

# Lemaire Channel and Booth Island

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Transported by glaciers: this large boulder is known as an erratic. It is near the top of a hill on Booth Island near Port Charcot.



A Pair of humpback whales and a pair of gentoo penguins, foraging in the narrow Lemaire Channel.



A humpback whale spy-hopping in the Gerlache Straits. We encountered many groups of whales gorging on krill.





A pair of crabeater seals laze about on an ice-floe. One sniffs the air as we head back to the ship on our Zodiacs after a great landing at Petermann Island.



Three crabeater seals sleep soundly on an ice-floe. National Geographic Orion is visible in the background, navigating through the ice and dropping Zodiacs in the sea for our afternoon landing.



One of our guests summiting the hill at Port Charcot. Despite the challenging weather, the sea and mountain views from the top of the hill were breathtaking, with fleets of huge ice-bergs visible out to the horizon.



Climbing the snow slopes of Booth Island, you soon realize that there is apparently no end to the number of icebergs in the seas around the Antarctic Peninsula. Here, we are looking south towards the Antarctic Circle.

Despite being at the most southern point of our journey (64 degrees south), today we experienced weather not normally associated with Antarctica: rain. But that didn't deter us, and we had two wonderful landings at islands along the Lemaire Channel: Booth and Petermann Islands. We encountered many humpback and minke whales along the way.

## About the Author

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**Conor Ryan** • Naturalist

Hailing from Cobh in the south of Ireland, Conor Ryan grew up on the shores of Cork Harbour where his fascination with the sea led him to study zoology at University College Cork. He continued his studies in marine biology in Galway, where he completed his Ph.D. thesis on the diet and population structure of baleen whales in the Celtic Sea using stable isotope analysis. His research also brought him to Cape

Verde in search of the breeding grounds of humpback whales that frequent the coasts of Ireland.  
However these whales have not yet given up their secret!