



Trip Report - Cape Town Pelagics – Wednesday, 18 February 2026

Trip Highlights: Four species albatross, Parasitic Jaeger, Great-winged Petrel, Great & Manx Shearwater and Sabine's Gulls.



On Wednesday 18 February, guests on board a Cape Town Pelagics trip were treated to sightings of numerous pelagic species about 25 nautical miles off Cape Point. The conditions were favourable and though fog was present, it didn't interfere in visibility.

En route to Cape Point from Simon's Town, coastal species like **Cape** and **White-breasted Cormorants**, **Greater Crested** and **Sandwich Terns** and **Kelp Gulls** were a common sight. As we reached Cape Point, it was confirmed that the two trawlers present in the area were too far away and impossible to chase down, but spirits were still high.

Soon, **White-chinned Petrels**, **Cory's** and **Sooty Shearwaters** and **Cape Gannets** made an appearance, with a **Sabine's Gull** in the mix, followed by at least 300 more Sabine's on the water! A big highlight for the day.

On the way to the trawling grounds, other species were seen, including **Great** and **Manx Shearwater**, **European** and **Wilson's Storm Petrels**, **Parasitic Jaeger** and another coastal species in **Common Tern**. A few distant **Shy Albatrosses** were also present.

Chumming was inevitable and it wasn't long before it worked, bringing in **Storm Petrels** almost within touching distance and providing guests with amazing views. A few **Northern Giant Petrels** flew past on multiple occasions, with a single **Southern Giant Petrel** sighted during the day.

A brief sighting of a **Great-winged Petrel** caused some excitement, while **Indian** and **Atlantic Yellow-nosed Albatrosses** made for a photographer's dream. **Black-browed Albatross** showed up later, while **Brown Skuas** flew by in close proximity.



Atlantic Yellow-nosed Albatross © Connor Barr

With weather conditions deteriorating, a decision was made to head back into False Bay a little earlier than usual. A **Bryde's Whale** surfaced briefly near Partridge Point before disappearing below the surface. A light lunch was enjoyed by all before checking in with the **Bank Cormorants** and the **Cape Fur Seal** haul-out.

Pelagic species seen and approximate numbers:

Albatross Black-browed 20
Albatross Shy 40
Albatross Atlantic Yellow-nosed 2
Albatross Indian Yellow-nosed 3
Petrel Southern Giant 1
Petrel Northern Giant 3
Petrel White-chinned 40
Petrel Great-winged 1
Petrel Wilson's Storm 40
Petrel European Storm 5
Shearwater Sooty 15
Shearwater Great 30
Shearwater Manx 6
Shearwater Cory's 40
Jaeger Parasitic 1
Gannet Cape 30
Skua Brown (Subantarctic) 3
Sabine's Gull 400

Coastal species:

Cormorant Bank 40
Cormorant White-breasted 20
Cormorant Cape 150
Gull Hartlaub's 10
Gull Kelp 40
Tern Greater Crested 60
Tern Sandwich 40
Tern Common 30

Marine Mammals:

Cape Fur Seal
Bryde's Whale

A FEW PHOTOS :



Black-browed Albatross



Southern Giant Petrel



Great Shearwater



Sabine's Gull



White-chinned Petrel

Trip report: Cape Town Pelagics guide: [Rob Cooper](#)

Photos: Connor Barr

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.