

Outreach opportunities from UK Polar Network

Fiona Sheriff

Head of Geography

Head of Education and Outreach at UK Polar Network

Kingsthorpe College

@fiona_616



What is the UK Polar Network?

The UKPN was established in 2007 and we are the UK branch of the Association of Polar Early Career Scientists (APECS).

The network is made up of aspiring undergraduates, Masters and PhD students, Post-Doc researchers, teachers and recent faculty appointees.

It is a voluntary group, which organises career development events, education and outreach activities and supports early-career polar researchers.



Outreach opportunities

- Antarctica Day Flag Project – annual competition
- Polar Pen Pals
- School visits / Skype meetings
- Festivals and events





Antarctica Day Flags Project





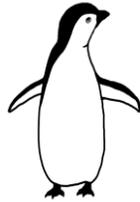


Antarctica Day 2022 – Flag Competition



Design a flag for Antarctica – what do you think their flag should look like?

The winning flag will be sent to Antarctic researchers and scientists who are visiting Antarctica this year. This is an exciting opportunity to have something you have designed go GLOBAL! Every school that enters will have a flag sent to Antarctica. This year 70 schools have entered.



An e-mail will be sent back to Kingsthorpe College with a photo and a certificate. The event will be documented on the UK Polar Network website and their social media feed. Mrs Sheriff is part of the UK Polar Network and she looks forward to receiving your flags to send on to the researchers and scientists!

Your flag should be colourful – avoid a white background as this won't show up in front of the snow!

It can be hand drawn or drawn using a computer.

There will be a winner for each form/class and an overall winner!

Closing date : 15th November 2022
Flags to be returned to: Mrs Sheriff



8th June 2022

To Year 8, Ivybridge Community College,

Thanks very much for the questions you put to the UK Polar Network, I was really pleased to receive them and also to learn about your enthusiasm for Antarctica and all things in it! It's really important that people recognise the unique environment that Antarctica represents, and the risks we all face from climate heating. I really hope that your interest continues - and that my answers to your questions prompt even more interest!

My name is Adam Booth, and I'm a geophysicist in the School of Earth and Environment at the University of Leeds. As a geophysicist, I'm interested in measuring what Antarctica's ice is like, 3 km beneath my feet: you can imagine me like an X-ray specialist for ice! But in learning what it's like down there, we can start to predict how glaciers will change with climate warming. I don't do too much with penguins, other than giving them a wave as they waddle through our research station! – so I'll admit that I referred your penguin questions a colleague who is more of an expert. I hope that's ok!

Anyway, my answers follow the end of this letter, and I've also included some pictures from the various Antarctic projects I've worked on. You can follow some latest developments in Antarctic work at thwaitesglacier.org, a website that describes some on-going research on Antarctica's Thwaites Glacier. Thanks again for your interest – keep it going!

All the best,



Dr Adam Booth
Associate Professor of Applied Geophysics
University of Leeds

1. What experiences have you had with penguins?

As I say, I don't work specifically with penguins so most of them have been 'by accident!' When we first arrive at [Rothera Station](#), on the Antarctic Peninsula, to get prepare our equipment, we're not close to any major penguin colonies – yet penguins still find their way onto the station! You can be sat working in a lab, look out of the window, and suddenly there are a couple of penguins walking past! Most of the ones I've seen were Emperor or Adelle penguins.

2. What happens to food shipping is delayed due to bad weather?

The kitchens at Rothera Station are really well stocked, and I think it'd have to be a *major* weather delay to put anyone at risk! But when we fly out to our sites, we make sure to take lots of extra food with us because the weather can be bad enough to delay resupply flights. But for most of the work I've done, delays were only for a few days at most and even though your food boxes are starting to look a bit empty, there's no risk as there are still emergency food boxes to use.

During covid, of course, there was real disruption to shipping to Antarctica – but most of the problems here were for fuel and not food.

3. How long do penguins live for?

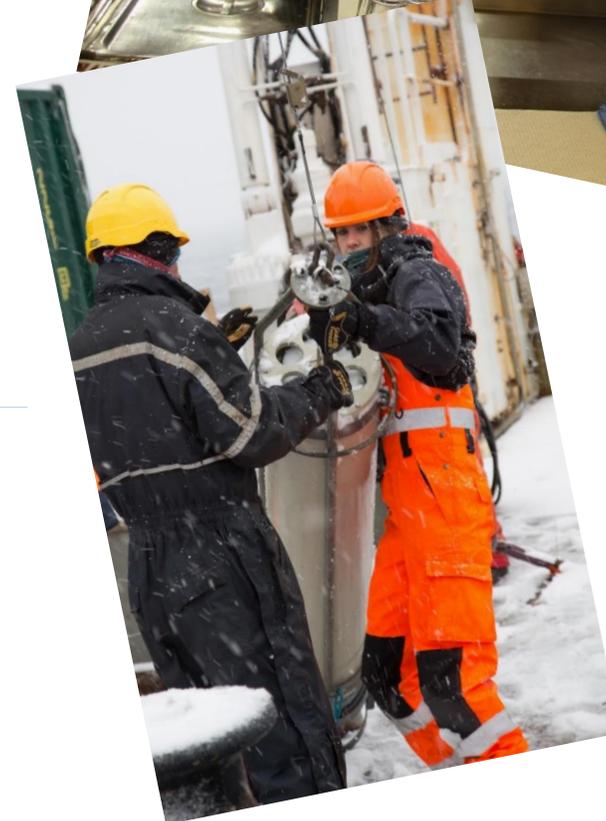
So, this is where I had to ask a colleague! – What do you think? To be honest, I was amazed that they live as long as they do...! But, for the two penguin species I've seen: Adelle Penguins can live anywhere between 10-20 years, and for Emperor Penguins it's more like 15-20 years. Apparently, there are some stories of Emperor Penguins living as long as 40 years! (which is just one year younger than me...!).

4. What animal do you see most often?

When we head out of the station, the simple answer is: hardly any at all! Nothing really lives in the centre of Antarctica, which is where we do most of our geophysical work. However, in 2015 when I returned to Rothera Station, the whole place had been invaded by Elephant Seals! They pretty smelly and noisy, and just lie around wherever they like including on the main runway – they have to be gently guided to safety using forklift trucks...!

5. Have you worked on Halley VI?

I haven't worked at Halley – all of my deployments have been based out of Rothera. However, I do know people who have, including those who are involved with [moving the station](#) because of the crack in the ice that is appearing nearby. Rothera is a larger station than Halley – there are maybe 150 people there at most (which feels like a city when you first come back in from a 'deep field' deployment!), whereas I think Halley maybe has more like 30 people.



Polar Pen Pals



School Visits

To find out more...

Email:

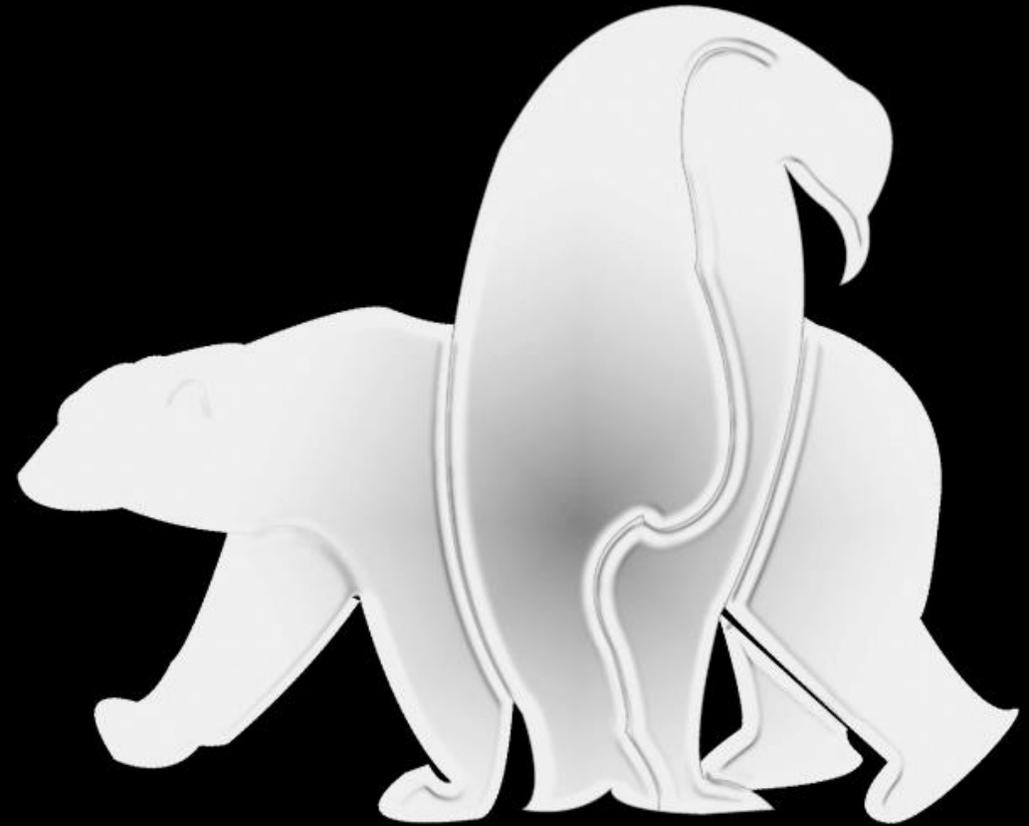
Fiona.old@kingsthorpecollege.org.uk

Visit:

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