

## Tour Report Galapagos Wildlife Cruise 17 – 30 April 2026

Blue-footed booby



Galapagos sea lion



Giant tortoise



Sally lightfoot crab



Compiled by Helen Bryon

## Summary

A bucket list destination, the Galápagos Islands are fabulous and unique in equal measure. A whopping 97% of the land mass is designated national park and surrounding marine reserves extend beyond its shores to protect an array of aquatic life. Nowhere else on earth is wildlife so completely and utterly unfazed by human presence. From observing Darwin's finches at eye-level to swimming over hammerhead sharks and from walking directly past blue, red and Nazca booby fledglings to side-stepping Sally lightfoot crabs, there is never a dull moment. The archipelago is somewhat unusually dominated by reptiles, with giant tortoises, land iguanas and lava lizards proliferating across stunning volcanic landscapes. Beneath the seas, snorkel with marine iguanas and more turtles than you can shake a stick at, alongside a supporting cast of penguins, sharks, rays, sea-lions, fur seals and a kaleidoscope of tropical fish.

Our annual private charter of the vessel, Beluga, is eternally popular and rightly so. The crew are warm, the accommodation comfortable, the food is moreish, and the enthusiasm of our accompanying and irrepressible naturalist enables us to fully experience the archipelago's flora and fauna over an extended twelve glorious nights. Through daily walks, panga rides and snorkels, we travel in late April, at the tail end of the rainy season when the environment is verdant, when waved albatross have returned to breed, and when water clarity is excellent.

Enhance your trip further by flying to and from UK regional airports with KLM, and/or extend your trip with a visit to the Ecuadorian Amazon or cloud forest, which is simply brimming with avian delights and butterflies. With extreme luck, there's even a chance of Andean spectacled bear. There's not a lot of downtime on this trip, so a day or two in Quito is just as worthwhile to start your Galapagos exploration feeling fresh and raring to go!

### Thursday 16 April 2026

#### Day 1:

London Heathrow to Quito

*Weather in Quito: wet, 25 degrees*

The group came together in stages today with just two clients flying out from London Heathrow on the group flight to Amsterdam with tour leader Helen. Our relatively short but valid connection was smooth, and at the departure gate for Quito, we met up with another five clients who had flown in from UK regional airports and/or spent the night in Holland to avoid the 03:30 start.

11 hours and forty minutes later, we found ourselves in the heart of the Andes. Met by Raul, we were transferred into the historic centre of Quito, where we were dropped off at our overnight characterful accommodation, La Basílica. After a warm welcome, we completed last-minute travel formalities, checking in for our onward flight to the Galapagos, and completing an online mandatory biosecurity declaration. We then went to our rooms to relax for an hour or two.

We gathered in the lobby at 18:45 and met up with the last six members of our group who had extended their stay in Ecuador, some simply enjoying Quito and others venturing further afield to experience the Amazon. Dinner reservations had been made at a restaurant, Vista Hermosa, just two blocks away, and after a very pleasant meal, we headed home in anticipation of tomorrow's early start.

### Friday 17 April 2026

#### Day 2:

Quito to San Cristobal, board Beluga and visit El Junco

*Weather: wet to start, clearing later, 25 degrees*

Surprisingly bright-eyed and bushy-tailed, we gathered in Reception at 04.50. Armed with a packed breakfast, we set off for the airport ten minutes later and departed on time at 08:00. It was a brief 25-minute

flight to Guayaquil initially, where we stayed on board before continuing for a further 90 minutes, reaching San Cristobal late morning local time (the islands are an hour behind the mainland). It was absolutely pouring down, so much so that by the time we'd set foot on the tarmac, airport staff were running out to meet us with bright red umbrellas for everyone. It was quite a lovely sight!

We entered the terminal building, paid our USD\$200 entrance fee in cash, and watched as a sniffer dog rather excitedly gave our luggage a good going over. We then met our enthusiastic naturalist, Juan, and jumped aboard our private bus transfer for the four-minute drive to Puerto Baquerizo Moreno itself. From there, we donned our lifejackets and waited to board pangas out to Beluga. We busied ourselves watching snoozing and nursing Galapagos sea-lions, Sally lightfoot crabs, marine iguanas and a lava heron who left its lofty perch atop a pole to fly down and walk along a rail right beside us. As we then cruised towards Beluga, magnificent frigatebirds soared above, two blue-footed boobies shot past, and white-vented storm-petrels 'danced' on the water, stirring up prey. The wildlife extravaganza had begun.

We left our shoes on the bow and embraced the no shoes policy on board. We entered the lounge where we had a welcome briefing before being shown to our cabins. The lunch bell rang, and we tucked into salad, vegetables and beef goulash washed down with fresh strawberries as the sun began to peek through the grey, overcast conditions.

At 14:30 we had donned our hiking shoes once again, applied sunscreen (living in hope!) and were gathered by the gangway ready to retrace our steps to port. One panga's departure was delayed as there was a sea lion in it, but once back on land, we were driven 25 minutes inland up to a large freshwater lake, El Junco. With 300 steps ahead of us, we set off at a slow pace as Juan pointed out invasive guava and blackberry bushes nestled within a forest of native miconia. We stopped shortly thereafter as our introduction to Darwin's finches got underway with the sighting of a yellow warbler, followed by three grey warbler finches.



We made good time and were soon rewarded with clear views of the lake and the coastline beyond. Whilst great frigatebirds were swooping down to drink and skim their feathers to rid them of salt water, smooth-billed anis were flying from tree to tree. Looking down, a common gallinule drifted through the reeds far below and the grasses and bracken around our feet were alive with all-black female carpenter bees and long-tailed skipper butterflies.

We set off to circumnavigate the crater rim, viewing monarch and sulphur butterflies, spot-winged glider dragonflies and hummingbird hawkmoths. We took our time, enjoying the

opportunity to stretch our legs and breathe in lungfuls of fresh air after two days of travel. It was difficult to believe that quite a few of us had woken up in Blighty the day before. We were in a different world and we were loving it.

Afterwards, we were driven back to Puerto Baquerizo Moreno where we had an hour to explore. We enjoyed a little retail therapy but spent most of the time rewarding our efforts with a welcome cold beer from a rooftop bar. At 18:00 we returned to Beluga to shower, indulge in a cocktail or two and at 19:00, dinner was served. Chicken, fish, vegetables and rice were all on the menu, followed by a welcome early night. We were finally here!



**Saturday 18 April 2026**

**Day 3:**

Gardner Bay & Punta Suarez, Espanola

*Weather: sunny and overcast, 28 degrees*



Having sailed overnight, we awoke to cloudy but clearing skies, anchored off the absolutely glorious white sands of Gardner Bay on Espanola. We could see Galapagos sea lions sprawled all over the beach and couldn't wait to get closer to them. As blue-footed boobies and cattle egrets filled the sky, bullseye or concentric pufferfish busied themselves around the pangas. Our first landing was a successful wet one and we enjoyed the sensation of squeaky, powdery sand between our toes. Leaving the sea-lions be for now, we walked past them and up the beach towards the vegetation line.



Here, Juan set about unveiling the island's secrets by pointing out saltbush (a member of the bougainvillea family), Galapagos shore petunia, grey mat plant, the little yellow flowers of puncture weed, and beach morning glory. We were immediately entranced by Galapagos doves with their distinctive red legs and blue eye rings as well as female Espanola lava lizards with their bright orangey-red throats. Hermit crabs crawled into the undergrowth, and a small ground finch flittered close by. Soon enough, we came across other endemics, the Espanola mockingbird and Espanola ground finch, the latter giving us particularly good views. We side-stepped the indentations of green turtle nests and tried to photograph colourful painted locusts as they jumped from twig to twig.

The group then split up. Half continued their stroll with Juan, coming across a Galapagos flycatcher, while the other half went for a swim directly off the beach with Helen. Taking the opportunity to practice breathing underwater with a mask and snorkel, we stood upright in the clear water until everyone was comfortable enough to go horizontal and practice swimming at the same time. Confidence levels suitably increased, we returned to Beluga and were treated to a super impressive aerial display by a fishing blue-footed booby en route. Flying in one direction at speed, it essentially flipped onto its back mid-air to change direction, dive, and successfully strike its prey! Elevenes done, it was a fait accompli!

During juice and snacks onboard, we repositioned to our snorkelling site, meeting up on the covered bow deck to be fitted with wetsuits and fins. Before we knew it, we were in the pangas and lowering ourselves into the water, avoiding amber jackfish as Galapagos hawks circled above. Visibility was great and we came across guineafowl puffer, large-banded blenny, hieroglyphic hawkfish, Pacific goatfish, bicour parrotfish, flag cabrilla and both black and white-tipped reef sharks. Orange cup coral, red sand sea stars and a variety of urchins provided some colour.

More than happy with our first aquatic encounter, we'd almost finished repositioning to Punta Suarez after lunch when Helen spotted a large pod of bottlenose dolphins off our port side. As the Captain slowed right down, we rushed to the bow as they gathered inquisitively around us. Another vessel ahead of us sped up, and the dolphins followed so we did the same and they came directly back towards us. We hung over the side to watch them bow ride literally metres beneath us. Wow. We oohed and aahed appreciatively as they moved with us for almost 15 minutes. It was such a treat and such a wonderfully unexpected experience that the endorphins were well and truly flowing. It was only our first full day and we were already being spoilt.

We rested for another hour or so before our walk to a waved albatross nesting colony. The tide was high, meaning that we were unable to land as planned at a jetty. Finding a gap in the lava instead, we clambered ashore and immediately stumbled across two Galapagos oystercatchers on a beach next to us. Littering the trail were marine iguanas still showcasing the remnants of their breeding colours with handsome turquoise backs and deep red limbs on full display. We had to be careful not to stumble over them as Galapagos doves busied themselves on surrounding bushes and sea-lions covered every inch of the white sand beach.

We carefully negotiated wet rocks culminating in a rough boulder-strewn path following the coast. The vegetation was waist-high, and mosquitoes began to make their presence known. We'd been warned about them, so most had opted for long trousers and shirts, and as long as we kept moving, they were not too much of a hindrance. We followed a coastal path rising to a plateau where we were rewarded with our first glimpses of waved albatross. Sitting down on the earth, their gorgeous buttermilk neck feathers contrasted with the pristine white ones of adult Nazca boobies.



Browner juveniles rested and preened and we marvelled at the bright red feet and eye rings of swallow-tailed gulls. As we stood still, taking everything in, the sheer profusion of life hit us. Male lava lizards did press-ups, marine iguanas and mockingbirds scrapped fiercely amongst themselves, chicks were fed regurgitated offerings by parents, and Galapagos hawks and frigatebirds flew overhead in a menacing fashion. We watched fascinated as one Nazca booby saw off another by essentially holding its bill closed in what we interpreted as a show of dominance. One of the albatross flew off and another hobbled literally right past us.

The group split into two, with some happy to simply sit amongst the melee, watching the proliferation of wildlife on display, while others continued with Juan down a ravine heading for a distant blowhole. Coming across Galapagos shearwaters and red-billed tropicbirds, they witnessed not



only mating waved albatross but a Galapagos dove having a bad day too, being presented in the bill of one



Galapagos hawk to its mate. Coming together again, we swapped stories and absorbed the incredible scene before us.

With the sun beginning its descent in the western sky and the mosquitoes gathering pace, we made our way back towards the waiting pangas, some narrowly avoiding a sea-lion charge while others observed a kill when a lava heron stealthily stalked the shoreline, emerging triumphant with a young Sally lightfoot in its mandibles. We gathered on the sun deck for a sundowner and then, immediately ahead of dinner at 19:00, we had an official welcome from the Captain and crew before the taste sensation that was beef stroganoff and/or yellow fin tuna served with salad, vegetables and pasta.



Sunday 19 April 2026

#### Day 4:

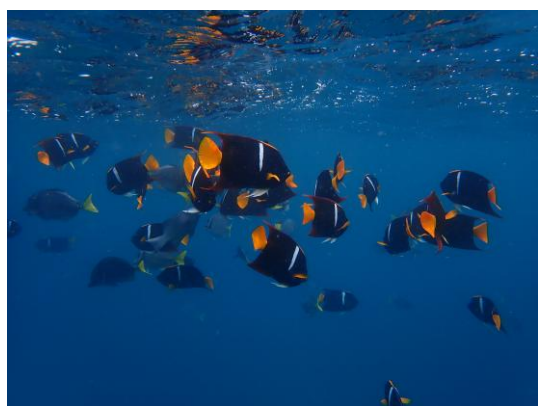
Punta Cormorant, Devil's Crown & Post Office Bay, Floreana

*Weather: mixed overcast and sunny spells, humid, 28 degrees*

After a bumpy crossing during the night, we woke up off Floreana Island this morning. The early birds who were enjoying coffee on the bow were rewarded with multiple green turtle sightings, a duo of Galapagos greater flamingoes flying by, brown noddy, and the clear outline of a Galapagos shark gliding by in the calm ocean.

We were getting into the rhythm of life onboard with breakfast being served at 07:00. Afterwards, we watched white-vented storm-petrels as we prepared for a wet landing and walk at Punta Cormorant. Cruising past blue-footed boobies and sleeping sea lions to get there, we stepped onto a black and grey sandy beach of volcanic origin to be greeted by a brown pelican in the top of a black mangrove tree and a wandering tatter walking along the distant shoreline. Juan picked up black obsidian and green olivine rock to show us before moving on to point out dominant flora which included Darwin's daisy, hairy morning glory, leatherleaf, and the sharp appendages of Jerusalem thorn that were clearly no problem for a male medium ground finch who posed amongst them beautifully.

Making our way to a brackish lagoon, gorgeous peachy pink flamingoes were beautifully reflected in the completely still water and black-necked stilt walked deliberately in the distance. Cattle egrets flew across the horizon and Floreana lava lizard scurried by our feet. We made our way back to the beach, stopping to view the mini javelin-style seed pods of red mangrove as yellow warblers and small ground finch flew close by. We set off along a gravel path, passing Galapagos passion flowers and succulent carpet weed as small tree finch, cactus finch and a stalking great blue heron made our species list.



A Galapagos blue butterfly landed obligingly in a plumbago bush and we arrived at our destination, a glorious Bounty advert white sand beach where mating green turtles were visible in the turquoise water. We walked down to the gentle surf and along to some rocks where a young marine iguana was pecking for algae as Sally lightfoots clung on to rocks when waves washed over them. Another cactus finch pecked on a black lava rock face and a grey plover hunted along the waterline. Walking back to our landing site, we spotted a ridiculous number of lava lizards and admired the blood red flowers of Galapagos cow pea.

Once back on Beluga, we readied ourselves for a snorkel at Devil's Crown. We were greeted by a large, sleeping white-tipped reef shark on the seabed. Sleek Cortez rainbow wrasse darted all around us amongst larger species including giant damselfish, dusky chub, blue chin parrotfish and streamer hogfish. White brain coral and blue sea stars were abundant. We found a marbled ray that immediately went under a rock, leaving just its tail visible and further on, a green turtle rested, using its hind flippers to seemingly excavate a cavity in the sand. Convict surgeonfish, three-banded butterfly fish and Pacific creolefish came next until we found ourselves experiencing an aquarium of king angel fish and yellow-tailed surgeonfish that were out in force just below the surface.

Looking up every now and again, a stunning red-billed tropicbird flew just over our heads and Galapagos shearwaters joined us on the panga ride home, as did leaping manta rays far off our stern. We changed in time for our delicious Ecuadorean lunch of pork, corn, salad, rice and vegetables, after which we relaxed

until departing for our afternoon activity at 15:00.

On the agenda was a panga ride or kayaking. Nine of the group opted for a panga ride and five for the latter, manoeuvring themselves onto the very stable two-seaters. The tide was high as we set off and between us, we saw tens of Galapagos sea lions resting on rocky ledges, spotted eagle rays, and a fleeting glimpse of the endemic Floreana mockingbird. A hawksbill turtle surfaced right next to one kayak, its distinctive orange carapace and beak unmistakable, while in another cove, so many green turtles surfaced to breathe that we simply lost count of them all. A super refreshing but brief downpour was welcome and as we returned to Beluga wet but happy, a whimbrel flew past.

We reconvened as a group and together set off for Post Office Bay. Our wet landing next to a small lagoon led us to three new species, a longtail stingray as well as least and semi-palmated sandpiper, before we made our way to the barrel in which we would deposit our unstamped postcards. Following in the footsteps of sailors two hundred years ago, we dated our mail and would rely on the kindness of future visitors to ideally hand-deliver the cards if they lived close enough to the address. We then went through those already deposited and took a number with us.

The first of many obliging Galapagos flycatchers landed in a Galapagos cotton tree and as we returned to the beach, a sea lion was zipping along the shore on a mission for prey. Numerous yellow warblers made an appearance and then a few of us cooled down with a refreshing dip before returning to Beluga for cocktails on the back deck. The sunset was nothing short of sensational. Golden rays softened to lavender hues over smooth seas, the clouds backlit and stunning. Our chicken and fish dinner was served at 19:00, followed by tomorrow's briefing, a brief look at the stars, and then bed.



**Monday 20 April 2026**

#### **Day 5:**

Dragon Hill, Santa Cruz & Sullivan Bay, Santiago

*Weather: sunny and hot, 29 degrees*

Waking up to a glorious morning off the central island of Santa Cruz, we prepared for our walk at Cerro Dragon or Dragon Hill. So called due to a small peak overlooking the bay's resemblance to the head of an iguana (imagination is required!), this would be our first chance to look for land iguanas. At 08:00 sharp, we were aboard the pangas and heading towards our dry landing where we stepped off the front of each vessel directly onto lava. We made our way up and over a mini headland to a wide sandy beach beyond, passing saltbush and prickly pear opuntia cactus, the wide, thorny pads of the latter being a staple food source for land iguanas once they fall to the ground.



Our first sighting was rather surprising. A goat! It ran off into the dense green vegetation and we turned our attention to a stationary giant blue heron patiently waiting for prey on a promontory overlooking the crystal clear ocean. A few individual marine iguanas posed beautifully for us, facing us and blending into their lava backgrounds perfectly. We enjoyed a little rock pooling, coming across a Galapagos four-eyed blenny, and then headed towards a brackish lagoon that under normal circumstances, we would walk around in order to access the trail beyond. It was so full of water, however, that we had to very carefully walk through it.

We negotiated lava stepping stones that didn't move when trodden on. It was a challenge, and a few fell foul

to wet feet, but we made it. We had been warned it may be muddy underfoot, but as we continued along the narrow path, it proved to be an absolute quagmire. We squelched our way along it, and sometimes through it, rising to the challenge and giggling as we pressed on to higher, and thankfully more solid ground.

The path widened and we came across our first land iguana moving slowly through the undergrowth. We watched him for a while before moving on to find further subjects in more open surrounds. We ducked under the webs of silver agiope spiders, watched sulphur butterflies blend into yellow muyuyu flowers, and admired a large shrub positively alive with Queen butterflies. We came across several Galapagos mockingbirds, a new species, and multiple bold flycatchers, one of which landed on a hat. The tall, pale grey bark of palo santo, or incense trees, was pointed out, the berries evident on heavily laden branches.



We found more and more land iguanas, often lying on, or directly beside our path. Their excavated ground burrows were everywhere and the stronger yellow, orange, rust and ochre colouring on males contrasted with the slighter duller, darker females. We reached a viewpoint from where we could look down on our landing site, and across the bay to where Beluga and her sister ship, Cachalote, were moored. We could clearly see the Guy Fawkes islands, four islets supposedly representing his hanged, drawn and quartered demise. Santiago Island dominated the distant horizon, our destination for the afternoon.



It was hot work, returning through the mud to view fiddler crabs on the beach and wash off our boots before boarding the pangas. Enjoying the natural air-conditioning, we arrived home around 10:40 and had a quick turnaround for those who wished to partake in a cooling dunk in the ocean. Circling Beluga to ensure it was safe, five intrepid clients leapt into the Pacific for five minutes of fun. Embracing our inner child, we dived, bombed, floated and generally loved it until we got a little more than we bargained for when a tiger shark was pointed out by crewman David out on deck. We climbed back up onto the panga quickly amidst a rush of adrenaline!

Half an hour later, lunch was served. Chicken wings, tuna, beans, corn, mince and salad were on offer with tortillas, and they were a hit. Afterwards, everyone retired for a well-earned rest, as it had been a fabulous, but very hot day so far.

We repositioned north to Sullivan Bay and when dropping anchor, Helen encouraged everyone out on deck to view what looked like the surface of the moon. Stark and barren, lava fields surrounded us, such a contrast to our earlier lush environment, yet breathtakingly beautiful all the same.

By 15:00, we were ready for our daily snorkel, almost immediately coming across a spotted eagle ray and large schools of black-striped selemia, Panamic sergeant major, Cortez rainbow wrasse, blacktip cardinalfish plus blue and gold snapper. Blunt-head triggerfish were out in force and barberfish chased each other off the submerged lava ledges, down to the sandy depths below. Guineafowl pufferfish in both yellow and its usual grey form were abundant and we happily followed the coastline, hoping, unsuccessfully, to see our first penguins. It was a wonderful hour with no other snorkellers around and we returned home ready to embark on our first lava walk at 16:30.



We entered another world. Coils of pahoehoe or rope lava crept towards the waterline beneath our feet, and we marvelled at the force that had created these molten rivers long since solidified. We learnt about aa-aa lava and plant colonisers such as lava carpet weed and lava cactus that would bring life to these currently predominantly bare conditions. Taking in the alienity of our surroundings, we fell into silence, taking it all in. At Juan's suggestion, we lay back on the lava, experiencing a hot stone massage if you like, and relaxed as the heat dissipated.



A Galapagos dove rested on a lava ledge and a tiny lava lizard disappeared into one of many crevasses as we ambled along, enjoying the striations, patterns, shapes and processes at work. Gazing out over Pinnacle Rock that we would visit later in the trip, a rainbow appeared through the cloudscape behind us, and the sunset sky deepened as we made our way home to Beluga. Sundowners were consumed inside tonight and our dinner of pasta three ways with garlic bread went down a storm. The chocolate cake for afters was the icing on the cake.

**Tuesday 21 April 2025**

**Day 6:**

Darwin Bay & Prince Phillip's Steps, Genovesa

*Weather: sunny and clear, 28 degrees*

Genovesa, you beauty. This croissant-shaped caldera in the far north-east is always a highlight, but today was exceptional. The early birds on deck at 07:00 observed a mobula ray leap clean out of the water when another vessel pulled up alongside us and dropped its anchor. For the rest of us, the fun started at 08:00 when we hoped for hammerheads on our snorkelling excursion and it was a case of, 'ask and ye shall receive'! Other highlights included two stunning spotted eagle rays gliding alongside us, a few large specimens of black tip reef sharks, and a green turtle resting in a rocky depression amongst a plethora of tropical fish. Gorgeous, floaty Moorish idol were seen alongside giant damselfish, finescale triggerfish, bacalao, cornetfish and trumpetfish.

We'd been feeling a little trepidation beforehand as we'd been warned jellyfish may have arrived with the Panama current so we dressed for the occasion wearing leggings, socks, buffs, and long shirts accordingly underneath our wetsuits. We looked a fright, but happily so, and took a group photo to capture the scene. None were seen in the end and we were all rather high on life when we returned home to find a Galapagos shark circling our vessel as we undressed on the bow.

While we readied ourselves for our next outing, a beach walk, the heavens completely and utterly opened. The crew found us bright yellow ponchos to wear over our own wet weather gear and we set off regardless, cameras and binoculars safely tucked away in dry bags. We landed as an adorable baby Galapagos sea-lion waddled across the beach rather plaintively calling for its absent Mum. We didn't have the heart to say it may be a few days yet while she is out fishing. A very wet Nazca booby chick stood next to its parent, sporting a shocking hairstyle as red-footed boobies sat high above us in vegetation overhanging the cliff.





Swallow-tailed gulls and one adorable ball of a downy chick sheltered under rocks at ground level as juvenile great frigatebirds preened while we slowly set off along a trail. Everywhere we looked, there was life.

We went quiet (again) as we tried to capture the scene on film, spreading out at photo opportunity after photo opportunity. It was mind-blowing how close we were able to get to everything. Bedraggled, young, sleeping, it just didn't matter. They didn't move one iota at our presence.

As the rain diminished, Galapagos doves sat on signposts and the bright red engorged throat pouches of male great frigatebirds were evident all around. Their green iridescence was obvious and the woo-woo-woo-woo-woo of their calls reverberated through the air. Tiny fiddler crabs, not even the size of a little fingernail, scurried across the beach, one enormous pincer dwarfing the other.



Then, one client made one hell of a spot. He pointed out a Galapagos short-eared owl up ahead perched atop a cactus



pad, framed against the pale grey sky. Safety shots were captured before we moved forward to get closer to it. It was absolutely stunning with its mottled coffee, cream, and rusty brown feathering, and it appeared nonplussed as gulls screamed their dissatisfaction at its presence. Potentially hundreds of photos later, we continued along a channel devoid of water, coming across large cactus finch, lava herons and the occasional blue-footed booby. In a tidal pool at the end, yellowtail damselfish were being watched by a yellow-crowned night heron as Sally lightfoots scuttled away at our approach. While Helen stayed with a third of the group, the rest followed Juan along a lava path, adding large ground finch to the species list.

When it was time to head for home, we re-traced our steps and were quickly distracted by the movement of a tiny, tiny ghost crab along the sand. We watched in amazement as it dug itself down beneath the surface. A little further on, we couldn't believe our luck when another short-eared owl was spotted, also by a client. A juvenile this time, it blinked deliberately over and over again as it sheltered beneath a prickly pear. We eventually tore ourselves away, and arrived home more than ready for lunch. Tucking into ceviche with popcorn and plantain chips and/or creamy chicken and mushroom with rice, we congratulated ourselves on a morning well spent.



At 15:30 we set off back in the pouring rain once again, arriving soaked to the skin at the base of Prince Philip's Steps. Once at the top of the cliff, we empathised with drenched great frigatebirds who, quite frankly, were looking very sorry for themselves. We then set off down a waterlogged path where Nazca boobies were sheltering at every turn, chicks squabbling with adults as they demanded food. We emerged onto a plateau overlooking the Pacific Ocean that was literally rammed with birds. Galapagos storm-petrels lined the distant cliff edge, along with a lone grey plover, and we walked through Galapagos sedge, heliotrope and Chinese lantern plants growing out of cracks in the lava. The rain began to ease and streamlined red-billed tropic birds flew past. Our ridiculous luck continued as another six sightings of owls ensued. We literally could not believe it.



With 45 minutes or so of daylight remaining, we reluctantly left this slice of paradise and made our way back towards the pangs. Helen spotted a Galapagos fur seal fast asleep on a ledge a few metres away and we made our way over for a closer look. Utterly endearing in its snoozing state, we crossed the caldera back towards Beluga bathed in glorious evening sunlight. We showered, grabbed a drink and enjoyed chicken, sausages and beef with avocado salad, rice, potato salad and lentils for dinner. We went through our nightly routine, covering our Species list and tomorrow's briefing, before setting sail back towards the central islands. It had been quite a day!

**Wednesday 22 April 2025**

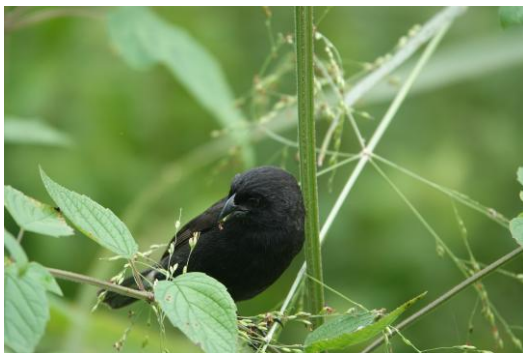
**Day 7:**

Black Turtle Cove, the highlands and Puerto Ayora, Santa Cruz

*Weather: mixed sun, heavy rain and heat, 29 degrees*

Our day ashore Santa Cruz started with a pre-breakfast panga excursion around Black Turtle Cove on the north coast. We motored in and noticed some serious splashing up ahead, so of course, went over to investigate.

A couple of juvenile black-tipped reef sharks were corralling fish, their dorsal fins flashing above the waterline with speed and dexterity. Things settled down so we continued on, squeezing through a narrow channel in the mangroves as a green turtle passed by in the opposite direction. It would be the first of many. We cut the engine and paddled on in silence, scanning the calm water for signs of life. Warblers sang around us, and fish darted surreptitiously between roots as we glided along enjoying a 'Zen Zodiac' experience. It was sublime. Pelicans perched on small islets and a pair of blue-footed boobies posed gloriously with Beluga in the background as we headed home...a shot captured by many.



Once back onboard for breakfast, it was a quick turnaround before we were zooming towards land where a bus waited for us. Privately chartered for the day, we were introduced to driver Adrian, and 20 minutes later we were dropped off at Los Gemelos (which translates as The Twins), two huge sinkholes, where we would embark on a warbler walk. We saw more than you could shake a stick at! Passing a tall daisy tree, we entered an oasis of green. Lush and verdant, every conceivable surface was covered in moss, with grasses, bracken and ferns underfoot, plus bromeliads and epiphytes hanging down above our heads. Galapagos milkweed, adorned with tiny clusters of droplet flowers, provided a hint of colour, as did bubblegum

pink blobs of lichen. A green warbler finch kick-started the avian delights, followed by small tree finch, small and medium ground finch, woodpecker finch and finally, vegetarian finch.



75 minutes later, we were back on the road heading for our next stop, Rancho el Chato, where we hoped to come across giant tortoises. We did, with bells on. As we drove down an avenue of flame trees, flanked by fields of cows complete with cattle egrets on their backs, they began to appear. We set off on a walk along gravel paths lined with established Spanish cedar trees, coming across tortoise after tortoise after tortoise. Strewn across the lawns, some slept, while others lumbered along, feasting on introduced guava fruits that had dropped to the ground, letting the pulp hang out of their mouths.



We spotted a common gallinule and a solo white-cheeked pintail busy in a pond, before being granted a fleeting visual of a Galapagos rail that disappeared as quickly as it had been seen. It started to rain hard, so it seemed a convenient time to descend into a lava tunnel on site. We ducked down to walk along it for 50 metres or so before it opened up and Juan explained how it had been formed. We then gathered in the lodge lounge to dry off before proceeding to our table for lunch. With eight options on the menu, there was plenty of choice, and it proved to be an excellent meal.

Suitably fed and watered, we continued our journey to Puerto Ayora, half an hour away. There, we visited the Charles Darwin Research Centre. We learnt about their tortoise breeding project, walking through nursery pens of labelled specimens, and visiting Lonesome George, the last La Pinta tortoise, who died in 2012. A Galapagos mockingbird landed above our heads with a moth in its bill, and we noticed two chicks fluffed up in the fork of a tree who made light work of it. At the centre itself, we read about the various projects that they are involved in, from the eradication of alien invasives such as flies and blackberry, to minimising the possibility of turtles colliding with ships.



Afterwards, we split up to amble through town and enjoy a few hours of downtime. Some shopped, others found bars, and we passed the notorious fish market. Although closed for the day, sea lions and marine iguanas rested there while brown pelicans and frigatebirds fought over scraps. A lone spotted eagle ray swam between the moored boats, and numerous lava herons were poised to strike from ship railings as well as steps. One pelican came into land unexpectedly, rather close to us, causing immediate ducks to avoid being hit in the head!

By 16:30 we were back aboard the bus heading north, passing two giant tortoises ambling along right next to the main road en route. Back on board, there had been three crew member changes and we were introduced to host Ivan, chef Ivan, and panga driver Israel. Dinner was delicious, consisting of fish in onion sauce with mashed potato, salad and vegetables, followed by strawberries.

**Thursday 23 April 2026**

#### **Day 8:**

Sombrero Chino (Chinese Hat) and Rabida

*Weather: sunny, 27 degrees*

We'd moved overnight to the aptly named island of Sombrero Chino, or Chinese hat. The sky was clear, and our wet landing onto a glorious white sand beach was seamless. It was only 08:00, but it was already hot. At only 6-700,000 years old, the island is still being colonised, and Juan pointed out lava carpet weed, Galapagos purslane, puncture weed and Galapagos bonsai. We received a lesson in Sally lightfoot crabs, learning how to sex them, and how they shed their exoskeletons nine times during their life cycle.

We then set off along a coral trail following the coastline to see what we could find. While some Galapagos sea lions hunted deftly in the shallows, others slept draped over rocks, lapping up the sunshine. Ahead, a great blue heron stood tall and a male brown pelican was sporting his impressive breeding plumage of pure white head and deep, rich chestnut neck. Lava lizards darted to and fro and a fantastic spot of a submerged marine iguana had us marvelling at how the creature could be squeezed into a tiny gap in the rocks, with just its head peeking out above ground level.



Across the turquoise channel, Santiago Island's bare lava fields provided a startling contrast to where we were, with just a few candelabra cactus cutting the skyline. We ascended a small rise and rounded a corner to walk down onto a lava wave-cut platform where more marine iguanas rested beside rock pools. We sat and admired the view. By now it was seriously hot, so we took a group photo and re-traced our steps. Back at our landing, instead of waiting for the pangas, a few of us ran fully clothed into the water to cool down. It was blissful! A Galapagos oystercatcher landed as we left, and we quickly readied ourselves for a snorkel.

Shortly before hitting the water, a Galapagos shark sauntered past and once we were in, the water was simply delicious. Crystal clear, shallow, and teeming with fish, a large shoal of black-striped selemas swam against the current, joined by three-banded butterflyfish, orangeside triggerfish, spinster wrasse, and a wealth of usual suspects. Some of the parrotfish were positively enormous and a lucky few witnessed a Galapagos penguin whizz by. It didn't hang around but a white-tip reef shark did, lazily meandering beneath us in circles. White sea urchins clung to rocks as pencil-spined sea urchins lay on the ocean floor next to chocolate chip sea stars and sea cucumbers. Three huge yellow-tailed grunts completed the sightings after which we returned to Beluga in time for spinach soup with popcorn, followed by beef, potatoes, rice and salad for lunch. The crème caramel for dessert was wolfed down and then we had a few hours to ourselves to rest while we repositioned to Rabida under low skies and in pouring rain.

It was still absolutely chucking it down as we donned our wet wetsuits on the bow shortly before 15:00. We wondered aloud what on earth we were doing out in the downpour, but once in the water, it was clearly a good move. The visibility was amazing as flag cabrilla lay on the seabed and we found ourselves swimming amongst a colourful array of creatures. A lone turtle rested under a rock and a white-tip reef shark meandered by, but it was sea lions that stole the show.



Initially, two flew past underneath us, disappearing from sight, but it was a lone ranger that captured our hearts. Bopping at least two of our underwater cameras on the nose to start with, it then stayed serenely within a foot or so of us, swimming on the surface and providing us with a fantastic experience. Trumpet and cornetfish came next, and then a huge shoal of scissor chromis saw us off as we reluctantly returned to Beluga. Hot chocolate awaited us and we had another quick turnaround before our beach walk.

Distinctive and unmistakable, Rabida is the red island, with its rocks, cliffs and beaches stained a rich, deep, maroony aubergine due to high levels of oxidising iron and magnesium in the earth. We disembarked the pangas and set off in thankfully dry conditions down the beach, passing ghost crabs who disappeared into



their small circular holes at our approach. We photographed a brown pelican stationary at the water's edge, and later, two oystercatchers sitting on the sand. From a distance, they looked like rocks.



As we turned inland towards a brackish lagoon, Galapagos greater flamingoes appeared to be out en masse. With their gorgeous salmon colouring, they were scene stealers as they noisily filtered the still water on their search for prey. Two paler individuals were identified by Juan as Chilean flamingoes and we watched as they all preened, fluffing out their feathers, stretching their legs and wings like ballerinas, generally stealing the show. Semi-palmated plovers patrolled the waterline, and we noticed white-cheeked pintail, yellow-crowned night heron and smooth-billed ani.

**Friday 24 April 2026**

### **Day 9:**

Sierra Negra and Puerto Villamil, Isabela

*Weather: sunny and hot, cool and rainy in the highlands, 31 degrees*

Waking unusually early in the dark, our early breakfast was served at 06:00. The sun rose shortly thereafter, revealing clear skies and turquoise ocean around our mooring that was positively teeming with nurseries of black-tip sharks.

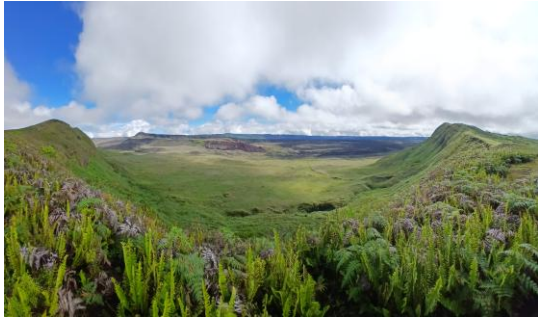
Leaving in the pangas at 07:00, we stepped off onto Puerto Villamil's dock and boarded our transport to the highlands, a wooden, open-sided bus. Our driver, Ivan, whisked us through town where we dropped off laundry to be collected this evening, and on to Sierra Negra. 40 minutes later we reached volcano HQ where we used the facilities and set off on a quest to find vermilion flycatchers.

Juan began to talk through the bill adaptations of Darwin's finches when a female woodpecker finch was observed literally right next to the path. Turning our attention to it, it stayed still long enough for us all to capture photographs, many in fact! She posed beautifully before we slowly continued down a track lined with the delicate lilac flowers of false vervain. Scanning the moss-ridden trees, we successfully found small and medium ground finch, small, medium and large tree finch, and then a few green warbler finches, with one individual boasting the peachy plumage of a breeding male.



We'd just turned back towards the vehicle when Helen spotted a young vermilion male. More orangey red than pillar box red, he was still impressive but flew off before most of the group had seen him. We loitered, hoping he would show himself again, but eventually conceded defeat and moved on. Helen spotted him again, though, far off in the distance, but once again he flew off. We carefully moved towards his direction, and this time, a client found him before he disappeared. Mission accomplished, we turned our attention towards the volcano, boarded our bus, and drove 12 kilometres around the crater rim to a viewpoint.

The panorama was astonishing. All ten kilometres of the vast, wide caldera could be seen, its steep sides covered in thin vegetation with a few wispy billows giving away the presence of fumaroles. Although there



hasn't been an eruption here since 2018, clearly the volcano is still active. Patches of bare lava surrounded the escaping steam and streams of pale ashy, sulphuric deposits were more than evident, not to mention impressive. We moved on to a further viewpoint from where it is possible to walk to more fumaroles, but not having five hours to spare, we negotiated some steep steps, spying tiny purple blooms, rain of the stars, along the way. A Galapagos hawk soared above as we took in the view and then, out of nowhere, heavy cloud cover began to roll in.

The heavens opened as we re-traced our journey around the perimeter of the crater but by the time we'd driven past small farms dotted with introduced hydrangeas and descended back to sea level, we were back in bright, hot sunshine. We added another new species to our bird list, Franklin's gull, as we waited for the pangas, and after our spaghetti and salad lunch, we relaxed in the lounge or retired to our beds for a little siesta. It had been a busy but fabulous week so far!

At 15:30, we set off in the pangas again and were thrilled to pass two Galapagos penguins and a squadron of spotted eagle rays en route to the jetty. Ivan the bus driver met us again and dropped us off at a lagoon teeming with black-necked stilts, white-cheeked pintails, and Galapagos greater flamingoes. We walked into town, got our bearings, and went our separate ways to explore. Sooty terns or brown noddies were busy along the lava shoreline and a whimbrel busied itself probing the beach for prey. Lava gulls were out in force and after a little retail therapy for some, and wildlife spotting for others, we convened in a bar to try 'Coco Locos', an excavated coconut filled with rum or local alcohol. A few hardy souls went for a swim as it started to rain and the sky came alive with a very photogenic and stunning rainbow. By 18:00 we were picked up and were on our way back to Beluga accompanied by penguins once again. Dinner was followed by another early night after another simply great day!

**Saturday 25 April 2026**

### **Day 10:**

Punta Moreno & Elizabeth Bay

*Weather: sunny, 27 degrees*

Well, mornings don't get much better than this. It started innocently enough with us supping coffee on the bow, marvelling at the sheer amount of turtles surrounding our anchorage off Punta Moreno. We disliked the collective noun for them, a bale, so came up with our own, a flotilla. To quote Juan, we'd experienced a 'rocking and rolling' night at sea to get here, and the sky was stormy, deep grey and threatening. There was a beauty to it though, the flat black lava spilling down into the ocean with lime green Galapagos sedge bursting upward from cracks like fireworks. A brown pelican landed on one of our bow railings and proceeded to 'walk' along it, a gravity-defying feat to reach the end.

By 08:00, we were in our wet weather gear and motoring towards land in an attempt to view our first flightless cormorants and mass huddles or 'orgies' of marine iguanas. We were successful on both counts. A flying fish provoked gasps of delight, two penguins popped up and then bobbed past us, whilst a ruddy turnstone stood alone, a pale flash in a sea of black. We slowly traversed the edges of coves, watching marine iguanas clamber over each other and observing cormorants gular flapping to regulate temperature as they held their wings aloft to dry.





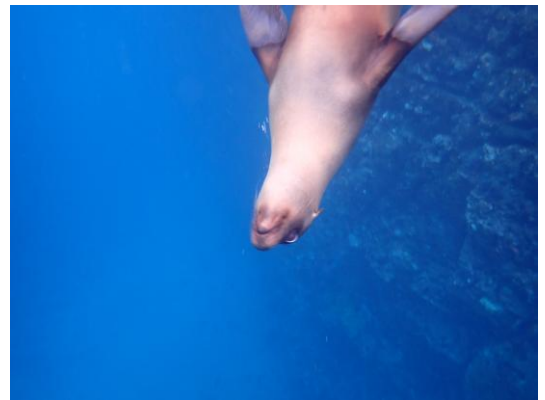


We moved up the coastline as manta rays leapt out of the ocean far to our stern, and entered some mangroves to see what we could find. Turning off our engines to once again paddle in silence, a squadron of small golden cownose rays glided by, a single spotted eagle ray amongst them. Black-tip reef sharks came next. A group of larger spotted eagle rays skimmed the surface ahead, causing fish to leap clean out of the water, and a lava heron perched on an overhanging branch, eyes intent on the water below. We had to remind ourselves to breathe while staring at it through our lenses, hoping it would hunt.

Two hours later we were on the pangas again, preparing to snorkel. We knew we'd likely see turtles as we were still surrounded by them, but were thrilled to bits to spot a group of eight or so penguins resting on the surface as we approached our target spot. Suddenly there was a shout for, 'Orca!' Turning around, our disbelieving eyes couldn't believe it, but sure enough, the unmistakable dorsal fin of a male and two others could clearly be seen slicing through the water on the horizon. The adrenaline hit was immediate, and with some urgency we set off towards them. They were clearly hunting. They disappeared below, so we slowed and waited. We needed to respect their space, so we stopped some way away, hoping they'd resurface. When they didn't for a while, and as per national park regulations, we backed off, thrilled regardless, returning to the rocky coastline for our intended snorkel.

The penguins were still there, but there was much more besides. No sooner had we entered the much cooler water (a result of the predominant Humboldt and Cromwell currents here) and caught our breath, when Galapagos sea-lions torpedoed beneath us, and we found ourselves amongst a gathering of huge green turtles. Even the fish seemed larger, with bacalao, harlequin wrasse and leather bass darting here and there. We swam towards the penguins and watched them from underwater as they sat idling.

With so much to view, we found ourselves at one point almost directly on top of a hawksbill turtle. Manoeuvring out of its way, we were distracted by incoming sea lions, and what ensued next was pure magic. They wanted to play. If we twisted and turned at their approach, they 'danced' with us, an utterly endorphin-producing activity. They came so close to us, veering away at the last possible moment just when it felt like a collision was inevitable. They seemed to respond to us blowing bubbles too. We just couldn't get enough of them, and had to be practically dragged out of the water to return home, but not before we saw one nibble at a turtle's backside and then at a client's fin. Cheeky monkey!



Whilst stepping out of our wetsuits on the bow, a small fin pierced the waterline below. We watched it for a while, thinking it may be a shark, but as it came closer, it materialised into an enormous manta ray. Its wingspan was huge, at least three metres or so, and it remained just under the surface until the captain started the engines and we progressed two hours on to our destination, Elizabeth Bay. Shortly before dropping our anchor, more manta rays were spotted. Our marine extravaganza was very much on!

Lunch was delicious, consisting of chicken, pork, potatoes and various salads, after which it started to rain...and when we say rain, we mean rain. The cloud cover kept on descending and by 14:00 it was absolutely bucketing down, impeding visibility massively. The torrential rain continued, so by the time our afternoon activity was due to commence an hour later, we weren't too keen to head out. We decided to wait ten minutes. And then another twenty. The pangas and kayaks were lowered into the water regardless and at 15:30, we went for it. Braving the weather, we set off together for the mangroves, coming across drenched lava lizards and another male brown pelican in full breeding plumage.

Entering more sheltered waters, both kayakers and those on the panga ride drifted along on another magical tour, devoid of engines. Golden cownose rays floated past, as did numerous turtles, and then a lone penguin completely stole the show. Standing upright, its white breast and belly contrasting against the dark, wet lava it stood on, we were able to paddle right up to it and admire the view. It posed, nonplussed, as we snapped away to record the memory. Rain was falling again by now, so we made for home, getting soaked en route. The kayakers paddled the entire way home, their efforts being rewarded by multiple sightings of flying fish and double cocktails once back!

We entered a discussion on land ownership in the archipelago, and how this is managed alongside a growing population and vast national park coverage. We then tucked into chicken with salad and vegetables, followed by a run-through of today's species checklist and the plan for tomorrow. We retired safe in the knowledge that we wouldn't be pulling up anchor until 04:30, so would hopefully experience calmer conditions tonight!

**Sunday 26 April 2026**

**Day 11:**

Urbina Bay & Tagus Cove, Isabela

*Weather: rain to start, clearing later, 28 degrees*

Well, if yesterday morning was dominated by marine adventures, today giant tortoises were the stars of the show!

It was raining at dawn and most forecasts predicted rain for the day. One said cloud with sunny spells between 08:00 and 11:00. We hung on to that. The mizzle gradually dissipated over breakfast and it was a dry wet landing (so to speak!) at Urbina Bay. We walked along the crescent-shaped, steep dark sandy beach and followed a lava ridge as a Galapagos penguin fished head down in the shallows. The subtle, pale blue light was beautiful as we walked along the coast hoping to see 'leaping' Sally lightfoots. Many were lined up facing head on, little channels through which rivulets of water were flowing with the incoming tide. We waited, and we waited. Just when we thought it was all over, one jumped. We hoorahed en masse and started our walk inland!



Our first obstacle was a humongous giant tortoise. Walking ponderously along the path, his cumbersome carapace literally creaking like a rusty door hinge, we marvelled as he plodded along within metres of us. Up ahead was another. We split up to watch them, noticing that they often lifted both front feet up and off the path as if to rest their weary selves just on their plastron. One nibbled at blades of grass and another gobbled up poison apples, one after another, occasionally drinking from a muddy puddle as small and medium ground finches flitted around everywhere, pecking at seeds.

The path began to narrow, and as we slipped into single-file formation, we noticed another giant tortoise walking head-on towards us. We stood to the side, giving it space to pass, but then realised we had one coming through the vegetation to the side as yet another popped up at the rear. We were in the middle of a reptilian three-way junction! We silently observed them in awe for quite some time and then continued on our way. Time and time again we came across more. Some were shy, some bold, some silent and others quietly grunting. All were quite incredible.

Another roadblock appeared in the form of a large, yellow land



iguana. Completely unconcerned by our presence, we photographed it and stepped around it as it wasn't moving for toffee. Quite right too. A little later, a large, reddish one was sloughing beautifully, large patches of skin clinging on for dear life that would eventually be brushed off by low-hanging vegetation. We came across more and more, completely stationary, even as we passed. Juan excitedly pointed out a pair of dark-billed cuckoos and we moved around a lump of aa-aa lava, enabling everyone to view them.

We made our way back to the beach we'd landed on and those that wanted to went into the ocean for a refreshing dip. The sun began to shine as we returned to Beluga, so we sat on the bow soaking it up and watching Galapagos shearwaters and a lone Galapagos petrel for an hour before lunch. Loaded tortillas with shredded chicken, mince, and salad were relished, and then we relaxed on deck some more as we pushed further north to Tagus Cove.



Snorkelling was scheduled for 14:30. As soon as we got into the water and moved towards the lava wall, they were beneath us, next to us, and swimming up behind us from the depths. One hawksbill turtle was amongst them, but they were predominantly green, with one even being groomed by attentive fish immediately beneath us. Pacific Sierra swam menacingly along the rock face looking very much like small sharks, while Pacific beakfish dodged the long, vicious spines of crowned sea urchins, and sea stars added a pop of colour. A highlight was the occasional presence of penguins. Shooting past at great speed, they moved between us, and one posed beautifully just above the waterline too.

We animatedly discussed our snorkel upon returning to Beluga for a warming cinnamon tea, enhanced by a shot of local alcohol tipped into it that we were encouraged to try. When in Rome..! We then landed at the base of approximately 170 steps which led to a ridge overlooking a saltwater lagoon named Darwin's Lake. It was a beautiful temperature, and the breeze was light as we made our way past Galapagos mockingbirds and Darwin's finches to a bare lava peak overlooking the volcanic peaks of Ecuador, Wolf and Darwin.

It began to spit slightly but soon cleared up, becoming progressively more humid as we made our way back down to the pangas, passing a land iguana en route. Chef Ivan had been busy as we were welcomed home with cold beers and fresh pizza, a winning combination, after which we showered and gathered around the vessel for drinks. We moved west to anchor off Fernandina, sailing directly into the sunset pink sky, watching the light fade as it was squeezed between clouds on the horizon. Beef in ginger with rice, vegetables and lentils sustained us as we recounted a fabulous day and prepared for another action-packed one tomorrow.



**Monday 27 April 2026**

### **Day 12:**

Punta Espinoza, Fernandina & Punta Vicente Roca, Isabela

*Weather: sunny, then cloudy with rain, clearing late afternoon, 27 degrees*

Helen and Juan, we're excited to get off Beluga this morning and explore the stunning landing site of Punta Espinoza on the island of Fernandina. The most active volcano in the Galapagos, onboard the pangas we were read a transcript from Captain Benjamin Morrell, a whaler who experienced the full force of an explosion back in 1825. Blue-footed boobies dive-bombed the ocean around us as a penguin fished and turtles raised their heads to breathe in the still morning air. It was picture perfect.



We landed right next to a marine iguana folded over a mangrove branch about a metre or so above sea level. He looked comfortable enough and posed as we took photos while trying to rid ourselves of our life jackets at the same time. We set off to walk around the point, the only landing site on the island, over coral sand beaches and lava platforms absolutely teeming with marine iguanas. Photo opportunities were so plentiful, it was difficult to know where to look.

A Galapagos hawk stood sentry from a tree top, unfortunately facing away from us, but we were easily distracted by a young sea-lion asleep on the beach who woke up and moved down towards the water. We



watched and heard another sea-lion nursing just metres away, sucking loudly as we took in lava lizards, fishing pelicans, and simply stunning scenery. Sally lightfoots crawled over iguana tails and we watched one cannibalistically eat another directly in front of us. We enjoyed a fly-by from our first Galapagos martin alongside wandering tattler, lava heron, and a juvenile ruddy turnstone patrolling the water's edge. A young sea lion frolicked in the shallows, turning over and over, seemingly relishing the movement of the water, and marine iguanas posed, clambering on top of each other, in endless supply. There were literally mountains of them, enthusiastically snorting the salt out of their nostrils.

After over an hour on the island, the mission to find racer snakes upped tempo. Searching every nook, cranny and crevasse, we discovered a lava lizard hanging to a vertical surface like Spiderman, but the snakes were being elusive. Suddenly we heard a cry of, 'Got one!' We power walked over and peered down a deep crevasse where a few clients had spotted one, but possibly two, duck down behind a rock. It or they failed to re-appear, and we were nearing the end of our time on the island, but around a third of the group had managed to get a sighting, and the rest of us were more than happy with the morning's beyond beautiful stroll.



We very much hoped to snorkel with marine iguanas this morning and couldn't get into the water fast enough to try our luck. Green turtles were once again out in force, but we were thrilled to look down upon



entry and see an iguana feeding directly beneath us. It looked huge. It bumped its head repeatedly against the submerged rocks to extract algae, and we watched as it slowly rose to the surface to breathe, moving beautifully in the water using just its tail for propulsion. We found more and tried to float over them, watching them feed, despite the ebb and flow of the tide trying to push us on. Lifting our heads up, we watched them move along the surface but had to keep looking down to stay out of the way of turtles that were out in droves. There were some absolute monsters amongst them, huge individuals, moving with a grace and agility that belied their size.

Vast schools of yellow-tailed surgeonfish moved alongside dusky chub, possibly utilising the tactic of safety in numbers. A few clients enjoyed more marvellous sea-lion interaction, with two or three repeatedly coming right up to them, almost inviting them to play, and others witnessed flightless cormorants whizzing past them unexpectedly at great speed. Once again, it was hard to leave, but our ceviche and pork lunch was waiting, as was Punta Vicente Roca across the channel on Isabela, our destination for the afternoon. The weather turned as we made our way back east. A still greyness descended, and we arrived to a moody scene of immense brooding cliffs with clouds rolling down from on high. There was a mythical quality about it, almost Lord of the Rings, Game of Thrones, or Viking-like. If it wasn't for the pair of sea lions chasing each

other, porpoising repeatedly off our bow, and diving blue-footed boobies, the scene wouldn't have been amiss in Svalbard! A shoal of Galapagos yellow-tailed mullet surrounded our bow, skimming the surface with mouths wide open, and one client summed up the scene perfectly when he said, "Well, you certainly feel the majesty of nature here."

By 14:30, we were out on the pangas ready for a geology lesson. Light rain had been falling, but it cleared as we learnt about seams of lava, dykes, forced through cracks in the rocks. Circular lava bombs dotted the exposed uplifted rock, and marine iguanas had reached impossibly high heights. The swell glowed aqua upon impact with land, and as we continued around the cove, we drifted at eye-level past sooty terns resting on shallow perches alongside a lone swallow-tailed gull. We smiled at two flightless cormorants facing the cliff, almost as if in time out on a naughty step! Blue-footed boobies lay on their nests, and we entered a cave where the outline of a turtle could be seen in the impossibly blue water before everything went dark. On one exposed rock, Galapagos sea lions were asleep, although one youngster woke at our approach, and far above, almost hidden in a pile of rocks, we noticed a Galapagos fur seal trying to get comfortable on its back.



45 minutes later, we were back on board and preparing for a snorkel. Mentally armed against the cold, we entered the water directly on top of a turtle and once again, they just kept on coming. Against the dark grey sandy seabed, they lay motionless on the bottom, moving inadvertently with the tide. We made our way over to some sea-lions, but a large, vocal male made it clear we weren't welcome, so we carried on, distracted once again by a ridiculous number of turtles all around. We came across a penguin on a rock and waited patiently by it, hoping it would swim alongside us, but clearly preening was far more important. A massive shoal of dark fish gathered together far below us, and we waited to see if they were being herded. Sea-lions shot through them but were only casually hunting. Three flightless cormorants bickered on the surface and through our masks, their flailing legs underwater were nothing short of comical.

At 16:30, it was time to get ready for our equator party, so we returned home, showered and gathered in the lounge waiting for the call from Guillermo, our captain. Helen suggested heading out on deck as we were passing fabulous scenery and the north-western coastline of Isabela is renowned for cetaceans. Half of the group were out on the bow when Helen excitedly shouted, "What's that? Looking towards land, a fin, then another. Crikey, we had orca yet again! We ran into the bridge to alert the captain, who immediately slowed



down and then gathered everyone outside for the spectacle. They were hunting. Frigatebirds, shearwaters, storm-petrels and petrels were close to the surface, hoping to enjoy the spoils. We scoured the choppy water, trying to predict where they may surface again. They'd tease us with a blow, then another, and for 15 minutes or so we waited with bated breath for glimpses of them. Our attention shifted when Juan exclaimed, "Mola mola" as a sunfish jumped out of the water twice to our starboard side. This was insane! The orcas weren't done with us yet though, as a very young individual tail slapped and then, out of nowhere, an adult breached. Wow! Wow! Wow!

We were literally on the equator, so once our attention shifted from the orcas, we were ready to celebrate crossing from one hemisphere into another. We counted down the co-ordinates until we reached zero degrees, enjoying a margarita, and singing a few songs with Juan leading us on the guitar.



We then watched the sun sink below the horizon in a spectacular array of colours. With just a few of us out on deck, we searched for the 'green flash' as the sun dipped out of sight. The golden afterglow was soothing and calm, a fitting end to a fantastic day.



Our fish in spinach sauce, chicken, salad, rice and cheesy potato dinner was served earlier than usual at 18:30 after which we went through what was on the agenda for our last full day in this incredible archipelago tomorrow.

**Tuesday 28 April 2026**

### **Day 13:**

Puerto Egas, Santiago & Pinnacle Rock, Bartolome Island

*Weather: light rain to start, hot and sunny later, 29 degrees*

We all commented on how much warmer the water was when we landed on the black sand beach of Puerto Egas on Santiago this morning. We were back in the central islands and were met by light rain, a marine iguana that blended into the volcanic sand, and obliging ghost crabs who we captured on film. The moisture in the air quickly dissipated, brightening up into a gloriously sunny day with a slight breeze.

Our two-hour walk got off to a good start with masses of butterflies, painted locusts, our first Galapagos flycatcher in a few days and plenty of land iguana poop. We didn't have to wait long to see the real thing, with three females spotted in quick succession, their darker skin belying their sex. We walked past gorgeous white clusters of lantana and silver agiope spiders and lava lizards galore before the path opened up onto a wide wave-cut platform.



We walked out onto it, past a blowhole known as 'Darwin's loo' and out towards the ocean where natural lava bridges and rocks harboured snoozing Galapagos fur seals and a stationary yellow-crowned night heron. In the water, a very Zen sea lion lay on its back, floating with its head just below the surface, blowing bubbles repeatedly. Every now and again it lifted its head slightly and took a breath as it rolled gently with the flow. It was easy to get lost in thought watching it, a true mindfulness moment that we videoed to look back on in the future.

Walking down and onto a coral beach comprised of long dead pencil-spined sea urchins, we took our time, watching and photographing diving brown pelicans and blue-footed bobbies as wandering tattler, ruddy turnstone, sooty terns, giant blue heron and Galapagos oystercatchers all went about their daily business. We noticed a land iguana sunning itself on the beach, a male this time, and then another walked with purpose towards it, maintaining enough distance that we were unable to witness any fisticuffs! Wandering tendrils of a purple flowering pea made their way across the sand, and we stumbled upon rock pools filled with marine iguanas and Sally lightfoots. The sun felt good upon our backs, and we ambled home after a happy morning so far.

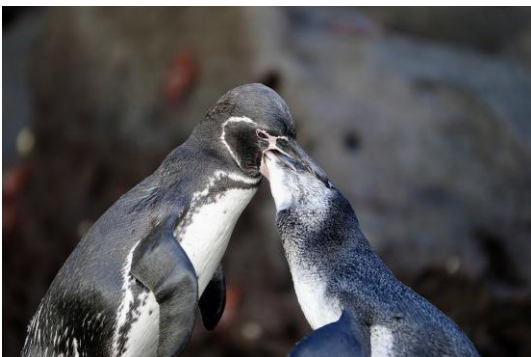
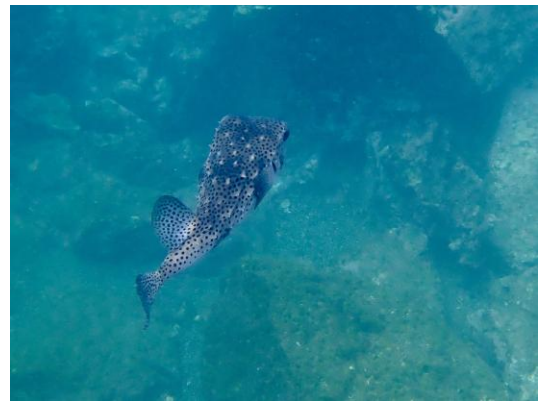






It felt even better to get into the ocean for our first snorkel of the day while brown pelicans continued to hover and hunt above. Almost immediately we came across a Galapagos shark and then a white-tip reef shark. As we rounded a headland, longfin halfbeaks swam at the surface, and deep gulley beneath us harboured all manner of colourful fish. More sharks were seen resting on the seabed far below but the visibility began to decrease as we made our way back to the pangas. Just in the nick of time though, a spotted eagle-ray swam serenely past, a lovely way to end our penultimate snorkel.

We were still getting out of our wetsuits on the bow when we started moving towards Pinnacle Rock. Three hours later, during which time we had lunch, relaxed on deck, packed and checked in online for our KLM flights home tomorrow, we arrived at our destination. We swam around it on our last snorkel, immediately coming across three spotted eagle rays. One was swimming almost directly on top of another, resulting in much shaking and swooping, presumably in an effort to furiously dislodge it. We swam over and beside huge bumphead damselfish, spotfin burrfish, coral hawkfish, scrawled filefish, sand dollars and even an octopus, a Galapagos octopus of course! A penguin lazed on a rock, and multiple Galapagos sharks and a white-tipped reef shark shared space with us in the water. We returned to Beluga tired but happy as we prepared for our final excursion.



Half of the group were intending to climb to a viewpoint overlooking Pinnacle Rock framed by two wineglass bays. One of the most recognisable scenic photographs of the islands, they took the 365 or so steps slowly and were rewarded with clear views. The rest of us went for a panga ride around the bay that was dominated by penguins. We watched, enthralled, as a chick squawked repeatedly at an accompanying adult who regurgitated food for it literally metres away from us. We stayed for ages, watching various behaviours, seeing the little one learn to hunt while another adult rested nearby.

Moving on, we came across yet more of these endearing creatures. Preening on rocks, we were once again able to pull right up next to them. A great blue heron, poised and ready to strike with lightning speed, stood patiently in the shallows and we looked up at huge cliffs, shaped by the wind into what looked like open Aero chocolate bars with rounded air pockets galore.

Returning to Beluga, a fin appeared right next to the panga and as we looked down from the bow where we were returning our life jackets, two more appeared. For twenty minutes or so as the sun set, the trio of Galapagos sharks circled us, providing brilliant views.



We had a farewell drink with the captain and crew, and then after dinner, went through our departure schedule for tomorrow. Helen read out a synopsis of everything we had experienced during our time here, and we later hit the hay for an early night, dreaming of the magic to be found here.

**Wednesday 29 April 2026**

**Day 14:**

North Seymour, Baltra to Guayaquil, and on to Amsterdam

*Weather: sunny, 29 degrees*



Those wanting to eke every last drop out of their Galapagos experience joined Helen and Juan at 06:00 for a last walk around North Seymour. A mini Galapagos on one island, it is only missing giant tortoise. We walked within inches of blue-footed boobies, land and marine iguanas and lava lizards as great and magnificent frigatebirds flew over our heads, throat pouches inflated. A brief visual of a lava gull, multiple sightings of swallow-tailed gulls and the tiniest sea-lion pup nestled into lava boulders completed the picture. The tiny flowers of yellow cordia stood proudly on tall stems and it was rather marvellous.

We savoured every minute before returning to Beluga for breakfast. We left our bags outside our cabins and prepared for departure at 08:15. We boarded the pangas for the last time and were dropped off on Baltra Island, where we said goodbye to the crew. Juan accompanied us on the bus ride to the airport, and we had a few land iguana roadblocks along the way, but made it with plenty of time for coffee with our last finches at the airport. A little retail therapy later and we flew to Guayaquil, where we collected our luggage from Avianca and dropped it off with KLM.

**Thursday 30 April 2026**

**Day 15:**

Arrive UK

Our overnight flight to Amsterdam was uneventful, and here we said our goodbyes to half of the group who were flying on to UK regional airports while the rest of us headed for Heathrow. It had been an epic trip, and we had memories enough to last a lifetime!



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# Checklist for Galapagos Wildlife Cruise



|    | Common Name                   | Scientific Name                        | Day 2 | Day 3 | Day 4 | Day 5 | Day 6 | Day 7 | Day 8 | Day 9 | Day 10 | Day 11 | Day 12 | Day 13 | Day 14 |
|----|-------------------------------|----------------------------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
|    | <b>MAMMALS</b>                |                                        |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |        |        |        |        |        |
| 1  | Galápagos sea-lion            | <i>Zalophus wollebaeki</i>             | ✓     | ✓     | ✓     | ✓     | ✓     | ✓     | ✓     | ✓     | ✓      | ✓      | ✓      | ✓      | ✓      |
| 2  | Bottlenose dolphin            | <i>Tursiops truncatus</i>              |       | ✓     |       |       |       |       |       |       |        |        |        |        |        |
| 3  | Galapagos fur seal            | <i>Arctocephalus galapagoensis</i>     |       |       |       |       | ✓     |       |       |       |        |        | ✓      | ✓      |        |
| 4  | Orca                          | <i>Orcinus orca</i>                    |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       | ✓      |        | ✓      |        |        |
|    |                               |                                        |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |        |        |        |        |        |
|    | <b>REPTILES</b>               |                                        |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |        |        |        |        |        |
| 1  | Marine iguana                 | <i>Amblyrhynchus cristatus</i>         | ✓     | ✓     | ✓     | ✓     | ✓     | ✓     | ✓     | ✓     | ✓      | ✓      | ✓      | ✓      | ✓      |
| 2  | Espanola lava lizard          | <i>Microlophus delanonis</i>           |       | ✓     |       |       |       |       |       |       |        |        |        |        |        |
| 3  | Floreana lava lizard          | <i>Microlophus grayi</i>               |       |       | ✓     |       |       |       |       |       |        |        |        |        |        |
| 4  | Galapagos green turtle        | <i>Chelonia mydas agassizii</i>        |       |       | ✓     | ✓     | ✓     | ✓     | ✓     | ✓     | ✓      | ✓      | ✓      |        |        |
| 5  | Hawksbill turtle              | <i>Eretmochelys imbricata bisssa</i>   |       |       | ✓     |       |       |       |       |       | ✓      | ✓      | ✓      |        |        |
| 6  | Lava lizard                   | <i>Microlophus albemarlensis</i>       |       |       |       | ✓     | ✓     | ✓     | ✓     | ✓     |        | ✓      | ✓      | ✓      | ✓      |
| 7  | Land iguana                   | <i>Conolophus subcristatus</i>         |       |       |       | ✓     |       |       |       |       |        | ✓      |        | ✓      | ✓      |
| 8  | Santa Cruz giant tortoise     | <i>Geochelone nigrita</i>              |       |       |       |       |       | ✓     |       |       |        |        |        |        |        |
| 9  | Galapagos leaf-toed gecko     | <i>Phyllodactylus galapagoensis</i>    |       |       |       |       |       | ✓     |       |       |        |        |        |        |        |
| 10 | Alcedo giant tortoise         | <i>Geochelone vandenburghi</i>         |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |        | ✓      |        |        |        |
| 11 | Western Galapagos racer snake | <i>Alsophis bisetalis occidentalis</i> |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |        |        | ✓      |        |        |
|    |                               |                                        |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |        |        |        |        |        |
|    | <b>BIRDS</b>                  |                                        |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |        |        |        |        |        |
| 1  | Magnificent frigatebird       | <i>Fregata magnifica</i>               | ✓     | ✓     | ✓     | ✓     |       | ✓     | ✓     | ✓     | ✓      | ✓      | ✓      | ✓      | ✓      |
| 2  | Lava heron                    | <i>Butorides sundevalli</i>            | ✓     | ✓     | ✓     | ✓     | ✓     | ✓     | ✓     | ✓     | ✓      | ✓      | ✓      | ✓      |        |
| 3  | Brown pelican                 | <i>Pelecanus occidentalis</i>          | ✓     | ✓     | ✓     | ✓     | ✓     | ✓     | ✓     | ✓     | ✓      | ✓      | ✓      | ✓      | ✓      |
| 4  | Blue-footed booby             | <i>Sula nebouxii</i>                   | ✓     | ✓     | ✓     | ✓     | ✓     | ✓     | ✓     | ✓     | ✓      | ✓      | ✓      | ✓      | ✓      |
| 5  | White-vented storm-petrel     | <i>Oceanites gracilis</i>              | ✓     | ✓     | ✓     | ✓     |       | ✓     | ✓     | ✓     | ✓      | ✓      | ✓      | ✓      | ✓      |
| 6  | Yellow warbler                | <i>Dendroica petechia aureola</i>      | ✓     |       | ✓     | ✓     |       | ✓     |       | ✓     |        | ✓      | ✓      |        |        |
| 7  | Grey warbler-finch            | <i>Certhidea fusca</i>                 | ✓     |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |        |        |        |        |        |

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|    |                            |                                   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|----|----------------------------|-----------------------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 8  | Smooth-billed ani          | <i>Crotophaga ani</i>             | ✓ |   | ✓ | ✓ |   | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |   | ✓ |   |   |   |
| 9  | Common gallinule           | <i>Gallinula galeata</i>          | ✓ |   |   |   |   | ✓ |   | ✓ |   |   |   |   |   |
| 10 | Great frigatebird          | <i>Fregata minor</i>              | ✓ |   | ✓ |   | ✓ |   |   |   |   |   |   |   | ✓ |
| 11 | Western cattle egret       | <i>Bubulcus ibis</i>              |   | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |   | ✓ |   | ✓ |   |   |   | ✓ |   |
| 12 | Galapagos dove             | <i>Zenaida galapagoensis</i>      |   | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |   | ✓ |   | ✓ |   |
| 13 | Small ground finch         | <i>Geospiza fuliginosa</i>        |   | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |   | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |   | ✓ |   | ✓ | ✓ |
| 14 | Espanola mockingbird       | <i>Mimus macdonaldi</i>           |   | ✓ |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| 15 | Espanola ground finch      | <i>Geospiza conirostris</i>       |   | ✓ |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| 16 | Galapagos flycatcher       | <i>Myiarchus magnirostris</i>     |   | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |   | ✓ |   |   |   |   |   | ✓ |   |
| 17 | Galapagos hawk             | <i>Buteo galapagensis</i>         |   | ✓ |   |   |   |   |   | ✓ |   | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |   |
| 18 | Galapagos oystercatcher    | <i>Haematopus galapagensis</i>    |   | ✓ |   |   |   |   | ✓ |   |   |   | ✓ | ✓ |   |
| 19 | Nazca booby                | <i>Sula granti</i>                |   | ✓ |   |   | ✓ |   | ✓ |   |   |   | ✓ |   |   |
| 20 | Waved albatross            | <i>Phoebastria irrorata</i>       |   | ✓ |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| 21 | Swallow-tailed gull        | <i>Creagrurus furcatus</i>        |   | ✓ | ✓ |   | ✓ |   |   |   |   |   | ✓ |   | ✓ |
| 22 | Red-billed tropicbird      | <i>Phaethon aethereus</i>         |   | ✓ | ✓ |   | ✓ |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| 23 | Galapagos shearwater       | <i>Puffinus subalaris</i>         |   | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |   | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| 24 | Brown noddy                | <i>Anous stolidus</i>             |   |   | ✓ | ✓ |   | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| 25 | Galapagos greater flamingo | <i>Phoenicopterus rubet-rubet</i> |   |   | ✓ |   |   |   | ✓ | ✓ |   |   |   |   |   |
| 26 | Wandering tatler           | <i>Tringa incana</i>              |   |   | ✓ |   |   |   | ✓ |   | ✓ |   | ✓ | ✓ |   |
| 27 | Medium ground-finch        | <i>Geospiza fortis</i>            |   |   | ✓ | ✓ |   | ✓ |   | ✓ |   | ✓ |   |   |   |
| 28 | Black-necked stilt         | <i>Himantopus mexicanus</i>       |   |   | ✓ | ✓ |   |   |   | ✓ |   |   |   |   |   |
| 29 | Small tree-finch           | <i>Geospiza parvula</i>           |   |   | ✓ |   |   | ✓ |   | ✓ |   |   |   |   |   |
| 30 | Common cactus-finch        | <i>Geospiza scandens</i>          |   |   | ✓ | ✓ |   | ✓ |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| 31 | Great blue heron           | <i>Ardea herodias</i>             |   |   | ✓ | ✓ |   |   | ✓ | ✓ |   |   |   | ✓ |   |
| 32 | Grey plover                | <i>Pluvialis squatarola</i>       |   |   | ✓ |   | ✓ |   |   | ✓ |   |   |   |   |   |
| 33 | Floreana mockingbird       | <i>Mimus trifasciatus</i>         |   |   | ✓ |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| 34 | American whimbrel          | <i>Numenius hudsonicus</i>        |   |   | ✓ | ✓ |   |   |   | ✓ | ✓ |   |   | ✓ | ✓ |
| 35 | Least sandpiper            | <i>Calidris minutilla</i>         |   |   | ✓ |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| 36 | Semipalmated plover        | <i>Charadrius semipalmatus</i>    |   |   | ✓ |   |   |   | ✓ |   |   |   |   | ✓ |   |
| 37 | White-cheeked pintail      | <i>Anas bahamamensis</i>          |   |   | ✓ |   |   | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |   |   |   |   |   |
| 38 | Galapagos mockingbird      | <i>Mimus parvulus</i>             |   |   |   | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |   | ✓ | ✓ |   | ✓ |   |
| 39 | Red-footed booby           | <i>Sula sula</i>                  |   |   |   |   | ✓ |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| 40 | Yellow-crowned night heron | <i>Nyctanassa violacea</i>        |   |   |   |   | ✓ |   | ✓ | ✓ |   |   |   | ✓ |   |
| 41 | Large cactus-finch         | <i>Geospiza propinqua</i>         |   |   |   |   | ✓ |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| 42 | Large ground finch         | <i>Geospiza magnirostris</i>      |   |   |   |   | ✓ |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |

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|    |                              |                                  |  |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|----|------------------------------|----------------------------------|--|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 43 | Galapagos short-eared owl    | <i>Asio galapagoensis</i>        |  |   |   |   | ✓ |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| 44 | Galapagos storm-petrel       | <i>Oceanodroma tethys tethys</i> |  |   |   |   | ✓ |   |   |   |   |   | ✓ |   |   |
| 45 | Green warbler finch          | <i>Certhidea olivacea</i>        |  |   |   |   |   | ✓ |   | ✓ |   |   |   |   |   |
| 46 | Woodpecker finch             | <i>Geospiza pallida</i>          |  |   |   |   |   | ✓ |   | ✓ |   |   |   |   |   |
| 47 | Vegetarian finch             | <i>Platypiza crassirostris</i>   |  |   |   |   |   | ✓ |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| 48 | Galapagos rail               | <i>Laterallus spilonotus</i>     |  |   |   |   |   | ✓ |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| 49 | Galápagos penguin            | <i>Spheniscus mendiculus</i>     |  |   |   |   |   |   | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |   |
| 50 | Chilean flamingo             | <i>Phoenicopterus chilensis</i>  |  |   |   |   |   |   | ✓ |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| 51 | Little vermillion flycatcher | <i>Pyrocephalus nanus</i>        |  |   |   |   |   |   |   | ✓ |   |   |   |   |   |
| 52 | Franklin's gull              | <i>Larus pipixcan</i>            |  |   |   |   |   |   |   | ✓ |   |   |   |   |   |
| 53 | Large tree finch             | <i>Camarhynchus psittacula</i>   |  |   |   |   |   |   |   | ✓ |   |   |   |   |   |
| 54 | Lava gull                    | <i>Lanus fuliginosus</i>         |  |   |   |   |   |   |   | ✓ |   |   |   |   | ✓ |
| 55 | Flightless cormorant         | <i>Nannopterum harrisi</i>       |  |   |   |   |   |   |   |   | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |   |   |
| 56 | Ruddy turnstone              | <i>Arenaria interprets</i>       |  |   |   |   |   |   |   |   | ✓ |   | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| 57 | Dark-billed cuckoo           | <i>Coccyzus melacoryphus</i>     |  |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   | ✓ |   |   |   |
| 58 | Galapagos petrel             | <i>Pterodroma phaeopygia</i>     |  |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   | ✓ | ✓ |   |   |
| 59 | Galapagos martin             | <i>Progne modesta modesta</i>    |  |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   | ✓ |   |   |
|    |                              |                                  |  |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|    | <b>SHARKS</b>                |                                  |  |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| 1  | Black-tip shark              | <i>Carcharhinus limbatus</i>     |  | ✓ |   |   | ✓ | ✓ |   | ✓ |   |   |   | ✓ |   |
| 2  | White-tipped reef shark      | <i>Triaenodon obesus</i>         |  | ✓ | ✓ |   |   |   | ✓ |   |   |   |   | ✓ |   |
| 3  | Galapagos shark              | <i>Carcharhinus limbatus</i>     |  |   | ✓ |   | ✓ |   | ✓ |   |   |   |   | ✓ |   |
| 4  | Tiger shark                  | <i>Galeocerdo cuvier</i>         |  |   |   | ✓ |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| 5  | Scalloped hammerhead         | <i>Sphyrna Leninist</i>          |  |   |   |   | ✓ |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|    |                              |                                  |  |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|    | <b>RAYS</b>                  |                                  |  |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| 1  | Marbled ray                  | <i>Taeniurops meyeri</i>         |  |   | ✓ |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| 2  | Giant manta ray              | <i>Manta hamiltoni</i>           |  |   | ✓ |   |   |   |   |   | ✓ |   |   |   |   |
| 3  | Spotted eagle ray            | <i>Aetobatus narinari</i>        |  |   | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |   | ✓ | ✓ |   |   | ✓ |   |
| 4  | Longtail sting ray           | <i>Hypanus longus</i>            |  |   | ✓ |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| 5  | Spinetail mobula             | <i>Mobula japanica</i>           |  |   |   |   | ✓ |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| 6  | Golden cownose ray           | <i>Rhinoptera steindachneri</i>  |  |   |   |   |   |   |   |   | ✓ |   |   |   |   |