



Luxury adventures in the Kiwi wilderness

Akaroa & Banks Peninsula Pohatu Penguin Habitat Eco-Tour Penguin Availability & the Flea Bay Experience!

You can be virtually guaranteed of seeing penguins between September to mid-February, and a high chance between mid-April and end of June. However, penguins tend to leave the bay by mid-February through March and start returning early April and then leave again, coming back in bigger numbers in September for the breeding season. So, from mid-February through to the end of March it's unlikely to view penguins, but we still run the day tour regardless including the nature safaris which incorporate for example sheep feeding - and the hike out to the seals on the "extended" tour (selectable option when booking)

So, although there is slim or no possibility of seeing penguins between mid-February to mid-April, Maossie Tours still run this day-tour for much of the year, including mid-winter being June – August. This is because the scenic nature safari, which is actually conducted by the conservationists at Pohatu (Flea Bay, Akaroa), remains a fascinating activity even in the "off-season". In other words, even when penguins are not in the area, the safari offers additional sites and wildlife likely to be of interest.

This unique nature safari is conducted in the spectacular, award-winning Wild Side Conservation area. It provides an opportunity to learn about the area's rich history, native flora and fauna and Pohatu's unique penguin conservation program. The people of Pohatu take very seriously their job in monitoring nesting sites. And, if an evening tour is undertaken, this is the only place in New Zealand you can easily see penguins' gathering and socializing on the water. This may also be occasionally observed during the extended day tour option.

If visiting between mid-November and mid-February, you may even be lucky enough to see rehabilitation efforts such as supplemental feedings and swim therapy. Fact is, Pohatu have been conserving the Little Penguins for over 30 years and have 4 conservation awards for their efforts in penguin conservation, protection and monitoring. Francis and Shireen Helps have worked over the last three decades protecting White-flipped Penguins (*Eudyptula minor albosignata*), Canterbury's own variant of Australasian Little Penguin, from introduced predators. Importantly, spending time with Pohatu helps the preservation of these beautiful birds for future generations!

On a more general note, courtesy of our luxury 4x4WD coach – as you journey to Flea Bay at Akaroa, you are able to take in the breath-taking scenery of the rugged Banks Peninsula coastline and farmlands. Our bus follows along the top of a volcanic rim before descending into coastline destinations, including Flea Bay Akaroa. This area is renowned for its rugged topography in a surprisingly sparsely populated district. Amongst extensive farm lands, Akaroa's diverse landscape is a region where conservation areas abound in an area regarded as extremely important for native plants and associated wildlife. In fact, Banks Peninsula is renowned as having the highest amount of biodiversity in New Zealand.

The other points of significance are that Maossie tours provides you with lunch, morning and afternoon tea and refreshments, as well as taking you earlier in the day to Okains Bay Maori & Colonial Museum, and later in the day to the award winning Barrys Bay Cheese Factory. And finally, be mindful that this is not an arduous 4WD experience although be aware the relatively inaccessible road into Flea bay is quite steep, windy, unsealed and narrow and 4WD only. Nonetheless, whether you are a serious conservationist, or just coming along to sight some wild animals (or mingle amongst more domesticated ones!), we believe that everyone is certain to enjoy the marvellous scenery.

See Trip advisor [here](#) for ratings by individual travellers.