



OCEANWIDE

EXPEDITIONS

In the realm of polar bear and ice

29 June – 6 July, 2023

On board *m/v Plancius*



M/v Plancius was built in 1976 as an oceanographic research vessel for the Royal Dutch Navy and was named “Hr. Ms. *Tydeman*”. The vessel was completely rebuilt as a passenger vessel in 2009 and complies with the latest SOLAS-regulations (Safety Of Life At Sea). *M/v Plancius* is 89 m long, 14.5 m wide and has a maximum draft of 5 m, ice class 1D, 10,5 knots average cruising speed and has 3 Diesel- Electric engines.

Captain Remmert - Jan Koster

And his international crew of 49 sailors

Chief Officer:	Romanas Vicas	[Lithuania]
Second Officer:	Yaroslav Pyetukhov	[Ukraine]
Third Officer:	Martin Hansson	[Sweden]
Hotel Manager:	Volodymyr Cherednychenko	[Ukraine]
Head Chef:	Ivan Yuriychuk	[Ukraine]
Sous Chef:	Sergiy Sklyarov	[Ukraine]
Ships doctor:	Dirk Houtman	[The Netherlands]
Expedition Leader:	Philipp Schaudy	[Austria]
Ass. Expedition Leader:	Eduardo Rubio Herrera	[Guatemala]
Expedition Guide:	Koen Jongerling	[The Netherlands]
Expedition Guide:	Jess Owen	[United Kingdom]
Expedition Guide:	Elizabeth Robinson	[United States]
Expedition Guide:	Ben Frederiks	[The Netherlands]
Expedition Guide:	Chris Long	[New Zealand]
Expedition Guide:	Sasha Romanovsky	[Russia]

We welcome you on board!

Day 1 – Thursday 29th of June, Longyearbyen, embarkation day

08h00 GPS Position: 78°13.30' W 15°32.6' E

Wind: NW3 • Sea: Rippled • Weather: Overcast • Air temperature: 6°C • Sea temperature: 6°C

Throughout the afternoon on our embarkation day in Longyearbyen guests were arriving at Plancius, our new home for the next week.

Once on board we were busy with familiarisations, safety briefings, a mandatory lifeboat instruction, and generally exploring the layout of the ship, working out where important places are, like the restaurant.

As we set off from Longyearbyen in the evening, and northward towards our first scheduled activity of the trip, there was time to enjoy beautiful views of the scenery. The water was very calm, and we even managed to spot a minke whale, a small baleen whale that is often seen in coastal waters.

Then, after departure, we had an introduction to the ship from our hotel manager. This was followed by captain's cocktails where Captain Remmert welcomed us and where our expedition leader Philipp introduced himself and the expedition team and shared the plans for the voyage. After a lovely first dinner on the ship, most of us went to enjoy the views outside while the ship was cruising or went to bed early after a long day of travelling.



Day 2 – Friday 30nd of June, Poolepynten and St Jonsfjord

08h00 GPS Position: 78°25.8'W / 011°55.1'E

Wind: N2 • Sea: Smooth • Weather: Overcast • Air temperature: 4°C • Sea temperature: 6°C

This morning we woke to a partly foggy, partly sunny sky and after breakfast we prepared for our first landing. Today we would be seeing our first walrus, the gentle shellfish eating giants of the north.

We boarded the zodiacs around 9am and after a long zodiac ride we were ashore on the long sandy beach at Poolepynten. To the north we could see the unmistakable large pile of walrus. Slowly we walked towards them, and we began to smell their distinct pungent smell. We all formed a line and slowly we inched forward towards the Walrus, stopping around 40m from them. Everyone took many pictures and videos and watched in awe as around 30 walrus slept, rolled over, made farting noises, and came and went from the ocean.

After visiting the walrus we walked to the south behind the sandy beach where we saw old whale bones, Siberian driftwood, and a reindeer gave us a show, running, and jumping all around us. Then it was back to the ship for lunch.

At around 3pm we boarded the zodiacs with great anticipation, and we went ashore at Gjertsenodden. Once ashore we split into groups with a fast, a medium and a slow hiking group and the first thing to look at was the small trappers hut which is built out of solid logs in a log cabin style. Inside there is a small fireplace and a bed and outside are many reindeer antlers that have been shed each winter by male reindeer. Certainly a cold place to spend even a summer in this fjord.

The fast hikers walked towards the top of the mountain, the medium hikers went to the east, and the leisurely hikers scoured the barren landscape for wildlife to photograph. We found some flowers, purple sandpipers, and arctic skuas.

Evening came and the ship headed back out to sea as we had recap in the bar followed by a delicious dinner.

Just as we were getting ready for bed Phillip announced that there was a whale outside and we were treated to an amazing view of a humpback whale lunge feeding. We then saw even more whale blows in the distance which turned out to be a group of six huge fin whales, the second largest animals in the world.



Day 3 – Saturday 1st of July, Smeerenburgreen and Fuglesongen

08h00 GPS Position: 79°37.7'N / 011°26.7'E

Wind: Light • Sea: Calm • Weather: Overcast+Fog • Air temperature: 2°C • Sea temperature: 5°C

Smeerenburgfjorden is a system of islands and fjords about 20 km long and 4 km wide located on the Northwestern corner of Spitsbergen. Towards the west, the fjord is connected with the sea by the Danskegattet, between Amsterdamøya and Danskøya, and the Sørgattet between Danskøya and the mainland of Albert I Land. The place is named after the Dutch whaling station of Smeerenburg.

Upon arrival we encountered a thick fog along the entrance of the Fjord. However, the veil of fog lifted to a low base of clouds, high enough to allow us to have some visibility. We deployed our zodiacs and began cruising closer to the glacier front. We had the chance to see birds typical of the arctic latitudes such as Common eider ducks, Arctic terns, Arctic skuas, King eider ducks, and various types of Guillemots among others. The main attraction of our zodiac cruise was to visit the glacier front and witness its activity. Soon we started to hear the crackling and thundering noises of the glacier. From a safe distance, we had the chance to witness the calving of massive pieces of ice falling from the glacier front. This left many of our guests speechless, making everybody feel infinitely small and humble against such a powerful force of nature.

In the afternoon we sailed to the Island of Fuglesangen which translates from Norwegian as “Bird Song” referring to the sounds made by the thousands of Little auks (*Alle alle*) that breed on the island. This island has an area of 4.1 km² and is located in Nordvestøyane, the Northernmost archipelago of the area known as Albert I Land. The island has many steep and rocky slopes and cliffs. Here and there are some scarce flat areas. These are the main characteristics of this wild part of Spitsbergen. The first activity would be to walk on land to look to the bird colony. The second activity would take those who would not be so comfortable walking into a zodiac cruise to see the bird cliffs from the sea.

The short walk together with the spectacular landscape and the copious bird life makes of this site a little pearl amongst the possible landings in this remote area.

Both groups enjoyed the incredible sight of flocks of hundreds, even thousands, of the Little auks flying around the island and the sea. Snow still covered some small portions of the landscape, but did not hinder our walking party, from access to the foot of one of the bird colonies. The best was to experience the comings and goings of the birds. For many of our passengers, this was an unforgettable experience, to witness hundreds of those beautiful birds, with their nervous movements and their relaxing

moments sitting in rows over the big boulders, or buzzing in large amounts, sometimes flying right over our heads.



Soon after heaving anchor, we were underway aiming for the North-West corner of Spitsbergen. In the evening we encountered plates of first year sea ice. The view lasted a short moment and soon after this we entered a thick fog bank.

Day 4 – Sunday 2nd of July, Liefdefjorden and Bockfjord, the day of fog

09h00 GPS Position: 79°54.4'N / 013°32.0'E

Wind: Light air • Sea: Calm • Weather: Fog • Air temperature: 1°C • Sea temperature: 2°C

After our wakeup call, we were able to see a beautiful sun shining outside. The mist surrounding the ship made it just the more mysterious and magical. During the morning we started to see more and more ice around the ship. It kept on building up until we could see nothing more than sea ice and mist. Whilst standing in the warm sunshine we looked out with our binoculars with hopes of seeing something moving or laying around. Occasionally we spotted a Bearded seal laying on the ice and some people even saw an Ivory gull fly over the sea ice. Hopes were high on spotting something that was also white but much bigger. Around midday the mist came in again which naturally made us go happily to lunch to get warm again and our bellies filled up.

After lunch the mist was being persistent and did not give us much to look out for. Sailing through Liefde Fjorden we saw a Ringed seal laying on the ice and different types of Auks kept on flying by until we were finally blocked by the fjord ice. Here we found a natural border that we were not allowed to touch or break so we had to turn around. Phillip had decided to go down into Woodfjorden to reach a fjord called BockFjord. On our way



there, the mist did not want to lift up and even though we scoured the coastline the best we could, no movement by any animal was noticed. We did have the chance to listen to the Lecture of Chris who talked about the different types of ice. We learnt how Glacier ice and Sea ice are different and how they are created. After his lecture we arrived at BockFjord and we were again stopped by fjord ice but this time there was more to see. There were 8 seals laying down on the ice in front of us. They looked like they were ringed seals looking at their shape although we were not able to confirm this. Due to the dense fog Phillip again had to make the choice to turn around and leave the Woodfjorden.

Whilst our journey brought us back up north, we were offered a Lecture by Elizabeth. She taught us when and how whales started to be identified and studied and how you can read different features on their dorsal fins, dorsal colorations, tail flukes and callosities on the face, and she told us about a survey that was necessary to start protecting the Orcas in the Northwest of the Pacific Ocean. Today the mist was definitely the most observed feature, however with an optimistic view to the next day in the Pack Ice we happily went to bed.

Day 5 – Monday 3rd of July, day in the pack ice

09h00 GPS Position: 79°55.1'N / 014°29.6'E

Wind: E3 • Sea: Ice • Weather: Partial clouds • Air temperature: 3°C • Sea temperature: 0°C



After yesterday's gray and gloomy day spent in thick fog, the sunlight today seemed especially life-affirming! Not a cloud in the sky, complete calmness, the azure blue of the sky mirroring the color of the Plancius, above us, and below us, right on the water's surface – the eternal ice of the Arctic Ocean. As far as the eye can see, only ice floes, rubbing against each other along the horizon.

Led by our captain, the Plancius maneuvered slowly between the ice, forging its path northward. From the south, the northern coast of Spitsbergen bid us a farewell.

The main task for today was to find a polar bear! Our expedition guides, taking turns, armed with binoculars, constantly stood on watch on the bridge, scanning the ocean surface, in case the ruler of the Arctic was roaming the ice, keeping an eye out for any unsuspecting seals.

We were persistent because the more people searching for the bear with their eyes, the higher the chance of spotting it! Some of us have powerful telescopes, others have good binoculars, and some just stand on the deck, marveling at the mesmerizing view of the most extraordinary ocean on Earth. But all of us constantly peer into the distance, hoping to catch sight of any movement.

"There's always a fish in a crab's trap," says a Russian proverb. No, it was not a bear, but other formidable inhabitants of the polar regions awaited us on the ice floe. Walrus! They rested on the ice, sometimes lazily raising themselves on their front

flippers and flashing their white tusks. They gazed at us, not understanding who we were, what we were doing here, and why we disturbed their daytime slumber.

After lunch, the search for the bear resumed with renewed vigor. But... more walrus. Huge, fat beasts sprawled themselves on a tiny ice floe and slept, showing no signs of concern about our presence. In contrast, fueled by curiosity, we crowded at the ship's bow, taking hundreds of photographs.

The bright sun still shines, but the wind intensifies. The water surface, which was mirror-like in the morning, now displays its combative nature. The ice floes maintain the tranquility of the ocean, preventing the waves from running wild. However, the small waves that manage to form in the small patches of open water, as if understanding their powerlessness, angrily attack the ice floes, striking them forcefully on their sides. Some of them even manage to lift a small spray of fine droplets. The black-legged kittiwakes and northern fulmars, it seems, were delighted by this change in weather. The stronger the wind, the easier it is for them to soar in the air, scanning for prey. Look, a kittiwake is flying after the Plancius, and suddenly - swoosh! - it dives into the water like a stone and immediately soars back into the sky, triumphantly clutching an unfortunate shrimp in its beak.



Unfortunately, the search yielded no results. The bear remained hidden. The sun, traversed the sky, gradually moves further and further north. For dinner we gathered at the stern of deck 3 and dine and dance while occasionally glancing at the ice floes — just in case the bear shows up after all.

It was a pleasant and leisurely day. Yes, we didn't find the bear, but we did cross the 80th parallel. None of us had ventured this far north before, so regardless, we have something to remember.



Day 6 – Tuesday 4th of July, Polar bear sighting

09h00 GPS Position: 79°43.0'N / 012°03.4'E

Wind: N3 • Sea: Smooth • Weather: Partly Cloudy • Air temperature: 7°C • Sea temperature: 5°C

Philipp's soft gentle voice flowed in our ears early this morning as we sailed into Raudfjorden. The participants of the BBQ's after-party might have had a bit of trouble waking up. It proved to be another sun filled morning, as the astonishing landscape slid past our portholes and cabin windows. Time to go outside and enjoy the warm glow of the Arctic sun.

On the decks and bridge one could see countless members of the expedition team ferociously scanning the landscape. The pressure was on to find the true king of the Arctic. It had to be somewhere! Footprints of large animals could be spotted in the snowy landscape, yet no animal that belonged to it. Rest assured many other Arctic inhabitants showed themselves: A pod of beluga whales, arctic terns, Skua's, harbour seals, bearded seals, reindeer, puffins, walrus and even the occasional minke whale were spotted by the keen spotters out on deck. This fjord was truly filled with life.



Philipp really put all his effort in finding us the illusive polar bear. He even made Plancius sail past small rocky outcrops surrounded by treacherous shallows to see if one furry friend was resting on the shores. Meanwhile we could again enjoy the beautiful scenery of Smeerenburgfjord while baking in the sun as we headed for our midday landing at Magdalena fjord.

Eagerly we looked at the clock, at 16:00 we should be at our destination. It had been two days since we walked on solid ground and our feet could use a bit of a stretch. One could already start to notice that the lack of movement and the effect of Ivan's exquisite dishes served three times a day. We could not wait to get a bit of exercise.

Out of nothing the engines went silent, Plancius lost its speed, excitement on deck, people hastily making way to the starboard side of deck. Were we sinking? Listing to port? God no, none of that. What in fact happened was ultimately the cancellation of our landing at Magdalenafjord because the crew had found a bear! Not one, but two! A very alert watchman named June came well rested on duty. As the story goes he picked up a pair of binoculars, had a look at the rocky shores of Danskøya and almost immediately saw a mother and cub resting in a snow patch. When informing the expedition leader about his find, the latter almost jumped through the roof. Finally, this almost mythical creature showed itself. Time to get into action. The guides launched the zodiacs.

As we all sat in the zodiacs the mother and cub decided to go for a swim. From the zodiacs it was not visible where they went, we were still at a fair distance. Luckily the officers on the bridge kept us up to date about their location. It is forbidden to approach a swimming polar bear so we had to gently wait until they climbed ashore again.

Once the bears were seen ashore our ten zodiacs steered to land at a slow and steady pace. What followed was a dream come true. The furry pair walked along the shoreline, entering the water every now and then. Surrounded by seals and mirrorlike water we followed them at a respectable distance. After a short hour the mother decided to head further inland towards a snow patch to lay down. We watched as they cuddled up into a furry bowl amidst the frozen landscape. Time to head back to Plancius, review the pictures we took and digest the special experience we just witnessed. And Ivan's upcoming plated dinner.



Day 7 – Wednesday 5th of July, Ymerbukta and Alkhornet

09h00 GPS Position: 78°14.8'N / 013°56.8'E

Wind: N4 • Sea: Slight • Weather: Partial clouds • Air temperature: 12°C • Sea temperature: 8°C

We woke to beautiful sunny weather on the last full day of the trip. We arrived at Ymerbukta and split into our usual hiking groups. The long hikers walked up to some scenic waterfalls and enjoyed rock ptarmigans and elevated views of the fjord. The medium hikers were treated to an amazing sight of an Arctic fox carrying a pink footed goose that was almost the same size as the fox. They also saw a Glaucous gull sitting proudly at the top of the mountain. The leisurely walkers found the nest of a purple sandpiper, and they enjoyed seeing the diverse range of flowers on the tundra and birds flying and paddling by the shore, such as fulmars, kittiwakes, and eider ducks.

We had a final delicious lunch on Plancius before heading back out to another landing site called Alkhornet, a spectacular spot where the mountain face towers over 600 meters above the sea and is home to hundreds of seabirds nesting on the cliff edge, particularly kittiwakes and Brunichs guillemot.

The long hikers at this spot found lots of tiny plants such as drooping saxifrage, scurvy grass, and mountain avens, all beautiful tundra flowers that are especially adapted to this harsh cold environment.



The medium walkers walked up to the base of the cliff to admire the seabird colony. Up there they had the privilege of seeing a family of arctic foxes emerging from their den on the other side of the valley. Their parent brought them a ptarmigan to eat and it was a magical moment to see the young foxes excited to get their next meal.

The slower walkers had a spectacular stroll along the shore where they saw walrus swimming and had close views of the Svalbard reindeer, a unique subspecies found only here.

Reluctantly we left the charming site of Alkhornet and began slowly sailing back to Longyearbyen. Captain Remmert wished us well in the lounge in the evening and Expedition Guide Elizabeth showed us a beautiful slide show of our adventures over the last week.

Day 8 – Thursday 6th of July, Arrival back into Longyearbyen

08h00 GPS Position: 78°12.5' N 15°35.3' E

Wind: NW3 • Sea: Smooth • Weather: Clear sky • Air temperature: 14°C • Sea temperature: 7°C

While we enjoyed a last breakfast on board, our suitcases were taken off the ship. It was a sad moment to disembark from Plancius, which has been a comfortable and cozy home during this unforgettable journey. We have shared many unique moments, encountered incredible wildlife, and made new friends. Loaded with fond memories we began our journeys home.

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: 659 nautical miles

Northernmost position: 80°28.8'N 013°03.3 E

On behalf of Oceanwide Expeditions, Captain Remmert Jan Koster, Expedition Leader Philipp, Hotel Manager Volodymyr Cherednychenko and all the crew and staff of M/V Plancius, it has been a pleasure travelling with you.



In the realm of the polar bear & Ice onboard M.V. Plancius

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|--------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1. Longyearbyen | 7. Bockfjorden |
| 2. Poolepynten | 8. Pack Ice |
| 3. Gjertsenodden | 9. Raudfjord |
| 4. Smeerenburgreen | 10. Polar bears at Danskøya |
| 5. Fuglesongen | 11. Ymerbukta |
| 6. Liefdefjord | 12. Alkhornet |

0 (km) 200

Birds and Mammals of Svalbard and Franz Josph Land

English Name	Latin	German	French	Dutch	Breeding / Transient / Vagrant	29/Jun	30/Jun	01/Jul	02/Jul	03/Jul	04/Jul	05/Jul	06/Jul
Red-throated diver	<i>Gavia stellata</i>	Sternaucher	Plongeon catmarin	Roodkeelduiker	B		X						
Northern Fulmar	<i>Fulmarus glacialis</i>	Eissturmvogel	Fulmar boréal	Noordse stormvogel	B	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Pink-footed Goose	<i>Anser brachyrhynchus</i>	Kurzschnebelgans	Oie à bec court	Kleine rietgans	B		X					X	
Barnacle Goose	<i>Branta leucopsis</i>	Weisswangengans	Bernache nonnette	Brandgans	B			X				X	
Common Eider	<i>Somateria mollissima</i>	Eiderente	Eider commun	Eidereend	B	X	X	X		X	X	X	
King Eider	<i>Somateria spectabilis</i>	Prachteiderente	Eider à tête grise	Konings eider	B		X	X					
Rock Ptarmigan	<i>Lagopus mutus hyperboreus</i>	Alpenschneehuhn	Lagopède alpin	Alpensneeuwhoen	B		X					X	
Purple Sandpiper	<i>Calidris maritima</i>	Meerstrandläufer	Bécasseau violet	Paarse strandloper	B		X					X	
Ruddy Turnstone	<i>Arenaria interpres</i>	Steinwäzler	Tournepieire à collier	Steenloper	B		X						
Pomarine Skua	<i>Stercorarius pomarinus</i>	Spatelraubmöwe	Labbe pomarin	Middelste jager	T	X							
Arctic Skua	<i>Stercorarius parasiticus</i>	Schmarotzerraub-möwe	Labbe parasite	Kleine jager	B	X	X	X			X	X	
Long-tailed Skua	<i>Stercorarius longicaudus</i>	Falkenraubmöwe	Labbe à longue queue	Kleinste jager	B								
Great Skua	<i>Stercorarius skua</i>	Skua	Grand Labbe	Grote jager	B						X		
Glaucous Gull	<i>Larus hyperboreus</i>	Eismöwe	Goéland bourgmestre	Grote Burgemeester	B						X	X	
Kittiwake	<i>Rissa tridactyla</i>	Dreizehenmöwe	Mouette tridactyle	Drieteenmeeuw	B	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Ross' Gull	<i>Rhodostethia rosea</i>	Rosenmöwe	Mouette de Ross	Rossmeeuw	T								
Ivory Gull	<i>Pagophila eburnea</i>	Elfenbeinmöwe	Mouette blanche	Ivoormeeuw	B				X	X	X		
Arctic Tern	<i>Sterna paradisaea</i>	Küstenseeschwalbe	Sterne arctique	Noordse stern	B	X	X	X			X		
Common Guillemot	<i>Uria aalge</i>	Trottellumme	Guillemot de Troil	Zeekoet	B								
Brünnich's Guillemot	<i>Uria lomvia</i>	Dickschnabellumme	Guillemot de Brünnich	Dikbekzeekoet	B	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Black Guillemot	<i>Cepphus grylle</i>	Gryllteiste	Guillemot à miroir	Zwarte zeekoet	B	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Little Auk	<i>Alle alle</i>	Krabbentaucher	Mergule nain	Kleine alk	B	X		X	X			X	
Puffin	<i>Fratercula arctica</i>	Papageitaucher	Macareux moine	Papegaaiduiker	B	X	X	X			X	X	
Snow Bunting	<i>Plectrophenax nivalis</i>	Schneeammer	Bruant des neiges	Sneeuwgors	B			X			X	X	

MAMMALS

English	Latin	German	French	Dutch	Breeding / Transient / Vagrant	29/Jun	30/Jun	01/Jul	02/Jul	03/Jul	04/Jul	05/Jul	06/Jul
Walrus	<i>Odobenus rosmarus</i>	Walross	Morse	Walrus	B	X	X		X	X	X	X	
Bearded seal	<i>Erignathus barbatus</i>	Bartrobbe	Phoque barbu	Baardrob	B			X	X		X		
Common /Harbour seal	<i>Phoca vitulina</i>	Seehund	Phoque commun	Gewone zeehond	B			X			X		
Minke Whale	<i>Balaenoptera acutorostrata</i>	Zwergwal	Petit rorqual	Dwergvinvis	T	X			X		X		
Fin Whale	<i>Balaenoptera physalus</i>	Finnwal	Rorqual commun	Gewone vinvis	T		X						
Humpback Whale	<i>Megaptera novaeangliae</i>	Buckelwal	Baleine à bosse	Bultrug	T		X						
Beluga	<i>Delphinapterus leucas</i>	Weisswal	Béluga	Beloega	B					X			
Polar Bear	<i>Ursus maritimus</i>	Eisbär	Ours blanc	Ijsbeer	B					X			
Arctic Fox	<i>Alopex lagopus</i>	Polarfuchs	Renard polaire	Poolvos	B		X					X	
Spitsbergen Reindeer	<i>Rangifer tarandus platyrhynchus</i>	Svalbard Renntier	Renne du Spitzberg	Rendier	B		X				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.

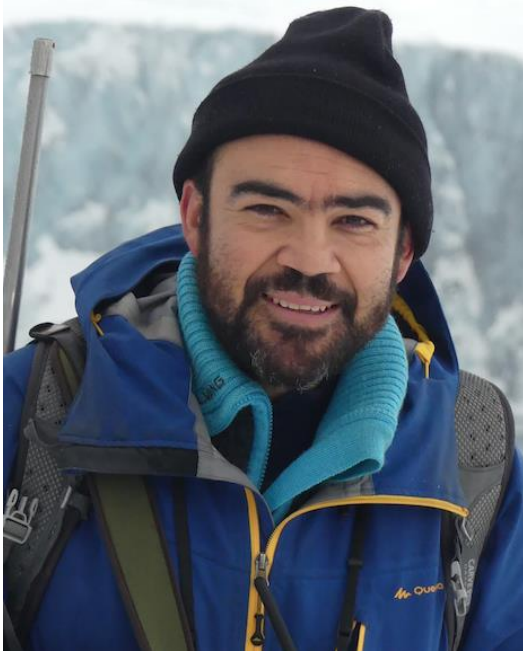
Along the way I finished studies to become a Geographer. Not so easy with my drive to travel.

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 – Assistant Expedition Leader



Eduardo describes himself as an astronomer by profession with a passion for sharing nature with others.

After studying physics, he got his PhD in Astronomy from the University of Amsterdam in 2010. After a postdoctoral position he became a lecturer of physics and Astronomy as well as a guide in expedition cruise ships. In 2018 he decided to become a full-time guide for Oceanwide Expeditions in the Antarctic and in the Arctic.

His interests vary from history of exploration to the intricacies of astronomy. During the trips he has undertaken, he 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 and engaged guide and lecturer, he loves to show constellations to people, pointing out their names and their lore. In every trip he made, he 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), he speaks English, Spanish and German.

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.

Jess Owen - Expedition Guide



Jess is from the South East of England and lives on the Isle of Skye in Scotland. Since graduating from a degree in Wildlife and Media, Jess has been working in environmental research and education roles with wildlife conservation charities in the UK, with a focus on marine mammals and birds. Jess is a passionate science communicator, wildlife guide, and nature enthusiast. She has delivered lectures, workshops, tours, school lessons, and training courses to a wide variety of audiences on subjects such as birds, insects, marine mammals, marine and terrestrial conservation,

citizen science, and gardening for wildlife. She is particularly passionate about citizen science and helping inspire people to become connected to their local wildlife and active in its conservation.

Jess now specialises in whales, dolphins, and porpoises, having worked as a marine mammal surveyor and whale watching guide since 2015. This work has taken her to the Bay of Biscay, the West Coast of Scotland, the Southern Ocean, the Falkland Islands, and the Antarctic Peninsula and she is very excited to be returning to Antarctica this season.

When she is not out at sea, Jess spends her time gardening, reading, making films, snorkelling, and bird watching, and loves to spend time with her nieces and nephew.

Elizabeth Robinson – Expedition Guide



Elizabeth was born and raised in Minnesota, a state in the middle north of the United States. Minnesota is known for having over 10,000 lakes and nature around every corner; something she took full advantage of growing up. Before the age of eighteen, Elizabeth travelled to all fifty US states, and became a Junior Park Ranger at over thirty National Parks.

She graduated with a Bachelor of Arts in Mammalogy, accompanied by additional degrees in Psychology, English Writing and Environmental Studies. Her undergraduate research focused on African elephants and squirrels. Recently, she graduated from the University of Bristol (UK) with a Master of Science degree in Global Wildlife Health and Conservation. Her dissertation focused on cetacean conservation and understanding how policy is integrated within conservation efforts.

Elizabeth has lived and studied whales in many places such as Hawaii, British Columbia, Alaska, Norway, and the UK. She has previously worked as an orca kayak guide, a snorkel guide in Hawaii, a wildlife documentary co-producer, and a marine mammal researcher. She has spent the last eight years studying species such as orcas, humpback whales, right whales, porpoises, and pinnipeds. She is passionate about cetacean conservation, specifically endangered species. Elizabeth currently calls both the US and the UK home and is happiest at sea.

Ben Fredriks - Expedition Guide



Discovering Spitsbergen in 2013 was like a dream coming true for Ben. During his studies in marine biology he conducted fieldwork which took him to the world's most Northern settlement: Ny-Ålesund. Here he fell in love with the Arctic Archipelago, and he has been returning to the Arctic ever since.

In the past, Ben worked on different scientific topics: Arctic shipping and the effect of oil spills in Arctic Regions. Ben is very interested in the Arctic biology/ecology and history, which makes Spitsbergen a perfect place for him to work, because it is filled with all

of it!

Since 2015 Ben works as a hydrographic surveyor on the North sea, but since his first visit to Spitsbergen he has caught the "Arctic virus" and is always looking forward to another adventure in the polar regions!

Chris Long – Expedition Guide



Chris grew up as a part of New Zealand's remotest family two long days hike from the nearest road at a place called Gorge River, on the South Islands West Coast, New Zealand.

His family lives as self-sufficiently as possible in a small cabin surrounded by the jungled rainforest, the rough rugged coastline, and an emerald green river. Most of their food came from a huge vegetable garden or was fished from the ocean. This wild untouched natural corner of New Zealand was Chris's home for the first 17 years of his life, until, one day, he set out to explore

what the rest of the world had to offer.

Since leaving Gorge River Chris has set out to see, explore and experience as much of the globe as possible. This constant search for adventure has seen him travel to over 60 countries on all seven continents. Along this journey, he spent two full summer seasons living and working as a field trainer at Scott Base, a New Zealand research station in Antarctica, as well as multiple voyages to the Ross Sea and East Antarctica.

Chris is also no stranger to the arctic. He once sailed the notorious northwest passage across the top of Greenland, Canada, and Alaska and spent much of the covid pandemic living with 150 husky dogs in Tromso, northern Norway, enduring two long cold dark arctic winters training for long distance dog races.

Since recently returning to New Zealand, he has published an autobiography and is training for his commercial fixed-wing pilot's license.

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 geoecological 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!



DAILY PROGRAM

Welcome aboard!

Date: Thursday 29th 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 will cast off. Please listen to announcements for our **mandatory safety and lifeboat drill** in the Lounge/Bar – Deck 5.

thereafter **Welcome Aboard Briefing** in the Lounge/Bar – Deck 5.

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 a gleam to guide us,
And the wild is calling, calling . . . let us go.*

Robert Service, The Call Of The Wild



DAILY PROGRAM

Forlandsundet

Date: Friday 30th June 2023

Day: Day 2

- 07.15** **Wake up call.** Good morning!
- 07.30** **Breakfast** buffet for **one hour** in the Dining Room.
- 08.30** **Mandatory** briefing in the lounge on **how to behave in Polar Bear country and on Zodiac operations.**
- thereafter** **Landing: Poolepynten.** Today we will wake up in Forlandsund. The long sandy beach of Poolepynten (on Prins Karls Forland) is one of the places, where walrus often are found resting. If our friends are at home, we will visit the animals in two groups. **Both groups will get the same amount of time with the walrus.**
First 5 boats: We are **going for a short hike.** After that we visit the walrus.
Second 5 boats: We are **going to the walrus first.** After that we go for a short hike. If you are in this group, there will be the possibility to get back to the ship right after the walrus-visit.
- 12.30** **Lunch-Bufferet** for one hour in the Dining Room.
- 15.00** **Landing: Sankt Jonsfjord.** Our target for today's afternoon is Sankt Jonsfjord, a 20 kilometre long fjord, cutting into the west coast of Spitsbergen. We will land close to an old trapper cabin. Once on land, we will split into groups, with different targets and explore the area on foot.
- 18.30** **Daily recap & briefing** for tomorrow.
- 19.00** Enjoy your meal. **Dinner** is ready!

*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

Smeerenburgbreen & Fuglesangen

Date: Saturday 01st July 2023

Day: Day 3

- 07.15** Wake up call.
- 07:30 **Breakfast** is available for one hour.
- 09.00** **Zodiac-Cruise: Smeerenburgbreen.** We are in the very northwest corner of the archipelago. Today's morning we are planning a Zodiac cruise at Smeerenburgbreen, a massive glacier spilling into the sea. **Dress warm**, we are not getting ashore!
- 12.30 **Lunch-Bufferet** for one hour in the Dining Room.
- 15.00** **Landing: Fuglesangen.** We intend to go ashore at the rugged island Fuglesangen ("bird-song"), so named for the large little auk colony breeding on its scree slopes. It is **not easy to land** here! There are large round rocks on the beach and boulders at the colony.
This is how it works: We will walk to the colony. At the colony we find ourselves good places to sit and wait (dress warm). It is important not to be too close – guides will show you the limit.
- 15.30** **Zodiac cruise: Fuglesangen.** As an **alternative to the landing**, we offer a Zodiac cruise along the cliffs of the island. Groups of birds will fly in and out and you get the full picture of the colony.
All who feel uncomfortable with a challenging beach, please join the cruise.
- 18.30** **Recap** of today and briefing for tomorrow in the lounge.
- 19.00 The **Dinner** is waiting for us.

*"One does not discover new parts of the world,
without the courage
of leaving all coastlines behind.*

André Gide



DAILY PROGRAM

LIEFDEFJORD

Date: Sunday 02nd July 2023

Day: Day 4

Expedition day towards Liefdefjorden! Close to Liefdefjorden we will encounter the pack ice, a spectacular Arctic Wonderland. According to the ice chart, the fjord entrance is still blocked by pack ice. Nevertheless we intend to try to get into Liefdefjorden – it is a brilliant experience unto itself to navigate in the pack ice. Join us on deck in the search of wildlife.

If we succeed to get into the fjord, we have a couple of good options for an afternoon activity. Please listen to announcements.

- 07.15** **A wonderful good morning.** Philipp's voice will stop our sleep.
- 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** **Dinner!** Enjoy 😊.

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

A DAY IN THE PACK ICE

Date: Monday 03rd July 2023

Day: Day 5

Expedition day in the pack ice! North of Spitzbergen we will encounter the pack ice, a spectacular Arctic Wonderland. Please join us on deck in the search of wildlife – it is a brilliant experience unto itself to navigate in the pack ice.

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.

- 07.45** **Pack-ice-sleep-in** 😊.
- 08.00** **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** **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

Raudfjord & Magdalenafjord

Date: Tuesday 04th July 2023

Day: Day 6

- 07.15** Good morning! **Wake up call.**
- 07.30** **Breakfast** buffet for **one hour** in the Dining Room.
- morning** **Raudfjord.** In the morning we will be back on the shores of Spitsbergen. We intend to enter Raudfjord, a fjord that is known for potential wildlife. Most likely there will still be winter-ice in the back of the fjord. We plan to ships-cruise the fjord and keep eyes open for animals!
- 12.30** **Lunch-Bufferet** for one hour in the Dining Room.
- 16.00** **Magdalenafjord.** This is one of West-Spitsbergens most beautiful fjords. We plan to get ashore at the sandy beach of Gravneset, a historic site with numerous graves from the whaling period. Walking here is easy and we will offer different hikes to stretch our legs after two days on the ship.
- 18.30** Daily **recap & briefing** for tomorrow.
- 19.00** Enjoy your meal. **Dinner** is ready!

Adventure is just bad planning.

Roald Amundsen (1872 - 1928), polar explorer.



DAILY PROGRAM

ISFJORD

Date: Wednesday 05th July 2023

Day: Day 7

- 07.15** A wonderful good morning! **Wake up call.**
- 07.30** **Breakfast** buffet for **one hour** in the Dining Room.
- 09.00** **Landing: Ymerbukta, Isfjorden.** This morning we will wake up at the entrance of Isfjorden, Svalbards largest fjord system. We plan to get ashore in the bay Ymerbukta. It is easy walking in a relatively open landscape and we plan to explore the country in our known hiking groups.
- 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!
- 12.30** **Lunch-Buffer** for one hour in the Dining Room.
- 14.30** **Landing: Alkhornet, Isfjorden.** This afternoon we intend to land at picturesque Alkhornet in the bay Trygghamna (west of Ymerbukta). We find lush vegetation, birdlife, reindeer and maybe even a polar fox. It is a great place to roundup an extraordinary voyage.
- 18.30** **Farewell Cocktail with the Captain & last official meeting.** Please join us for a toast on our voyage!
- 19.30** **The Last Supper.** Bon Appetite!

"Where does the white go when the snow melts?"

Author unknown



DAILY PROGRAM

LONGYEARBYEN

Date: Thursday 06th July 2023

Day: 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.

Red ribbon: flight SK4425 at 14.30

White ribbon: flight SK4491 at 16.25

No ribbon: Malaysian group

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

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

13.00 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.

15.00 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“