

## An 11-year old's observations of Antarctica

### My visit to Antarctica by Kate Ledingham, age 11

Antarctica was fantastic. It was a bit warmer than I thought it would be — it wasn't always cold and windy like you'd think. I really enjoyed the rocks and the seals and penguins.

Going up to the animals was the funniest part. Penguins would come and talk to you, and watching the chicks was great — they were cute and they peep to their mums and dads. You can't touch them like a pet, but it's nice to see them. I saw a wandering albatross on its nest. It kept spreading its wings — they were huge!!

The first couple of icebergs were really fantastic. We had a competition to see who could guess when we would see the first one. Then they got a bit boring, but there were still some really amazing shapes.

Antarctica is different from everything else in the world that I've ever seen. It was amazing, it made you feel small and you're always amazed at how big and beautiful it was. The scenery, the colours — sometimes the water was turquoise. There's different wildlife that you'd never see anywhere else. I'd like to go to the Arctic now and see polar bears.

I had fun. It was great how it was light almost all the time so you could stay up really late. I liked meeting lots of people on the ship. I was the only child on the ship. I think older people liked having younger kids around. I was disappointed to leave, partly sad to leave something that special and partly to say goodbye to all the friends I'd made on the ship. I reckon the expeditioners would like to have kids at their stations — it'd be a learning experience for them too. The kids would probably run around and play and laugh. It would be good for them to play games with them. It's probably more natural to have kids around.

It'd be fun, but you'd be a bit isolated if you went for a year. You'd miss playing outside in the sun and having trees and plants and greenery, playing on the grass and round the sprinkler. You wouldn't have fun with friends at school and you couldn't have pets.