

# SEA LION ISLAND Wildlife Calendar

## September:

- Alpha male Elephant Seals return to peg out territory and the females return to form Harems on the beaches – pups start being born mid September onwards.
- Gentoo penguins in their hundreds – start building their nest mid September
- Magellanic penguins return around 01 September to their burrows
- Upland Geese nesting
- Orca pods around from now onwards – pods of 4 and 5
- Sea Lions in the tussock and sometimes on the beaches
- Occasional fur seals and King penguins all season
- Elephant seal pups are born and are fed on their mother's rich milk for only 22 days and weaned. Mothers then mate and leave. Weight when born approx. 45 kg and weaned at 180 kg

## October:

- Third week of October is the height of the Elephant Seal breeding season – up to 1800 seals on the beaches – lot of fighting between males going on.
- Flightless Streamer Ducks, Ruddy Headed Geese and Upland Geese chicks around.
- Rockhopper Penguins arrive around 01 October to start nesting.
- Gentoo lay eggs mid October – chicks mid November
- Magellanic penguins – lay mid October and chicks mid November
- Elephant seals still having pups
- Orcas around waiting take female elephants returning to seas
- Sea Lions around
- King Cormorant's courtship mid October

## November:

- Gentoo and Magellanic Penguins chick mid November onwards.
- Rockhopper lay from mid November and Chicks early December
- Many small bird chicks around everywhere.
- Orcas around waiting to take unsuspecting elephant seals pups playing in shallow water.
- King Cormorant Chicks
- Wild flowers start to flower – we have the dog orchid near the lodge

**December:**

- Lots of chicks around
- Elephant seal pups lying around ready to go to sea. Most females have left to other places. Young males come back to moult. Large alpha males go to sea to feed – having been on the beaches for up 3 months.
- Christmas time onwards the Sea Lions start to breed – they have harems of 5/6 females – pups being born. Females feed their young for up to a year but go away March. Males around all year.
- Penguin chicks are getting bigger.

**January:**

- Sea Lions breeding – we have on average 55 pups per year
- Penguin chicks moulting
- Lots of chicks around from small birds still
- Lots of moulting elephant seals

**February:**

- This years' penguin chicks fledged – go out to feed
- Sea Lion pups play in the water close to breeding site.
- Orcas around still

**March:**

- All species are still around

**April:**

- Migrating birds leave mid April – Rockhopper and Magellanic penguins – plus Skuas.