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KAYAKING TO SAVE THE ALBATROSS

FIRST SOLO KAYAKING ATTEMPT TO CIRCUMNAVIGATE SOUTH GEORGIA

Arcata, CA – In January 2009 Hayley Shephard, a Kiwi now residing on the West Coast of Canada, will attempting the very first solo sea kayak circumnavigation of South Georgia Island in efforts to help save the Albatross.

Behind the scenes of soaring Albatross is the insidious, almost invisible loss of lives, thinning out breeding colonies, emptying skies and threatening the very existence of 19 out of 20 species of Albatross, due to illegal fishing and poor techniques in the Long Line fishing industry. South Georgia, a Sub-Antarctic island known for its rugged beauty and abundant wildlife is home to a number of Albatross species.

“South Georgia - an exceptionally isolated, storm torn island, stands ultimately alone in the middle of the Southern Ocean, its nearest neighbor 1400km away. Treacherous seas constantly batter the coastal rocks and ridges, and fearless animals generously congregate on the few accessible beaches, taking shelter from the savage winds. As hostile, as dangerous, and as foreboding as it feels, South Georgia’s charm, it’s dramatic and ruggedly stunning beauty, has a power that I will be forever drawn to. And I shall not rest until I have seen the intimacy of it all.” – Hayley Shephard

Shephard anticipates the expedition will take 3-5 weeks, and perhaps longer due to the often stormbound conditions she will have to face. The circumnavigation of South Georgia is approximately a 490 nautical mile journey, and there will be days where Hayley will spend at least 12-14 hours in her kayak utilizing good weather windows.

Hayley spent the last 7 years kayak guiding, and leading expeditions in the Arctic, Antarctica and the Sub-Antarctic islands, gaining a passion for these Polar Regions and a care and interest in the wildlife. In 1999 she was the first woman to solo sea kayak the 1200km circumnavigation of Vancouver Island, followed by another epic adventure in 2005 when she was the first woman to sea kayak alone around the rugged and exposed coast of the sacred Haida Gwaii (Queen Charlotte Islands).

For more details on Hayley Shephard, the South Georgia Expedition and Saving the Albatross, please visit www.kayakingtosavealbatross.com and www.kokatat.com/expeditions.asp

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