



Application guide: Visits to Falkland Island Government Owned islands

FIG Environment Department

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Contact:

FIG Environment Department
Stanley
Falkland Islands

Tel.: +500 28449

E-mail: environment@sec.gov.fk

1. Introduction

Some of the small offshore islands located around the Falkland Islands are owned and managed by the Falkland Islands Government. If you wish to visit any of these islands you will need to be in possession of a valid visitor permit issued through the FIG Environment Department. This guidance document will provide useful information for your visit and guide you in making your application to visit these FIG owned islands of the Falkland Islands with the exception of Beauchene Island, for which separate guidance and a separate application procedure exists. The instruction for Beauchene Island can be found at – www.fig.gov.fk/policy/environment/licenses-permits. This document outlines the process for applying for a visitor permit and advises on some practical aspects for your trip.

The FIG Environment Department is responsible for processing your application and issuing your permit. If you need further information in relation to the visitor permit application please do not hesitate to contact us.

There are approximately 126 named FIG owned islands, but most of these islands are rarely visited. The most popular visit site is Kidney Island, and due to this popularity has a modified visitor protocol; focusing on the risks of more frequent visitors to the island whilst ensuring fair visitor access. Kidney Island has a specific guidance and application system for visitor permit access. Each of the Falkland Islands remote off-shore islands are a unique environment with many of the offshore islands home to a wide range of iconic wildlife: from fur seals and sea lions to albatross and rockhopper penguins. Most of these islands are densely covered in Tussac grass that can grow up to 3 m high with rocky approaches.

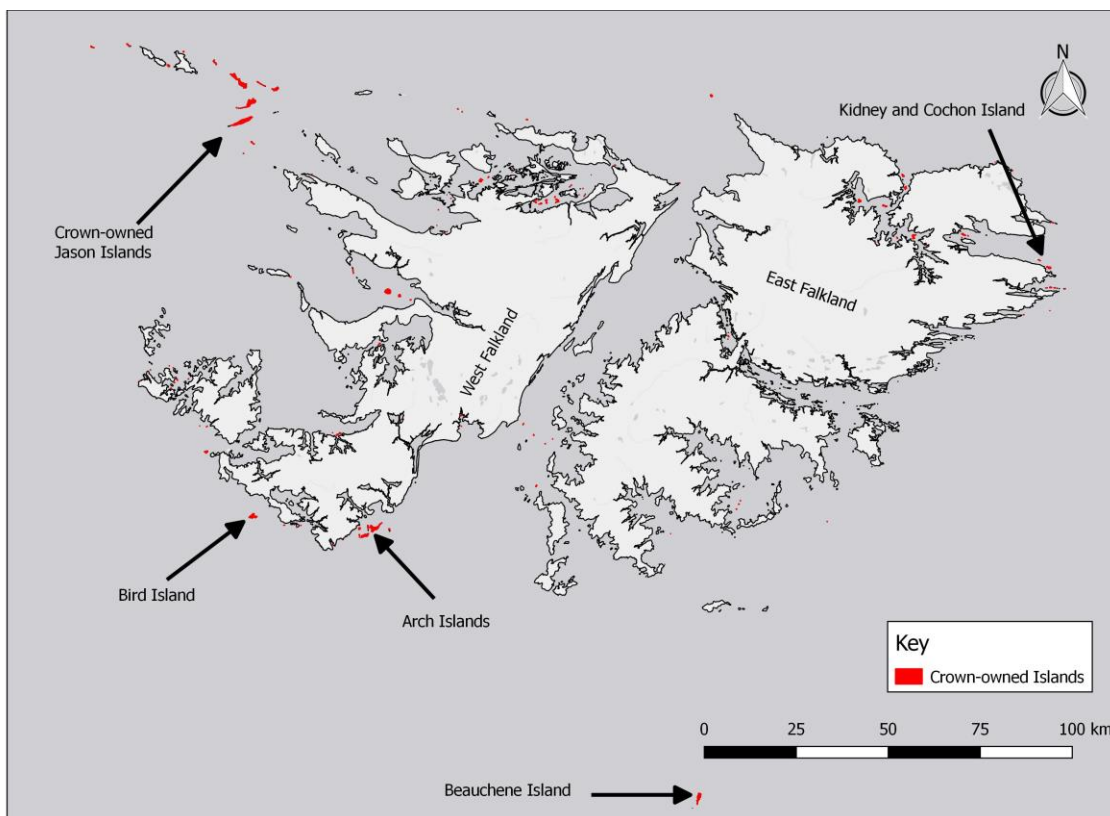


Figure 1: FIG-owned Islands around the Falkland Islands. Some key islands and island groups are labelled.

Of the 126 islands, 27 are part of a National Nature Reserve. A list of all islands is found in Appendix 1 noting whether these are a National Nature Reserve. National Nature Reserves enjoy legal protection, all visitors to all islands are obliged to conform to the conditions of their visitor permit.

2. The Application Process

Any groups or persons wishing to visit a FIG owned island must obtain a Visitor Permit. Depending on the nature of your visit, you may also be required to obtain additional permissions, for example, a research permit. Please allow up to three working days for your application to be processed. Applications for the same day will not be processed.

Visitor application forms for FIG owned islands can be found on the FIG website:

FIG: <https://fig.gov.fk/policy/environment/licenses-permits>

Specific information for visiting Kidney Island can be found on the website of the FIG Environment Department, Kidney Island Page:

FIG: <https://www.falklands.gov.fk/policy/environment/kidney-island>

and the application for visitors permit to Kidney Island can be found on the FIG Kidney Island booking page:

FIG: <https://kidneyisland.simplybook.me/v2/>

If you wish to contact us to discuss your trip prior to making a formal application please feel free to do so on Tel ext 28449. If you do have any questions or queries during the application process, please do not hesitate to contact the Environment Department on 28449 or email environment@sec.gov.fk.

Please note that there are no landing fees and all permits are provided free of charge.

2.1. The Application Form

For visits, you will need to complete the Visitor Application Form (available as a separate download). The application form will need to be completed in English.

Section 1: Please state clearly the name of the Island you wish to visit, referring to the list in Appendix 1. If you are intending to visit multiple islands, please complete a separate form for each separate island.

Section 2: Please provide your details and contact address. Please provide an e-mail address and telephone number in case we need to clarify any details on your application or for your visit. A working, Falkland Islands telephone number is imperative and should be used to contact the group

leader/guide on or near the date of your trip. Please note that it is not appropriate to provide the office contact details of a tour operator here.

There are three types of people involved in organising trips to islands. You may be any combination of these:

- **The group leader:** This is the person who organises the trip. They organise the list of people going on the trip, and arrange a date and book the boat. For the other people on the trip they are the person of contact. Your group leader does also not need to be yourself or your guide but should be the person taking overall responsibility for the safety of the group.
- **The group guide:** This is the person who guides the group when on the island. A guide does not need to be a qualified guide but someone who takes responsibility for ensuring the welfare of the environment and wildlife of the island during the trip and monitors the group in conjunction with this. The guide can be anyone who has previously visited the island (or a similar island).
- A person not going on the trip: You may be an agent for organising trips or simply someone who has offered to do “the paperwork”. But, most important, you are not going on the trip.

If you are unclear about which of these roles you take, please do not hesitate to contact us. Please note that access to the island without the named guide and group leader is not permitted.

Section 3: This section is about your group leader and group guide. If you are taking on both of these roles, you do not need to complete this section. If you are only taking on one or none of these roles, please add details of the person(s) who will be taking on the role of group leader and/or group guide. If your group guide is not known to the department, we reserve the right to contact your guide and ensure they are comfortable guiding your group. As with the details in Section 2, it is imperative that you provide a working Falkland Islands telephone number.

Section 4: In this section, provide details of the number of people in your party; please remember to list number of adults and children separately. For planning your trip, it is recommended that there is at least one adult for each child under the age of 16 to ensure proper supervision.

Section 5: In this section we ask for the details of your visit.

Please provide details of the reason for visit. If you are undertaking scientific research or filming operations please detail other permit numbers here and briefly describe the research or filming procedures intended. If you are waiting for these permits to be processed or have not received your permit number yet, you will not be able to submit your application. If you cannot locate your number then please don't hesitate to contact us. Your permit will not be issued until other relevant permissions are in place.

Please provide the date for which your trip is planned and the time of day. You are advised to check the availability for your trip prior to submitting an application, please contact the FIG Environment Department to check availability. You will not be issued a permit for your trip if that date is already booked.

Please state the duration of your visit and if you plan to stay overnight. Please note that overnight visits are dependent on the applicant's circumstances and may not be granted, so in cases where you wish to stay over multiple days you may be restricted to day periods only.

Finally, please provide the name of the vessel taking you on your visit. If you have booked through Sullivan Shipping or FIC Penguin Travel but are unsure of the name of the vessel, then please provide the name of your tour operator.

Once the form is completed, please submit this to the FIG Environment Department be email to: environment@sec.gov.fk, Electronic submission is required for all applications. You will receive a confirmation of your permit application once this has been received. If you do not receive confirmation of your permit application within the three working days, please contact the Environment Department to ensure that it has been received.

2.2. The Decision Processes

Kidney Island – Your visitor approval to Kidney Island is dependent on you meeting the application requirements and availability on the requested date.

Beauchene Island – A separate application procedure exists for visits to Beauchene Island. Information on this can be found at <https://fig.gov.fk/policy/environment/licenses-permits> or by contacting the Environment Department.

Other FIG-owned islands – In general, visits to other FIG-owned islands is limited to research and conservation purposes, however, each application will be assessed based on its merits and on a case-by-case basis. Your visit is also dependent on your guide having previously visited the island or showing evidence of visiting a similar island. Though there are no visitor number limits for your visit, the application will be assessed dependent on the size of the island and your group size.

3. Planning your trip

3.1. Kidney Island:

Guidance for Kidney Island can be found on the FIG, Environment Department website's Kidney Island Page:

FIG: <https://www.falklands.gov.fk/policy/environment/kidney-island>

and the application for Visitors permit to Kidney Island can be found on the FIG Kidney Island booking page:

FIG: <https://kidneyisland.simplybook.me/v2/>

3.2. Other FIG owned islands:

Carefully planning your visit to other FIG owned islands is imperative to ensure that the impact to these islands is kept to a minimum. Some of these considerations form a key part of your permit and are reflected on it. To help you meet these requirements we have included here useful information to take into consideration when planning your trip.

3.2.1. Logistics

Careful planning of your trip is essential. Before you start planning your trip, familiarise yourself with those parts of the Countryside Code that are essential to the island as well as the advice and any additional guidance that may be provided to you by the Environment Department. You should carry a copy of all guidance with you during your visit. You will also need to carry a copy of the visitor permit issued to you and ensure that you comply with all conditions on the permit.

The types of things you should consider for planning your visit should include the following.

3.2.2. Permission for landing:

You need permission from FIG before landing on a FIG owned island in the Falkland Islands. Should you be issued a visitor permit, you will be given permit conditions that you must follow.

3.2.3. Access:

Plan your access onto the island carefully noting that access beaches may be occupied by marine mammals. Where they are occupied an alternative access route should be considered and used, if necessary. This will not only help ensure your group's safety but also prevent disturbance to animals. As you make your way across the island be sure not to disturb the burrows or nests of any birds, many of which burrow underground.

Please also note that it may not be possible to anchor in the vicinity of your island and you should check whether this is possible or not utilising local charts or by contacting the Maritime Authority.

3.2.4. Shelter:

There is a lot of variability in shelter for the islands, however, even where there is shelter, the state of the shelter is unknown. You are advised to familiarise yourself with the island whilst planning your trip and where necessary ensure that you have adequate shelter.

3.2.5. Safety:

Your safety is equally as important as is protecting the natural environment of the island. Please ensure you take all appropriate steps and that all members of your group are physically fit enough for the visit and all individuals take appropriate clothing and waterproof jacket and trousers. At a minimum a satellite telephone or radio should be carried with you at all times in the case of an emergency. You will need to produce an emergency plan that takes account of risks to safety and how you plan to mitigate these, as well as what you plan to do in case of an emergency. Though you do not need to share this with us we do as that you have a plan in place. It is recommended that you consider taking emergency shelter, spare rations and water.

3.2.6. Biosecurity

In order to ensure that we continue to protect these Islands from invasive non-native species, whether this is a plant, animal (including insects) or pathogen we ask that all visitors follow the guidance below.

Before you arrive on the island please check all luggage and equipment that you are bringing ashore and make sure there is neither vegetative matter nor animal matter anywhere. Make sure there are no rodents or signs of rodents (droppings or chew marks) in any of your bags or equipment. Please check any pockets, creases, Velcro and zippers and remove any visible plant matter and seeds. To aide in ensuring that your items remain rodent free you may contact the rodent detector dog handler, Naomi Baxter, on +500 55166 or biosecurity.doghandler@gov.gs.

Prior to accessing the island, you should wash any boots and weatherproof clothing and equipment with a biocide such as Virkon. This is available locally through some supermarkets or by contacting the Environment Department and will help protect against the spread of any pathogens.

Any foodstuff brought ashore must be kept in a transparent air-tight container and should be checked thoroughly before arriving. If you do take any fresh produce (meat, vegetables and fruit or dairy products) with you ashore, these must be taken off the island again including any wastes.

As FIG has ongoing development of biosecurity protocols and measures, you may be required to meet further biosecurity requirements or have goods destined for the Island inspected by the biosecurity officer. Please discuss this with the Environment Department should your application for a visitor permit be successful.

3.2.7. Rubbish and Waste

Please take all rubbish with you off the island after the trip. During the trip, please store any rubbish in sealed containers, bearing in mind that glass and household metal waste can be recycled upon your return to Stanley. No material, apart from biodegradable toilet paper should be left on the islands. Toilet facilities should be located where there is access to the sea.

3.2.8. Fire Risk

Most of the islands are peat islands and so the fire risk is high. As a result, **we do not permit the use of open fires or smoking on the island.** The only exception to the use of flammable equipment on the island is that of a small camp cooker which may be used in a rocky area of the island away from wildlife and any flammable material. No electrically powered equipment should be used unless this is battery operated as this may also pose a fire risk.

4. Understanding Your Permit

Your permit will be made out to your group leader and provide the following detail:

- Name of your guide; note it is not permitted to land on the island without your guide. They should be first on and last off the island.
- Date and duration of your visit. You may visit for a shorter period within this timeframe but should never exceed this.
- Number of people in your group. You should never exceed the number of people in your group stated on your permit. This number includes the guide. Less people than on your permit may access the island.
- The name of the vessel taking you to the island. If this changes, please let us know at least 3 working days ahead of your trip so we can amend your permit.

Your permit also includes specific conditions for your visit to the islands. These will include the elements reflected upon in section “3 Planning your trip” above. Note that the conditions may vary between different Islands. Once you receive your permit, please read this carefully and take note of any conditions. If you have any queries, then please don’t hesitate to contact us.

5. **Liability**

5.1. Health, safety and welfare arrangements

It is a condition of the issuance of any permit to visit any of the Islands in Falkland Islands Government Ownership that those leading and/or guiding the visit ensure that a suitable and sufficient risk assessment is performed regarding the risks that may be encountered and that the salient provisions of that risk assessment and any mitigation measures it recommends are brought to the attention of the visitors.

In addition, all visitors are to be appropriately briefed regarding:

- The risks that may be encountered including the risks posed by:
 - Embarking and disembarking vessels, including transferring to another sea-going craft, going ashore whether at a jetty, on beaches, on a rocky shore, and the risk of slipping;
 - Being on board the vessel and being at sea;
 - Getting wet;
 - Getting cold – including the effects of wind-chill;
 - Marine life, wild animals and wild birds;
 - The landscape – including cliffs, rocks, stones, mounds, holes, burrows, tussock grass, unstable surfaces;
- Additional risks faced by the young, the elderly, the infirm, the vulnerable etc.;
- The importance of wearing appropriate clothing and footwear;
- Any safety equipment required to be worn such as life-jackets or life preservers;
- What to do in a medical emergency including the limitations of medical assistance available through calling 999;
- The limitations regarding mobile phone signals;
- The importance of remaining in contact with the guide throughout the visit – and what to do if the visitor becomes separated from the group and guide; and
- What to do when encountering wildlife – including the risks associated with large marine mammals such as sea-lions.

It is the responsibility of the guide to ensure that before visitors assemble to be taken on the trip that they are made aware of the welfare facilities that will be available to them whilst on the trip including what provision will be made for toilets, water, hot and cold drinks, snacks and the like.

5.2. Protection of Wildlife and Wildlife habitats

It is a condition of the issuance of any permit to visit any of the Islands in Falkland Islands Government Ownership that those leading and/or guiding the visit ensure that all visitors accompanying them are appropriately briefed on:

- The Countryside code;
- Biosecurity precautions required for the visit;
- Falkland Islands law – Conservation of Wildlife and Nature Ordinance 1999 and the criminal offences it creates regarding:
 - disturbing wild animals, wild birds, and marine animals, and
 - protecting wild plants

5.3. Limitation of liability

It is a condition of the issuance of any permit to visit any of the Islands in Falkland Island Government Ownership that those leading and/or guiding the visit accept the following limitation of liability provision:

The Falkland Islands Government is not and shall not be responsible or liable in any manner for any harm, injury, loss and/or damage of whatever nature suffered by you, any of your visitors, any other party or third party nor shall it be responsible or liable in any manner for any damage to property resulting from any acts, neglect, reckless conduct and omissions occurring (however caused or arising) during your trip.

It is a further condition of the issuance of any permit that this limitation of liability is brought to the attention of all visitors

5.4. Certificate and signature

In relation to 5.1 to 5.3 above you will be asked to sign the following:

“I confirm that I have read and understood each and every part of this Application Form and the conditions attached to it. I confirm that:

- a suitable and sufficient risk assessment will be performed
- all visitors will be briefed about:
 - the risks they may encounter
 - the importance of wearing or having available appropriate clothing and footwear
 - the importance of wearing and/or using safety equipment
 - how to respond to emergencies, including medical emergencies
 - what to do if they become separated from the group or guide
 - the limitations on the medical facilities on the Falkland Islands including the limitations of the emergency services and the mobile phone service
 - protecting and preserving wildlife
- their need to take personal responsibility and to take care of themselves and those in their party
- the Falkland Islands Government’s limitation of liability

6. Appendix

Appendix 1: FIG Owned Islands

Island Name	General Location	National Nature Reserve
Albemarle Rock	Arch Islands and Cape Lagoon	Yes
Big Arch Island	Arch Islands and Cape Lagoon	Yes
Clump Island (Arch Islands)	Arch Islands and Cape Lagoon	Yes
Natural Arch Island	Arch Islands and Cape Lagoon	Yes
Pyramid Rock	Arch Islands and Cape Lagoon	Yes
Tussac Island (Arch Islands)	Arch Islands and Cape Lagoon	Yes
Beauchene Island	Beauchene Island	Yes
Cochon Island	Berkeley Sound	Yes
Kidney Island	Berkeley Sound	Yes
Elephant Jason	Jason Islands	Yes
Elephant Jason rocks centre	Jason Islands	Yes
Elephant Jason rocks east	Jason Islands	Yes
Elephant Jason rocks west	Jason Islands	Yes
Flat Jason	Jason Islands	Yes
Jason East Cay	Jason Islands	Yes
Jason West Cay	Jason Islands	Yes
North Fur Island	Jason Islands	Yes
Seal Rocks (Jasons) centre	Jason Islands	Yes
Seal Rocks (Jasons) northwest	Jason Islands	Yes
Seal Rocks (Jasons) southeast	Jason Islands	Yes
South Fur Island	Jason Islands	Yes
South Jason	Jason Islands	Yes
The Fridays northwest	Jason Islands	Yes
White Rock (Jasons)	Jason Islands	Yes
Middle Island (King George Bay)	King George Bay	Yes
Bird Island	Port Stephens	Yes
Sea Dog Island	Weddell Island and Smylie Channel	Yes
Sisters centre island	Adventure Sound	No
Sisters north island	Adventure Sound	No
Sisters south island	Adventure Sound	No
Cape Lagoon island	Arch Islands and Cape Lagoon	No
Cape Lagoon islet	Arch Islands and Cape Lagoon	No
Eagle Rock islet	Arch Islands and Cape Lagoon	No
Pyramid Rock islet	Arch Islands and Cape Lagoon	No
Sand Bay Island	Arch Islands and Cape Lagoon	No
Porpoise Island	Bay of Harbours	No
Shag Rock / Little Harbour Island	Bay of Harbours	No
Castle Rock (Beaver)	Beaver Island	No
Channel Rock	Beaver Island	No
Cucumber Island	Beaver Island	No
Herald Rock	Beaver Island	No
Rat Island (Beaver)	Beaver Island	No
Stinker Island	Beaver Island	No
The Colliers	Beaver Island	No

Celery Island (Berkeley Sound)	Berkeley Sound	No
Hog Island	Berkeley Sound	No
Peat Islet	Berkeley Sound	No
Shag Rock	Bleaker Island	No
Clay Island	Brenton Loch	No
Bluff Island	Byron Sound	No
Hill Cove islet	Byron Sound	No
Skip Rock	Byron Sound	No
Sloop Rock	Carcass Island and Westpoint Island	No
Fox Bay east islet	Fox Bay	No
Government Island	Fox Bay	No
Knob Island (Fox Bay)	Fox Bay	No
Box Island south islet	Golding Island area	No
Monday Island	Golding Island area	No
Clarke's Islet	Jason Islands	No
Steeple Jason islet	Jason Islands	No
Gid's Island	King George Bay	No
Green Island (King George Bay)	King George Bay	No
Rabbit Island Rocks main island	King George Bay	No
Rabbit Island Rocks south island	King George Bay	No
Round Island	King George Bay	No
Split Island (King George Bay) islet	King George Bay	No
The Crouching Lions north	King George Bay	No
The Crouching Lions south	King George Bay	No
Leicester Creek Island	Lake Hammond	No
Dutchmans Island	NE coast of East Falkland	No
Macbride Head islet	NE coast of East Falkland	No
Seal Bay islet	NE coast of East Falkland	No
Volunteer Rocks	NE coast of East Falkland	No
Eddystone Rock	North Falkland Sound	No
White Rock (White Rock Bay)	North Falkland Sound	No
East Rock	Pebble Island	No
Penguin Point islet	Pebble Island	No
White Island	Pebble Island	No
Christmas Island (Port Egmont)	Port Egmont	No
Seal Point Islet	Port Harriet	No
Wolf Rock	Port Harriet	No
Bullock Island (Philomel Pass)	Port Philomel	No
Seal Island (Philomel Pass)	Port Philomel	No
Castle Rock (Port Stephens)	Port Stephens	No
Stephens Bluff	Port Stephens	No
Ten Shilling Bay Islands islet	Port Stephens	No
Bottom Island	Port William	No
Kelly Rock	Port William	No
Seal Rocks (Port William)	Port William	No
Top Island (Port William)	Port William	No
Double Creek Islands east island	Queen Charlotte Bay	No

Double Creek Islands west island	Queen Charlotte Bay	No
Double Creek outer islet	Queen Charlotte Bay	No
Double Rocks	River Harbour	No
Kent Island	River Harbour	No
Kent Island Knob	River Harbour	No
Rabbit Island (River Harbour)	River Harbour	No
River Island Knob	River Harbour	No
River Island Reef	River Harbour	No
Shag Rocks (River Harbour)	River Harbour	No
Top Island (River Harbour)	River Harbour	No
Top Island centre islet	River Harbour	No
Top Island east islet	River Harbour	No
Top Island south islet	River Harbour	No
Top Island west islet	River Harbour	No
Big Shag Island	Salvador Waters	No
Bob's Island	Salvador Waters	No
Centre Island (Salvador Waters)	Salvador Waters	No
Ear Island	Salvador Waters	No
Green Island (Salvador Waters)	Salvador Waters	No
Little Shag Island	Salvador Waters	No
Ram Island	Salvador Waters	No
Teal Inlet islet	Salvador Waters	No
Whittington's Rincon islet	Salvador Waters	No
Channel Point islet	Saunders Island	No
Port Egmont Cays northwest	Sedge Island area	No
Port Egmont Cays southeast	Sedge Island area	No
Clump Island	South Falkland Sound	No
North Wedge Island	South Falkland Sound	No
Stinker Island (Falkland Sound)	South Falkland Sound	No
Wedge Islet	South Falkland Sound	No
West Island (Falkland Sound)	South Falkland Sound	No
Cliff Island (Weddell)	Weddell Island and Smylie Channel	No
Horse Block	Weddell Island and Smylie Channel	No
Letterbox Island	Weddell Island and Smylie Channel	No

FIG ISLAND VISIT REPORT

Island Visited:			
Visit Organiser/ Name:	Vessel Name:	Master's Name:	Vessel type: Ship Yacht Launch/inflatable
Date of visit:	Number of people ashore:	Time first people landed:	Time last people depart site:
Reason for visit/special interest groups (if any):			
Notes e.g. about beach litter, net-entangled wildlife, dead birds or seals, introduced weeds* or other unusual sightings:			
* If you see any introduced weeds such as thistles, please hand pull any plants that you can and bring them to Stanley for disposal.			
Sites visited - see permit form for locations	Yes/No	Comments	
Wildlife seen	Yes/No	Numbers (e.g. 1, 2-10, 10+)	
Cobb's wren			
Tussacbird			
Falklands steamer duck			
Short-eared owl			
Crested caracara			
Sea lion - where possible, count			
Elephant seal			
Commerson's dolphin			
Peale's dolphin			
Oil pollution			
Oil on coastline			
Oil seen offshore			
Oiled wildlife			

Signature(*Visit Organiser*)

Date

If you wish to conduct formal nature surveys, you can complete a Breeding Birds Survey form or a Cetacean Watch sighting form. Forms are available from FIG Environmental Department or Falklands Conservation.