

Española Island

Dec 11, 2022 - National Geographic Endeavour II



A baby Galapagos sea lion hanging out with a marine iguana. While sea lion mothers are feeding at sea, their babies stay on land or play in the tidepools. Sometimes they get bored and play with marine iguanas. Photo by Msc. Juan de Dios Morales



A marbled stingray resting on the bottom of Gardner Islet during our snorkel. Photo by Msc. Juan de Dios Morales



A majestic waved albatross gliding above us during our hike at Punta Suarez on Española Island. Photo by Msc. Juan de Dios Morales



One of my favorite authors, Carl Safina, on one of my favorite islands! Photo by Msc. Juan de Dios Morales

Today we visited the home of the waved albatross, the only species of albatross that nests in the Galapagos Islands. Every time we visit this island is special. It is always wonderful to observe the interactions and behaviors of this majestic bird. However, today was extra special as we got to share the island with Carl Safina, famous ecologist and author of many books about wildlife. In fact, he's one of my favorite writers. Carl stayed on Española Island for a week to study the waved albatross while he was writing his book, *The Eye of the Albatross*. This time, he came back to the Galapagos to share his knowledge and wisdom about how animals think and feel, a subject many people never thought possible that has now been scientifically proven.

In the morning, we explored Gardner Bay, a beautiful white sand beach that is home to Galapagos sea lions. We also had an introduction to the underwater world of the Galapagos. In the afternoon, we visited Punta Suarez, a nesting site for waved albatrosses. Galapagos is truly a special place where the wildlife is unafraid of humans, teaching us all that it is possible to coexist.

About the Author



Gianna Haro • Naturalist

Most of Gianna's memories seem to be dreams, made on flawless white sandy beaches with black lava rock contours and gorgeous turquoise ocean waters. Most of it happened while barefoot, in an enchanting place that some people regard as an ideal natural laboratory, the Galápagos Islands. For her it was home. Gianna grew up going to the beach nearly every day, snorkeling in crystal clear waters, playing with wild flowers,

having sea lions steal her ice cream, observing marine iguanas, and identifying invertebrates. The latter was by no means technically accurate—she dubbed each new discovery with its own made-up scientific name. At some point during those early years, being an observer became an innate ability and she knew she wanted to be a biologist.