



### Depth:

Up to 18 m

### Ice:

Brash Ice can be a factor to be contended with, as the nearby glacier is very active. There also may be bergy bits grounded or floating about Point Wild, preventing or making access to the dive site difficult.

### What you might see:

#### TOP 7 M:

Sea stars  
Limpets  
Algae

#### BELOW 7 M:

Sea stars  
Tunicates  
Anemones  
Algae  
Sea spiders  
Notothenids

Elephant Island is the easternmost outlier of the South Shetland Islands. It was discovered and chartered by Edward Bransfield, RN in 1820, and was named for the many Southern Elephant Seals found there. Most notably this is the first *terra firma* Shackleton and the men of his *Endurance* expedition landed upon after escaping the ice. Point Wild was named for Frank Wild, the leader of the 22 men who were stranded here for 135 days while Shackleton made a desperate attempt to find help. Thankfully, on 30 August 1916 the men on Elephant Island were rescued after a two-year battle of survival against the Southern Ocean.

### CONDITIONS

Elephant Island is fully exposed to the Southern ocean and all its forces, and Point Wild offers little reprieve from a constant battering of surge from the North. This surge can make diving difficult and very dangerous.

It is not uncommon for divers at this site to lose spatial bearings, reach an undesired depth, or abort the dive because of a combination of adverse conditions. The dive should only be attempted in relatively calm conditions, which unfortunately are rare around the island.

Due to surge, it is necessary to hug the wall upon descent and ascent. The upper 3 m of the wall are often scoured by brash ice and bergy bits which have broken off of the nearby glacier, or grounded icebergs trapped around the island. However, below 7 m a good variety of life is present.

Point Wild, Elephant Island



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LEFT: Undescribed anemone (top); Encrusting sponge (middle); undescribed anemone (bottom).

RIGHT: Heavily encrusted portion of Point Wild wall (top); Sea spider (*Pycnogona*) (bottom).



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