your distance if any change in behaviour is observed.

Be alert to fur seals.

Know the location of the diving petrel burrow areas and avoid them.

Be alert to the presence of Antarctic terns in Shackleton Valley.

Avoid walking on areas of lichen and moss and on the bog and mire slope adjacent to the Shackleton waterfall.

Avoid the gentoo penguin access routes between the colony and the beach at Stromness.

Be aware of giant petrel nests on the slopes above the landing beach in Fortuna Bay, keeping a minimum distance of 10 metres.

- **Cautionary notes**

This is a strenuous walk in potentially treacherous wilderness conditions, remote from any outside assistance. This walk should only be undertaken in calm, settled weather conditions with appropriate medical and safety procedures in place to enable self sufficiency in the case of an emergency.

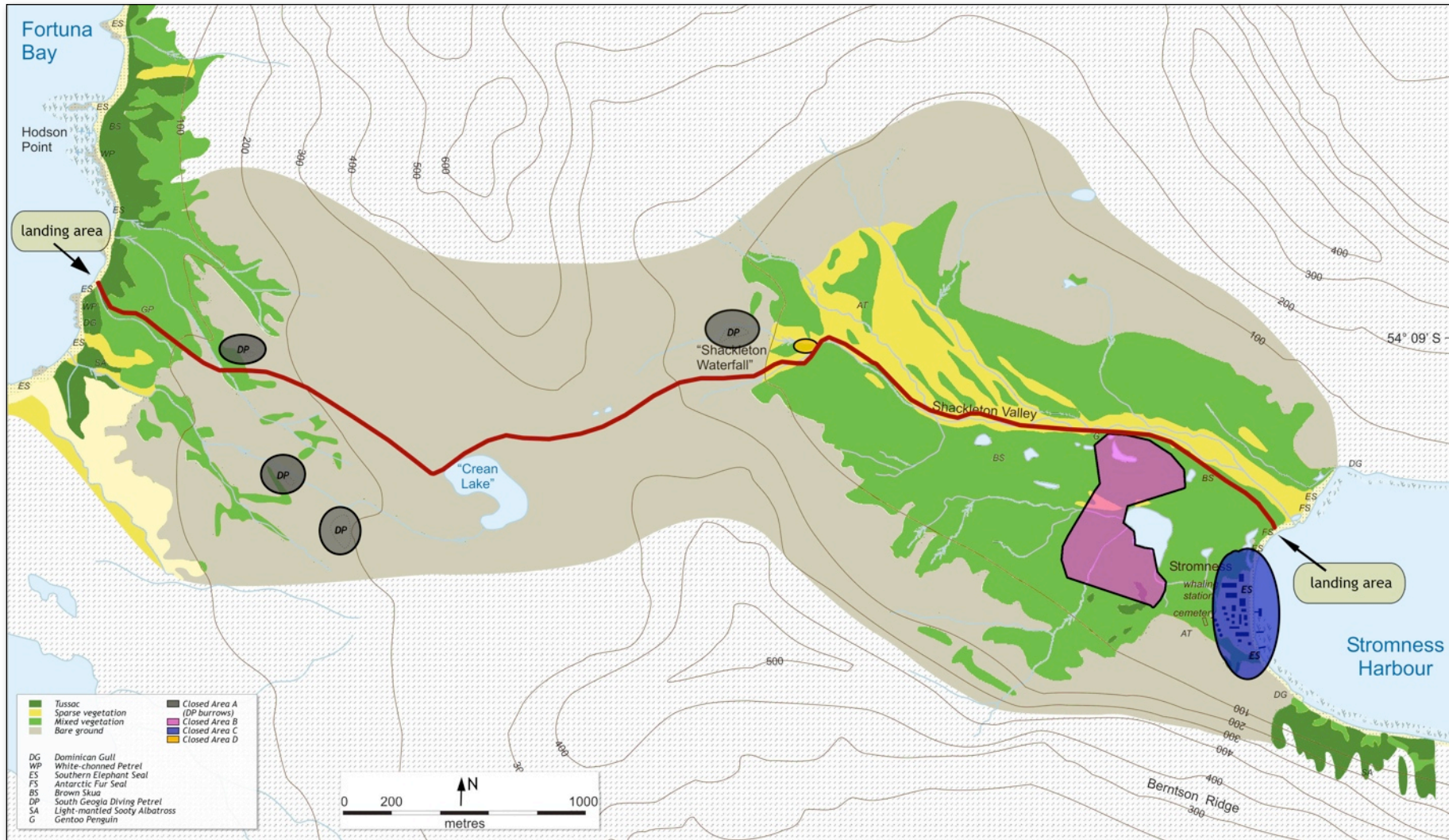
Be aware that the descent from the pass down into Shackleton Valley is particularly steep. Small slab avalanches can occur in this vicinity under certain conditions.

- **Biosecurity**

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



## Location



Sketch Map. Not for navigation

• Start: 54°08.85`S 36°47.11`W Finish: 54°09.4`S 36°42.6`W

5.5km hike across a 300 metre mountain pass between Fortuna Bay and Stromness Harbour.