



OCEANWIDE
30 YEARS OF EXPEDITIONS

East Spitsbergen Explorer
Home of the Polar Bear, Summer Solstice
20th June – 27th June 2024



M/V Plancius

MV Plancius was named after the Dutch astronomer, cartographer, geographer, and minister Petrus Plancius (1552 - 1622). Plancius was built in 1976 as an oceanographic research vessel for the Royal Dutch Navy and was named Hr. Ms. Tydeman. The ship sailed for the Royal Dutch Navy until June 2004 when she was purchased by Oceanwide Expeditions and completely refit in 2007, being converted into a 114-passenger expedition vessel. Plancius is 89 m (267 feet) long, 14.5 m (43 feet) wide and has a maximum draft of 5 m, with an Ice Strength rating of 1D, top speed of 12+ knots and three diesel engines generating 1230 hp each.

Captain Ernesto Barria

and his international crew

Chief Officer: **Elizbar Kadaria**

2nd Officer: **Don Buren**

3rd Officer: **Anar Babaiev**

Chief Engineer: **Sebastian Alexandru**

Hotel Manager: **Oleksandr Lyebyedyev**

Assist. Hotel Manager: **Bogdan Manevski**

Head Chef: **Ivan Yuriychuk**

Ships Doctor: **Jon Messing**

Expedition Leader: **Phillipp Schaudy**

Assist. Expedition Leader: **Eduardo Rubio Herrera**

Expedition Guide: **Alexander Romanovskiy**

Beth Hitchcock

John Rogers

Koen Jongerling

Paolo Bellezze

Tiphanie May

Day 1 – 20th June

Longyearbyen - Embarkation Day

12:00 GPS Position: 78°14.0'N / 015°37.4'E

Wind: SSE 3, **Sea State:** Smooth, **Weather:** Overcast, **Air Temp:** 5°C, **Sea Temp:** 5°C

Today is the day! It is finally time for us to embark upon our arctic adventure! The day was suitably arctic with clouds and a strong breeze, but the gales from the early morning had abated. In the late afternoon we arrived at the dock where we could see our ship Plancius, our new home for the next 8 days, at anchor in the harbor. We had a bonus Zodiac shuttle to start our expedition. Onboard we all checked in and were quickly escorted to our respective cabins. We excitedly started exploring the ship and wandering the decks enjoying the views of Longyearbyen.



Once we were all aboard, we were invited to the lounge to take part in a mandatory briefing and abandon ship drill. After we completed the mandatory drills, it was time for the ship to leave. At 18:30 we weighed anchor and were on our way out of the harbour.

Whilst the crew made sure we left the harbour soundly, our expedition leader Phillipp invited us back to the lounge for the Captain's Cocktails, where we met our captain Ernesto Barria, and the rest of the expedition

team. We celebrated our expedition with some bubbles and canapes before we were called for the final activity of the day: dinner!

We all filed down to the restaurant for a delicious buffet and an opportunity to meet all our fellow travellers. For this voyage about half of us had been on the previous voyage as well – and were going back-to-back – making introductions that much easier.

Our day was not done yet as after dinner we located the Boot Room and collected our rubber boots, and the long walkers convened in the lounge for an introductory briefing. We were another step closer to being able to start our off-ship activities.



We spent the rest of the evening enjoying the long summer light into the evening before returning to our cabins to prepare for tomorrow's adventure!

Day 2 – 21st June

Hornfjord

12:00 GPS Position: 77°00.1'N / 016°09.5'E

Wind: S 2, **Sea State:** Smooth, **Weather:** Partly Cloudy, **Air Temp:** 1°C, **Sea Temp:** 1°C



After our first night underway, heading south, we arrived at the entrance of Hornsund early in the morning. The wind was strong, gusting up to 50 knots. The mountains were topped with lenticular clouds and fast ice lined the inner reaches of the fjords. We made our way into the inner most bay of Hornsund called Brepollen. This is a bay surrounding by glaciers from all sides. These glaciers once rumbled down the valleys much further than they do today, even reaching as far as Treskelen in 1900, the site where we went ashore.

Excited guides and guests wandered the decks off Plancius with their binoculars to hand. The patchy snow at this time of year makes spotting challenging so you must focus if you want to find anything around here. Dark grey seals were spotted on the fast ice, resting next to a convenient hole in the ice.

After breakfast, we had our mandatory briefing for how to board and unload zodiacs, a useful lesson particularly when the weather is not so calm. Our expedition leader Phillipp also introduced the plans for the morning's walks in more detail and polar bear safety.



At the landing site, on the western side of Treskelen, we set off exploring the rocky, snow laden peninsula in our groups. We divide into groups so we could go at our own pace, whether that was slow and steady for taking many photos, or a brisk walk to get to the hilltop and see the views to the east. From the high ridge, we could see from above the large areas of Brepollen covered in fast ice. The wind was strong, blowing us backwards as we tried to walk up the loose rock to the ridge. Each step on the snow was a surprise, sometimes a foot would sink in, deeper than your knee, other times the hard ice below would hold your foot near the surface.

In our groups we observed the flowers and mosses that persevere in this harsh environment, growing into a colourful display during the short burst of summer. Tufted Saxifrage and Purple Saxifrage were amongst the most common seen, which are pioneer species colonising the landscape. The rocks which we walked on were

also of interest. They are sedimentary layers that were laid down during a time when the climate and setting were quite different for Svalbard. We began walking on limestone type rocks, representing a time when Svalbard was further south, near the equator. By the time we made it to the top of the ridge, we found ourselves walking on dark coloured rocks called shales. These represent a change in the conditions as Svalbard slowly drifted north due to plate tectonics, reaching a climate where fine muds were deposited in cold shallow seas.

A group also went for a longer walk, taking a packed lunch ashore to allow an extension along the coastline. We had lunch at an old trapper's hut which is used occasional by private trips visiting Hornsund. Our walk ended near a stony beach where we were shuttled back to Plancius.

The afternoon was spent zodiac cruising for those who did not join the long hike. Burgerbukta is split into two fjords now that the glaciers have retreated beyond the rocky spur. We made our way into the eastern fjord of Burgerbukta where the glacier Mühlbacherbreen forms a calving glacier front.

The fast ice covered a lot for the bay making an area that was impassable to the zodiacs. One kittiwake was attacked by an arctic skua, which was caught on camera by some. Brunnichs guillemots and fulmars were also seen. The impressive landscape was wonderful to see from the water, making us feel small in such a vast setting.

In the evening, Phillip, Beth and Eduardo gave some talks on the plans from the following day, the geology we had seen today and the importance of this day as the summer solstice: a day that is important for many cultures around the world!



Day 3 – 22nd June

Cruising the Pack Ice

12:00 GPS Position: 77°24.8'N / 019°59.3'E

Wind: NW 2, **Sea State:** Calm, **Weather:** P. Cloudy, **Air Temp:** 3°C, **Sea Temp:** 0°C

After a night of a little more movement than we are used to from the ship, we were awoken by our



expedition leader Phillip to find a beautiful sunny day outside and some of our first glimpses of the pack ice. The ship skirted around the edges as our expedition guides and crew scanned the horizon for wildlife. We are trying to work our way north.

We gently cruised along the edge for the first part of the morning. At 10am our expedition guide Koen Jongerling gave us a talk about sea ice. It was extremely interesting, and we learned a lot about the state of the sea ice in Svalbard.

By about 11am Plancius started to make her way inside the pack ice so we could see for ourselves. Pieces of ice were gently crunching against the side of the hull. Many of us hung out on the decks as we entered a whole new world. We could already see the land ahead of us, but it was an optical illusion caused by the reflection of the water making it seem larger and closer than it really was. Soon time for lunch. We enjoyed the buffet watching all the pieces of ice float by the windows.

After lunch we headed out onto the decks again to enjoy the sunshine. Then the PA system announced that a seal had been spotted. The ship moved very slowly closer towards it and we saw that it was a bearded seal. It was so cool! Then the PA system went off again and our expedition leader Phillipp announced that some walrus had been spotted on the ice and we would be trying to get a closer look. We managed to get quite close with the ship and were able to enjoy watching them laying in a pile on the ice. They gave each other no space at all as they wriggled and annoyed each other in close contact. It was magical!



As we continued our wildlife search through the ice, we were informed that hotel manager Alex and his team would be serving hot apple juice on the deck behind the bridge with a little extra kick if wanted. We all gathered behind the bridge and enjoyed the hot juice and the atmosphere of being in this wonderful place bathed in sunshine.

Afterwards it was time for us to join the expedition team in the lounge for recap. Phillipp gave us the plans for tomorrow and expedition guide Tiphanie gave us a recap about Walrus followed by a recap about the Arc of Meridian expeditions given by expedition guide John.

Afterwards we all filed down to the restaurant for a great dinner before retiring for the evening.

Day 4 – 23rd June

Russebukta and Habenichbukta

12:00 GPS Position: 77°35.5'N / 020°59.6'E

Wind: S 2, **Sea State:** Calm, **Weather:** Partly Cloudy, **Air Temp:** 2°C, **Sea Temp:** 3°C

Good morning, everybody. What have you seen so far? Well, absolutely nothing to be honest. Only mist and water.

This was the start of our day. Luckily our EL had already made up a plan, before breakfast, to “hopefully” get to a better area with more visibility. Everybody was informed after breakfast that we had set sail down south to an area called Russebukta. We sailed for about 2 and a half hours through the mist, and it never seemed to clear up. Luckily just before arriving at Russebukta we got out of the mist. It clearly showed that

there was a bank of mist at the northern end of Edgeoya so it was a great idea heading south in the end. No time was wasted, and activities started right away.

We landed at a small beach which was the start of a large open area filled with many lagoons and small hill tops made of Dolomite rock. Everybody got the chance to choose the leisure, middle or long hike. Meanwhile, while waiting the Snow Buntings filled the area with a song and the Grey Phalarope colored up the area with its red breeding colors. The hikes took us up the plateau and passed by small lagoons where many birds were breeding and feeding. The first birds that everybody could see were Pink Footed Geese and King Eiders. The long hike immediately took a distance from the medium



group and headed to some Svalbard Reindeer that were grazing further in the tundra. The medium group took some time photographing the birds and the leisure group took a left turn at the first lagoon. The terrain was a bit wet here and there but was generally quite easy to hike through. Every group had the chance to hike a good distance seeing many kinds of birds, flowers and rock formations. The views around with a blue sky were very pleasant and many people were able to take a moment for themselves to realize where they were in the world. This is a real wild place that has hardly been touched by any human. Pristine and beautiful. A memory that will last for a very long time.



The guides definitely had taken the maximum time to enjoy this amazing place, so lunch was pushed back a bit. The weather stayed pleasant and calm as we arrived at the afternoon landing site called Habenichtbukta. The expedition team prepared for a landing however, together with the bridge team they had spotted 2 larger white spots walking over the tundra far inland. This was both a pleasant surprise and gave for a difficult choice. We were not able to make out if the white spots were polar bears or not. With the chance that 2 bears were walking around at the area we wanted to land the EL made a necessary choice to do a Zodiac cruise instead.

We headed out through the Habenichtbukta looking for wildlife and a possible sighting for two large white dots. During the cruise we were able to cruise along the Dolomite wall at the coast with dramatic basaltic columns. Here we were able to see a variety of birds including the Arctic Tern, Long Tailed Duck, King Eider and Kittywakes. On land we spotted some Svalbard reindeer and could see the remains of a Pomor summer station where these Russians hunted for Walrus around the 1800's. There were sadly no sightings of the earlier white spots. After a 2-hour cruise we turned back to the ship. Which we could have found even if there had been mist as there was a particular smell coming from the back deck.



The hotel department and Kitchen had prepared an Arctic Dinner for us. A BBQ on the back deck surrounded by mountains and ice while music was playing in the background. A moment that would not soon be forgotten. Some stayed and danced to the Macarena and YMCA, whilst sometimes looking out from the dancing circle remembering where we were and how special this moment really was. Another great memory made for the rest of our lives.

Day 5 – 24th June

Freemansundet and Cruising the Pack Ice

12:00 GPS Position: 77°49.7'N / 020°50.5'E

Wind: SW 3, **Sea State:** Calm, **Weather:** Foggy, **Air Temp:** 2°C, **Sea Temp:** 3°C



The hopes were high after a fantastic day yesterday and glassy seas and clear skies on arrival to Freemansund. Unlike the day before where we had found heavy pack ice, tonight everything is pointing towards a beautiful morning operation in great conditions. But it wasn't to be. Arctic climate is challenging at best and thick fog was the only thing we could see out of our windows after waking up. Thick fog and thick ice! Not a great combination for relocating fast anywhere. We moved west out of Freemansund and south again to try and find a clear spot, how frustrating for us all, guests, and

crew. Is simply not possible sailing fast in these conditions, is not safe. Is also frustrating to think we went past, twice by the Walruses hauled out at Kapp Lee and maybe even the usual polar bears roaming the coast of Edgeøya, but we could not possibly see them. Nature follows its own agenda and no good will or desire can change it.

Instead, today we had an easy but infotainment packed day with presentations for all taste, 'Svalbard Reindeer', 'Svalbard Plants', 'Arctic Fox' and a talk on mirages and other visual effects typical of these latitudes.

Later in the day, before dinner, the fog lifted enough to make being outside a good option again. Northern Fulmars were flying less than a meter away from camera lenses as they gently ridge soared the bow of the ship.

The weather gods did not smile upon us today but that's nature and luckily, we have two more days to change our luck.



Day 6 – 25th June

Hornsund – Gåshamna and Gnålodden

12:00 GPS Position: 76°56.6'N / 015°49.1'E

Wind: NW 3, **Sea State:** Calm, **Weather:** Overcast, **Air Temp:** 2°C, **Sea Temp:** 3°C

Today we entered the fjord system Hornsund again. Everybody was with high hopes for good weather and especially having no fog outside. When we arrived, the weather looked quite decent although mist was around and blew around the ship just before 08:00. Luckily it was just a bit of



mist and weather cleared enough for us to decide to make a safe landing. This morning landing was at Gashamna. A place where old remains of an English whaling station could be seen right at our landing site. In the beginning everybody was free to walk around the blubber ovens but making sure not to step on anything with moss as there would be whale bones laying there. The two ovens were in poor condition but that was something to be expected if you leave a structure unattended for 380 – 350 years.

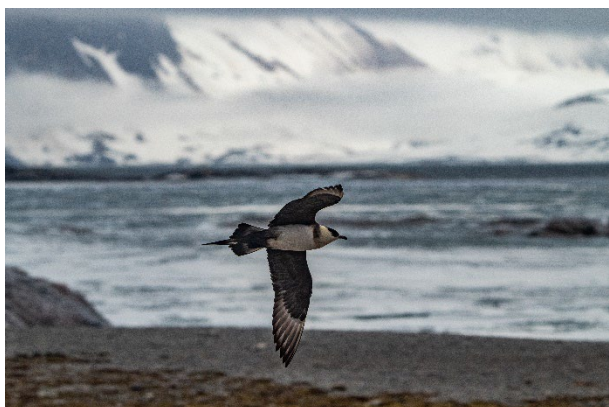
Afterwards everybody was divided into groups. The long hikers went round the tip of the bay to look for a Pomor station. Russian hunters that were in the area around the late 1700's and during the 1800's used this site as a station. The long hike was not too strenuous although the guides did get the group a little bit up the hill. The middle group also made their way towards the Pomor station but afterwards walked further too the tip of the peninsula looking for wildlife and different rock formations. The leisure group stayed with Koen and John and explored the vicinity of the whaling station and hiked a little bit towards the rock formations made of limestone/ dolostone where they found an imprint of a clam. All in all, a good morning out.

In the afternoon we went to Gnålodden. A giant wall situated at the beginning of the fjord Burgerbukta. illed with bird colonies. Black Legged Kittiwakes, Northern Fulmars and Brunnichs Guillemots breed here in large quantities. The approach was a bit difficult with all the ice on our way towards the coast and there was quite a bit of swell at the landing site. We did make it happen and landed everybody on the coast. We met at the hut just over the hill where we met a surprise. Two



Arctic Foxes came running over the hills just above us out looking for food. One ran up the hill quickly but the other stuck around for quite a while. Everybody had a good time taking pictures of the Fox although some people had to take care as they were getting attacked by Arctic Skuas that were nesting at the coastline. One of the Skuas even attacked a Fox while he was running over the hill. Phillipp made a choice to make it a perimeter landing which meant that everybody was able to

walk freely within the set borders where the guides were standing. This was a nice surprise to finally have some time for yourself to fill in and do what you like to do. Some people sat/ laid down. Others walked as far up the hill to see the bird colonies and foxes from up close.



At the end of the landing everybody was offered to join in the Polar Plunge. An experience that many people choose to skip as the waters were ice cold and it was lightly sprinkling. Some brave souls did choose to jump into the water, which made for quite the spectacle. The pool of water was very calm and some people even to stay in for a short while. The water was measured to be around 4°C. Not too cold, but definitely not comfortable.

In the evening, we had our general recap where we heard about the plans for the following day from Philip. We learned a bit more about Wanny Woldstad who lived in the trapper's cabin for a while with her sons during the 1930's from John. And we learned from Koen why the geological map from Svalbard is so colorful and where it has been for the past 1 billion years.

A great day in the Arctic which gave a lot of good energy for the following and final day of our trip.

Day 7 – 26th June

Bellsund

12:00 GPS Position: 77°33.3'N / 015°04.9'E

Wind: NE 4, **Sea State:** Calm, **Weather:** Overcast, **Air Temp:** 5°C, **Sea Temp:** 4°C

Today we really packed in activities making the most again of good weather. In the morning we landed at Bamsebu, a location with a beautiful wooden cabin surrounded by the reminders of an intense beluga whale hunting. This bay with its shallow waters was attractive for beluga and so it was for whalers who would round the beluga with nets and drag them ashore for their slaughter. Several piles of bones are a testimony for the activity that went on here. We had different hiking groups, the most energetic ones hiked



from Bamsebu at Kapp Toscana towards Recherchefjorden, the other groups spread in hikes of different intensity. Some went towards the base of Aldegondaberget others hiked NW along the coast towards the cabin in Pitnerodden. We found a polar bear carcass, an old rowing boat, remains of a capstan used to tow belugas up the beach and at Pitnerodden, a cabin that appeared to have been broken into, perhaps by a bear. We kept our distance.

All hikes enjoyed good encounters with a small herd of Reindeer, there were males, females, and calves. It was a good quiet moment to observe and take in the sight of these endemic animals.

We then returned to the ship and relocated during lunch time, this time sailing to Recherchefjorden where we would have another landing and we were planning to pick up the long hikers.

On our way to our landing near Calypsobyen at the northwest shore on the entrance of Recherchefjorden, our colleague Sasha spotted hauled out walrus at the southern tip of a spit of land, perhaps a terminal moraine of the Renardbreen (glacier) in Josephbukta and a new plan was hatched.

We would again split in groups for different hikes landing near Calypsobyen and from there we would walk whilst also being shuttled to near the walrus colony to have some time observing these very calm and sleepy beauties.



Some hikers went to see Renardbreen, whilst others hiked to the 1918-19 remains of the Northern Exploration Company, Calypsobyen. These buildings show excellent examples of artifacts, buildings and a number of small rowing boats including a large barge very well preserved. They attempted to exploit a seam of coal that reaches the beach and where the collapsed entry to the mine is still visible. It is also possible to see a narrow gauge railway track coming from the mine and some carriages. In the NW end a 'lucky' building which narrowly escaped the fall of a tall telegraph pole.

After two hours of walking, we headed back to the landing site and were shuttled to the walrus haul out. What a great experience! There were around 20 beautiful walrus, sleeping and rolling in the sand, we had a quiet moment to appreciate them fully and take pictures with the perfect backdrop of the glacier.

Finally, we returned to the ship and the very last zodiac had the chance to enjoy a minke whale which appeared at the last moment. It was very interactive, and it showed its jaw out of the water a couple of times before swimming away. What a great moment to finish our last operation.

In the evening, the Captain's Farewell Cocktails and beautiful dinner was wrapped up by Sasha's unique and very special invitation for his slideshow of the trip. He had worked every free moment in producing this long and detailed video diary for our trip and it really showed. We all loved going through the memories of what was the trip of a lifetime.



Day 8 – 27th June

Disembarkation

12:00 GPS Position: 78°15.3'N / 015°06.3'E

Wind: NE 6, **Sea State:** Smooth, **Weather:** Overcast, **Air Temp:** 5°C, **Sea Temp:** 6°C

All too soon we arrived back in Longyearbyen. Almost half of us were staying aboard for the next voyage but for the rest it was time to say our goodbyes. We had our last breakfast aboard the Plancius then gathered the last of our things. We said goodbye to the whole team and took the buses waiting for us to start the journey home or to our next adventure.



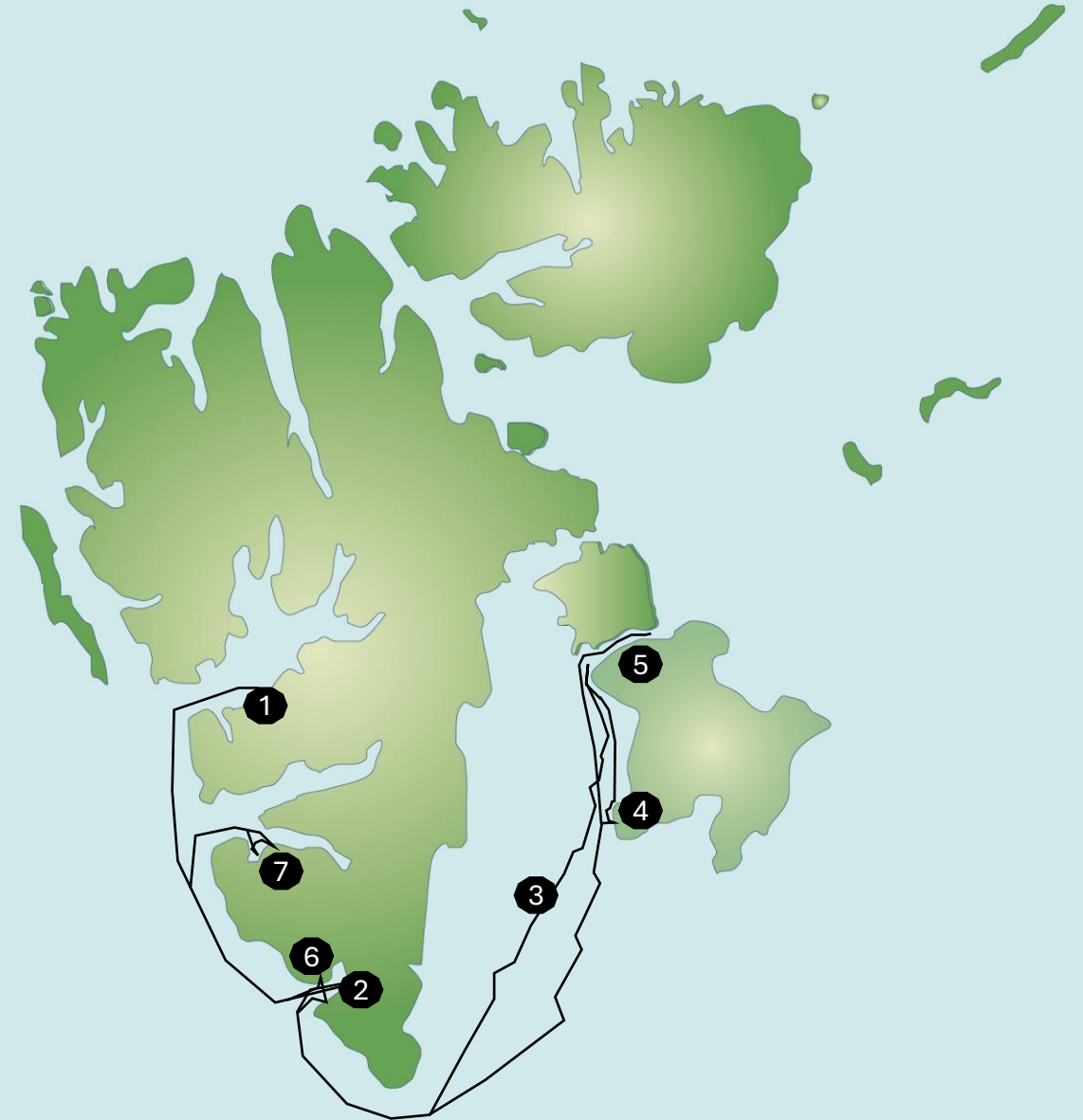
Thank you for your enthusiasm and support, but most of all for joining us on this exploratory North Atlantic voyage. We hope to see you again in the future, wherever that might be!

Total distance sailed: 865.0 nautical miles.

On behalf of Oceanwide Expeditions, Captain Ernesto Barria, Expedition Leader Phillip Schaudy, Hotel Manager Oleksandr Lyebydyev, and all the crew and staff of M/V Plancius, it has been a pleasure travelling with you!

Trip Map PLA04 – 24

Day	Time	Location	Activity
1		Longyearbyen	Boarding
2	AM	Brepollen	Ships cruise
	AM	Treskelen	Landing
	PM	Burgerbukta	Zodiac cruise
3	AM/PM	Storfjored Sea Ice	Ships cruise
4	AM	Russebukta	Landing
	PM	Habenichtbukta	Zodiac Cruise
5	AM	Freemansund	Ships Cruise
	PM	Storfjord Sea Ice	Ships Cruise
6	AM	Gåshamna	Landing
	PM	Gnålodden	Landing
7	AM	Bamsebu	Landing
	PM	Pocockodden	Landing



Purple Sandpiper	<i>Calidris maritima</i>	Meerstrandläufer	Paarse strandloper	B		X		X		X	X		
Red Knot	<i>Calidris canutus</i>	Knutt	Kanoetstrandloper	B									
Dunlin	<i>Calidris alpina</i>	Alpenstrandläufer	Bonte strandloper	B									
Whimbrel	<i>Numenius phaeopus</i>	Regenbrachvogel	Regenwulp	T									
Common Redshank	<i>Tringa totanus</i>	Rotschenkel	Tureluur	V									
Ruddy Turnstone	<i>Arenaria interpres</i>	Steinwälzer	Steenloper	B									
Grey Phalarope	<i>Phalaropus fulicarius</i>	Thorshühnchen	Rosse franjepoot	B									
Red-necked Phalarope	<i>Phalaropus lobatus</i>	Odinshühnchen	Grauwe franjepoot	B									
Pomarine Skua	<i>Stercorarius pomarinus</i>	Spatelraubmöwe	Middelste jager	T									
Arctic Skua	<i>Stercorarius parasiticus</i>	Schmarotzerraub-möwe	Kleine jager	B		X	X						
Long-tailed Skua	<i>Stercorarius longicaudus</i>	Falkenraubmöwe	Kleinste jager	B									
Great Skua	<i>Stercorarius skua</i>	Skua	Grote jager	B									
Sabine's Gull	<i>Xema sabini</i>	Schwalbenmöwe	Vorkstaartmeeuw	B									
Black-headed Gull	<i>Larus ridibundus</i>	Lachmöwe	Kokmeeuw	V									
Common/Mew Gull	<i>Larus canus</i>	Sturmmöwe	Stormmeeuw	V									
Glaucous Gull	<i>Larus hyperboreus</i>	Eismöwe	Grote Burgemeester	B					X	X			
Iceland gull	<i>Larus glaucooides</i>	Polarmöwe	Kleine burgemeester	T									
Herring Gull	<i>Larus argentatus</i>	Silbermöwe	Zilvermeeuw	V									
Lesser black-backed Gull	<i>Larus fuscus</i>	Heringsmöwe	Kleine mantelmeeuw	V									
Great black-backed Gull	<i>Larus marinus</i>	Mantelmöwe	Grote mantelmeeuw	B									
Kittiwake	<i>Rissa tridactyla</i>	Dreizehenmöwe	Drieteenmeeuw	B	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Ross' Gull	<i>Rhodostethia rosea</i>	Rosenmöwe	Rossmeeuw	T									
Ivory Gull	<i>Pagophila eburnea</i>	Elfenbeinmöwe	Ivoormeeuw	B									
Arctic Tern	<i>Sterna paradisaea</i>	Küstenseeschwalbe	Noordse stern	B	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	
Common Guillemot	<i>Uria aalge</i>	Trottellumme	Zeekoet	B			X	X	X	X	X		
Brunnich's Guillemot	<i>Uria lomvia</i>	Dickschnabellumme	Dikbekzeekoet	B									
Black Guillemot	<i>Cephus grylle</i>	Gryllteiste	Zwarte zeekoet	B			X	X		X			
Little Auk	<i>Alle alle</i>	Krabbentaucher	Kleine alk	B		X	X						
Puffin	<i>Fratercula arctica</i>	Papageitaucher	Papegaaiduiker	B		X	X		X				
Barn Swallow	<i>Hirundo rustica</i>	Rauchschwalbe	Boerenzwaluw	V									
White Wagtail	<i>Motacilla alba</i>	Bachstelze	Witte Kwikstaart	V									
Meadow Pipit	<i>Anthus pratensis</i>	Wiesenieper	Grasnieper	V									
Wheatear	<i>Oenanthe oenanthe</i>	Steinschmätzer	Tapuit	B									
Blackbird	<i>Turdus merula</i>	Amsel	Merel	V									
Snow Bunting	<i>Plectrophenax nivalis</i>	Schneeammer	Sneeuwgorst	B			X		X				

Philipp Schaudy - Expedition Leader



It all started on this memorable 24th of December 1973. It was cold and snow was falling on the Austrian city of Graz. I instantly loved that. Immediately I decided to become a polar explorer but managed only to be a Christmas tree vendor in front of a supermarket in my early years.

That was a dead-end job, so I packed my rucksack and tried to find happiness abroad. I bicycled across continents, climbed mountains, paddled rivers. "To be on the road" was my motto. I took pictures of everything, gave public talks and told the audience about my

adventures.

Along the way I finished studies to become a Geographer. Not so easy with my drive to travel.

And then the addiction to the North. Again and again. Scandinavia, Iceland, Canada, Alaska and – more than 20 years ago – for the first time Spitsbergen. Suddenly I felt at home and stayed there for several years together with my wife.

Eventually we had seen enough polar nights and broke camp. Still plenty of virgin soil ahead of us. Greenland, the Russian Arctic, the North Pole, the deep South – Antarctica – and a lot in between.

Today I live with my family at 750 meters above sea level in a small village near Graz. A place where snow is falling at Christmas. Nevertheless, I am back in the Arctic every summer. Sure thing!

Eduardo Rubio - Expedition Guide



I describe myself as an astronomer by profession with a passion for sharing nature's wonders. I aim to help to better understanding what scientists do with the public. Born in Guatemala (1978), I live in Switzerland since 2017. I speak English, Spanish and German.

After studying physics, I got my PhD in Astronomy from the University of Amsterdam in 2010. After a postdoctoral position I became a lecturer of physics and Astronomy as well as a guide in expedition cruise ships. Since 2018 I have worked for Oceanwide Expeditions in various roles such as guide, assistant expedition leader and expedition leader in the Antarctic and in the Arctic. Today I enjoy these trips as well as teaching undergraduate/graduate students and doing science outreach at the Planetarium of the Museum of Transport in Switzerland.

My interests vary from the history of exploration to the intricacies of astronomy. During the trips I have undertaken, I offer lectures about polar explorers, the science carried out in Antarctica (astronomy in particular), about our Universe, and the mysteries of our ocean's depths, to mention some. At sea, besides being an engaged guide and lecturer, I love to show constellations to people, pointing out their names and their lore. In every trip I made, I always aim to raise the enthusiasm of guests towards science, and their awareness towards the unique and fragile planet where we live.

Alexander Romanovskiy

Expedition Guide



Alexander Romanovskiy comes from Saint-Petersburg, the Northern capital of Russia. He was born in 1981. After having graduated from the boarding school Alexander entered Saint-Petersburg State University, where he spent 5 years studying physical geography, ecology, regional geography and international tourism. Afterwards he was working on his PhD thesis in Herzen State Pedagogical University of Russia, doing geocological researches.

In the year of 2011 however, Alexander decided to pause his scientific career and start doing something completely different, which means working in tourism and traveling the world. He spent 2 seasons working as a trekking guide in Fann mountains (Tajikistan), 1 season on Novolazarevskaya Antarctic scientific station (Queen Maud Land, Antarctica) working as a member of a guesthouse crew.

Since February of 2012 most part of the year he spends on Svalbard. For five seasons in a row Alexander has been living and working as a guide in a ghost town of Pyramiden. In 2016 a new page in Alexander's guiding career was opened: he started working as a naturalist guide on cruise ships in polar regions of the world – Svalbard and Antarctica.

3 to 4 months a year Alexander dedicates to his main passion – traveling the world. No public transport, no hotels, only hitch-hiking and staying overnight with locals or sleeping in a tent. This way he has already visited almost all Soviet republics, Middle East (Iran, Turkey), Asia (China), South America (Argentina, Chile, Paraguay), and it is hopefully far not the end! The world is big, friendly and interesting to explore!

Beth Hitchcock – Expedition Guide



After graduating from her Geology honours degree in 2018 at Glasgow, Beth balanced two jobs until she succumbed to full time in the guiding world in 2021. Beth worked as a deckhand / guide on a tall ship and, when on the land, as an Engineering Geologist working mainly on Scotland's road and railway networks.

On the tall ships, Beth visited many places around the Atlantic Ocean from the Azores to Cape Town and Tristan da Cunha. In the austral summers she guides on the ship when they visit Antarctica and South Georgia. These

are ideal places to interpret the landscape and explain to the guests how the glaciers and geological processes have carved what we see today. The incredible human history in these regions has a significant impact on the regional geological story and on our understanding of geology globally.

Beth also enjoys spending time in the mountains of Scotland where she works when she is not guiding on board ships. She grew up sailing around the islands of the west coast of Scotland - home to some fascinating geology where she spent many field trips during her undergraduate years. This sparked the desire to explore and embark on adventures to discover new landscapes and cultures around the world.

John Rogers - Expedition Guide



History came early to John as his home town of Concord, Massachusetts, is famous as the site of the first battle of the American Revolution and much early American literary culture. He learned to swim in Walden Pond, of Thoreau fame. His love of the outdoors started with family holidays to lakes and mountains.

His first career was in computer software development which allowed for numerous extended travelling holidays in the USA and then to New Zealand – where he still lives. The travelling continued with visits to every continent

– the final one being Antarctica in 2001 as a passenger and then for several seasons as a guide.

Along the way John has managed several trips north of the Arctic Circle backpacking, river rafting and exploring in Alaska, Norway and Iceland.

John's approach to the history is to concentrate on the stories of the places and people who inhabit and have explored to the extremes of the earth. Polar history is filled with remarkable stories of adventures, perseverance, triumph and defeat. He encourages anyone on this voyage with specialized knowledge, or with a family connection, to help him others share in this fantastic legacy.

Koen Jongerling - Expedition Guide



Having grown up in the Netherlands Koen always knew he wanted to live in a more rugged landscape than the rather flat lowlands that surrounded him. That is why after finishing his outdoor education in 2011, he chose to move to Patagonia, Chile to find the mountains he was longing for.

Combining his love for nature and the desire to learn more, he started guiding expeditions through the mountain ranges of Patagonia. Travelling back and forth to Europe for additional mountain courses - every time feeling more at home in the rough conditions of Patagonia. In 2017 he started his own guide company, introducing travelers to the beauty of Southern Chile.

Living in Puerto Natales he came to love the cold and extreme weather and after years of working in one of the most southern mountain ranges in the world, he could not stop looking further south to the great white continent, Antarctica.

Paolo Bellezze – Expedition Guide



Born in Argentina (Dec 80') and raised in Italy, Paolo finally moved to Scotland where he settled in 2006. Nowadays, when not at sea, he splits his time between Argentina and Scotland.

Before expedition cruises Paolo spent 12 years working shoreside in merchant shipping. He was a Product Manager for a Norwegian company developing Voyage Planning and Marine Weather Forecasting Systems for merchant ships.

He also started Paragliding at the age of 14 and has been very involved in the sport as a school owner instructing both beginners and advanced courses for over 20 years. When not paragliding, Paolo likes to sea kayak and he mixes Field Guide with Kayak Guide roles onboard.

In 2021 he started working full time in expedition cruises, since then he has guide in several expeditions such as Antarctica, South Georgia, Falklands, Greenland West coast, Greenland East coast, Iceland, Faroes Islands and British Isles.

Aside from sea kayaking and flying he is into hiking, motorbikes and spending time with friends. He is passionate about polar regions and sharing the experience with our guests.

“Happiness is only real when shared” (Chris McCandless)

Languages: English, Spanish, Italian.

Tiphanie May - Expedition Guide



Tiphanie is an 8th generation Falkland Islander living in Stanley. She was raised on a small group of islands called Speedwell Island Group, owned and worked by her parents as a sheep farm and family crab business.

Tiph was raised surrounded by Falkland's wildlife with her family island boasting rookeries of Magellanic penguins, Gentoo penguins as well as several other breeding birds. The islands also include haul outs of South American sealions and elephant seals. Surrounded by all this wildlife it was of no surprise that she found nature

fascinating. From the penguin couple that lived under her house to the wonderful variety of creatures found in the crab pots, marine life was a theme. This led to her to travel to the UK at 16 to study to be a marine biologist.

Tiph spent 6 years in the UK studying to get her BSc (HONS) Marine Biology and MSc in Marine Biology. Using her holidays to volunteer in the Falklands for various conservation projects to gain experience. Upon completing her studies, she joined the Government Fisheries Department, spending 200 days per year at sea monitoring seabird activity and collecting research material. The sea has been a big part of her life, from a young age she worked to haul crab pots with her father's boat. Later she went on to work for an experimental sustainable fish farm which allowed her to get her RYA qualifications in Power Boat. Tiph currently works full time operating a small boat in the Falklands.

Tiphanie started working in the tourist industry at the age of 23. Having grown up with no roads her whole life, 4X4 tour driving just made sense. Tiph has worked to provide a variety of tours such as hiking, 4X4 and penguin colony visits. In 2018, Tiphanie was offered the amazing opportunity to go to Antarctica and South Georgia with Oceanwide as guide. She fell in love with the scale of the landscape and has never looked back.

Jon - Ships Doctor



Meet Jon, currently living in Birmingham, United Kingdom. With a background as an intensive care consultant, he brings a wealth of medical expertise to our expedition. Jon has volunteered his time on several similar expeditions to this, which has seen him contribute his work across five continents. He values global exploration and has an interest in understanding and embracing the local cultures on his travels.

Having lived in New Zealand for eight years, he can call himself a kiwi despite his persistent British accent. Outside of medicine, Jon enjoys road cycling, mountain biking, and snowboarding, but is willing to give anything adventurous a go! His remaining spare time is currently dedicated to a diploma in mountain medicine, showcasing his commitment to expanding his skills in challenging outdoor environments.



DAILY PROGRAM

Welcome aboard!

Date: Thursday 20th June 2023

Day: Day 1

16.00 **Embarkation.** Once you have found your cabin, please feel free to explore the ship.

When all are on board we are ready to cast off.

Please listen to announcements for our **introduction to the ship** by our hotel manager Aleks and our **mandatory safety and lifeboat drill** in the Lounge/Bar – Deck 5.

thereafter **We invite you to our Welcome Aboard Briefing** in the Lounge/Bar – Deck 5. Please listen to announcements.

19.30 **Dinner** is served in the Dining Room. Enjoy your meal.

thereafter You will get your **rubber boots** in the boot-room (Deck 3 forward). Listen to **announcements** – we will call you by deck.

*Let us probe the silent places, let us seek what luck betide us;
Let us journey to a lonely land I know.
There's a whisper on the night-wind, there's a star agleam to guide us,
And the wild is calling, calling . . . let us go.*

Robert Service, The Call Of The Wild



DAILY PROGRAM

HORNSUND

Day: Day 2 | Friday 21st June 2024 | **summer solstice**

Please sign up for the long hike on the evening of the 20th.

- 07.00** **Wake up call.** If the weather is in our favour, we plan to wake up in the innermost part of Hornsund, called **Breepollen**. Several large glaciers are reaching all the way to the sea. It is a beautiful scenery. **Come out on deck** and enjoy the landscapes before you go for breakfast.
- 07.30** **Breakfast** buffet for **one hour** in the Dining Room.
- For all who have signed up for the long hikes** (with packed lunch). Please prepare your sandwiches at the food-station in the Lounge and bring it with you on our hike.
- 08.30** **Mandatory** briefing in the lounge on **how to behave in Polar Bear country and on Zodiac operations.**
- thereafter** **Landing: Treskelen.** For our first landing we plan to get ashore on the north side of Hornsund on a spit of land called Treskelen. Interesting geological formations and great views of Hornsund are waiting for us. We will split into groups and explore the area by walking. The terrain is uneven and partly stony.
- For all who have signed up for long hikes** (with packed lunch). After having checked out the interesting geological formations at our landing site, we plan a coastal hike into Adriabukta and continue towards Wibevilka, where we will be picked up in the afternoon.
- 13.00** **Lunch-Buffer** for one hour in the Dining Room.
- 15.00** **Zodiac Cruise: Burgerbukta, Hornsund.** While the group doing the long hike is still on its way, we plan a Zodiac cruise in beautiful Burgerbukta. It is a smaller side arm of Hornsund, with great glacial scenery. Please dress warmly, we are not getting ashore!
- 18.30** **Recap and briefing** for tomorrow.
- 19.00** **Dinner** is served. Bon Appetite!
- thereafter** Today is the **summer solstice** - the longest day! Let's hope for a sunny night 😊

*Never stop because you are afraid. You are never so likely to be wrong.
Fridtjof Nansen*



DAILY PROGRAM

EXPEDITION DAY STORFJORDEN

Date: Saturday 22nd June 2024

Day: Day 3

This morning we will encounter the **pack ice**, a spectacular Arctic Wonderland. We will follow the ice edge into Storfjorden, the waters between Spitsbergen and Edgeøya, where the ice (according to the ice chart) should get less dense.

We want to send (at least) the morning, exploring the pack ice and get deeper into Storfjorden. Please keep eyes open for wildlife!

If we have the luck to encounter polar bears, please **keep noise levels low** (voices down; close doors gently) for the best opportunities of finding and remaining with the wildlife.

Depending on our progress in the morning and the ice situation we may head for a landing on **Edgeøya**. Please listen to announcements.

- 07.15** **Good morning! Wake up call!**
- 07.30 **Breakfast** buffet for **one hour** in the Dining Room.
- 12.30 Our **lunch-buffet** is waiting for us in the Dining Room. Enjoy your meal.
- 18.30** **Recap** of today and **briefing** for tomorrow in the lounge.
- 19.00 **Dinner** is served. Bon Appetite!

*something feels so cold against my skin
the coldness goes so well with the state I'm in
barefoot in the snow
what do you do where do you go barefoot in the snow*

part of a song by Susi Varming (Norwegian artist, grew up in Longyearbyen)



DAILY PROGRAM

EXPEDITION DAY FREEMANSUND

Date: Sunday 23rd June 2024

Day: Day 4

If ice conditions permit, our intention is to spend the day in Freemansund, the strait between Edgeøya and Barentsøya, Svalbards 3rd and 4th largest islands.

We aim to make two landings today. Where and when is dependent on the pack ice and the fast-ice that might still be blocking the beaches.

Please listen to announcements for timings!

- 07.15** **A wonderful good morning!** Wake up call!
- 07.30** **Breakfast** buffet for **one hour** in the Dining Room.
- 12.30** **Lunch buffet** is waiting for us in the Dining Room. Enjoy your meal.
- 18.30** **Recap** of today and **briefing** for tomorrow in the lounge.
- 19.00** **BBQ** on the back deck! Enjoy and bring your dancing rubber-boots 😊.

BE A SEAGULL
Take the breath
Of the wings of morning
Lift your eyes
To the canyons
Of the skies
And fly!

Richard Bach, 1970, Jonathan Livingston Seagull



DAILY PROGRAM

EXPEDITION DAY FREEMANSUND / STORFJORD

Date: Monday 24th June 2024

Day: Day 5

We aim to make two landings today, either in Freemansund or in the northern Storfjorden area. Where and when is dependent on pack ice and weather conditions.

Please listen to announcements for timings!

- 07.15** **Good morning!** Wake up call!
- 07.30** **Breakfast** buffet for **one hour** in the Dining Room.
- 12.30** The **lunch-buffet** is waiting for us in the Dining Room. Enjoy your meal.
- 18.30** **Recap** of today and **briefing** for tomorrow in the lounge.
- 19.00** Enjoy your meal. **Dinner** is ready!

*What is the secret of the Arctic?
You must live through the long night, the storms, and the destruction of
human pride.
You must have gazed on the deadness of all things to grasp their livingness.
In the return of the light, in the magic of the ice, in the life-truths of animals
observed in the wilderness...
lies the secret of the Arctic and the overpowering beauty of its lands.*

Christiane Ritter (1898-2000). A Woman in the Polar Night



DAILY PROGRAM

HORNSUND

Date: Tuesday 25th June 2024

Day: Day 6

07.15 **Good morning!**

07.30 **Breakfast** – enjoy!

09.00 **Landing: Gåshamna, Hornsund.** Today we will be exploring the western parts of Hornsund, Spitsbergen's most southerly and arguably one of the most beautiful fjords. We intend to land on the western side of Gåshamna, a wide bay that has been witness to different phases of Spitsbergen's history. Remains of a 17th century English whaling station and foundations of Pomor houses (Russian hunters) are found in the area. In different hiking groups we invite you to explore the area.

12.30 **Lunch** is waiting for us.

14.30 **Landing: Gnålodden, Hornsund.** This afternoon we intend to go ashore at the Cape of Gnålodden. It is a beautiful spot with lush vegetation and a cliff above our landing site, where seabirds are nesting. We will go ashore close to an old trappers hut. The cabin was used as a bystation by the first female trapper of Svalbard Wanny Wolstad in the 1930s.

Bring your swimsuit. If you ever wanted to take a swim in the Arctic-ocean, this is your chance at the end of our landing. We bring towels. Enjoy!

18.30 **Recap and briefing** for tomorrow.

19.00 **Dinner.** Bon Appetite!

*A lonely seagull flies the winds
Majestic... soaring...gliding wings
A single screech sounds from the sky
Come fly with me... come here and fly*

Author unknown



DAILY PROGRAM

BELLSUND

Date: Wednesday 26th June 2024

Day: Day 7

Please sign up for the long hike on the evening of the 25th.

- 07.15** **Good morning! Wake up call!**
- 07.30** **Breakfast** buffet for **one hour** in the Dining Room.
- For all who have signed up for the long hikes** (with packed lunch). Please prepare your sandwiches at the food-station in the Lounge and bring it with you on our hike.
- 09.00** **Landing: Bamsebu (Ahlstrandhalvøya), Van Keulenfjord.** This morning we get ashore at the Beluga hunting cabin of Bamsebu. Beluga skeletons litter the area. The place is a unique cultural remain of Svalbard. Please take care not to step on or touch the bones.
- From here we will start exploring the wide open tundra in our well known hiking groups.
- For all who have signed up for the long hikes** (with packed lunch). We plan a coastal hike from the cabin of Bamsebu (Ahlstrandhalvøya) towards Reinodden and Recherchelaguna.
- 12.30** Our **lunch-buffet** is waiting for us in the Dining Room. Enjoy your meal.
- 14.30** **Landing: Snætcherpunten, Recherchefjord.** For our last landing, we plan to go ashore at Gjævervilla. This wonky looking house was built in 1904 as an accommodation for tourists (several decades too early it now seems). From here we will separate into our hiking groups and explore the area.
- 18.30** **Farewell Cocktail with Captain & last official meeting.** Please join us for a toast on our voyage!
- 19.30** **The Last Supper.** Bon Appetite!

"I am prepared to go anywhere, provided it be forward."

David Livingstone (1813-1873)



DAILY PROGRAM

LONGYEARBYEN

Date: Wednesday 27th June 2024

Day 8

07.15 For a last time: **A wonderful good morning.**

Important: Please put your check-in luggage into the corridors before you go to breakfast! So that we can bring it on shore.

Orange Tags: flight SK4425 at 14.30

Blue Tags: flight SK4491 at 16.25

07.30 **Breakfast is available** in the restaurant.

from 08.30 **Last landing: Longyearbyen.** The busses will bring you to town and drop you at Svalbardbutikken.

12.30 For all booked on the flight **SK4425 at 14.30:** The **bus** is leaving from **town to the airport**, from where it dropped you before.

14.25 For all booked on the flight **SK4491 at 16.25:** The **bus** is leaving from **town to the airport**, from where it dropped you before.

*Have you suffered, starved and
triumphed,
grovelled down, yet grasped at glory,
Grown bigger in the bigness of the
whole?*

*"Done things" just for the doing,
letting babblers tell the story,
Seeing through the nice veneer the
naked soul?*

*Have you seen God in His splendours
heard the text that nature renders?*

*The simple things, the true things,
the silent men who do things --
Then listen to the Wild -- it's calling
you.*

*Robert William Service „Call of the
wild“*

On behalf of Captain, Crew and Staff, have a safe journey home!