Destination Antarctica

No place on earth compares to this vast white wilderness distilled to an elemental haiku: snow, ice, water, rock. Antarctica is simply stunning. The enormity of its ice shelves and mountain ranges invariably heightens feelings of humanity's insignificance and nature's grandeur. Antarctica's peculiar beauty may haunt you for the rest of your days.

Because the continent has never had a native population – even today, scientists and other staff members at research stations are only temporary residents – Antarctic wildlife is still unafraid of people. Well-behaved visitors usually elicit no more than disinterested yawns from seals and penguins focused on rearing their young and evading predators. The human reaction is exactly opposite: almost all visitors to Antarctica find that their experiences here exceed their expectations.

Everyone – scientist, support worker, government official and tourist alike – who comes to this, the most isolated continent, must 'earn' Antarctica, either by making an often-difficult voyage or a costly flight. Ice and weather, not clocks or calendars, determine the itinerary and the timetable of all travel here.

An international treaty signed by 46 countries, representing the large majority of the world's population, governs Antarctica. The continent, the treaty parties concur, is too large and important to belong to just one country. They further agree that Antarctica, unique among the world's landmasses, should remain a peaceful, free and demilitarized place of international cooperation and scientific research, open to all, with a minimum of human development.

Antarctica's most pressing issue is its environment and how best to protect it. The major impacts on the Antarctic environment are caused by people who have never even visited it. Climate change and ozone depletion are prime examples of the way human activity elsewhere affects Antarctica. But studies have also found that lead particles from gasoline combustion are blown to Antarctica as soon as one month after they leave exhaust pipes in South America, Australia and New Zealand, and pesticide residue has been found both in seabird guano and in penguin tissues. Plastic and other rubbish washes up on Antarctica's beaches in ever-increasing amounts.

Human activity in the Antarctic is also having negative impacts. Longline fishing for Patagonian toothfish has been a twofold environmental disaster. Toothfish are caught in enormous and unsustainable numbers, with much of the catch illegal, and albatrosses in their thousands are also caught on the steel hooks, dragged down hundreds of meters and drowned – an ignoble end for such magnificent fliers.

Despite continuing concerns that oil drillers or miners will ruin Antarctica's snowscape, the continent's largest industry by far is tourism. While governments fret over how best to regulate tourism to minimize its impact, they're hindered by the fact that since no one owns Antarctica, no single country can legislate behavior here. Meanwhile, tour companies police themselves, although no industry has ever been completely successful at that task, fraught as it is with conflicts of interest. For Antarctica's sake, may the parties involved use their best judgment for the sake of safeguarding the Antarctic environment, and not just their own individual financial concerns.

FAST FACTS

Population: 3000 (summer), 1200 (winter)

Estimated visitors: 46,091 (2007–08)

Lowest recorded temperature: -89.6°C (Vostok station)

Highest elevation: 4900m (Vinson Massif)

Ice-free land: <1%

Deepest ice core drilled: c 950,000 years old at its bottom

Getting Started

Unless you're planning your own expedition, you'll visit Antarctica as part of a group tour, almost certainly on a ship. This has the advantage of combining your transportation, meals and accommodations all in the one vessel. It also means that no infrastructure has to be built ashore in Antarctica's delicate environment.

Antarctica is not as cold as you might imagine, at least not in the summer, which is the only time tourists visit. As they say, there's no bad weather, only inappropriate clothing.

WHEN TO GO

See Climate (p334) for more information.

Tourists do not visit Antarctica during winter, when the pack ice extends its frozen mantle for 1000km around most of the continent. In any case, few people would pay thousands of dollars to experience the Antarctic winter's near round-the-clock darkness and extreme cold – the thermometer can plummet to -50°C.

The Antarctic tour season is short – about five months, with each offering its own highlights. November is early summer: the spring pack ice is breaking up, and birds – especially penguins – are courting and mating. December and January, when penguins are hatching eggs and feeding chicks, are the height of the austral summer, bringing warmer temperatures and up to 20 hours of sunlight every day. In the late summer months of February and March, whale-watching is at its best, penguin chicks are beginning to fledge and adult penguins are ashore molting.

Cruises later in the season may be less crowded. However, the longer you wait to go, the more wildlife will already have headed out to sea.

DON'T LEAVE HOME WITHOUT...

- **Windproof and waterproof jacket and trousers** Much better as an outer layer than a heavy coat.
- **Knee-high waterproof boots (ie Wellingtons)** Essential for landings, when you step into surf and walk through guano.
- **Felt insoles for your Wellingtons** Great insulation; take two sets and dry on alternate days.
- **UV-filtering sunglasses** Sun reflecting off ice, snow and water creates lots of glare.
- **Warm gloves** Fingers freeze fast.
- **Glove liners** Handy when removing thick gloves for photography.
- **Hat** Any sort prevents rapid heat loss.
- **Balaclava** Better than a scarf.
- **Ski goggles** Preferred over sunglasses by some, but fogging can be a problem.
- **Double the digital-photo storage capacity (or film) you think you'll need** When the light's right, you'll be unable to stop yourself.
- **Seasickness pills** Although the ship's doctor will also have a supply.
- **Flashlight** Useful inside dark historic huts.
- **Patience** Weather, ice and unpredictable seas set the schedule, not calendars or clocks.

LIFE ABOARD A POLAR SHIP

Voyages to polar seas are different from other sorts of travel, and even seasoned 'cruisers' may need to adjust. It's completely normal to feel lethargic and sluggish during the several days of sailing required to reach Antarctica.

Typically, a printed bulletin listing the day's planned activities is distributed the night before to let you know what's ahead. It helps to attend the educational lectures and video screenings, which are given, in part, to relieve the monotony of long ocean crossings. Enterprising passengers will find activities to occupy themselves – seabird-watching, iceberg spotting, visits to the bridge or engine room, diary writing, reading – but even these can get stale after three or four days.

Don't worry: Antarctica is worth the wait.

International law requires every ship to hold a lifeboat drill within 24 hours of sailing. These drills are serious and mandatory for all passengers. Each cabin should contain a sign or card telling which lifeboat station the occupants should use. There will also be a life vest for each person in the cabin; these are usually equipped with a whistle, reflective patches and a battery-powered beacon light, which starts flashing automatically upon contact with saltwater. The universal signal to proceed to lifeboat stations is seven short blasts on the ship's bell or horn, followed by a long blast. This signal may be repeated several times for the lifeboat drill. Since there's only one such drill held during each voyage, if you ever hear the signal a second time during your voyage, it is the *real thing*. You should go immediately to your cabin to pick up your life vest and some warm clothing and then head straight to your lifeboat station to await instructions from the crew.

Extra care is needed when moving about any ship, but passengers on Antarctic cruises especially should keep in mind the rule of 'one hand for the ship,' always keeping one hand free to grab a railing or other support should the ship roll suddenly. Cameras or video equipment should be securely stowed in your cabin.

Many Antarctic ships maintain an 'open bridge,' welcoming passengers to the navigation and steering area. The bridge will be closed during tricky navigation and whenever the pilot is aboard or the ship is in port. Etiquette demands that no food or drink be brought to the bridge, especially alcohol, and going barefoot on the bridge is not appreciated. Keep your voice down; excessive noise interferes with communication between the navigator and helmsman. Of course, it's unwise to touch any equipment without being invited to do so by an officer of the watch. One further warning: sailors are a superstitious lot, and whistling anywhere on a ship is considered bad luck – seriously. Tradition says that a person whistling is calling up the wind, and that a storm will result.

COSTS & MONEY

Antarctica isn't cheap. It's remote, and operating tours there is expensive. Expect to pay at least US$5000 for your trip, with prices rising quickly from there; high-end berths can cost eight times that.

It's sometimes possible to find bargain prices in Ushuaia since ships ready to sail may have empty berths. However, most Antarctic ships are fully booked months in advance – particularly the small ships, which have fewer berths. Very early (November and early December) and again late in the season (mid-February onwards), you may be lucky. Expect to pay at least US$4000 to US$4500; the 'last-minute' price is the same for all cabins, even, rarely, a suite! 'Last-minute' South Georgia costs between US$6000 to US$8000. One good place to seek these fares is Ushuaia Turismo (p169).

Solo travelers pay a premium for a single cabin (1.4 times the regular fare, or more). If you're willing to be matched with another solo traveler of the same gender, you each pay regular fare.

TRAVELING RESPONSIBLY

Antarctica has a sensitive ecology. Visitors must ensure that no damage is done – penalties include fines of up to US$10,000 (for US citizens) or even imprisonment (for British citizens). The Antarctic Treaty's Protocol on Environmental Protection is legally binding on all visitors to Antarctica

GUIDANCE FOR VISITORS TO THE ANTARCTIC

Activities in the Antarctic are governed by the Antarctic Treaty of 1959 and its associated agreements, referred to collectively as the Antarctic Treaty System. The Treaty established Antarctica as a zone of peace and science.

In 1991 the Antarctic Treaty Consultative Parties adopted the Protocol on Environmental Protection to the Antarctic Treaty, which designates the Antarctic as a natural reserve. The protocol sets out environmental principles, procedures and obligations for the comprehensive protection of the Antarctic environment and its dependent and associated ecosystems.

The environmental protocol applies to tourism and nongovernmental activities, as well as governmental activities in the Antarctic Treaty area. It is intended to ensure that these activities do not have adverse impacts on the Antarctic environment or on its scientific and aesthetic values.

The information provided here is intended to make visitors aware of, and therefore able to comply with, the treaty and the protocol. Visitors are, of course, bound by national laws and regulations applicable to activities in the Antarctic.

Respect Protected Areas

A variety of areas in the Antarctic have been afforded special protection because of their particular ecological, scientific, historic or other values. Entry into certain areas may be prohibited except in accordance with a permit issued by an appropriate national authority. Activities in or near designated historic sites and monuments and certain other areas may be subject to special restrictions.

- Know the locations of areas that have been afforded special protection, and any restrictions on entry or on activities that can be carried out in and near them.
- Observe applicable restrictions.
- Do not damage, remove or destroy historic sites or monuments, or any artifacts associated with them.

Respect Scientific Research

- Do not interfere with scientific research, facilities or equipment.
- Obtain permission before visiting Antarctic science and logistic support facilities; confirm arrangements 24 to 72 hours before arriving, and comply strictly with the rules regarding such visits.
- Do not interfere with or remove scientific equipment or marker posts, and do not disturb experimental study sites, field camps or supplies.

Be Safe

- Be prepared for severe and changeable weather. Be sure that your equipment and clothing meet Antarctic standards. Remember that the Antarctic environment is inhospitable, unpredictable and potentially dangerous.
- Know your capabilities and the dangers posed by the Antarctic environment, and act accordingly. Plan activities with safety in mind at all times.
- Keep a safe distance from all wildlife, both on land and at sea.

who are nationals of its signatory countries, whether they are on governmental or private visits; for more information see Environmental Impact of Tourism, p106.

Guidelines for visitor behavior in Antarctica (see above) are straightforward and easy to follow. Ship staff will help.

The International Association of Antarctica Tour Operators (IAATO), promotes environmentally responsible travel. All ships listed in the Transportation chapter are IAATO members.

- Take note of, and act on, advice and instructions from your leaders; do not stray from your group.
- Do not walk onto glaciers or large snowfields without proper equipment and experience; there is a real danger of falling into hidden crevasses.
- Do not expect a rescue service; self-sufficiency is increased and risks reduced by sound planning, quality equipment and trained personnel.
- Do not enter emergency refuges (except in emergencies). If you use equipment or food from a refuge, inform the nearest research station or national authority once the emergency is over.
- Respect any smoking restrictions, particularly around buildings, and take great care to safeguard against the danger of fire, which is a real hazard in Antarctica's dry environment.

Protect Antarctic Wildlife

- Taking or harmfully interfering with Antarctic wildlife is prohibited except in accordance with a permit issued by a national authority.
- Do not feed, touch or handle birds or seals, or approach or photograph them in ways that cause them to alter their behavior. Take special care when animals are breeding or molting.
- Do not harm plants; damage can be caused by walking, driving or landing on extensive moss beds or lichen-covered scree slopes.
- Do not use guns or explosives. Keep noise to a minimum to avoid frightening wildlife.
- Do not bring non-native plants or animals (including house plants, pet dogs and cats) into the Antarctic.
- Do not use aircraft, vessels, small boats or other means of transportation in ways that disturb wildlife, either at sea or on land.

Keep Antarctica Pristine

Antarctica remains relatively pristine, and has not yet been subjected to large-scale human perturbations. It is the largest wilderness area on earth. Please do your part to keep it that way.

- Do not dispose of litter or garbage on land. Open burning is prohibited.
- Do not disturb or pollute lakes or streams. Any materials discarded at sea must be disposed of properly.
- Do not paint or engrave graffiti or names on rocks or buildings.
- Do not collect or take away biological or geological specimens or artifacts as souvenirs, including rocks, bones, eggs, fossils, or parts or contents of buildings.
- Do not deface or vandalize buildings or emergency refuges, whether occupied, unoccupied or abandoned.

Although tourism to Antarctica is sometimes criticized as being harmful to the Antarctic environment, the impact made by tourists is minimal when compared to that made by scientific activities on the continent. Ship-based tourists leave behind almost no trace of their stay (hopefully!), and those few who do spend the night on the continent are not supposed to leave behind any evidence of having done so.

Some scientists like to raise the point that cumulative visits to the same place (by tourists, for example) may have long-term effects that are not yet

TOP 10

ANTARCTICA IN THE MOVIES

Antarctica has been featured in surprisingly few movies, given its exotic nature, probably because it's so costly to actually film there.

1. *South* (1998; p59)
2. *Antarctica* (1983; p55)
3. *Scott of the Antarctic* (1948; p47)
4. *Virus* (1980; p66)
5. *The Thing* (1982; p49)
6. *Hell Below Zero* (1953; p44)
7. *With Byrd at the South Pole: The Story of Little America* (1930; p62)
8. *90° South: With Scott to the Antarctic* (1933; p54)
9. *Cry of the Penguins* (aka *Mr Forbush and the Penguins*; 1971; p50)
10. *La Marche de l'empereur* (*March of the Penguins*; 2005; p314)

AMAZING MOMENTS

At times in Antarctica, you may feel as though you're living in an extraordinary documentary. Here are examples of the stories you may be able to tell on your return home.

1. Entertaining a curious penguin chick by letting it nibble your boot
2. Spotting the first iceberg (they're so big!) at dawn as you arrive on the bridge
3. Watching a mother minke whale and her calf surface alongside your Zodiac
4. Inhaling your first ammoniacal whiff of a penguin colony
5. Grabbing any available support as your ship pitches through the Drake Passage
6. Gazing in fascinated horror as a leopard seal devours an unlucky Adélie penguin
7. Cruising in Zodiacs through a field of grounded bergs almost close enough to touch
8. Stepping out of the Zodiac into the surf on your first continental landing
9. Seeing a beautiful blue-eyed shag regurgitate a meal to its chick
10. Sighting a rare blue iceberg or an even rarer bottle-green one

understood. In fact, there are several places on Antarctica that get remarkably high tourist traffic. But scientific stations – permanent facilities – represent the largest possible number of cumulative visits to a single site. As any visitor to a station can attest, the most serious environmental impacts in Antarctica occur at stations, where personnel eat, sleep, work, drive, fly and eliminate onshore every day for years.

By the time their ship reaches the continent, many tourists are better versed in environmental concerns in Antarctica than some members of national Antarctic programs.

TRAVEL LITERATURE

Antarctica has a vast number of books on its wildlife, exploration and science, but worthwhile travel narratives about the continent are less common.

The Worst Journey in the World (1922), by Apsley Cherry-Garrard, is *the* Antarctic classic. It's a highly readable account of Captain Scott's fatal expedition and the hellish midwinter manhaul to study the emperor penguins at Cape Crozier.

The Crystal Desert (1992), by David G Campbell, chronicles the ecologist's three summers studying the life of the Antarctic Peninsula region.

South (1919), by Ernest Shackleton, tells the amazing story of the ill-fated *Endurance* expedition from the leader's perspective.

The South Pole (1912), by Roald Amundsen, describes in surprisingly engaging prose the polar technician's triumph in reaching 90° South.

Scott's Last Expedition (1913), by Captain Robert F Scott, is the firsthand account of the doomed *Terra Nova* expedition, taken from his diaries and published posthumously. Scott was deservedly known as a skillful writer.

Let Heroes Speak: Antarctic Explorers, 1772–1922 (2000), by Michael H Rosove, is a compilation of the major early expeditions to Antarctica. Rosove wisely lets the explorers tell their own stories, quoting liberally from their published accounts.

Water, Ice and Stone (1995), by Bill Green, is a geochemist's personal account of his work studying the unusual lakes of Antarctica's Dry Valleys.

Antarctica: Life on the Ice (2007), a collection of 20 works edited by Susan Fox Rogers, gives a fascinating, often hilarious view of experiences of US workers in Antarctica.

INTERNET RESOURCES

70South (www.70south.com) Strives to be an Antarctic news service; includes an extensive archive of hundreds of 'Antarcticles.'

International Association of Antarctica Tour Operators (www.iaato.org) Includes lots of contact information, as well as tourism statistics.

Lonely Planet (www.lonelyplanet.com) Includes links to useful travel resources elsewhere on the web.

Itineraries
CLASSIC ROUTES

THE ANTARCTIC PENINSULA
Seven to 14 days

Starting from **Ushuaia** (p166), your ship crosses the **Drake Passage** (p165). Depending on the size of your vessel – and the weather you encounter along the way – the crossing could take as little as 1½ days, or as long as…well… Remember, everything depends on Antarctica's moods. You might make your first landing at one of the **South Shetland Islands** (p208) at the discretion of the expedition leader. You might visit **Deception Island** (p216), an active volcano with a hidden 'amphitheatre' accommodating the largest chinstrap rookery in the Peninsula, or **Livingston Island** (p215), with its penguins and wallowing elephant seals.

Next, you'll steam down to the **Antarctic Peninsula** (p264). Again, depending on the expedition leader's judgment, you may land at such places as the former British research base-turned-museum at **Port Lockroy** (p270), the rumbling glaciers above **Neko Harbor** (p269), or take a Zodiac cruise in aptly-named **Paradise Harbor** (p270).

Homeward bound, keep an eye out for a glimpse of the fabled headland at **Cape Horn** (p171) off the port side.

The Antarctic Peninsula itinerary, the most popular trip and a good introduction to Antarctica and its spectacular wildlife, takes from one to two weeks. You'll visit the South Shetlands en route, with their teeming penguin rookeries and scientific stations of many nations.

THE PENINSULA, SOUTH GEORGIA & THE FALKLAND ISLANDS/ISLAS MALVINAS

14 to 20 days

Combining the wildlife and scenery of the Peninsula with South Georgia's history and Shackleton connections plus the Falklands' wildlife and friendly folk, this route is increasingly popular despite the greater sea time it requires.

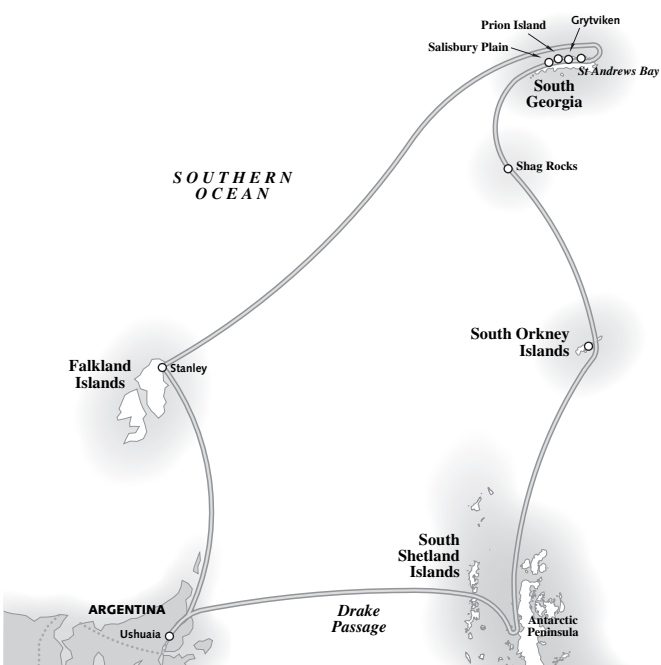
Departing from **Ushuaia** (p166), you may either head straight to the Peninsula and then on to South Georgia (which has the advantage of following the prevailing westerly winds), or the route may be done in reverse (which means going against the westerlies – with often heavy head seas). Go with the flow: head south across the **Drake Passage** (p165), stop in the **South Shetland Islands** (p208), then visit the **Antarctic Peninsula** (p264). See opposite for more information on the Antarctic Peninsula itinerary.

After leaving the Peninsula, head east (with following seas, resulting in a faster and more comfortable trip) to the **South Orkney Islands** (p188), provided there's time and the weather cooperates. Next, cruise past the lonely, wave-thrashed **Shag Rocks** (p188) while looking for their eponymous bird life.

Your first **South Georgia** (p176) landing is most likely to be at **Grytviken** (p184), home to an abandoned **whaling station** (p185) and **Shackleton's grave** (p184).

For South Georgia wildlife, visit **St Andrews Bay** (p188) or **Salisbury Plain** (p182) to watch the antics of king penguins by the thousand. Offshore **Prion Island** (p181) in the Bay of Isles is an excellent place to watch the endangered and magnificent wandering albatrosses on their nests.

On the way back to Ushuaia, call in at the Falklands. You will most likely land at one or two of the outer islands, with their abundant penguins and albatrosses, and spend half a day in the engaging capital, **Stanley** (p196).



This trip includes the popular Peninsula region, plus stunning South Georgia, with its Shackleton connections and huge concentrations of king penguins and fur seals. You may also visit the lonely South Orkneys and pass Shag Rocks. Finish with a few days in the fascinating Falklands.

ROADS LESS TRAVELED

THE ROSS SEA

18 to 28 days

This is Antarctica to another degree: cold and wind are magnitudes greater, tabular icebergs more abundant, wildlife more scarce. As the explorers' gateway to the South Pole, the region has the continent's richest historic heritage.

Starting from an Australian or New Zealand port, spend a couple of days rolling across the **Southern Ocean** (p165), getting your sea legs and watching the abundant bird life either from the bridge or an outside deck. Depending on your route (and the unpredictable weather), you may stop at either **Macquarie Island** (p244), **Campbell Island** (p253), or the **Auckland Islands** (p250), all famous for their breeding seabirds and windswept aspects. After a cruise past the shudder-inducing icebound coasts of the **Balleny Islands** (p248), and a quick visit to Antarctica's first buildings at **Cape Adare** (p283) if the wind allows (not likely), turn to starboard and head south into the **Ross Sea** (p281) for a stunning view of the floating, France-sized **Ross Ice Shelf** (p300) and a visit to **Ross Island** (p290), site of the fascinating huts built by the early 20th century explorers.

If you're fortunate – and the pack ice permits – you'll hit the historic hut trifecta, landing at Scott's ***Discovery* Hut** (p295), Shackleton's hut at **Cape Royds** (p297) and the tragedy-pervaded hut at **Cape Evans** (p296), to which Scott and his men would have returned if they had not perished returning from the Pole.

Add a visit to one of Ross Island's human communities, the sprawling US **McMurdo station** (p292) and/or New Zealand's **Scott Base** (p290) for a look at Antarctic scientific research and some shopping, and your trip is complete.

The Ross Sea itinerary includes not only the haunting historic heritage of the Ross Island huts of British explorers Robert F Scott and Ernest Shackleton, but also the busy US and New Zealand scientific research stations and several of the wildlife-rich peri-Antarctic island groups.

The Authors

JEFF RUBIN

Jeff first visited Antarctica in 1987, when he made a three-month-long trip to Macquarie and Heard Islands and Davis station while writing a story for *Time*'s Australian edition about Australia's Antarctic science program. Since then, he has returned to Antarctica many times and always enjoys going back again. Jeff has become very interested in the early history of Antarctic exploration. He is the Antarctic Editor of the *Polar Times*, the official publication of the American Polar Society, and writes the magazine's 'Due South' column. He lives in Ohio with his wife Stephanie and daughters Emily and Isabel. The *New York Times* called Jeff's 1st edition of this book 'the only travel guide that any visitor to the region should need,' while the *Sydney Morning Herald* called it 'the first book on Antarctica destined for the suitcase, not the coffee table.'

CONTRIBUTING AUTHORS

John Cooper, author of the Wildlife Guide (p114), has undertaken ecological and physiological research on African, sub-Antarctic and Antarctic seabirds for more than 35 years at the University of Cape Town. He has chaired the Scientific Committee on Antarctic Research on Bird Biology Subcommittee (now the SCAR Group of Experts on Birds) and the World Conservation Union's Antarctic Advisory Committee. He is a Co-editor of *Marine Ornithology*, an international journal of seabird science and conservation, which he founded in 1976. He initiated in 1997 and led for four years BirdLife International's Seabird Conservation Programme and its 'Save the Albatross Campaign.' His current interests and activities center on fostering and supporting international agreements that help conserve seabirds and their habitats, especially the Agreement on the Conservation of Albatrosses and Petrels (ACAP), which came into force in February 2004, and of which he was its Advisory Committee's first Vice-Chair. Now retired, John acts as ACAP's honorary Information Officer.

Dr Maj De Poorter, author of the Environmental Issues and Climate Change & Antarctica chapters (p100 & p110), worked with Greenpeace as Antarctic campaigner from 1984 to 1996. She participated in five of their expeditions (three as leader), and has personally carried out inspections on more than 35 bases throughout Antarctica to check their environmental performance. She has attended official meetings of the Antarctic Treaty System as an NGO observer since 1986. Dr De Poorter is the Chair of the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) Antarctic Advisory Committee, and coordinator of the Invasive Species Specialist Group of IUCN's Species Survival Commission. She has been a member of New Zealand's Environmental Assessment and Review Panel, the body that advises on all environmental impact assessments for New Zealand Antarctic activities.

Dr David Goldberg MD cowrote the Health chapter (p353). David completed his training in internal medicine and infectious diseases at Columbia-Presbyterian Medical Center in New York City, where he has also served as voluntary faculty. At present, he is an infectious diseases specialist in Scarsdale, New York, and the editor in chief of the website MDTravelHealth.com.

Colin Monteath, author of the Private Expeditions chapter (p71), has had dozens of seasons in Antarctica since 1973, including 10 years with the New Zealand Antarctic Programme. Since 1983 he has been a freelance photographer and writer, specializing in polar and mountain regions. With his wife Betty he runs the Hedgehog House New Zealand photo library. Colin has climbed many new routes on Antarctic peaks and has been involved in seaborne tourism since 1983.

Professor David Walton, author of the Antarctic Science chapter (p146), first became interested in the Antarctic while a teenager. After a first degree in botany from Edinburgh University, he began work in 1967 with the British Antarctic Survey (BAS), studying sub-Antarctic plants. After 20 years as a research scientist for BAS he moved to science management. He has recently retired from managing the Environment & Information Division at BAS and is researching the history of Antarctic science and politics. Professor Walton represented the international Antarctic scientific community at Antarctic Treaty Meetings for 14 years and was recently awarded the first Scientific Committee on Antarctic Research (SCAR) medal for International Scientific Coordination. He also holds the Polar Medal. He is the author of more than 100 scientific papers, author and editor of several books and the editor in chief of the international journal *Antarctic Science*.