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Cape Town Pelagics Trip Report

11 September 2008

A Cape Town Pelagics trip left Simon's Town on September 11th guided by Dave Christie. We had better than average weather conditions with a comfortable and flat sea. We encountered a few **Southern Right Whales** in the bay. First pelagics were spotted just off Cape Point with the usual **White-chinned Petrels**, **Sooty Shearwaters** and a few **Shy Albatross** making an appearance. About 5 miles off the point we saw what we thought might be a Manx Shearwater but did not get a close enough view to be sure. We were unlucky not to find a trawler or long-liner - we did however go right out to the canyon but the boats were just not working in the area and must have been either further north or south. The seals were also stumped and we passed several groups also wondering where the trawlers were! We made a few chum slicks to attract the birds closer to the boat and managed to get juvenile and adult **Black-browed** and **Shy Albatross** literally next to the boat with great photo opportunities. We had an enjoyable trip with the clients really enjoying the pelagic species.

Birds we saw...

Shy Albatross	100
Black-browed Albatross	20
Atlantic Yellow-nosed Albatross	1
Indian Yellow-nosed Albatross	1
Northern Giant Petrel	5
Pintado Petrel	35
Soft-plumaged Petrel	1
Antarctic Prion	1
White-chinned Petrel	200
Great Shearwater	40
Sooty Shearwater	80
Wilson's Storm Petrel	40
Cape Gannet	50
Arctic Jaeger	1
Subantarctic Skua	2
Sabine's Gull	1
Kelp Gull	30
Arctic Tern	2
Common Tern	10

A message from Cape Town Pelagics: A huge thank you to our experienced skippers who are able to safely lead us to the best birding areas and skillfully manoeuvre the boat into just the best position while all on board are busy concentrating on the birds! Coordinating a pelagic trip over a year in advance with guests from all across South Africa and different countries around the world requires an organised office team. We thank them for their special eye for detail - and for the sometimes last-minute rearrangements and frustration if the weather delays the trip to another day! Our biggest thank-you is to our Cape Town Pelagics guides who take time out of their work, often involving seabirds and conservation, and time away from their families, to provide our guests with a world-class birding experience. Cape Town Pelagics donates all its profits to seabirds, and so all the participants who join the trip make a contribution towards bird research and conservation – a big thank you from all of us.

Trip Report by Cape Town Pelagics guide Dave Christie.