



OCEANWIDE
EXPEDITIONS

Arctic Ocean Expedition
Aberdeen – Fair Isle – Jan Mayen – Ice Edge - Spitsbergen
on board
M/V Hondius
May 15th 2022 – May 26th 2022



The MV Hondius was built in 2019 in Brodosplit, Croatia, as an expedition vessel for Oceanwide Expeditions. Hondius is 107.60m long, 17,60m wide and has a maximum draught of 5.3m and has an exceptionally high Ice class of PC6, a top speed of 15 knots and 3 diesel generators. The Hondius sails on LSMGO. Now the ship is sailing as a 176-passenger vessel with 83 cabins. Our beautiful, modern vessel carries 369m³ of fresh water and has a water plant producing 70m³ per day. In many ways, the Hondius is the perfect vessel for a true polar adventure!

Captain Artur Iakovlev

and his international crew of 66

including:

Chief Officer:	Diederik Scholten
Staff Officer:	Elizbar Kadaria
Second Officer:	Kirill Buriachek
Third Officer:	Don Buren
Chief Engineer:	Daniel Liliac-Zajontz
Hotel Manager:	William Barnes
Assist. Hotel Manager:	Andrius Juodvirsis
Head Chef:	Ralf Barthel
Sous Chefs:	Milos Simeunovic Mihai Melinte
Ship's Physician:	Arne Mosch
Expedition Leader:	Eduardo Rubio Herrera
Assist. Expedition Leaders:	Sara Jenner George Kennedy
Expedition Guides:	Claudio Ghiglione Meike Sjoer Szymon Niezabitowski Miriam Vermeij Koen Jongerling Juan Berenstein Andrew Crowder Hazel Pittwood Beth Hitchcock

We welcome you on board!

Day 1: 15th May 2022

Embarkation, Vlissingen

GPS position at 1200: 51°26.883' N, 003°35.830' E

Wind: E4 Sea State: Port Weather: Sunny with clear skies

Air Temp: +16 °C Sea Temp: +13 °C

A great start to our trip: the sun was shining, guests were smiling and Oceanwide Expeditions staff were thrilled to be welcoming the eager polar explorers aboard! After a little time to settle in to cabins it was time to begin with the important matter of mandatory safety briefings. Expedition Leader Eduardo, Hotel Manager William and Chief Officer Diederik gave us all the information we needed prior to beginning our journey North. Dr Arne Mosch also introduced himself, reassuring guests with advice regarding sea sickness.

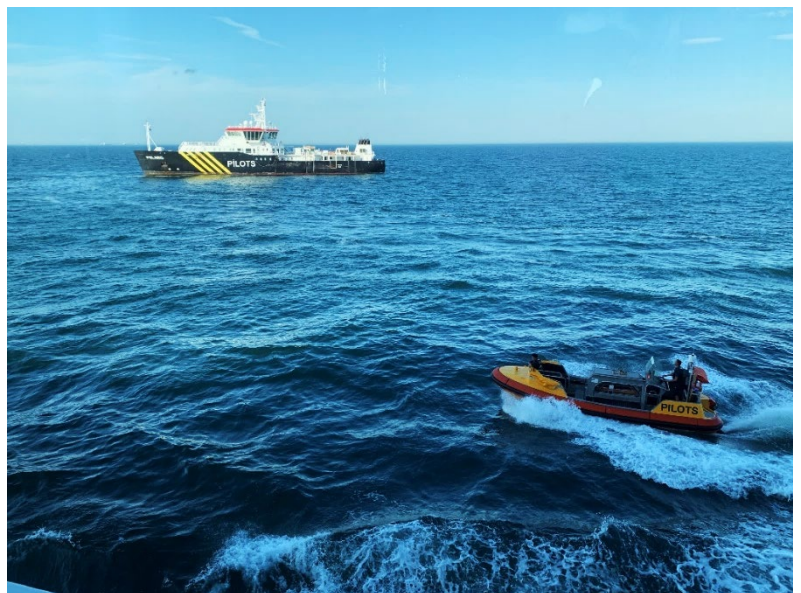


After learning how to put on life jackets and where our muster stations were, we took a break from the formalities to head outside. The bridge team had skilfully manoeuvred Hondius away from the dock in Vlissingen and we were now passing close by beautiful sandy beaches and enjoying flat seas (very much hoping that the waters would remain this calm throughout our trip!) The keen birdwatchers among the guests had already donned their binoculars; **Swift** were observed, along with **Cormorant**, **Great Black-backed Gull** and **Black-headed Gull**. Everyone then returned to the Observation Lounge for the Welcome Briefing, during which we learnt more about the lovely ship that we would call home for the coming days and an overview of life on board.

Being an astronomer, Eduardo was excited to report that a lunar eclipse would be visible tomorrow morning. When he asked guests to raise their hands if they were interested to get up early and be on deck for 4:30am to see it he was met with great enthusiasm!

As we headed further out to sea a vessel approached to pick up the pilot who had been on board assisting the bridge team to navigate out into open waters. Pilots have special expertise regarding the waters close to a port and come aboard both on approach to a port and on leaving a port. With him safely off the ship we proceeded onwards and the waters became a little rougher with white caps becoming visible atop small waves.

With briefings over it was time for dinner. Head Chef Ralf and his galley team produced a delicious buffet meal for us and the dining room staff attended to our mealtime needs. After dinner most guests headed to their cabins, either tired from a day of travelling to arrive at the ship or going to bed to be up early for the lunar eclipse (perhaps both!)



Day 2: 16th May 2022

At sea, en route to Aberdeen

GPS position at 1200: 55°02.8' N, 000°18.8' E

Wind: ESE4 Sea State: Smooth Weather: Overcast

Air Temp: +11°C Sea Temp: +12.5 °C

The day got off to a very early start for the guests and staff keen to see the lunar eclipse. Unfortunately, when Expedition Leader Eduardo got up at 04:00am all he could see was cloud which meant the eclipse was not going to be visible. Everyone headed back to bed until the normal wake-up call before breakfast.

Today was the start of the lecture programme and Andrew kicked things off with a description of the four species of Skuas we might encounter on our trip and their rather complicated genetics. Outside, guests were getting experience of identifying common seabirds such as **Gannet**, **Kittiwake**, **Fulmar** and **Common Guillemot**. What was slightly less expected were some of the passerines (perching/land-based birds) that were being seen about the ship.

Among these passerines, guest Lucy identified a **Chiffchaff**, a small warbler that usually inhabits woodland in northern Europe. This bird was using the ship to rest during its incredible northward migration, probably from sub-Saharan Africa. It was likely this same bird that accidentally ended up in the dining room and had to be rescued by the expedition team! The bird was caught by throwing a table cloth over it to stop it flying away and was then released from the stern. It was unharmed by the ordeal and flew away strongly.

After lunch Beth gave an interesting talk on 'The Formation of the Grampian Coastline' which we would be visiting the following day. Meanwhile, a **Red-throated Diver** was seen flying across the front of the ship and there was a small 'fall' of passerines on deck with a **Willow Warbler**, **Blackcap** and a **Grey Wagtail** identified. A **Barn Swallow**, with its distinctive tail streamer feathers and blue-black plumage was also seen flying by.



To complement the earlier talk on skuas, Meike packed out the lecture theatre with her fascinating talk on Fulmars and how the research project she is associated with is monitoring marine plastic pollution and the impact it has on this seabird species. After our first delicious table served dinner many guests took advantage of the calm weather to stroll the decks and spotted our first **Puffin** of the trip!

Day 3: 17th May 2022

At sea, offshore of Aberdeen

GPS position at 1200: 57°08.6' N, 004°59.1' W

Wind: SE2 Sea state: Smooth Weather: Foggy

Air Temp: +11 °C Sea Temp: +11.7 °C

This morning we were drawn out of our bunks with the anticipation of dolphins, seals and seabirds awaiting us. Many of us were on deck early, cameras and binoculars at the ready. Observations revealed new bird species hitching a lift on the ship; **Tree Pipit**, **Meadow Pipit** and **White Wagtail** were identified. Plan A was in our minds: arrival in port in Aberdeen, a day ashore in for guests already with us and embarkation for those newly joining the trip. Little did we know that the day would take us a considerably further through the alphabet of plans, arriving eventually somewhere near plan F!



Sea fog (or 'haar' as Scottish folks would call it) developed into a thick fog drastically reducing visibility meaning we could not enter Aberdeen harbour. Hours passed by and it did not lift. We waited, adapted plans, waited then made new plans. The unfortunate weather conditions that Scotland had presented us with did however provide fantastic opportunity for the Expedition Guides to share their wealth of knowledge on a variety of topics. This started with an informative lecture from Miriam on Auks (a group of seabirds that includes puffins and guillemots) helping us with identification and sharing some of her experience/observations. Following this, Assistant Expedition Leader George gave a lecture, in three parts, giving a thorough and comical report on the issues which are highly relevant in understanding the Arctic with a focus on sociological aspects: the complicated geopolitical challenges of the far north.

After lunch passenger Barwolt Ebbinge shared some of his stories of his research and travels on Spitsbergen in the 1970's during which time he studied geese there with his wife Dorothea Dallmeijer. We learnt about some of the findings from their research and saw some fantastic photos of the living conditions and logistical operations involved in their stay in the remote Arctic wilderness. During this time some challenging planning was taking place on the bridge in light of the enduring weather conditions and we reluctantly had to announce that we could not carry out our activities ashore. This being the case, a wildlife documentary was then shown in the Lecture Room, a happy hour was announced and guests enjoyed card games in the Observation Lounge. But what of the guests due to embark who were still ashore?

At 17:00pm the Expedition Team sprung into action: the new guests, and their luggage, would be brought aboard using Hondius' Zodiacs. This complex operation was executed over the next 4 hours and included bringing a boarder control officer and some additional provisions.



Typically, shortly after we launched the zodiacs the fog lifted! This meant those on board could watch the proceedings from the outside deck and Observation Lounge windows. Once all of the new guests and their luggage was safely on board they received the mandatory safety briefing before settling in to their cabins after their zodiac embarkation adventure!

Day 4: 18th May 2022

Fair Isle and the Island of Foula

GPS position at 1200: 59°31'.8 S, 001°34'.7 W

Wind: S4/5 Sea State: Moderate with low swell

Port Weather: Visibility was good

Air Temp: +11 °C Sea Temp: 11.2 °C



Today started with some important mandatory briefings about the general safety on our ship the M/V Hondius for our newly embarked passengers. Additionally, we learned specific safety details on what to do and what not to do during our zodiac operations. After Eduardo had given the briefings, the bridge made an abandon ship alarm call and everybody, that had just entered the ship from Aberdeen the night before, had to get their life jackets and make their way up to the lifeboats so we would know what to do in case of a real emergency. This abandon ship procedure was of course just a drill so everybody then safely headed back to their cabin.

In the afternoon we planned to launch the zodiacs for our scheduled landing on Fair Isle but, unfortunately, we were not able to do so due to the weather conditions. Guests and Expedition Team alike were disappointed not to go ashore. The Captain and Expedition Leader made the decision to organise a ship cruise around the island to be able to observe Fair Isle and its spectacular cliffs before continuing our journey up northwards.

A bonus within our alternative plan was that we cruised close by a small island called Foula. This family-owned island has some impressive cliffs which were teeming with bird life. Here we were able to spot many **Fulmars**, **Gannets** and some **Common Guillemots**. The weather was definitely back on our side again as we enjoyed a bright warm sun together with smooth waves whilst looking out at this stunning scenery.

After experiencing the geology and bird life of Foula we joined Eduardo and the Expedition Team in the Observation Lounge for the daily recap. During the recaps we learned more about the geological formations that we saw from our geologist guide, Beth, whilst wildlife guide Andrew shared some details about the birds we had encountered. During the recap snacks were offered along with a glass of champagne or non-alcoholic fruit juice alternative. Captain Artur Iakovlev joined us in the observation lounge and welcomed us all on board, reassuring everybody that we would be kept safe under his highly experienced leadership during this long sea voyage.



Day 5: 19th May 2022

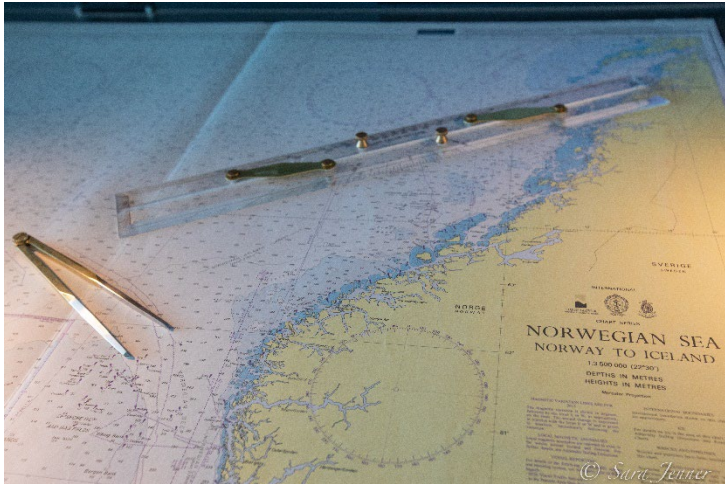
At sea, en route to Jan Mayen Island

GPS position at 1200: 63°32.6' N, 004°10.6' W

Wind: SE4 Sea State: Slight Weather: Overcast

Air Temp: +9 °C Sea Temp: +8.4 °C

We woke up to our Expedition Leader's calm voice welcoming us to our day at sea, with the hope of some good sailing conditions and quality wildlife encounters: his wish was granted! Throughout the day we had benign sea and weather which allowed guests to spend a significant amount of time out on deck in the fresh air. A **Whimbrel** from the day before was still flying around the ship and had been joined by a **Turnstone**, a new bird for the trip.



Sara started the day's lecture programme with a guide to spotting and identifying cetaceans (porpoise, dolphins and whales) at sea. This was to come in handy later in the day... Juan followed with an extremely helpful guide to understanding your camera, from the most complex kit to phone cameras. This covered everything including set up and image composition to some simple ideas for getting good quality photos in the polar regions.

The afternoon started with George giving a reprise of his 'Geopolitics in the Arctic' lecture. Fascinating though the talk was, when a guest popped his head round the door from outside and shouted 'Whale!' everyone dashed to

the starboard side windows and outer decks! As it happened the group in the lounge was probably too low to see the whale when it next surfaced, but those outside on the higher decks saw the classic surfacing profile of a **Fin Whale**.

George managed to finish his talk before a **Minke Whale** cruised by, close in on the starboard side. Through the afternoon small groups of beautiful **Long-tailed Skuas** were spotted flying west towards their breeding grounds Norway. Hazel concluded the lecture programme introducing the pinnipeds (meaning 'flipper footed', such as the walrus and Arctic seal species) that we hoped to see during our cruise.

At the evening's recap Eduardo gave us a demonstration of what a melon looks like when a torch is shone on it; his entertaining way of explaining the changes in daylight hours we would experience as we continued north. Sara gave a recap on 'Superstitions at Sea' and what we should (and shouldn't do) to ensure we had good luck throughout our trip. After yet another superb dinner we wandered out onto the decks to enjoy the superb sunlit evening. At this time of year, this far north, the sun barely dips below the horizon. This meant that, at 23:15pm, a **Sperm Whale** was spotted off the starboard side, instantly identifiable from its characteristic blow (directed forward and to the left) and its knuckled back. The animal went into a deep dive giving a stunning show of its tail flukes to loud cheers from the few guests still out on deck. What a spectacular end to the day!



Day 6: 20th May 2022

At sea, en route to Jan Mayen Island

GPS position at 1200: 67°30.2' N, 006°42.8' W

Wind: SE4 Sea State: Slight Weather: Sunny with clear skies

Air Temp: +4°C Sea Temp: +5.5°C

The atmosphere was quietly hopefully on board this morning. The fog had again engulfed the ship leaving only a few hundred meters of sea visible around us. We were heading for the island of Jan Mayen, described by writer Rolf Stange as *"a windswept, foggy, ice-covered, moss-overgrown lump of lava in the North Atlantic"*. His description of this remote volcano gave us pause for thought regarding the conditions needed for a safe landing; swell and fog could make it impossible to land, there was no promise that we would be lucky enough to step foot on Jan Mayen. All we could do was desperately hope the odds would be in our favour and that we would be among the fortunate few who are able to go ashore there.



At 07:00am ships time (05:00 UTC) we crossed into the polar circle, passing over the line of 66°33' N latitude! This entitled us to our first polar breakfast on board, with the dining room adorned with cuddly polar bears and 'snow'. In the morning Beth gave an insightful lecture in the Observation Lounge during which she introduced some of the rock types and features in the landscape to look out for at Jan Mayen. The explanations included an overview of the opening of the north Atlantic Ocean and how this has resulted in the formation of this remarkable volcanic island.

In the afternoon we enjoyed a highly informative talk from Meike giving an introduction to the history, wildlife and present-day occupation of Jan Mayen. This was followed by an entertaining lecture from Andrew in the afternoon entitled 'The Strange World of Birders' which helped us grasp how fans of our feathered friends see the world, including a humorous taxonomic classification! This provoked much conversation about what group one would put themselves in, from ornithologist to twitcher to dude. The activities of the day were brought to a close with a wonderful recap led by Expedition Leader Eduardo followed by dinner. After our evening meal many of us headed to bed wanting to be well rested in anticipation for exploring Jan Mayen the following day whilst others enjoyed relaxing in the Observation Lounge.



Day 7: 21st May 2022

Jan Mayen Island

GPS position at 1200: 70°58.0' N, 008°42.7' W

Wind: NE4 Sea State: At Anchor off Jan Mayen Island

Weather: Foggy Air Temp: +3 °C Sea Temp: +5 °C

There was a huge sense of anticipation around the ship from early today. Having been unable to land on Fair Isle there was a pent-up desire to feel the ground beneath our feet. But sitting above that was to make the landing on the legendary Jan Mayen Island. So when we awoke to find that weather forecast was correct, proven by the benign sea full of rafting Fulmar, we knew the gods were with us.



The expedition team were out early to land the shore party ready to receive guests, who were excitedly gathering themselves to embark the zodiacs. The Norwegian Base Commander greeted the team to the island and we handed over several boxes of fresh food that Ralph, our Executive Chef, had prepared for him and his team. Once all the guests were ashore we split up into groups to do hikes of varying length. The 'long' hike group set off with their guides first and were soon lost to sight in the mist as they made their way up the first track. The beach was the starting point for many others, viewing the stunning array of whale bones amongst a forest of driftwood logs. The exact origin of the bones is unknown – whether they washed up naturally or were a relic of the whaling activity that used to be based here. The staggeringly large skull and jaw bones of a Bowhead Whale were particularly outstanding

At the top of the first slope all walkers were able to scan the cliffs in front of them and find the first nesting **Little Auks** of the trip but, more importantly for some, their first good views of **Puffins**. Other notable birds seen included **Wheatear**, **Barnacle Goose** and **Snow Bunting**. The naturally staggered return to the zodiacs had everyone back on board in time to dry off and get a warming lunch.

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In the afternoon we sailed a complete circuit of the island, although sometimes obscured in the mist. Amazingly though, just as we were about to leave Jan Mayen behind, it produced one last surprise as the clouds rolled away to reveal the summit of the Beerenburg volcano – a sight few get to see. Eduardo then gave a fascinating talk on the "Eternal Darkness" – life at the bottom of the deep oceans. At recap, Beth was able to walk us through the geological features that we had seen on our various routes, with actual photographs to aid our understanding.

Day 8: 22nd May 2022

At sea, exploring the ice edge

GPS position at 1200: 73°46.7' N, 009°18.1' W

Wind: N/NE3 Sea State: Ice Weather: Overcast

Air Temp: -1 °C Sea Temp: +1.6 °C

Today we woke up surrounded by ice patchy fog, and calm waters. Before 8:00am there had been fantastic sightings of **Ivory Gull**, **Harp Seal** and even a **Bowhead Whale**! After a delicious breakfast our day got better still: we had an announcement from the Expedition Leader that a **Polar Bear** had been spotted on the pack-ice from the bridge! Even though directions on where to find the bear were given immediately, it took most of us several minutes to find the bears



ourselves. This demonstrated again how well-camouflaged these animals are with regards to their surrounding environment. We traversed through the ice for a little and the curious bear stood sniffing the air in the distance. After a few minutes we couldn't believe our luck when another bear appeared! This mother with her two-year-old male cub delighted us all with a once in a lifetime encounter. Completely relaxed in our presence, they played together on the ice and in the water. Excited passengers, Expedition Team members and crew filled the outside decks. For most of us, today was the highlight of the whole voyage. It was truly a dream come true to finally meet the king (or in this case queen and prince!) of the Arctic out on the ice. The icy wonderland was breath-taking, but the sighting of a polar bear was undoubtedly the highlight of the day.



We also saw many birds **including Ivory Gulls** and **Black-legged Kittiwakes**, large groups of **Harp seals**, a **Ringed Seal** and a single **Hooded Seal** far out on the ice. The silence and peacefulness of the sea ice was only interrupted only by the calls of seabirds and the sound of pack ice breaking up as the bridge team skilfully navigated through it.

During this incredible morning we also enjoyed a lecture from Szymon about the sea ice at 11:00am followed by lunch in the dining room. Throughout the afternoon we had more time among the sea ice looking for wildlife and two further lectures; the first by Head Chef Ralph Barthel about the

challenges of catering for all of the guests and crew of the ship and the second by guide Koen about the evolution of whales. During the recap of the day we celebrated the fantastic Polar Bear sighting of the morning with Assistant Expedition Leader Sara sharing amazing photos she had taken of the animals we saw along with information about this iconic Arctic species. The atmosphere on board was noticeably jubilant with big smiles on everyone's faces; from birds to bears to a bowhead whale, we all agreed it was a truly unforgettable day. We headed to bed wondering what awe-inspiring sights might await us tomorrow!

Day 9: 23rd May 2022

At sea, en route to Svalbard

GPS position at 1200: 76°25.9' N, 000°32.4' W

Wind: E/NE 2/3 Sea State: Slight - ice Weather: Fog

Air Temp: +4.5 °C Sea Temp: +1.7 °C



Early this morning we crossed back into the Greenland Sea/Norwegian waters. After a lovely breakfast most of us went outside, making the most of the good visibility for our day at sea journeying once more through the ice. We marvelled at all the different shapes of icefloes and many people commented on the beautiful variety of blue-green colours within the ice too, as a result of ice being of varying ages (older, more compacted ice appears blue as it absorbs light at the red end of the colour spectrum). We became accustomed to the sound of ice hitting the ship as we continued through the floe. The ice was stunning but of

course what we really all wanted to see were more whales, seals and birds! Thankfully the wildlife was very obliging, giving us good views of a variety of birds and even the sight of a Fin Whale. These huge animals are the second largest species after the blue whale, so even at quite a distance they are easily visible.

Sara gave an excellent talk about polar bears and everyone enjoyed learning about these majestic creatures in more detail after our fabulous encounter with the mother and cub yesterday. Claudio gave a thought-provoking lecture about climate change, providing us with research findings and facts, enabling us to better understand this complex and vitally important issue. Just after 10:00am our weather nemesis the fog came back! With visibility drastically limited now it was time to gather in the Observation Lounge to warm up with some hot drinks and socialise indoors or enjoy a library book.

After lunch many guests headed to the Observation Lounge where Hazel gave an informative lecture about the three Arctic whale species, namely Bowhead, Beluga and Narwhal. Then there was time to relax peacefully around the ship, or head out on deck for those optimistically hoping to spot something through the ever-present fog! There's little chance of going hungry on board an Oceanwide Expeditions cruise, but this evening the provisions were even more bountiful than usual for our special barbecue dinner outside on the back deck! We were treated to an extremely unique experience, enjoying a full buffet surrounded by sea ice. With funky music playing and free drinks for the evening the atmosphere was very jolly and plenty of us saw out the end of the day on the dancefloor!

Day 10: 24th May 2022

Arrival in Spitsbergen, Poolepynten Landing

GPS position at 1200: 78°12.5' N, 012°19.4' W
Wind: S/SE4 Sea state: slight Weather: Overcast
Air Temp: +4 °C Sea Temp: +4.7 °C

By the time we had finished our breakfast and dressed into all our layers to go out on deck, the outline of the mountainous west of Spitsbergen was emerging on the horizon. Characterised by a landscape of jagged peaks, these mountains are what Spitsbergen owes its name to, forged from Svalbard's oldest basement layer of rocks. An exciting announcement was made revealing that we had made good progress with our journey with following winds and fair conditions and therefore were ahead of schedule. This meant we would visit Poolepynten today rather than tomorrow! Everyone was delighted to hear this great news.



On approach there was report of some **White-beaked Dolphins** and even a **Walrus** in the water. As we came closer to the land, we started to see many **Common Eider** ducks and **Black-legged Kittiwakes**. The bridge team were busily preparing to anchor for our landing whilst the Expedition Team scoured the landscape with binoculars to scout the area for polar bears to ensure the site was safe. Prins Karls Forland was on our port bow and the towering mountains either side of Isfjorden on mainland Spitsbergen could be seen beyond. On board entertainment came in the form of a trio of lectures from Szymon, Miriam and Claudio. These provided us with a wealth of information including the types of flora we might see ashore and

how Arctic plant life is adapted to such an extreme climate. The matter of the climate was also discussed in greater depth which explained some of our observations such as the slight rise in sea temperature as we travelled from Jan Mayen to Svalbard and entered into the norther reaches of the Gulf Stream. Finally, we broadened our knowledge on a topic which is certainly not in a ubiquitous lecture line-up: research on reindeer droppings!

After an early lunch we headed ashore to explore Poolepynten in perfect conditions: calm seas and clear skies. Approximately twenty **Walrus** awaited us and we stood quietly in a line along the beach observing these blubbery giants, some of them resting, others awkwardly hauling themselves ashore or swimming along in the shallows. Not only will the experience of seeing these magnificent animals remain with us in our photographs but the distinctive 'aroma' of the walrus will surely be memorable to our nostrils for some time too! A lone Svalbard reindeer was grazing nearby, seemingly completely unphased by our presence, and some lucky guests also managed to catch glimpse of an



Arctic fox and **Beluga Whales**. Due to a limit on the number of guests who can be ashore at the same time Koen gave a broad introduction to Svalbard, covering a wide range of topics and preparing us with broad knowledge of the area, for those remaining on board.

To top off the day, those who were still out on deck in the evening were rewarded with a **Blue Whale** sighting; the animal was distance but unmistakable.

The day came to a close with dinner during which the bright evening sun streamed in through the dining room windows. Many were out on deck afterwards to enjoy the spectacular views of jagged mountains blanketed in glaciers and snow.

Day 11: 25th May 2022

Trygghamna and Ymerbukta Zodiac Cruises

GPS position at 1200: 78°13.9' N, 013° 51.1' E

Wind: Variable 1/2 Sea State: Smooth Weather: Overcast

Air Temp: +3°C Sea Temp: +9.5°C

We woke early to grey, leaden skies and a winds gusting to 40 knots. It was clear to everyone that our planned landing at Alkhorner was just not possible. However, the guide leaders decided that a zodiac cruise in the adjacent Trygghamna fjord was possible due to the shelter it provided. As the zodiacs were being launched the bridge team spotted a **Polar Bear** on the slope opposite the ship; it had killed a reindeer and was feeding on the carcass. This was obviously the first target for each zodiac but making sure we stayed at an appropriate distance so as not to disturb it. All the guide team were also conscious that the nearby ship was a Sysselmesteren vessel (the police of Svalbard) so we were careful to make absolutely sure we worked to all AECO (Association of Arctic Expedition Cruise Operators) guidelines.

We then cruised to the glacier at the end of the fjord where we encountered several large flocks of eiders. Initially, they all seemed to be **Common Eider** but then one **King Eider** was spotted, although it was often lost to view among the commons. We had more luck with the next flock: everyone had really started to 'get their eye in' so that everyone was eventually able to admire these handsome birds. For many guests this was the first time they had ever seen this species; birdwatchers would call this a 'lifer'! We happily made our way back for lunch whilst the Captain repositioned Hondius to the nearby Ymerbutka fjord ready for our afternoon zodiac cruise.



This time the zodiac drivers took their guests towards the Esmarkbreen Glacier to explore the area. Once again, we encountered large flocks of eiders; as before, they were mainly **Common Eider** but this time there were many more **King Eider** in the mix with the added bonus of improved light for viewing and photography. A few zodiacs were also treated to a flyover by a fabulous **Long-tailed Skua** which went on to harass nearby **Kittiwakes**! Several **Common Seals** surfaced in the vicinity, curiously taking a look at us and trying to make sense of what was going on. It is amazing to consider the animals in this remote environment may never have seen people. For the birders, **Snow Bunting, Purple Sandpiper** and **Barnacle Geese** were an added delight of the afternoon's zodiac cruise.

Bear tracks were spotted on the slopes of a small bay which could possibly even have been made by the bear we saw this morning in the adjacent fjord as these large animals can travel a considerable distance in a short time. With rain and increasing winds everyone was glad to return back on board to warm up. We settled our bills with reception and returned our muck boots. To conclude our final full day on board it was time for the Captain's Farewell Cocktail gathering including the fantastic slide show put together by Expedition Team photography guide, Juan. Some guests later admitted they had felt a little a little emotional whilst watching which is a testament to his skills. A fitting end to a fantastic expedition!

Day 12: 26th May 2022

Longyearbyen - Disembarkation

GPS position at 1200: 78°13.7' N, 015°36.1' E

Wind: E6 Sea State: Port Weather: Partly Cloudy

Air Temp: +8°C Sea Temp: +4.6°C

This morning Expedition Leader Eduardo's wake-up call roused guests from their slumber at 7:00am. Everyone put luggage outside cabins and headed to the dining room for their last breakfast on board M/V Hondius. Surely it wasn't time to go home already?! Sadly yes, this epic Arctic adventure was over, but whilst everyone had to leave our dedicated crew and beautiful ship they could keep the incredible memories made on this cruise to cherish forever.



Thank you all for travelling with us on this voyage; for your enthusiasm, support and good company. We very much hope to see you again in the future, wherever that might be!

Total distance sailed on our voyage: 2106 nautical miles

Furthest North: 78°25.9 N, 011°55.3 E

**On behalf of Oceanwide Expeditions, Captain Artur Iakovlev,
Expedition Leader Eduardo Rubio Herrera, Hotel Manager William Barnes
and all the crew and staff of M/V Hondius, it has been a pleasure travelling with you.**

Eduardo Rubio - Expedition Leader



I describe myself as an astronomer by profession with a passion for sharing nature with others.

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. In 2018 I decided to become a full-time guide for Oceanwide Expeditions in the Antarctic and in the Arctic.

My interests vary from 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. Born in Guatemala (1978), I speak English, Spanish and German.

Sara Jenner – Assistant Expedition Leader



For as long as Sara could remember she has had a passion for travel and searching for the wildest and most remote places on earth.

Back in the UK when she was only 10, she remembers trading in her favourite pink bicycle for the money to start her travel fund. Every birthday and Christmas she added a little more in the kitty and finally, at 18 she realised her dream of diving at the Great Barrier Reef! At that point the travel addiction was born. Ever since Sara has been travelling the globe in search of wild and remote places and has spent many

months volunteering on wildlife conservation projects in a bid to help some of our most iconic and endangered species.

Sara's love of wildlife and the great outdoors has taken her to all seven continents and she has travelled extensively in the polar regions including the Antarctic Peninsula, Falklands, South Georgia, Spitsbergen, Greenland, Iceland, Baffin Island and Canadian High Arctic. Returning to the UK, Sara used this knowledge to work in the travel industry as a polar specialist for several years, until the travel bug hit again, when she decided to swap life on the land for a life at sea and joined the Oceanwide Expedition Team in 2016.

During 2020-2021 she worked extensively on a leopard seal identification project and took the opportunity to fulfil a lifetime dream of visiting South Georgia in winter by working on the M/V Pharos, which is deployed by the South Georgia Government as a fishery patrol vessel.

Sara is a keen wildlife photographer and when she is not wrapped up warm in the polar regions she enjoys working as a photographic guide in Botswana, on the beautiful Chobe River and Okavango Delta, so really has a life of two halves.

George Kennedy – Assistant Expedition Leader



George is an anthropologist and political scientist currently studying at the Australian Institute of Marine and Antarctic Science. He has a keen interest in cultural identity and contemporary geopolitics in the polar regions. His current research focusses on the complex dynamics between indigenous, scientific and political stakeholders in their pursuit of environmental protection in Antarctica and the Arctic.

In his practice as an anthropologist, George has worked predominantly with community development organisations in Latin America. His work has focussed on identifying collaborative solutions to support environmental conservation and sustainable tourism in Patagonia and the Amazon basin.

Prior to his work in anthropology, George served as a paramedic in Australia, still occasionally throwing on the uniform to work with Ambulance Victoria in Melbourne.

Second only to expedition cruising, George's great passion is motorcycle travel. He has ridden from Mongolia to India, around Australia, and most recently from Patagonia to Mexico on his Kawasaki KLR650.

Claudio Ghiglione - Expedition Guide



Claudio was born in Italy in 1983. He is a marine ecologist specialised in polar regions, expedition guide and nature photographer.

Interested in science and nature since he was very young, he graduated first in *Marine Environmental Sciences* (BA) and then in *Marine Science* (MA). In March 2017 he obtained a *PhD in Earth, Environmental and Polar Sciences* run in cooperation with the Italian National Antarctic Museum (Italy) and the British Antarctic Survey in Cambridge (UK).

For several years he worked as a polar researcher focusing his work mainly on the South Pole (Antarctica); his objective is to analyse and evaluate information used for ecological modelling and possible future scenarios following global warming. During his academic career, he actively takes part in some scientific expeditions both in Arctic and in Antarctica in cooperation with Norway and England.

His passion for travel, mainly to cold and often inhospitable places, and his career as a photographer led him to travel a lot, creating and managing – often in complete autonomy – itineraries and logistics. In 2017 – thanks to his professional experience, the skills acquired over the time and the need to spend more time on the field – he starts working full time as a guide Oceanwide.

Specialised in nature, scientific and travel photography, Claudio uses his photos as a means of telling stories to draw attention mainly to his main subjects, namely animals, nature and environment. In the 2019 he published his first book 'Polar Lights' with whom he shares the passion for nature photography.

Meike Sjoer - Expedition Guide



From early on Meike has been a passionate naturalist and traveller who just loves birds.

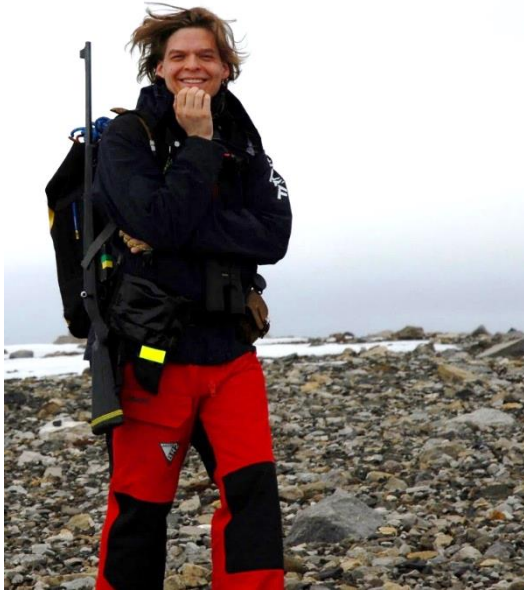
At the age of 7 she bought her first bird book. Being outdoors all the time, she wanted to learn more about the amazing creatures she encountered. Investigating and learning about nature and wildlife has been a passion ever since.

Meike has a master degree in film and television from the University of Utrecht. For the last 25 years she has been working as a television director. Her stories involve nature, wildlife and environmental topics. If not travelling, she is directing the prime-time wildlife television program *Vroege Vogels*.

When time permits, she volunteers as a nature guide for the Dutch institute for nature and education. As a teenager Meike started sailing the oceans but her true love for the life in the oceans began 14 years ago when she started working with Sea Shepherd on the mediateam.

Meike is thrilled to be your guide on this trip and looking forward to sharing knowledge and the passion for this magical polar world with you.

Szymon Niezabitowski - Expedition Guide



Szymon was born in Cracow, Poland. He studied Biology and Geography in Cracow where he received his graduate degree in “Faculty of Biology and Earth Sciences”. His final thesis was about Volcanic Soils on Iceland.

After he finished his studies, he joined Polish Academy of Sciences and worked for the Institute of Systematics and Evolution of Animals, where he was a guide and researcher on exotic animals.

Szymon began guiding in the Arctic in 2016 on Spitsbergen and since then has also led Orca whale trips in North Norway.

From the earliest years of his life he is a passionate naturalist with a special interest in the geography and the wildlife of the higher latitudes.

Miriam Vermeij – Expedition Guide



During her youth she travelled a lot with her parents and sister in Europe. Miriam developed an interest in nature at a young age and lots of time was spent outdoor, exploring local insects and plants. Following her interests, she followed an environmental science study and got a degree with a specialisation on soil pollution. Nowadays she is a self-employed environmental planning officer.

From 1999 the travelling outside Europe started and after a trip to South America, the Falklands and Antarctica in 2006 she got the passion for the poles. The first contact with the Arctic was in 2011 and after another trip in 2013 she came back as field assistant on the Dutch polar expedition (SEES) in 2015 and to the Dutch polar station in Ny Alesund in 2016. Since 2017 she has been guiding in the Arctic, followed by the Antarctic in 2018.

In Holland Miriam is a nature guide since 2003. First in the local forest and since 2008 also in one of the largest national parks in Holland: De Biesbosch. There she is guiding school kids and adult groups on walking and boating trips. She is also part of the board that manages the local forest.

Koen Jongerling - Expedition Guide

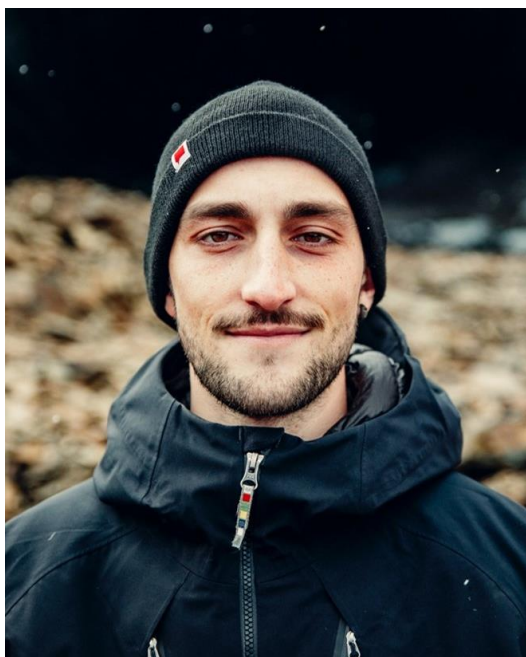


Having grown up in the Netherlands Koen always knew he wanted to live in a more rugged landscape than the rather flat lowlands that surrounded him. That is why after finishing his outdoor education in 2011, he chose to move to Patagonia, Chile to find the mountains he was longing for.

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.

Juan Berenstein – Expedition Guide



Juan is a professional photographer and drone pilot born in Ushuaia, Argentina. He is embarking on his first Antarctic Expedition Cruise with Oceanwide Expeditions.

He is a young and highly motivated person, who loves enjoying outdoors and on the mountains. His hobbies are trekking, camping, FPV drone flying and photography.

His passion for nature started at an early age with his family, who enjoyed the weekends camping at the end of the world and travelling around the country

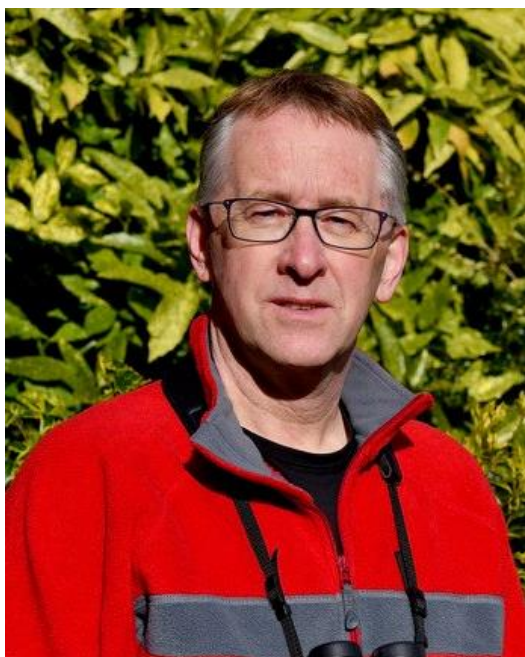
on holidays. Nowadays he enjoys discovering new landscapes around the end of the Andes chain with his friends.

He studied photography in Buenos Aires and decided to return to his hometown to start his career and develop an independent way of life.

Juan has been working in tourism for more than 5 years in Ushuaia and has amazing skills related to guest management, being a sociable and talkative person. He speaks natively Spanish, English and some German as he did an exchange back in 2014 after finishing high school.

Going to Antarctica has been a lifetime dream of his, as being born at the southernmost city in the world and the nearest city to the white continent really set the path for the years to come. He plans on starting a Polar career learning from every aspect, from wildlife to history, and someday become an Expedition expert.

Andrew Crowder - Expedition Guide



Andrew is an experienced naturalist with a lifelong history of observation, study and sheer enjoyment of wildlife. His interest in natural history started as a young boy watching birds and they remain his first passion. Focusing mainly on UK and European species, he has travelled extensively and accrued a wealth of knowledge. As part of that journey of discovery, he has also developed self-taught skills in wildlife photography.

Andrew has always been drawn to the sea and is a CMAS Class 2/BSAC qualified Advanced Scuba Diver; he has had the privilege of experiencing incredible marine life which few others get to see. Time spent exploring the underwater world helped spawn his other main interest: cetaceans. Andrew has over twenty years of experience with these animals, including undertaking scientific surveys and guiding on cruise ships in the Arctic and UK waters.

Andrew recognizes that few wildlife encounters spark such an emotional reaction in humans as when they see whales and dolphins. He uses his knowledge and enthusiasm to help more people share such inspirational experiences and thereby promote the conservation of our precious natural world.

Hazel Pittwood - Expedition Guide



Hazel grew up in the county of Dorset on the South coast of the UK. A childhood spent pond dipping, bug hunting and exploring the countryside and coast nurtured her love of the natural world.

She has worked in practical conservation and community engagement roles for a variety of habitats, including heathland and coastal nature reserves. Hazel also has experience surveying rare protected species and is a trained wildlife rescue volunteer and marine mammal medic

Whilst she is broadly learned about the natural world, Hazel has specialised in marine mammals and seabirds since 2014. At that time she began volunteering as a marine mammal and seabird surveyor, collecting sightings data regarding these animals for UK based conservation charities. In 2017 she worked on a passenger ship travelling between the UK and Spain across the Bay of Biscay for six months, delivering talks and leading wildlife watching sessions out on deck.

Hazel has been working as a guide and lecturer on cruise ships for over three years. This role has taken her to Norway and Svalbard, Iceland, Alaska, Canada, the Faroe Islands, the Canary Islands, the Caribbean and Central America. She is a World Cetacean Alliance certified responsible whale watching guide, championing the highest standards of wildlife experiences.

The polar regions host an incredible diversity of seabird and marine mammal species and Hazel looks forward enhancing your encounters with these incredible animals with her knowledge, skills and enthusiasm.

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.

Birds and Mammals of N Atlantic & Svalbard 15-26 May 2022

English Name	Latin	German	Dutch	15-05	16-05	17-05	18-05	19-05	20-05	21-05	22-05	23-05	24-05	25-05
Great Northern Diver	<i>Gavia immer</i>	Eistaucher	Ijsduiker									x		
Red-throated diver	<i>Gavia stellata</i>	Sterntaucher	Roodkeelduiker		x									x
European Storm Petrel	<i>Hydrobates pelagicus</i>	Sturmschwalbe	Stormvogeltje											
Northern Fulmar	<i>Fulmarus glacialis</i>	Eissturmvogel	Noordse stormvogel	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Manx shearwater	<i>Puffinus puffinus</i>	Schwarzschnabelsturmtaucher	Noordse Pijlstormvogel			x	x							
Northern Gannet	<i>Morus bassanus</i>	Basstöpel	Jan-van-gent	x	x	x	x	x	x	x				
Shag	<i>Phalacrocorax aristotelis</i>	Krähenscharbe	Kuifaalscholver			x	x							
Great Cormorant	<i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i>	Kormoran	Aalscholver	x			x							
Pink-footed Goose	<i>Anser brachyrhynchus</i>	Kurzschwanzgans	Kleine rietgans					x					x	x
Barnacle Goose	<i>Branta leucopsis</i>	Weisswangengans	Brandgans							x			x	x
Eurasian Teal	<i>Anas crecca</i>	Krickente	Wintertaling										x	
Mallard	<i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>	Stockente	Wilde eend	x										
Northern Pintail	<i>Anas acuta</i>	Spießente	Pijlstaart											
Tufted Duck	<i>Aythya fuligula</i>	Reiherente	Kuifeend							x				
Common Eider	<i>Somateria mollissima</i>	Eiderente	Eidereend			x				x	x		x	x
King Eider	<i>Somateria spectabilis</i>	Prachteiderente	Konings eider										x	x
Long-tailed Duck	<i>Clangula hyemalis</i>	Eisente	Ilseend										x	x
Common Kestrel	<i>Falco tinnunculus</i>	Turmfalke	Torenvalk			x								
Rock Ptarmigan	<i>Lagopus mutus hyperboreus</i>	Alpensneehuhn	Alpensneeuwoen											
Eurasian Oystercatcher	<i>Haematopus ostralegus</i>	Austernfischer	Scholekster	x		x								
European Golden Plover	<i>Pluvialis apricaria</i>	Goldregenpfeifer	Goudplevier							x				
Purple Sandpiper	<i>Calidris maritima</i>	Meerstrandläufer	Paarse strandloper							x			x	x
Dunlin	<i>Calidris alpina</i>	Alpenstrandläufer	Bonte strandloper					x					x	
Whimbrel	<i>Numenius phaeopus</i>	Regenbrachvogel	Regenwulp				x	x	x	x				
Ruddy Turnstone	<i>Arenaria interpres</i>	Steinwälzer	Steenloper					x			x		x	
Whimbrel	<i>Numenius phaeopus</i>	Regenbrachvogel	Regenwulp				x	x	x	x				
Pomarine Skua	<i>Stercorarius pomarinus</i>	Spatelraubmöwe	Middelste jager					x	x					
Arctic Skua	<i>Stercorarius parasiticus</i>	Schmarotzerraub-möwe	Kleine jager				x	x					x	x
Long-tailed Skua	<i>Stercorarius longicaudus</i>	Falkenraubmöwe	Kleinste jager					x			x		x	x
Great Skua	<i>Stercorarius skua</i>	Skua	Grote jager				x	x		x	x	x	x	x
Black-headed Gull	<i>Larus ridibundus</i>	Lachmöwe	Kokmeeuw	x										
Glaucous Gull	<i>Larus hyperboreus</i>	Eismöwe	Grote Burgemeester							x	x	x	x	x

Iceland gull	<i>Larus glaucooides</i>	Polarmöwe	Kleine burgemeester							x				
Lesser black-backed Gull	<i>Larus fuscus</i>	Heringsmöwe	Kleine mantelmeeuw	x				x					x	
Great black-backed Gull	<i>Larus marinus</i>	Mantelmöwe	Grote mantelmeeuw	x				x		x				
Kittiwake	<i>Rissa tridactyla</i>	Dreizehenmöwe	Drieteenmeeuw		x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Franklins Gull	<i>Larus pipixcan</i>		Franklins meeuw											
Ivory Gull	<i>Pagophila eburnea</i>	Elfenbeinmöwe	Ivoormeeuw								x			
Common tern	<i>Sterna</i>	Flusseeschwalbe	Visdief	x		x								
Arctic Tern	<i>Sterna paradisaea</i>	Küstenseeschwalbe	Noordse stern				x			x				x
Sandwich tern	<i>Sterna sandvicensis</i>	Brandseeschwalbe	Grote Stern			x								
Common Guillemot	<i>Uria aalge</i>	Trottellumme	Zeekoet		x	x	x	x	x	x				
Brunnich's Guillemot	<i>Uria lomvia</i>	Dickschnabellumme	Dikbekzeekoet							x	x	x	x	x
Razorbill	<i>Alca tadorna</i>	Tordalk	Alk		x	x	x	x	x					
Black Guillemot	<i>Cepphus grylle</i>	Gryllteiste	Zwarte zeekoet				x			x	x	x	x	x
Little Auk	<i>Alle alle</i>	Krabbentaucher	Kleine alk							x	x	x	x	
Puffin	<i>Fratercula arctica</i>	Papageitaucher	Papegaaiduiker		x		x	x		x		x	x	x
Common Wood Pigeon	<i>Columba palumbus</i>	Ringeltaube	Houtduif	x										
Swift	<i>Apus apus</i>	Mauersegler	Gierzwaluw		x									
Barn Swallow	<i>Hirundo rustica</i>	Rauchschwalbe	Boerenzwaluw		x	x	x		x					
Sand martin	<i>Riparia riparia</i>	Uferschwalbe	Oeverzwaluw		x									
House martin	<i>Delichon urbica</i>	Mehlschwalbe	Huiszwaluw		x	x								
White Wagtail	<i>Motacilla alba</i>	Bachstelze	Witte Kwikstaart		x	x				x				
Meadow Pipit	<i>Anthus pratensis</i>	Wiesenpieper	Graspieper		x	x								
Wheatear	<i>Oenanthe oenanthe</i>	Steinschmätzer	Tapuit							x				
Willow warbler	<i>Phylloscopus trochilus</i>	Fitis	Fitis		x	x								



1. Aberdeen
2. Fair Isles
3. Foula
4. Jan Mayen
5. Sea ice
6. Poolepynten
7. Trygghamna
8. Ymerbukta
9. Longyearbyen



- 6. Poolepynten
- 7. Trygghamna
- 8. Ymerbukta
- 9. Longyearbyen