Dear All

Well we have now got to the point where everyone and everything on the ship seems to smell of penguin poo. It is not a nice smell and it not a nice sight either but at least we got ashore and did a fantastic zodiac trip this morning so we are feeling very blessed. The sun shone too. As the noon tide approached the coastal fog seemed to be rolling in but we were fine.

Now we are travelling back into the Antarctic Sound again to try and make our first landing on the Antarctic Continent this afternoon.

This morning we woke early and saw that the sun was shining so hurriedly threw on some outer layers and went out on deck to watch the icebergs pass by. Then I went back to bed for a bit. Sarah says she has never been to the Weddell Sea but has been to the west side of the peninsular twice and knows we will not see ice bergs like these ones again on the west side of the Antarctic Peninsula. Here huge chunks of ice have broken off the ice shelf in the Weddell Sea and are rolling about spectacularly. On Paulet Island where we were this morning there is an enormous colony of Adele penguins. We hadn't seen that sort yet so that was exciting. They are small with notable tufty tails and big blue ringed eyes. The baby’s heads are not as black as their parents. When they moult they look a bit like a Mrs Tiggywinkle hedgehog as the feathers fall off on their fronts first of all and they are left with a Mohican that runs all the way down their backs. They eat Krill which is a prawn like thing about 1-2 inches long. It is here in abundant because of an algae explosion and everything feeds off that or off the animals that eat that. One of the top predators is the leopard seal and we had a great view of one sunning itself on an ice floe. It stretched and yawned as we watched and I have a great photo of its enormous mouth and loads of teeth. It would easily crunch a penguin up. The crab eater and Weddell seals look like cats and dogs respectively and not like a snake. We have learnt so much!

Hope all is well. Keep warm in the freezing temperatures you are experiencing.