



## Trip Report - Cape Town Pelagics - Monday, 7 April 2025

Trip Highlights: African Penguin, three species of albatrosses, including Indian Yellow-nosed, Manx Shearwater, Cory's shearwater, Great Shearwater, Wilson's Storm Petrel (including a potential "Fuegian"/*chilensis*), Brown Skua, Parasitic Jaeger.



A stunning autumn sunrise greeted us as we set out onto the mirror smooth waters of False Bay.

The sea birding started with **Cape, Crowned** and **White-breasted Cormorants, Great Crested Terns,** and both **Kelp** and **Hartlaub's Gulls,** roosting on vessels and buoys near the yacht basin. Offshore of Boulders Beach, we encountered a close group of **African Penguins** heading out to feed. A few **Sooty Shearwaters** were seen near Cape Point.

After checking out at the safety station, we ventured out into the open Atlantic Ocean. The shallower coastal waters were dominated by mixed feeding flocks of **White-chinned Petrels,** and **Cory's, Sooty** and **Great Shearwaters.** A single **Manx Shearwater** was spotted within one of these groups. **Cape Gannets** were also common.

As we ventured into deeper waters, we quickly added the first of several **Shy (White-capped), Black-browed** and **Indian Yellow-nosed Albatrosses** to the trip list.

Unfortunately, the fishing fleet were operating far beyond our range, so we decided to stop and put down a slick of fish oil. Developing slick slowly attracted a respectable variety of species. These included more albatrosses: **Shy, Black-browed** and **Indian Yellow-nosed. Brown Skua, White-chinned Petrels, Sooty, Cory's** and **Great Shearwaters** were also recorded.

Another highlight was the diversity of storm petrels encountered behind our boat. These included both **European** and **Wilson's Storm Petrels**. A single potential "**Fuegian**"/*chilensis* individual was spotted as well. The bird showed typical Wilson's features in addition to extensive white underwing markings and white markings extending down onto the belly.

With the wind steadily strengthening by late morning, we started the return run to the coast, stopping at a large flock of petrels, shearwaters and gannets roosting on the water.

Our final birding stop was the Partridge Point **Bank Cormorant** colony, and then back into port.

**Bird species seen and approximate numbers:**

Shy/White-capped Albatross – c.25

Black-browed Albatross – 5

Indian Yellow-nosed Albatross – 4

Manx Shearwater – 1

Sooty Shearwater – c.25

Great Shearwater – c.50

Cory's Shearwater – c.150

White-chinned Petrel – c.150

European Storm Petrel – 7

Wilson's Storm Petrel – 8 (including 1 potential "Fuegian"/*chilensis*)

Cape Gannet – c.50

Brown (Sub-Antarctic) Skua – 1

Parasitic Jaeger – 3

**Coastal species:**

African Penguin – 50 (more onshore at Boulders)

White-breasted Cormorant –33 (13 active nests)

Cape Cormorant – c. 500

Bank Cormorant – 29 (11 active nests)

Crowned Cormorant - 3

Kelp Gull – c.50

Hartlaub's Gull – c.25

Great Crested Tern – c.25

Common Tern – 5

**Marine mammals:**

Cape Fur Seal – abundant (coastal and pelagic)



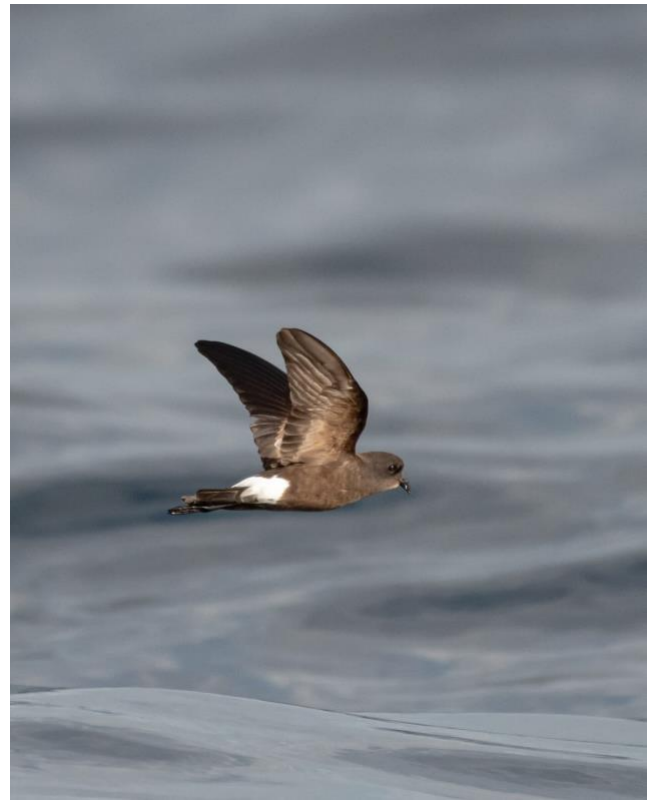
**Cory's Shearwater**



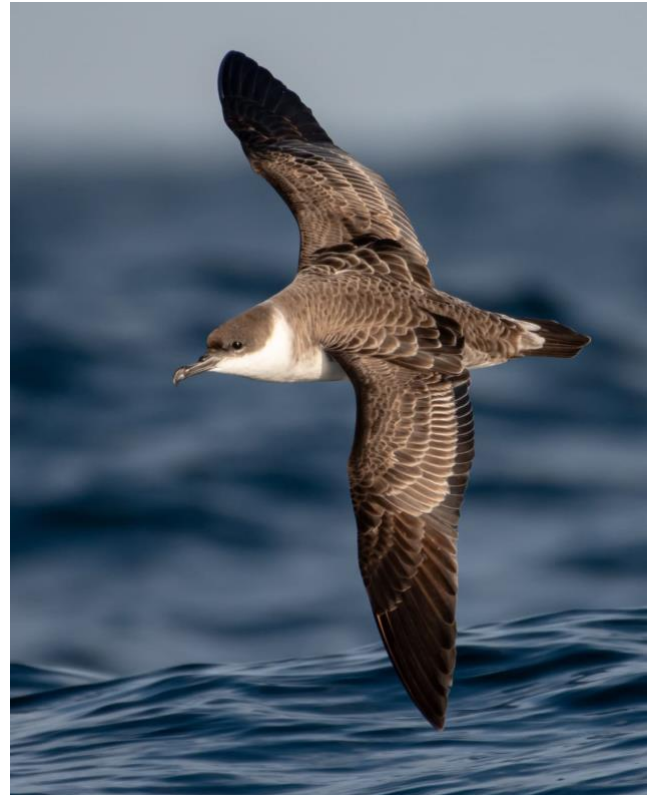
**Indian Yellow-nosed Albatross**



**Shy Albatross**



**Wilson's Storm Petrel**



**Great Shearwater**

Trip report: Cape Town Pelagics guide: [Vince Ward](#)

Photos: Rob Cooper

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 organized 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.