

Plancius 12 Dive Log 20th August to 29th August 2022



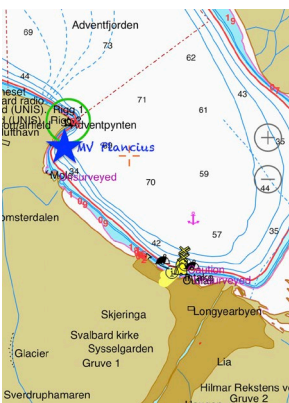
Svalbard Norwegian Arctic

Dive Team: Dive Team Leader Henrik Enckell, Diveguides Tanja Bayer, Michael Green, Mike Pumm

Divers: Faith, Erika, Charlotte, Shari, Sally, Becky, Carol, Rebecca, Angel, Valerie, Kitrina, Chad, Forrest, Bob, Milan, Jim, John T, Tom, Jeff, Rick, Nigel, John G, Michael C , Glenn

20th August 2022

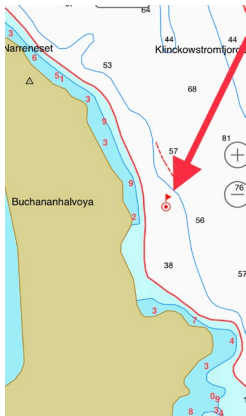
Boarding MV Plancius in Longyearbyen - 68°51.981'N / 016°53.909'E



After getting onboard of MV Plancius we tried to find our way around the ship and explored the different decks. After the mandatory safety briefing we were on our way to circumnavigate Spitzbergen, including the very eastern island Kvitøya. After dinner the muck boots were handed out and we had our mandatory dive briefing in the dining room. And off we went heading towards the north-western edge of Spitzbergen.

21th August 2022 - Afternoon

Dive 1 : Buchannanhalvøya - 79°41.428´N / 012° 12.826´E



After driving all night to the north, we arrived in the morning at Smeerenburgreen. After breakfast the mandatory briefings about Polar bears and Zodiac operations had to be done. Then we got our dive gear ready, prepared the weights and checked everything. There was still time for a little Zodiac cruise in the sunshine before lunch. We sailed further north into the Raudfjord and planned a landing and dive at Alicehamna.



An old trapper hut and a grave on the top of a small hill was seen. But also 2 Polarbears, a mother and her cub, were seen there, just behind the hut. Of course the landing was

cancelled and Plan B was to go a little further into the Raudfjord to the east side of Buchannanhalvøya in the Ayerfjorden. For the first time we started our diving operations and everybody was well prepared. We sorted out 4 groups of 6 divers, packed the Zodiacs and off we went, boarding the divers from the gangway.

After a short drive we arrived at a rocky shore. The depth was 3m, sloping down into the fjord.

After checking and adjusting the weight, everybody went off.

A lot of small stuff was seen. Crabs, small fish, seastars, shrimps and a lot of lionmaine jellyfish.

Visibility was not too bad, about 3-4m, getting better further down.

After 30 min. all divers surfaced and felt happy about the first dive of the trip and for most of them the first dive in the Arctic and some also became „bipolar“ now!

This was a successful Check Dive and we are ready for more adventures.

23rd August 2022 - Morning

Dive 2 : Migmatittodden / Phippsøya - 80°40.293´N / 020°50.031´E



After one beautiful day in the ice, we arrived at the Seven islands in the morning. Plancius was anchoring right in front of Isflakbukta / Phippsøya. We decided to dive on the rocky slope of Migmatittodden, which is at the southwestern corner of Phippsøya at the western entrance to Isflakbukta.

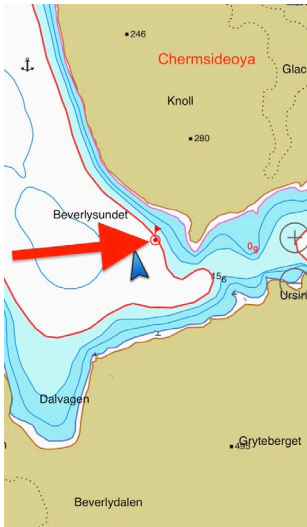


Dive started easy at 2-3m and loped down to max. 12m. It was sometimes hard to get through the kelp to the rocks. But in the kelp there was a lot of life. The divers were happy about nudibranches, shrimps, and also some small fish rushing through the kelp. Sculpins and crabs were on the rocks and large lion's mane jellyfish in the pelagic water. Visibility was good, up to 6m.

After the dive all divers returned to the ship and the tanks were filled again. The next dive was planned for the afternoon at Chermsideøya. So we are sailing now for about 2,5 hours to a small island on the northern coast of Nordaustland, the second largest island of Svalbard.

23rd August 2022 - Afternoon

Dive 3 : Chermisidøya / Nordaustlandet - 80°28.397' N / 019°54.083' E



After 2 hours sailing south, we reached Chermisidøya in the afternoon. It is small island on the northern coast of Nordaustland. The southern tip of the island is known as a place where „stone-graffiti“ can be seen on the high beach. Only 6 divers decided to dive the afternoon dive. The others wanted to do the landing and stretch their legs on a long, medium or leisurely hike.



2 zodiacs with 6 divers took off to the stony coast north of the landing area. The water looked very clear and the 6 divers spoke about a good visibility of 8-10m. On the rocky bottom they saw a lot of seastars, some kelp, skulpins and other fish. Small stuff like nudibranchs, crabs, shrimp and copepods were found. Different jelly fish were swimming around in the water column.

This time they could take some nice pictures.

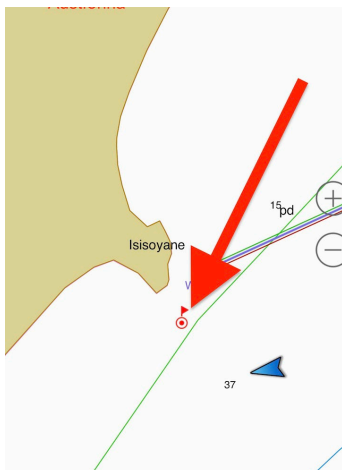
After the dive there was still enough time to go ashore on the landing site. 4 different „stone - graffiti“ from 1898-Swedish-Russian-Arctic-Meridian-Expedition, 1928 - Rescue Operation of Nobile, 1937 - Fishing Boat „Blue Seal“ and 1939 - German U-Boot were still to be seen. The beach was also full of interesting stone formations.

After dinner all divers prepared their gear in the zodiacs for the next dive.

Tomorrow we will reach our most eastern point at Andréneset on Kvitøya.

24th August 2022 - Afternoon

Dive 4 : Isispynthen or „Jim´s DEEP“ / Nordaustland - 79 42.982' N / 026°40.273' E



In the morning we arrived at Kvitøya. We were lucky to see the island which is mostly covered in fog. Andréneset is the western corner and only a small piece of land while 90% of the island is covered by an icecap. Captain and EL assessed the conditions and decided to cancel all activities because of the swell. Also the weatherforecast had announced stronger winds later. So we sailed towards Nordaustlandet and Isispynthen. On the way we saw some very playful humpback whales and minke whales.



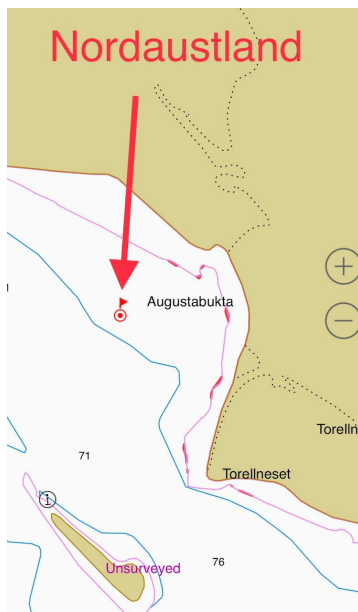
Late afternoon we reached Isispynthen and most of the divers went on the Zodiac Cruise. But some decided to also try a dive in this area. I

am sure nobody tried this before. So after 50 min. of Zodiac cruise around the island, they jumped into bay with a max. depth of 6m.

Visibility was very poor and it was hardly anything to see. But still 2 divers managed a dive of 35min.! On the way back they saw Walrus on the beach.

25th August 2022 - Morning

Dive 5 : Augustabukta / Nordaustland - 79°23.799'N /020°37.533'E



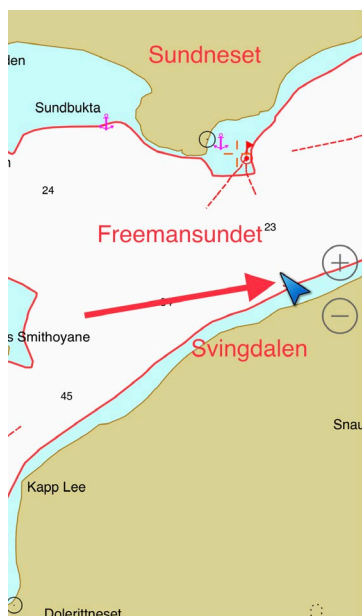
After cruising along the ice wall of the Austfonna Icecap all night, we arrived at Augustabukta in the morning. It is a very wide bay with small hills in the background. In the northern and southern corner are 2 glaciers. The weather was cloudy with some sunshine and reindeers were on the tundra.



Some divers decided to do the landing and see some reindeers. A group of 7 divers went out to the southern part of the bay. Descending to 10m, deepest 16m, they found a stony bottom with some kelp. Crabs, shrimps and some unknown clutch of eggs were seen. As the wind picked up, it was not easy to get back on the Zodiacs, but everybody managed. And off we go, further north in the Hinlopenstrait, to Lomfjorden.

26th August 2022 - Afternoon

Dive 6 : /Svingdalen / Edgeøya - 78°10.035'N /021°09.977'E



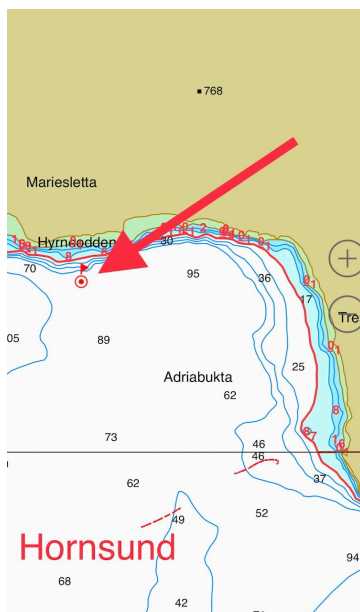
In the night we followed the Hinlopenstrait to the south and turned westwards in the Freemansundet. This is a channel between the Edgeøya in the south and Barentsøya in the north. First dive was planned on Barentsøya, but a Polar bear mum and her cub were walking along the beach. So our expedition leader decided to go for a Zodiac cruise and watch the bears and the reindeers ashore. They were totally relaxed and the mum even nursed her cub just in front of us. This is very rare to be seen. After that we crossed the Freemansundet and tried to find a landing and diving site at Edgeøya. At least „Plan C“ worked and we went for a dive at Svingdalen. At the surface we did not know that this was going to be a nice drift dive to the east. Visibility was not great, but ok. We went down to the bottom between 10 and 12m and just did nothing. It was much too fast to take pictures, but we did see a lot of isopods, small snailfish, lumpsuckers, crabs, shrimps, tunica.... The



tube worms and Kelp was flat on the bottom, because of the strong current. After 35min. and about 2km one-way dive we surfaced. It was a long ride to get back to the ship. But especially the „Girls-Team“ seemed to be quite happy about this long ride! :-))))

27th August 2022 - Morning

Dive 7 : Hyrneodden-Adriabukta / Hornsund - 77°00.999'N /016°05.575'E



In the night we went around the southern tip of Spitsbergen to the western side of this big island. As we turned into the first big Fjord , the Hornsund, we had a lot of wind blowing against us. It was not possible to land and dive at our „Plan A“ location. Gåshamna did not give us any shelter. We decided to go further into this 60km long fjord. Just in front of the headland of Teskelen we found some shelter and decided to try a dive in Adriabukta. Although we new there are many glaciers around, we were keen to try a dive at the nice and colourful geologic formations of Hyrneodden.

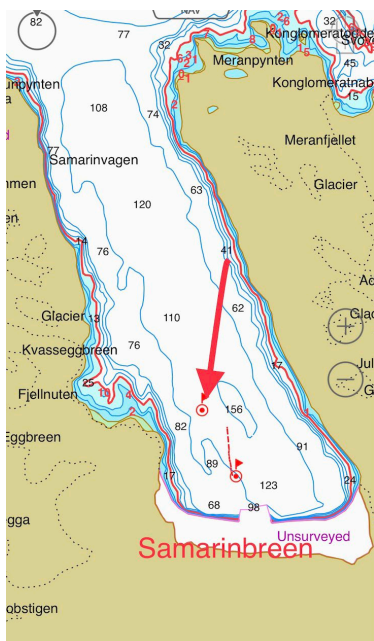


The wind picked up, but 14 divers went into the water and down to 10-16m. The bottom was gravel and kelp and as usual crabs, small fish, snails and sea stars were hiding between the leaves. The glacier water seemed to take away a lot of light in the upper layers. So this dive was very much like a night dive at daytime. Everybody

surfaced safely and we made our long way back to the ship.

27th August 2022 - Afternoon

Dive 8 : Samarinbreen-Iceberg / Hornsund - 76°55.577'N /016°17.404'E



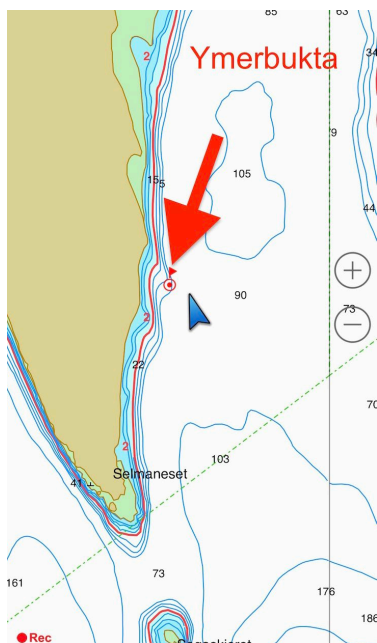
After lunch we did a ship's cruise in Brepollen and had a look at the beautiful Hornbreen and Storbreen. For the afternoon we tried to find a sheltered fjord and found Samarinvagen. In the end is a beautiful glacier and the fog even made it look better. This was the time to find a nice piece of ice to play around. Because we were close to the glacier, visibility was very poor. Some divers stopped after a few minutes , others just snorkelled around. But is was great fun to get in the water in front of a glacier. More than half of the group decided to go on a zodiac cruise with all the other passengers. They saw a pod of Beluga whales including grey calves and a big calving of the glacier.



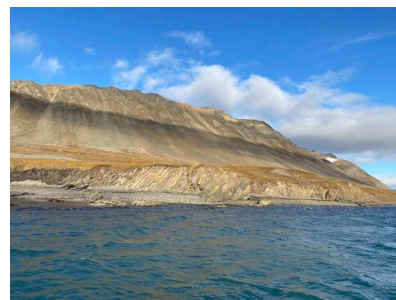
In the evening we watched a beautiful sunset and although it was quite cold, everybody went out to take some beautiful pictures.

28th August 2022 - Morning

Dive 9 : Ymerbukta / Isfjord - 78°14.491'N / 013°56.361'E



In the night we sailed north to the entrance of Isfjord. Plan A was to land and dive at Alkhornet, the northwestern corner of the entrance. Again a polar bear stopped us from landing and we went on to Ymerbukta. It was a beautiful sunny day and we found some nice rocks and a great wall for the last dive.



Near the rocks was a shallow entrance, but it sloped down between the rocks and the divers found a nice wall to follow. Between the kelp they found a lot of crabs, some quite big. Sculpins, tunicae, shrimps and the lovely amphipods could be found.

It was a beautiful last dive for this trip.

Now the gear had to be rinsed and packed.

This is going to be our duty for the afternoon, before we have to say Good-bye tomorrow morning.

Thank you for diving with us! Your Oceanwide Expeditions Dive Team!



