



Trip Report - Cape Town Pelagics - Sunday, 6 August 2023

Trip Highlights: Four species albatross



Our group met at 09:30 on a beautiful Sunday morning at the Simon's Town Yacht Club before setting off on our pelagic tour. As we set off from harbour towards Cape Point, we soon started encountering a few coastal seabird species such as **Cape Cormorants**, **Kelp Gulls** and **Greater Crested (Swift) Terns**, as well as a small raft of **African Penguins** out on their first foraging outings for the day.

Just beyond Cape Point, where we briefly stopped for a safety check-in with the lookout tower, we saw a bit of action with several **Sooty Shearwater**, **Greater Crested (Swift) Tern**, **Cape Cormorant**, **White-chinned Petrel** and a couple of **Cape Gannets** attending to an area where presumably there was a shoal of small fish close to the surface.

Soon afterwards, underway to the Cape Canyon, the first **Shy Albatrosses** of the day put in an appearance, accompanied by the odd curious **Kelp Gull**, **Cape Gannet** and **White-chinned Petrel**. No fishing vessels seemed to be present at the usual fishing grounds, however, general bird numbers picked up as soon as we got to deeper waters. At first, we only saw birds already encountered earlier during the day, but after we put out a bit of anchovy oil, both bird numbers and species diversity increased with the addition of **Northern Giant Petrel**, **Southern Giant Petrel**, **Wilson's Storm Petrel**, **Black-browed Albatross**, **Brown Skua**, **Indian Yellow-nosed Albatross** and **Atlantic Yellow-nosed Albatross**.

It finally was time to head northwards again after spending a few hours with the seabirds. The swell gradually built up throughout the day and the trip back towards Cape Point was a bit bumpy, however, we continued to see good numbers along the way of some of the species already seen earlier in the day, some of which kept following our boat. Along our route we added one more seabird species, namely **Arctic Tern**, as well as a mammal species in the form of a **Humpback Whale**.

En-route back to Simon's Town, we made a last stop at Partridge Point where we visited the **Bank Cormorant** colony and the **Cape Fur Seal** rock, which also hosted a few **White Breasted Cormorants**, **Cape Cormorants** and an **African Oystercatcher**. We then finally returned to the Simon's Town harbour after a beautiful day of birding out at sea.

Pelagic species seen and approximate numbers:

Shy Albatross	200+
Black-browed Albatross	5
Atlantic Yellow-nosed Albatross	1
Indian Yellow-nosed Albatross	1
Northern Giant Petrel	1
Southern Giant Petrel	1
White-chinned Petrel	400+
Sooty Shearwater	100
Wilson's Storm Petrel	15
Cape Gannet	20
Brown (Subantarctic) Skua	3
Arctic Tern	1

Coastal Species:

Kelp Gull	50
African Oystercatcher	1
White-breasted Cormorant	1
Bank Cormorant	20
Crowned Cormorant	2
Cape Cormorant	500+
African Penguin	50
Great Crested Tern	150

Marine mammals:

Brown (Cape) Fur Seal	50
Humpback Whale	1

Trip report: Cape Town Pelagics guide - [David Swanepoel](#)

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.

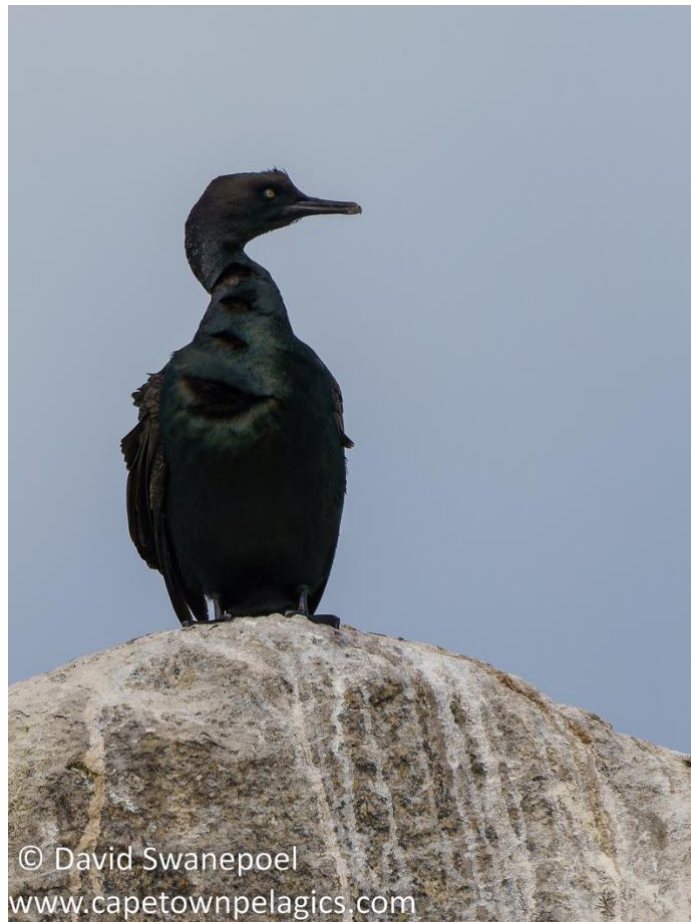


Shy Albatross



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