



Falkland Islands Visitor Calendar 2010

A round-up of the Islands' best events and occasions

The Falkland Islands have a host of events happening throughout the year ranging from wildlife must-sees to whacky sporting challenges. There is always something happening on the Islands and here's the best of what is coming up in 2010.

January - February: A Wildlife Watching Wonderland

From December to February the majority of the Islands' penguin species will have hatching eggs. With a flurry of activity - from foraging penguin parents to huge chick crèches - the Falklands are a haven of guaranteed sightings for wildlife enthusiasts and photographers.

Not to be outdone by the Islands' feathered residents, the sea lions begin mating while the new pups begin to form pods and suckle from their mothers. The best places in the Falklands to view the wildlife are Sea Lion, Carcass, Saunders and Pebble Islands where it is possible to see elephant seals and killer whales as well as the beautiful island birds.

March 1st - 5th: Get Active at Sports Week

Camp Sports Week marks the traditional end of the sheep shearing season. Camp is a Falklands term meaning countryside, originating from the Spanish word *campo*. It's an event which involves horse racing, sheep shearing, dog trials, children's activities and big barbeque cook-ups where Islanders celebrate after working hard on the Falklands farms.

March 14th: Stanley's Annual Sprint

Officially known as the world's most southerly AIMS-certified marathon, the challenging Stanley Marathon is a great way for sports fiends to get island views and test their endurance. In 2010 the Stanley Marathon will be five years old and will once again be sponsored by Standard Chartered Bank. As well as the normal prizes and awards, there will also be a trophy and £200 cheque presented to the first Falklands-born runner to cross the finish line.

March - April: The Great Penguin Departure

Between March and April Magellanic, gentoo and rockhopper penguin chicks leave the nest, strong enough to survive on their own. Magellanics and rockhoppers both disperse off the Islands but 50% of the gentoo population stays on the Falkland Islands over winter. Black-browed albatross chicks also fledge during this time.

June 19th: A Dip for the Brave

Bold residents, visitors and onlookers gather together for the annual mid-winter swim. Taking to the chilly waters of the South West Atlantic is not for the faint hearted, but this fundraising event is great fun to watch. All the action takes place in Surf Bay, about five kilometres east of the capital, Stanley.

August 14th: Falklands Day

Falklands Day marks the first recorded sighting of the Islands on 14th August 1592 by English sea captain John Davis from his ship called 'Desire'.

September 1st: Get Hooked as Trout Season Begins

Few places in the world can offer a true wildness fishing experience like the Falkland Islands. With a variety of fishing spots, stunning backdrops, unspoilt locations and above all, pristine waters, the start of the trout fishing season is a perfect time to visit the Islands for any fishing enthusiasts. The season ends in April.

September: The Great Return

After being away for up to six months gentoo and Magellanic penguins return to the Islands along with the black-browed albatross and male elephant seals. The Falklands buzz as the breeding season for lots of wildlife begins.

September 11th - 12th: Get Crafty

The annual arts and crafts fair held at the Falkland Islands Community School in Stanley shows local work including photography and woven and leather products.

October - November: New Life

October to November marks the start of new wildlife arrivals on the Islands – eggs are laid by gentoo, Magellanic and rockhopper penguins and black-browed albatrosses, whilst elephant seal pups are born in early October.

December: The Kings are Born

King penguins are the Islands' proud upstanding feathered dweller. Eggs from these regal birds are laid from mid-November through to mid-March. Between May and August new chicks may only be fed three times as parents return infrequently to the Islands, spending much of their time at sea. Kings have an average 18-month breeding cycle and chicks don't venture off dry land until they are 14-16 months old. Volunteer Point is a fantastic place to watch the Falklands' kings; it's the world's largest, most accessible colony.



Become a Falklands fan on Facebook at www.facebook.com/naturesbestkeptsecret.

For further information on the Falklands Islands plus a downloadable taster guide, please visit www.falklandislands.com.

Notes for Editors:

- **Parades and Public Holidays:** Liberation Day (14th June), Queen's Birthday (21st April) and Battle Day (8th December) are annual public holidays. On these three days, along with Remembrance Sunday, a parade takes place involving members of HM Forces, the Falkland Islands Defence Force and other organisations and associations depending on the event. All except the Queen's Birthday include memorial services at Christ Church Cathedral and around the appropriate monument. Smaller services are also held to commemorate other key events of the 1982 conflict at different locations across the Islands.
- The Falkland Islands have a raw, unspoilt quality that entices locals and tourists back time and again. Visitors to the Islands are spoilt for choice with more than 227 species of identified birds (including several of the world's largest endangered breeding colonies), as well as whales, dolphins, elephant seals, sea lions, delicate flora and rugged geographical formations.
- The best time to visit the Islands and experience the local culture and wildlife is October to April. The average summer temperature (December to March) is 15° Celsius (59° Fahrenheit) and the Falklands has more sunshine hours and less rainfall than the UK.
- There are over 40 international tour operators offering tailor-made packages and escorted tours to the Falkland Islands. See www.falklandislands.com for the latest list.
- Visitors can reach the Falklands on the weekly LAN Airways flight via Chile or the charter flight operated twice weekly from RAF Brize Norton in the UK by the Ministry of Defence.