

Dear Field Staff colleagues,

Part of what makes IAATO unique is our willingness to set aside competition in the pursuit of protecting the continent which we all hold so dear. We have pledged, in line with the Antarctic Treaty System, to robustly self-manage and year upon year vote in new restrictions and caveats which further our mission of safe and environmentally responsible Antarctic travel.

In 2018 we took the bold move to vote in a system which enables concerned visitors – be they field staff, guests or our polar friends – to report any concerns they had about either collective or individual practices south of 60. We called this protocol [Care and Concern](#) because that is what fuels the reports we receive.

Almost two years on from the launch of this policy we have received 13 reports; some, as you would expect, were remedied quickly by sharing information of our robust guidelines with the concerned party, others pertained to images the reporter, in good faith, felt did not reflect a true Antarctic experience. We responded by contacting either you or your companies directly, offering advice and sharing the Marketing Antarctica Guidelines. Finally, and in the minority, we have had reports of non-IAATO members behaving in a way that we would certainly balk at but never the less suffer the ignominy of. In all cases on that broad scale, we have dealt with the complaint appropriately and thanked the reporter for their time and candor.

With the imminent launch of our new website, Care and Concern will be given more prominence and will be significantly more user-friendly. It is an important tool to assist us with our mission and vision, it promotes honesty and transparency in what seems like the increasingly opaque world we live in, and it is right we encourage its use.

Over the next few months you will see this important tool promoted, both internally, via this newsletter, to polar partners and to the general public. You will also see mention across our social media. I hope you will lend your support to this campaign by actively sharing this news.

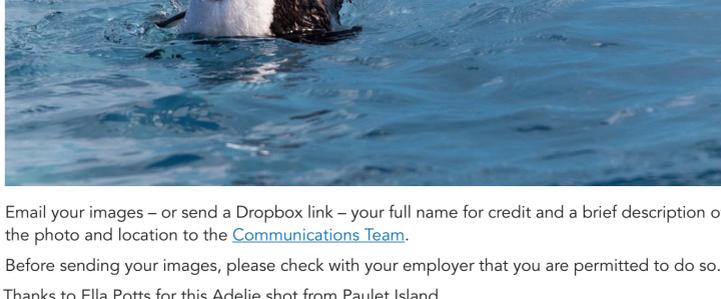
As we approach the 30th anniversary of our organization in 2021, we celebrate almost three decades of successfully managing guest activities to this remote region, but our continued success depends on making our inimitable organization stronger in its self-governance and its processes more transparent.

Janeen Haase
Director of Governance and Finance
International Association of Antarctica Tour Operators



Send us your polar pics!

Nothing conveys a message quite like a photograph. Please help IAATO share our safe and environmentally responsible travel mission by sending us your images for inclusion on the new website (coming soon) and across social media.



Email your images – or send a Dropbox link – your full name for credit and a brief description of the photo and location to the [Communications Team](#).

Before sending your images, please check with your employer that you are permitted to do so. Thanks to Ella Potts for this Adelie shot from Paulet Island.

Field Staff Assessment | Helpful Hints

The IAATO field staff assessment has been designed to ensure all staff are familiar with the FOM; and in particular the seasonally-changing guidelines.

If you are yet to take the Online Assessment, here's our [Helpful Hints guide](#) to help you through the process.

UKAHT artistic programme *Antarctica In Sight* celebrates 200th anniversary of discovery through art and culture

Antarctica has played a fascinating role in British life since its discovery 200 years ago; from the development of the great whaling fleets, to the Heroic Age of Scott and Shackleton, to the discovery of the hole in the ozone layer - the moment that more than any other laid the grounds for modern environmentalism.

The United Kingdom Antarctic Heritage Trust (UKAHT) is celebrating the 200th anniversary of the first sighting of Antarctica with a new artistic programme, [Antarctica In Sight](#), that will explore Antarctica's past, and the role of humans on the continent. UKAHT is helping to create a future where Antarctica is at the centre of discussions about humanity's role in preserving and safeguarding the planet.

The programme begins with the hoisting of a "Hello" flag, created by artist Peter Liversidge, at Port Lockroy in Antarctica, the location of the UK's most remote post office. Liversidge has also created a book of "Proposals for Antarctica" detailing dozens of artistic ideas inspired by the continent.

Over the course of 2020, UKAHT will host a range of events across the UK, creating a lasting legacy of education about Antarctica. *Antarctica In Sight* will focus on three themes: human endeavour, and the courage and exploration of Antarctica's pioneers, now and in the past; climate and the legacy of scientific work on the continent; and geopolitics, exploring how the human impact on Antarctica has evolved from exploitation to preservation. The programme is curated by creative director Sud Basu, who previously produced 14-18 NOW, the nationwide artistic commemoration of World War I.

[Find out more](#)

A note from the editors...

We love including news from heritage trusts, scientific programs and other non-profits in *Freeze Frame*.

If you have news to share with the readers of *Freeze Frame* or *IAATO Member News*, please send your submissions with any accompanying images to the [IAATO Communications Team](#)

News from The Citizen Science Collective

Update from the scientists of FjordPhyto

The phytoplankton sampling for FjordPhyto in Antarctica is still under way this season with our IAATO tour ship partners hard at work (and having fun) collecting phytoplankton until late March!

Huge thank you to all collecting samples this season.

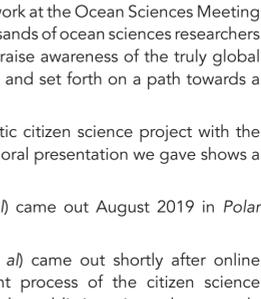
Last week (February 16-21), we presented the findings of our work at the Ocean Sciences Meeting in San Diego, California. This conference brings together thousands of ocean sciences researchers (6,300 to be exact) and the ocean-connected community to raise awareness of the truly global dimensions of the ocean, address environmental challenges, and set forth on a path towards a resilient planet for the future.

We are very excited to share the results of our polar Antarctic citizen science project with the broader community through events like this. The poster and oral presentation we gave shows a snapshot of our two recent publications.

Our [first scientific peer-reviewed publication](#) (Mascioni et al) came out August 2019 in *Polar Biology* showing the results from the first year of sampling.

Our [second scientific peer-reviewed publication](#) (Cusick et al) came out shortly after online January 2020 in *Oceanography* detailing the development process of the citizen science framework as an effective way to further science and engage the public in active polar research.

This project could not happen without a team of enthusiastic partners, and we appreciate every person who has been supportive along the way!



Humpback Feeding Super-Aggregation off South Georgia

Expedition staff, are you travelling to South Georgia? HappyWhale has reported super-aggregations of feeding humpbacks and want to know more about where and why. By sharing your images and videos of whales in this area, HappyWhale will be able to share this data with scientists to improve our understanding of whale population health.

[Share your images](#) with HappyWhale



Image © Lauren Farmer

On the IAATO Blog this month...



Within the crystal aquamarine waters of Antarctica lie tiny little organisms you cannot see with the naked eye. They are like plants-in that they use sunlight and carbon dioxide to make energy through photosynthesis-yet, they're not plants. They are also not bacteria, nor fungi, nor animal. They belong to a group of organisms called protists; mysterious otherworldly life that has had millions of years to evolve. Allison Cusick, Graduate Student (Ph.D.) Biological Oceanography, shares with us the importance of Phytoplankton to Antarctica and the world.

10-minute read | [Tiny but mighty - why we owe our existence to the phytoplankton.](#)

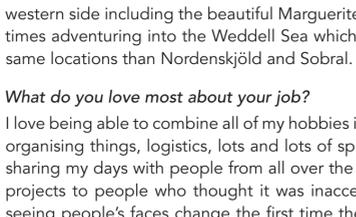
In the news...

'Astonishing' blue whale numbers at South Georgia (BBC)

Scientists say they have seen a remarkable collection of blue whales in the coastal waters around the UK sub-Antarctic island of South Georgia.

Ice-breaker

Daniela Cornejo | Expedition Leader and Passenger Services Manager, Polar Latitudes



How long have you been working in the Antarctic?
I started working in Antarctica in 2014, so it's been 6 seasons coming down to this amazing place. The first time I dreamt about working in Antarctica was back in 1991 when I was six years old and my father was offered a job in one of the Argentinian stations as a teacher. That opportunity wasn't successful, but the idea of exploring the area that Sobral described in his stories always remained in my mind.

What areas of Antarctica have you worked in?
I always worked on ship-based expeditions to the sub-Antarctic island of South Georgia and the Antarctic Peninsula, visiting mainly the western side including the beautiful Marguerite Bay area south of the Antarctic Circle, and a few times adventuring into the Weddell Sea which gave me the amazing privilege of exploring the same locations than Nordenskjöld and Sobral.

What do you love most about your job?
I love being able to combine all of my jobs into one role description: boating, hiking, guiding, organising things, logistics, lots and lots of spreadsheets, lecturing, talking to amazing people, sharing my days with people from all over the world, teaching and learning, facilitating science projects to people who thought it was inaccessible and only reserved to a few guys in a lab, seeing people's faces change the first time they get to Antarctica and they see the mountains, glaciers and icebergs while listening to penguins and ice cracking in the background.

I don't think there's any other industry that could put together all the things that I love and let me call it a job!

And what do you find most challenging?
The environment can be very challenging in Antarctica. The weather, the conditions that we need to juggle with to make things happen. We want to deliver the best experience to our guests, keeping in mind that for most people this is a one in a lifetime experience, and sometimes it can be very difficult. Those very late evenings on the Bridge trying to find option for next morning as you know conditions are not looking great, very early mornings trying to find a small little pocket of good weather that will also deliver something they haven't seen already, those long evenings before the trip starts planning the next itinerary thinking about the February conditions, the amount of penguins everywhere and how to take our guests to land while keeping them safe on a very slippery, guano-y landing... But those are the challenges that when sorted, make our job very rewarding and exciting!

What is the biggest lesson you've learned while working in Antarctica?
I learned how small we are as individuals to this planet and still, how much power we have as a whole to produce changes. We have the power to choose what we want to change and how. It is on us to take action, even if it is small steps on our daily lives.

My work in Antarctica has put me in touch with amazing people who have shown me that it is never too late to start doing something to achieve your goals or change what you think is wrong.

Tell us about a special polar memory...
When I started working in Antarctica, my father used to send me off telling me "be careful, be safe". Every time I came back after a season, he was happy to see everything went well. Three years ago, I got to take my parents on a Falklands, South Georgia & Antarctica voyage with me. We had strong winds, some surf landings and a few challenging operations on that particular trip. I remember a particular landing when we had to bring back everyone earlier as the wind was picking up fast and by the time I brought back the last boat up the hook, it was already blowing something like 45 knots. He was watching the crane operations from the outer deck. When we were on our way back to Ushuaia, I sat down with my dad on the aft deck watching the waves and reflecting on the journey we have just shared, and he said: "thank you for bringing me along, I used to think your job had some kind of risk associated, but after seeing the logistics and operations, I think this is completely safe and there are no dangers in what you do". I couldn't do anything but laugh, and feel that the team had done an amazing job at making everyone feel extremely safe even when conditions could be challenging and guests could feel some stress.

What toothbrush(s) do you always pack for your time South?
My toothbrush! It is the number one item on my packing list. A stuffed Walrus, a good book (different one every time), a picture of my dad, a map of the Peninsula, My organic shampoo & conditioner bars, my GPS, a knife, my own harness/system to keep my radio out of the elements, my own VHF radio, a dry suit, merino wool base layers, sunglasses and goggles, my water bottle and some Argie music!

Interested in being featured?
Speak to your employer and [contact Hayley](#) in the IAATO Secretariat