

# Spitsbergen, North-East Greenland

20 August – 02 September 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 (Safety Of Life At Sea) regulations. She is 89m long, 14.5m wide, and has a maximum draft of 5m. Her average cruising speed is 10,5 knots on three diesel-electric engines.*

**Captain Artur Lakovlev**

And his international crew of 50 sailors

Chief Officer:	<b>Romanas Vicas</b>	[Lithuania]
Second Officer:	<b>Nino Cizmic</b>	[Croatia]
Third Officer:	<b>Eline Schuurman</b>	[The Netherlands]
Hotel Manager:	<b>Ingrid Van de Loo</b>	[The Netherlands]
Asst. Hotel Manager:	<b>Karolina Guziejko</b>	[Poland]
Head Chef:	<b>Khabir Moraes</b>	[India]
Sous Chef:	<b>Sachin Anant</b>	[India]
Ships doctor:	<b>Veronique Verhoeven</b>	[Belgium]
Expedition Leader:	<b>Rinie van Meurs</b>	[The Netherlands]
Ass. Expedition Leader:	<b>Michelle van Dijk</b>	[The Netherlands]
Expedition Guide:	<b>Chloe Marechal</b>	[France]
Expedition Guide:	<b>Irene Kastner</b>	[Germany]
Expedition Guide:	<b>Elodie Bouvier</b>	[Switzerland]
Expedition Guide:	<b>Frigga Kruse</b>	[Germany]
Expedition Guide:	<b>Ross Wheeler</b>	[United Kingdom]
Expedition Guide:	<b>Pierre Gallego</b>	[Luxembourg]

**We welcome you on board!**

**Day 1 – Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> of August, Longyearbyen, Embarkation Day**

**12h00 GPS Position:** 78°14.6'N / 015°32.6'E

**Wind:** Northerly, Beaufort force 2 • **Sea:** Calm • **Weather:** Overcast

• **Air temperature:** +7°C • **Sea temperature:** +9°C

We began our expedition in Longyearbyen, having travelled from all over the world to reach the spectacular Arctic archipelago of Svalbard. Once safely on board MV Plancius, our new home for the next two weeks, we familiarised ourselves with our new surroundings and undertook the required mandatory safety briefings. As our mooring lines were let go and we said goodbye to Longyearbyen, we toasted our forthcoming adventure with Captain Artur, Expedition Leader Rinie and the rest of the expedition team in the observation lounge. We then set off to the restaurant for a relaxed first buffet dinner amongst new friends. Following dinner, we headed down to the boot store for to receive our sturdy footwear that we would use throughout our expedition and enjoyed the remainder of the evening socialising in the lounge or on the open decks where the sun remained hovering over the horizon.



## Day 2 – Monday 21<sup>st</sup> of August, SmeerenburgFjorden, Smeerenburg

**12h00 GPS Position:** 78°13.7'N / 015°36.1E

**Wind:** North-Easterly, Beaufort force 2 • **Sea:** Calm • **Weather:** Partial clouds

• **Air temperature:** +6°C • **Sea temperature:** +8°C

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It was 07:45 when our Expedition Leader Rinie gave us our first wake-up-call. It might have taken a short moment to realise where we were – far north on the lovely ship Plancius which we were now calling home.

This morning we had reached the northwest corner of Spitsbergen and during breakfast, the Captain himself was steering our ship through Sørgattet, the narrow passage south of Danskøya.

When we looked out of the windows of the dining room, we saw the stunning landscape, so right after breakfast we put on some layers and went outside to see the beautiful Smeerenburgfjord, and breath the fresh Arctic air. Over the PA, Expedition Leader Rinie told us that the still impressive glacier Smeerenburgbreen retreated a lot, and he remembered the time that the island in front of it, was still covered by ice. Having a closer look at the island, Irene, one of our guides, spotted two polar bears. It was a mother and her cub of last year. The ship sailed closer to get a better look, however, they were still difficult to observe, but with the help of our guides, we all managed to find them.

After a while it was time for the – because of the polar bears – postponed briefings. Rinie explained how safely to get in and out of the Zodiacs, how to behave around polar bears and the dos and don'ts on land.





Right after lunch it was time to get into the Zodiacs, ten boats cruised towards the island where mother and cub were relaxing. They didn't mind us watching them, and except for some polar bear yoga, they didn't move. But the Arctic is not only about polar bears, but the nearby glacier was also calling and as we approached, we were greeted with many species of birds flying and seals in the water.

Our next aim was Smeerenburgreen, Michelle looked first and spotted an Arctic fox, being attacked by Arctic terns. Incredible how camouflaged these animals are, if it wasn't because of the arctic terns, we would have difficulties to find it. Arriving in the ice at the glacier was exciting, and we could see so many different shades of blue and hear the air bubbles escaping from it. At 15:00h it was time to get back to the mother ship as we still wanted to visit the walruses on Smeerenburg.

Shortly before 17:00h we got into the Zodiacs again, half of the group would be taken to the walruses and half of the group would be taken to the historical remains of Smeerenburg. Smeerenburg was build 400 years ago as a whaling settlement and there is a lot to talk about it.

But suddenly, the plans changed again as there were again polar bears spotted, across Danskegattet on the island Danskøya, opposite of the island Amsterdamøya on which Smeerenburg is situated. This time it was a mother with her cub of this year. Instead of the history talk, the second half was taken towards the polar bears and after some time with the walruses and bears we swapped.



Incredible, what a day!

We had only one day of Spitsbergen, but so much was experienced that it felt like much longer.

### Day 3 – Tuesday 22<sup>nd</sup> of August, At Sea

**12h00 GPS Position:** 77°47.6'N / 001°07.8E

**Wind:** South-Westerly, Beaufort force 4 • **Sea:** Slight • **Weather:** Overcast, fog

• **Air temperature:** +6°C • **Sea temperature:** +2°C

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Following an epic day exploring the wonders of Svalbard, our expedition continued its eastward course towards Greenland. The morning greeted us with a moody, overcast sky and a thick fog, accompanied by a slightly turbulent sea that gradually calmed as the day progressed.



In the morning, Michelle and Frigga engaged us with an enlightening lecture about the history of whaling in Svalbard, recounting the sailors' daunting challenges in this unforgiving environment and the heartrending saga of whaling itself. Their narrative took us back to the early 17th century when there were so many whales in these waters that ships had trouble moving. Yet, by the late 18th century, the whale populations suffered a disastrous decline due to extensive hunting, marking the end of an era.

In the afternoon, Rinie and Michelle shared fascinating insights into the lives of polar bears. These magnificent mammals reach impressive lengths exceeding 2.5 meters and carry a remarkable weight of approximately 680 kilograms, firmly cementing their status as Earth's largest living carnivores. The polar bear's colossal size is just one facet of their remarkable adaptation to the unforgiving Arctic environment.

In the frigid Arctic, polar bears are perfectly suited for survival. Their thick fur coats provide insulation against the biting cold, ensuring their warmth in sub-zero temperatures. These formidable creatures traverse snow-covered terrain with grace, thanks to their oversized paws, which function as natural snowshoes, preventing them from sinking into the snow.

However, one of the most astonishing attributes of polar bears is their incredible swimming prowess. Their powerful front limbs act as efficient paddles, enabling them to navigate icy waters with exceptional skill and agility.

At the end of the day, our expedition team held our first recap. They told us about the never-ending daylight in the Arctic, the different types of Arctic birds, and the iconic walrus. We can't wait for more adventures ahead!

## Day 4 – Wednesday 23rd of August, At Sea

**12h00 GPS Position:** 74°51.2'N / 009°15.9E

**Wind:** Westerly, Beaufort force 4 • **Sea:** Slight • **Weather:** Overcast, fog •

**Air temperature:** +2°C • **Sea temperature:** +1°C

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Those of us who, despite poor visibility for most of the previous evening, had not given up seeing the first sunset of our voyage were rewarded with a spectacular sight as the fog fell apart on the horizon just before midnight. The setting sun became visible just as he was about to sink into the waters, and for the following hours, the sky turned crimson.



As we woke up to a beautiful morning, the fog kept a respectful distance at the horizon, and the sea had calmed down nicely. Pieces of drift ice passed by as Plancius moved steadily through the waters and the fulmars who circled around us seemed to enjoy the early hours as much as the early birds amongst us. Inside, today's breakfast buffet was waiting. As we expected to spend another day at sea on our way to westwards the daily program offered a few more lectures. Yet, as many of us had not experienced the pack ice before a quick change of plans was soon on the table. Our captain was not hard to persuade and soon we went on a ship cruise into the ice! As long as the pack ice was not too close, as long as there was space to push through between the floes, Plancius was maneuvering elegantly in this labyrinth of white, grey, blue and green. We found our way out into open water just in time for Elodie's lecture on sea ice and the importance of this special ecosystem both on and under its surface. Not only is the extent of sea ice important, but it also needs to be of the right age in order to provide the right conditions for plankton to grow to serve as food resource for fish



to be eaten by seals who are the main food source for the polar bears .By lunchtime, the fog had caught up with us again and made it necessary for the officers to close the bridge for visitors. Every now and then, drift ice came into our way forcing them to reduce speed and maneuver carefully, reading the radar screens and consulting ice charts. However, we made use of the circumstances as Ross invited us to a photography workshop. Hopefully, we would soon get a chance to put our new knowledge to the test! From time to time, visibility became better only to decrease again and even the fulmars seemed to have given up on following us. After a while in open waters the drift ice forced us once again to deviate from a straight course towards Myggbukta. The fastest way through the ice seemed indeed to be going around it and thus captain Artur decided to search for free passage further South. Eventually, at least the fog lifted again in the late hours and now we were waiting patiently for the Sun to set as we witnessed another one of the spectacular and extended crimson night hours of the late arctic summer.



## Day 5 – Thursday 24th of August, At Sea

**12h00 GPS Position:** 72°46.7'N / 015°33.0W

**Wind:** South-Westerly, Beaufort force 4 • **Sea:** Slight • **Weather:** Overcast, fog

• **Air temperature:** +0°C • **Sea temperature:** +1°C

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As the Arctic sun pierced through our cabin curtains, we awoke surrounded by a surreal landscape of sea ice. The cold air was invigorating, and the sight of the endless ice floes stretching as far as the eye could see was awe-inspiring. It was as if we had been transported to another world altogether. Shortly after we finished breakfast, Frigga, one of our expedition guides, began her captivating lecture on Greenland's rich archaeological history but her lecture was abruptly interrupted by a burst of excitement from the deck. Three massive fin whales had gracefully breached the surface and our attention was immediately drawn to this amazing natural spectacle.



Then, Frigga began her captivating lecture on Greenland's rich archaeological history. She delved into the mysteries of ancient Inuit settlements and the ingenious adaptations of the people who thrived in this harsh environment. Her insights into the artifacts, tools, and structures left behind by these resilient societies provided a profound understanding of their lives and challenges in the Arctic, making us appreciate the cultural significance of this remote land.



At the beginning of the afternoon, there were fog enveloping the ship, creating a mysterious atmosphere. Following lunch, James, the geologist guest speaker, gave us an interesting lecture on the geology of East Greenland. James described the tectonic forces and the fascinating stories of rocks and fossils that could be found in this remote corner of the world. It gave us a good understanding about what we will see the next couple of days.

This Arctic expedition had already proven to be an adventure of a lifetime, filled with surprises, wonder, and newfound knowledge. We are looking forward to what tomorrow would bring as our ship continued its journey through this remote wilderness.



## Day 6 – Friday 25<sup>th</sup> of August, Segelsällskapetfjord & Alpefjord

**12h00 GPS Position:** 77°47.6'N / 001°07.8W

**Wind:** South-Westerly, Beaufort force 3 • **Sea:** Calm • **Weather:** Overcast, •

**Air temperature:** +9°C • **Sea temperature:** +5°C

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There probably wasn't a single passenger onboard who wasn't on the outside decks before breakfast. The early morning sun, clear and unobstructed waters ahead of us and stunning scenery left us all amazed by the beauty of Greenland.

We had entered Davy Sund, a sound named by William Scoresby Jr., an English whaling captain, in 1822. Sir Humphrey Davy was an English chemist and President of the Royal Society, who incidentally invented the famous and important Davy miners' lamp.

As we continued into the wide Kong Oscar Fjord, we marveled at the multicolored mountains all around us. Named by the Swedish explorer A. G. Nathorst in 1899 to commemorate the king of Sweden, who could guess its scale?! It turns out we were looking at up to 25 km at its widest! It gave us our first sense of the vastness of this landscape.



Our first landing on Greenland soil would be at the oddly named place Segelsällskapet Fjord. Also named by Nathorst, it referred to the Swedish Royal Yacht Club. This location was full of geological wonders such as the axis of a fold in the rock, which we could place our finger on. Even if we did not understand all geological ins and outs, the layering and the colour that went with it were simply stunning. Opposite the fjord, we could trace the same colors in a sedimentary sequence called the Eleanor Bay Super Group, marine deposits of over 16 km thick that were later uplifted to form the mountains we see today.



In the afternoon, the ship sailed through Alpefjord, a name derived from the spectacular high mountains of the Stauning Alper on the east side of the fjord. Did anyone spot the Norwegian hunting hut built by Helge Ingstad's expedition in 1932/33? It looked tiny; it was dwarfed by huge erratics surrounding it. Here and there, there were musk oxen, and although we roughly know the size of these animals, they appeared a little black dots on the tundra vegetation.

We undertook our second landing near the merging glaciers Gullygletscher and Sefstrøm Gletscher (Gletscher = glacier, Sefstrøm having been a Swedish chemist and geologist). This time, we had a chance to practice exploring the landscape in three groups: the "mountain goats" on a faster, higher hike to gain height from which to look across to the two glaciers, the medium group, and the leisurely. And it is true: you think you already saw the place from the ship, but out on the landing you get a very different feel for what it means to finally be in Greenland.



## Day 7 – Saturday 26<sup>th</sup> of August, Blomsterbugt & Antarctic Sund

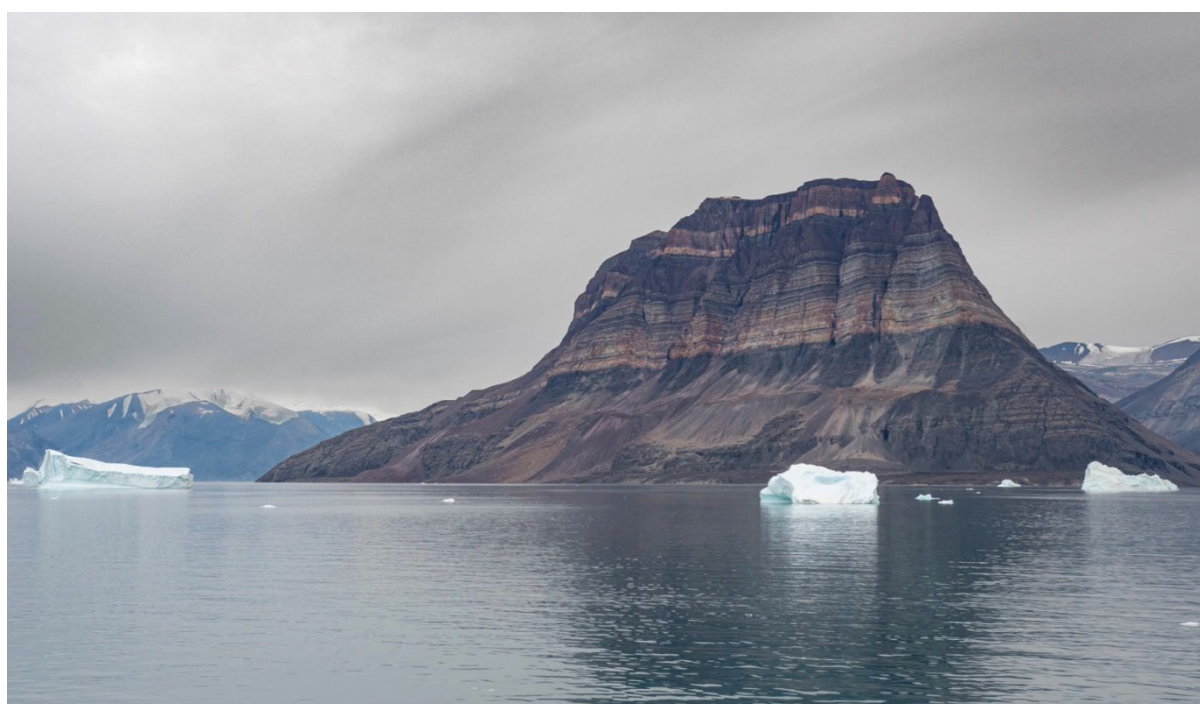
**12h00 GPS Position:** 73°19.7'N / 025°17.5W

**Wind:** South-Easterly, Beaufort force 1 • **Sea:** Calm • **Weather:** Overcast,

**Air temperature:** +10°C • **Sea temperature:** +5°C

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Before breakfast, we sailed into Geologfjord, a narrow fjord nestled between mountains reaching heights of up to 2,100 meters (6,900 feet) on both sides. The cliffs here display beautifully coloured strata, hinting at the geological history of our planet and possibly supporting the Snowball Earth hypothesis. This theory suggests that the Earth's surface was completely or nearly frozen at least once, possibly over 650 million years ago.



Following breakfast, we made landing at Blomsterbugt, also known as Blomster Bugt or Flowers Bay in Danish. It was a unique opportunity to observe muskoxen as they grazed on the tundra. These creatures are a relic from the distant past, having roamed the Earth even before the woolly mammoth. Their remarkable insulative undercoat boasts the finest fur of any mammal worldwide. Surprisingly, muskoxen are more closely related to goats and sheep than to oxen or cattle. Their thick, shaggy coats and the powerful musky odour emitted by males during mating season are two of their most distinctive features.

In the afternoon, we embarked on a scenic ship cruise through the enchanting Antarctic Sund. The sound was named by Alfred Gabriel Nathorst, who discovered and mapped this fjord branch in 1899 aboard the Antarctic, during the Swedish Greenland Expedition's search for survivors of S. A. Andrée's Arctic balloon expedition of 1897. While cruising through this serene waterway, we had the privilege of witnessing a mother polar bear and her cub in the distance.





## Day 8 – Sunday 27<sup>th</sup> of August, Ella Ø

**12h00 GPS Position:** 72°54.7'N / 025°03.5W

**Wind:** Westerly, Beaufort force 2 • **Sea:** Calm • **Weather:** Overcast, rain

**Air temperature:** +07°C • **Sea temperature:** +2°C

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Today we were woken up by Rinie to a cloudy, rainy day. On our way to Ella. Island, the island that is home to the Sirius patrol base. We had already been in contact with them on our first day on arrival in Greenland when they came aboard to check our paperwork. We were allowed to land on the base, and several members of the patrol came to greet us. Most of the Patrollers will be stationed in Greenland for two years and there is a very strict procedure to be able to join the patrol. During the winter they patrol most of Greenland with their dog sleds. For the patrol to go all around Greenland it takes them 3 to 4 years in this harsh environment.



As we landed, it was raining slightly, and we set off to do different hikes across the island. The hiking group made it up to a high vantage point where they were able to have a breathtaking view of the surroundings. We went back to the ship right on time for lunch and Plancius set off to go south to Scoresby sound as there were predictions of heavy wind with the risk of having pack ice being blown into our itinerary. This is why the captain decided to set sail right after landing to avoid the ice and get to Scoresby Sund in time.





As we started navigating South, the sea was quite rough, and the visibility was quite poor, but our passengers had already gotten used to swell, and nobody got seasick. After lunch, we listened to a lecture about the female polar explorer Louise Arnar Boyd. We then had a recap of the day with Irene, telling us more about the Sirius patrol, the harsh selection process, the duties, and what life looks like for the members of these patrol for the two years commitment. Chloe gave us a recap on tardigrades. She uncovered all the mysteries of these very resistant little organisms, and confessed to us that she is keeping one as a pet.

Dinner was then served in the dining room, and we enjoyed yet another fantastic set of dishes, prepared by our signature chef Kabir. We then headed to the bar to enjoy a drink before going to bed and preparing for our next activities in Scoresby Sund.

## Day 9 – Monday 28<sup>th</sup> of August, Vikingbugt & Denmark Island

**12h00 GPS Position:** 70°23.7'N / 025°04.5W

**Wind:** Westerly, Beaufort force 2 • **Sea:** Calm • **Weather:** Overcast •

**Air temperature:** +06°C • **Sea temperature:** +2°C

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Rinie woke us up today to the beautiful side of blue sky and sunshine as we are already in Scoresby sound and entering Vikingebugt. Plancius had to progress slowly through the Icebergs, our first sights of very large Icebergs. After breakfast, we all headed to the outer decks to absorb the incredible views of steep cliffs and Icebergs.

At about 10 o'clock that ship stopped, and we dropped the Zodiacs for a Zodiac cruise. The ice coming from the glacier was so abundant that even with the Zodiacs it was very difficult to progress, and it took us quite a time to get to the cliffs to observe the very characteristic columnar basalt that is typical of the area. We had a wonderful time driving through the ice stopping at beautiful Icebergs. We just could not get enough pictures of all these different shapes and sizes and colors. Back on the ship we had time for a lovely lunch prepared by Kabir and we even had time for a little rest as we repositioned Plancius to Denmark Island. Our navigation to our destination was amazing. We were navigating through flat, calm waters, with huge mountains on both sides, and Icebergs passing us by.



We arrived at Denmark Island at about 3:30 PM. The weather was gorgeous: the sun was shining brightly as we landed on the sandy beach of these islands. We divided as usual into three groups, the hikers, the medium group, and the leisure group. The hikers managed to go a long distance to a high vantage point, where we had

brehtaking views. But we all managed to have a beautiful walk in this tundra, and to have a look at the remains of the winter houses from the Thule.



We got back on the ship in time for a nice dinner and after dinner we all spent some time on the outer decks, looking at the Icebergs passing next to the ship. Some of us stayed up for quite a while waiting for the northern lights, but unfortunately, we were not lucky.



## Day 10 – Tuesday 29<sup>th</sup> of August, Sydkap & Ø fjord

**12h00 GPS Position:** 71°17.6'N / 025°01.1E

**Wind:** Westerly, Beaufort force 2 • **Sea:** Calm • **Weather:** Fog clearing to clear sky

**Air temperature:** +04°C • **Sea temperature:** +8°C

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What had seemed like a faint veil of mist settling with dusk the previous evening and thus obscuring our hopes of witnessing any northern lights had developed into a rather dense layer of fog by the following morning. As we dropped the anchor in a small inlet in the northern part of Scoresby Sound, not much of the surrounding landscape could be seen, instead our attention was once again drawn to the delicious breakfast buffet while we hoped for better visibility outside.

Eventually, our patience paid off and the fog started moving, revealing rich tundra, soft slopes and finally, sharp peaks covered in ice sticking out of the mist. After a rather long Zodiac ride, we soon found ourselves on land and ready to explore the neighborhood. Four groups formed and set off into the landscape into different directions, looking at the local geological features, exploring the remains of a former hunting settlement and hoping to find some musk ox willing to let us have a good look at them. Even though the fog had delayed us a bit this morning, the opportunity to stretch our legs was welcome. Upon return, the mystic morning mood had given way to a brighter light and fewer clouds which suited us perfectly as we were about to embark on a ship's cruise into the Ø fjord, a narrow sound between the high mountains of Milne Land and Renland with peaks of up to almost 2900 meters.





Now, the Sun had dissolved all the fog, and our captain steered carefully and with high concentration between the many icebergs these waters were sending our way! Watching Plancius maneuver swiftly between all these beautiful but demanding obstacles was fascinating – often, it seemed as if there was no further passage, then yet again, a slight movement of the hand at the helm, a new angle of approach and we were able to cautiously pass between the bright white chunks of ice.



The sea was still and every now and then we were able to spot the little head of a seal curiously peaking out of the water. As the evening came, a barbecue was arranged on the aft deck and we had proceeded into Rypefjord where we found a nice little bay providing shelter from the icebergs for anchorage. The party went on for a few hours while we watched the sunset and the first stars appeared. This time, no clouds or fog appeared, the sky remained clear and finally, our patience was rewarded and the Northern lights appeared! First, a faint green ribbon was only recognizable to those who knew what to look for, but eventually, the lights became a bit stronger and also those who had gone to bed already were woken up to have a chance to witness this phenomenon of the high latitudes.

## Day 11 – Wednesday 30<sup>th</sup> of August, Røde Ø

**08h00 GPS Position:** 70°42.0'N / 027°53.9W

**Wind:** SW1 • **Sea:** Calm • **Weather:** Clear • **Air temperature:** +05°C •

**Sea temperature:** +7°C

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As the rising sun crept over the mountains, the cold crisp air slowly began to warm on what was a perfect morning in the Scoresby Sund. With mirror calm conditions and a vibrant blue sky, we lifted anchor and started to head South along the magnificent Rødefjord, or Red Fjord.

Meandering slowly through countless icebergs of all shapes and sizes we were awarded with glassy conditions and perfect reflections of the 300-million-year-old Permian red sandstone cliffs that wall the 11km fjord. The intense brownish red sandstone, which gives the fjord its name, is sometimes referred to as 'New red, as it is both geologically and visually very similar to the 'Old red' sandstone found in parts of Spitsbergen and Scotland; however, it is younger or 'newer'.

Following our relaxing morning and a buffet lunch, we arrived at Røde Ø or Red Island, a monolithic island of the red sandstone rock that is found throughout the fjord. We started our visit to the island with a Zodiac cruise along its Southern edge where we encountered picturesque geological dikes and an intrusion of columnar basalt that earns itself the nickname 'braendestabelen' or 'pile of firewood'. We continued along the coastline of the island to observe the eastern edge of the 'iceberg graveyard' that makes Røde Ø so famous. With a depth of just a few meters, countless towering icebergs like those seen throughout the morning were literally stuck in position to form a virtual maze of ice.





After our Zodiac cruise, We made a landing on the island and undertook a short hike up the hills to get a more elevated view of Røde Ø's breathtaking landscapes and to observe the gigantic icebergs from above – For many, this was the most breath-taking and memorable moment of our expedition to East Greenland.

Making our way back down to the beach, a few of the bravest amongst us took the opportunity to strip down to their swimming costumes and take a swim in the balmy water as a part of the infamous 'polar plunge'.



Shortly after our departure from Røde Ø, we arrived back onboard Plancius for a hot shower and dinner in the restaurant. We spent the remainder of the evening relaxing in the lounge and on the open decks as we admired the beautiful scenery of Føn fjord as we head East towards the settlement of Ittoqqortoormiit.

## Day 12 – Thursday 31<sup>st</sup> of August, Ittoqqortoormiit

**08h00 GPS Position:** 70°28.7'N / 021°58.3W

**Wind:** E5 • **Sea:** Calm • **Weather:** Cloudy • **Air temperature:** +04°C •

**Sea temperature:** +7°C

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As the sun's gentle rays broke through the portholes, we awoke to a breathtaking view from aboard Plancius. We found ourselves in front of the settlement of Ittoqqortoormiit in Greenland. The morning greeted us with an idyllic scene - clear blue skies and a tranquil sea without a whisper of wind. The first sight to capture our attention was the colourful houses nestled along the shoreline, creating a picturesque contrast with the pristine Arctic surroundings. It was a truly enchanting start of our day.

After a quick drive to the shore in Zodiacs, we had the entire morning to explore this remote settlement. Ittoqqortoormiit had a museum that provided valuable insights into the rich history and culture of the Inuit people. For those looking to take home a piece of the Arctic, a souvenir shop offered crafts made by the locals. We could even musk ox meat! One of the most heart-warming sights was the locals of Ittoqqortoormiit feeding their dogs. They were busy feeding and caring for the sled dogs, a vital part of their livelihood and culture.



We could walk around the settlement, soaking in the picturesque vistas that surrounded us. The fjord lay before us, its pristine waters reflecting the clear skies above. Towering mountains served as a majestic backdrop, and colossal icebergs added a touch of surreal beauty to the scene.





Back on Plancius, a lunch awaited us as we prepared to set sail once again, this time in the direction of Iceland. The afternoon brought a change in weather as the wind picked up considerably. Despite the challenging conditions, Plancius sailed smoothly.

To enrich our understanding of the Arctic environment, Pierre conducted a fascinating lecture. He delved into the workings of the International Whaling Commission, shedding light on the delicate balance between conservation efforts and sustainable whaling practices. The discussion of whale quotas left us with a profound appreciation for the complexities of managing marine resources in this pristine wilderness.

As the day ended, we retired to our cabins with the memories of our day in Ittoqqortoormiit and the last days we spent in Greenland in our minds.

## Day 13 – Friday 1<sup>st</sup> of September, At sea towards Iceland

**12h00 GPS Position:** 66°44.4'N / 018°56.0E

**Wind:** SE4 • **Sea:** Calm • **Weather:** Overcast, rain • **Air temperature:** +09°C •

**Sea temperature:** +8°C

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Today Rinie woke us up to a much calmer sea than yesterday. The crossing overnight had been a little bit shaky, but we all made it. A lot of fulmars were flying around the ship, because there was not much wind left, they were mostly landing on the surface of the water. After a hearty breakfast, Ross gave us another workshop on photography where he taught us how to edit pictures.

Right after lunch, we could already see Iceland in the distance. The typical rugged coastline was covered in clouds, which gave it a very dramatic look. We kept on looking for whales, and at some point, a group of white beaked dolphins appeared in front of the ship. In the afternoon Irene gave us a lecture on her activities in Longyearbyen, where she looks after dogs for her dog sledging activities. It was very interesting to learn about her experiences, and how she works with these kinds of dogs. At 4 PM the time arrived to say goodbye to our rubber boots, and we brought them to the boot room.

We were then all called deck by deck to go to reception to settle our bar bills. Some of us had quite a surprise. At 6 PM. It was time to go to the observation lounge for the captain's cocktail where our captain addressed us for the last time. Rinie also thanked us all for choosing Oceanwide expeditions, thanked the entire staff and crew for this incredible voyage, and took us through all the memories of the different steps of this expedition. Ross and Pierre then showed us the slideshow of the trip with a time lapse, with all the beauties that we had experience during these past 14 days.

It was then time to go for our last plated dinner in the dining room, where our chef Kabir spoiled us again with his delicious creations. At the end of the dinner, the entire crew from the kitchen, hotel department and laundry came through the dining room to say goodbye, and it was wonderful to be able to see all the faces again. We then all gathered at the bar for a couple of drinks as the pilot came on board Plancius to assist the bridge in their efforts to get alongside in Akureyri. There was a gigantic cruise ship in front of us on the pier which made our mighty Plancius appear very small. We all could not believe that our fantastic trip had come to an end.

## Day 14 – Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> of September, Arrived in Akureyri

**09h00 GPS Position:** 65°41.1'N / 018°04.4E

**Wind:** SSE8 • **Sea:** Moderate • **Weather:** Overcast • **Air temperature:** +16°C • **Sea temperature:** +8°C

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Late last evening, we arrived in Akureyri. While we enjoyed a last breakfast on board, our suitcases were taken off the ship. It is 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, seen a range of rarely sighted wildlife, and made new friends. Loaded with fond memories, we now must head home.

Our wildlife encounters and the landscapes we saw on this trip were truly spectacular. For the most part, the weather has been fantastic, and we have loved sharing the Arctic with you.

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

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**Total distance sailed: 2244 nautical miles**  
**Northernmost position: 79°49.8'N**

On behalf of Oceanwide Expeditions, Captain Artur Iakovlev, Expedition Leader Rinie van Meurs, Hotel Manager Ingrid Van de Loo, and all the crew and staff of M/V Plancius, it has been a pleasure travelling with you.

# SVALBARD

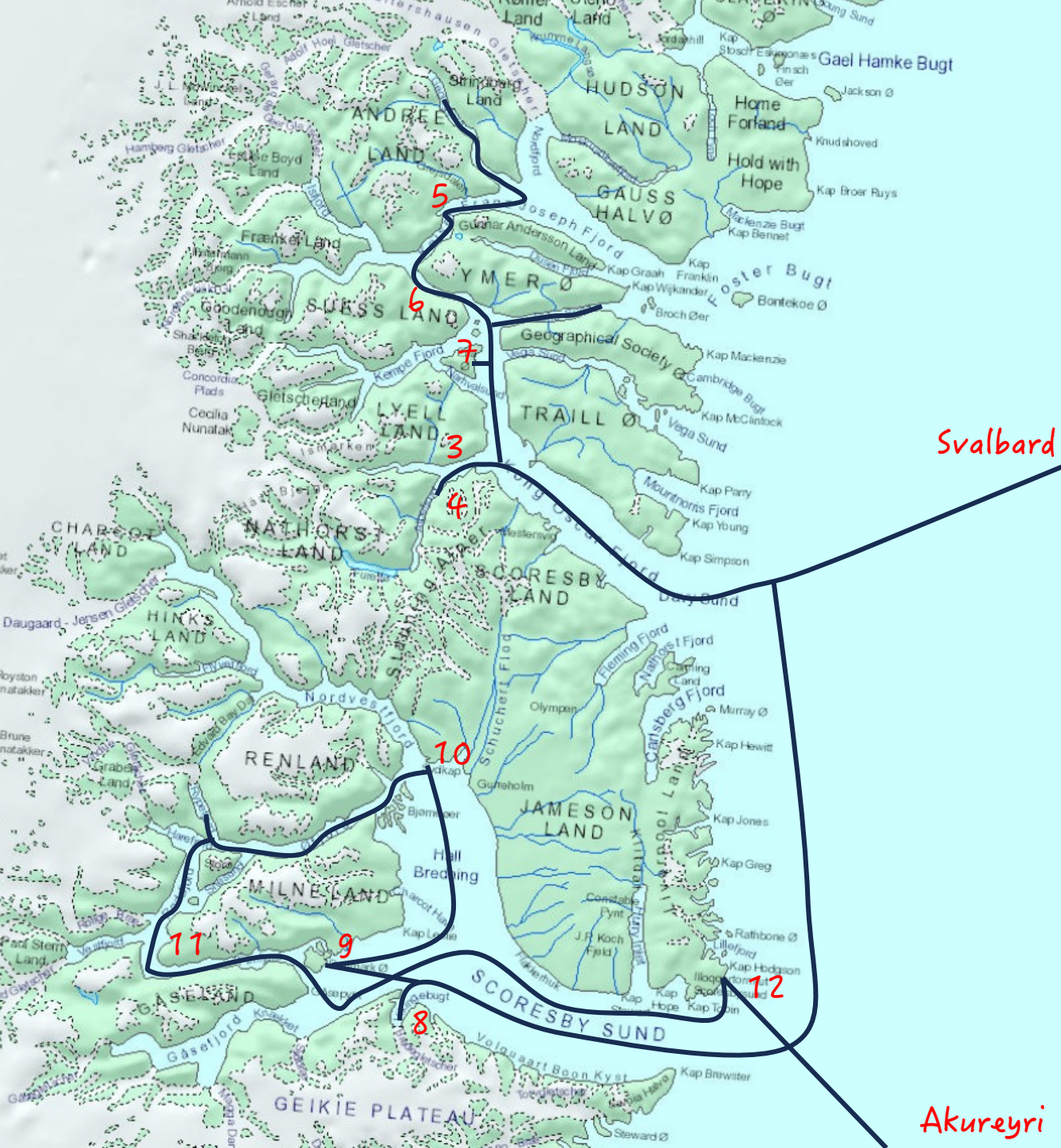
1 – Longyearbyen

2 – Smeerenburgfjorden





# GREENLAND



3 – Segelsallskept Fjord

4 – Alpefjord

5 – Blomsterbugt

6 – Antarctic sund

7 – Ella Ø

8 – Vikingbugt

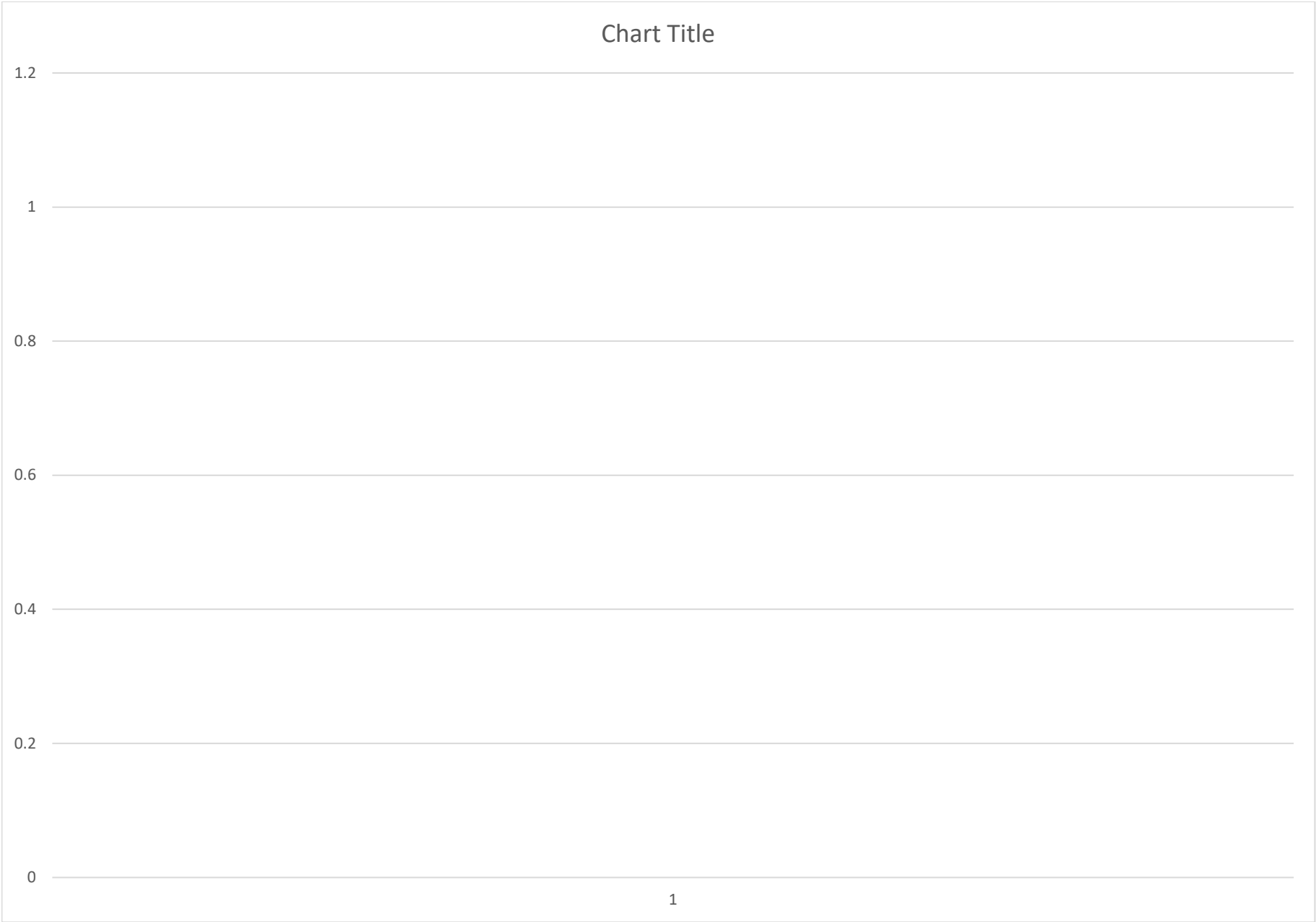
9 – Danmark Island

10 – Sydkap

11 – Røde Ø

12 – Ittoqqortoormiit





## Birds and Mammals of Svalbard & East Greenland

English Name	Latin	German	French	Dutch	20-Aug	21-Aug	22-Aug	23-Aug	24-Aug	25-Aug	26-Aug	27-Aug	28-Aug	29-Aug	30-Aug	31-Aug	1-Sep
Great Northern Diver	Gavia immer	Eistaucher	Plongeon Imbrin	Ijsduiker													
Red-throated diver	Gavia stellata	Sternaucher	Plongeon catmarin	Roodkeelduiker							x	x		x			
Northern Fulmar	Fulmarus glacialis	Eissturmvogel	Fulmar boréal	Noordse stormvogel	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Pink-footed Goose	Anser brachyrhynchus	Kurzschnabelgans	Oie à bec court	Kleine rietgans													
Barnacle Goose	Branta leucopsis	Weisswangengans	Bernache nonnette	Brandgans		x							x	x			
White-fronted Goose	Anser albifrons	Blässgans	Oie Rieuse	Kolgans													
Greylag Goose	Anser anser	Graugans	Oie cendrée	Grauwe gans													
Brent Goose	Branta bernicla	Ringelgans	Bernache cravant	Rotgans													
Snow Goose	Chen caerulescens	Schneegans	Oie des neiges	Sneeuwgans													
Eurasian Wigeon	Anas penelope	Pfeifente	Canard siffleur	Smient													
Eurasian Teal	Anas crecca	Krickente	Sarcelle d'hiver	Wintertaling													
Mallard	Anas platyrhynchos	Stockente	Canard colvert	Wilde eend													
Northern Pintail	Anas acuta	Spießente	Canard pilet	Pijlstaart													
Tufted Duck	Aythya fuligula	Reiherente	Fuligule morillon	Kuifeend													
Common Eider	Somateria mollissima	Eiderente	Eider commun	Eidereend		x							x	x		x	
King Eider	Somateria spectabilis	Prachteiderente	Eider à tête grise	Koningseider													
Steller's Eider	Polysticta stelleri	Scheckente	Eider de Steller	Stellers eider													
Long-tailed Duck	Clangula hyemalis	Eisente	Harelda boréale	Ilseend													
Black Scoter	Melanitta nigra	Trauerente	Macreuse noire	Zwarte zee-eend													
Common Goldeneye	Bucephala clangula	Schellente	Garrot à oeil d'or	Briduiker													
Rock Ptarmigan	Lagopus mutus hyperboreus	Alpenschneehuhn	Lagopède alpin	Alpensneeuwhoen									x				
Eurasian Oystercatcher	Haematopus ostralegus	Austernfischer	Huitrier Pie	Scholekster													
Ringed Plover	Charadrius hiaticula	Sandregenpfeifer	Grand Gravelot	Bontbekplevier													
European Golden Plover	Pluvialis apricaria	Goldregenpfeifer	Pluvier doré	Goudplevier													
Sanderling	Calidris alba	Sanderling	Bécasseau sanderling	Drieteenstrandloper													
Pectoral Sandpiper	Calidris melanotos	Gaibruststrandläufer	Bécasseau tacheté	Gestreepte strandloper													
Purple Sandpiper	Calidris maritima	Meerstrandläufer	Bécasseau violet	Paarse strandloper	x	x											
Red Knot	Calidris canutus	Knutt	Bécaseau maubèche	Kanoetstrandloper													
Dunlin	Calidris alpina	Alpenstrandläufer	Bécasseau variable	Bonte strandloper													
Whimbrel	Numenius phaeopus	Regenbrachvogel	Courlis corlieu	Regenwulp													
Common Redshank	Tringa totanus	Rotschenkel	Chevalier gambette	Tureluur													
Ruddy Turnstone	Arenaria interpres	Steinwälzer	Tournepierre à collier	Steenloper													
Grey Phalarope	Phalaropus fulicarius	Thorsühnnchen	Phalarope à bec large	Rosse franjepoot													
Red-necked Phalarope	Phalaropus lobatus	Odinshühnchen	Phalarope à bec étroit	Grauwe franjepoot													
Pomarine Skua	Stercorarius pomarinus	Spatelraubmöwe	Labbe pomarin	Middelste jager													
Arctic Skua	Stercorarius parasiticus	Schmarotzerraub-möwe	Labbe parasite	Kleine jager		x		x		x							
Long-tailed Skua	Stercorarius longicaudus	Falkenraubmöwe	Labbe à longue queue	Kleinste jager		x											
Great Skua	Stercorarius skua	Skua	Grand Labbe	Grote jager									x	x	x		
Sabine's Gull	Xema sabini	Schwalbenmöwe	Mouette de Sabine	Vorkstaartmeeuw													
Black-headed Gull	Larus ridibundus	Lachmöwe	Mouette rieuse	Kokmeeuw													
Glaucous Gull	Larus hyperboreus	Eismöwe	Goéland bourgmestre	Grote Burgemeester													
Iceland gull	Larus glaucoides	Polarmöwe	Goéland arctique	Kleine burgemeester													
Herring Gull	Larus argentatus	Silbermöwe	Goéland argenté	Zilvermeeuw													
Lesser black-backed Gull	Larus fuscus	Heringsmöwe	Goéland brun	Kleine mantelmeeuw													
Great black-backed Gull	Larus marinus	Mantelmöwe	Goéland marin	Grote mantelmeeuw													
Kittiwake	Rissa tridactyla	Dreizehenmöwe	Mouette tridactyle	Drieteenmeeuw	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x		x	
Ross' Gull	Rhodostethia rosea	Rosenmöwe	Mouette de Ross	Rossmeeuw													
Ivory Gull	Pagophila eburnea	Elfenbeinmöwe	Mouette blanche	Ivoormeeuw		x							x				
Arctic Tern	Sterna paradisaea	Küstenseeschwalbe	Sterne arctique	Noordse stern	x	x				x		x	x				
Common Guillemot	Uria aalge	Trottellumme	Guillemot de Troil	Zeekoet													
Brunnich's Guillemot	Uria lomvia	Dickschnabellumme	Guillemot de Brünnich	Dikbekzeekoet		x		x	x								
Black Guillemot	Cepphus grylle	Gryllteiste	Guillemot à miroir	Zwarte zeekoet		x	x	x									
Little Auk	Alle alle	Krabbentaucher	Mergule nain	Kleine alk		x			x	x			x				
Puffin	Fratercula arctica	Papageitaucher	Macareux moine	Papegaaiduiker													
Snow Bunting	Plectrophenax nivalis	Schneeammer	Bruant des neiges	Sneeuwgors													
Lapland longspur	Calcarius lapponicus	Spornammer	Bruant lapon	Ijsgors													
Gyrfalcon	Falco rusticolus	Gerfalke	Faucon Gerfaut	Giervalk													
Raven	Covus corax	Kolkrabe	Grand Corbeau	Raaf													
Redpoll	Carduelis flammea	Birkenzeisig	Sizerin flammé	Barmsijs													
Arctic Redpoll	Carduelis hornemanni	Polarbirkenzeisig	Sizerin blanchatre	Witstuitbarmsijs													
Peregrine	Falco peregrinus		Faucon pèlerin														
Snowy Owl	Nyctea scandiaca	Schneeeule	Harfang des neiges	Sneeuwuil													
White Wagtail	Motacilla alba	Bachstelze	Bergeronnette grise	Witte Kwikstaart													
Northern Gannet	Morus bassanus		Fou de bassan														x
Wheatear	Oenanthe oenanthe	Steinschmätzer	Traquet moteux	Tapuit								x	x			x	

[illegible]

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# Rinie van Meurs – Expedition Leader

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After a formal education in Forestry and Nature Conservation, Rinie started to travel around the world in search of wildlife and in particularly birds.

However, he was already attracted by the polar regions since he was a boy. After he finished his study, he went in the early eighties on private trips to Iceland and Northern Scandinavia; this was as Arctic as he could afford. However, he knew, further north the pack ice in the high Arctic Ocean that was his goal. To explore one day the sea ice, as the early explorers did, that was something he could only dream of. Until 1989, he managed to find a job on board of the "old" Plancius as a potato peeler for his first season in Spitsbergen. After he came back, he knew he was definitely hooked on the high latitudes. Rinie became one of the industry's first expedition leaders and a pioneer in exploring new landing sites in Spitsbergen and the Antarctic. Only around Spitsbergen he has made more than 200 expedition cruises. He knows Spitsbergen better than his own backyard! Since '89 then he has logged in his seaman's book more than of 300 expedition cruises

including; East- and West Greenland, the Canadian high Arctic, Franz Josef Land, Novaya Zemlya, Geographical North Pole, Antarctica, South Georgia, the Falklands, the sub Antarctic Islands of New Zealand, and many islands along the Atlantic Ridge. During these years, spending so much time exploring the Arctic and having the opportunity to encounter so many Polar Bears in the ice, he has become absolutely passionate about these magnificent animals. Give him a ship with the right ice class and Rinie will take you to the Polar Bears. He has become an expert in leading Polar Bear trips. He is also leading every fall Polar Bear trips on the Hudson Bay. He has published four photo books on the Polar Regions of which one was about the Polar Bears of Spitsbergen.

## Deutsch

Nach einer formalen Ausbildung in einem Forst- und Naturschutz begab Rinie sich auf die Suche nach Wildtieren und vor allem Vögeln während er um die Welt reiste.

Allerdings war er schon seit seiner Kindheit von den Polarregionen fasziniert. Nach Abschluss seines Studiums unternahm er Anfang der achtziger Jahre private Reisen nach Island und Nordskandinavien. das war so weit in die Arktis wie es sich finanziell leisten konnte. Er wusste jedoch das weiter nördlich das Packeis im hohen Arktischen Ozean war und das war sein Ziel. Um eines Tages das Meereis zu erkunden, wie es die frühen Entdecker taten, hiervon konnte er nur träumen. 1989 bekam er seinen ersten Job in Spitzbergen einen Job an Bord der "alten" Plancius als Kartoffelschäler. Rinie wurde einer der ersten Expeditionsleiter der Branche und ein Pionier bei der Erkundung neuer Landeplätze in Spitzbergen und der Antarktis. Alleine rund um Spitzbergen hat er mehr als 200 Expeditionskreuzfahrten unternommen. Er kennt Spitzbergen besser als seinen eigenen Hinterhof! Seit '89 hat er in seinem Seemannsbuch mehr als 300 Expeditionskreuzfahrten eingetragte, einschließlich Ost- und Westgrönland, die kanadische Hocharktis, Franz-Josef-Land, Novaya-Zemlya, der geografische Nordpol, Antarktis, Südgeorgien, die Falklandinseln, die subantarktischen Inseln Neuseelands und viele Inseln entlang des Atlantischen Rückens. Er hat in diesen Jahren so viel Zeit damit verbracht die Arktis zu erkunden und vor allem die Möglichkeit um viele Eisbären im Eis zu begegnen, das wurde für ihn die größte Leidenschaftlich geworden. Gib ihm ein Schiff mit der richtigen Eisklasse und Rinie bringt dich zu den Eisbären. Er ist ein Experte für die Führung von Eisbären-Reisen geworden. Er leitet auch jeden Herbst Eisbären-Reisen auf der Hudson Bay. Er hat vier Fotobücher über die Polarregionen veröffentlicht, von denen eines von den Eisbären Spitzbergen handelte.



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## Michelle van Dijk – Assistant Expedition Leader

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Is nearly a local, since she is the owner of Longyearbyen Camping, world's northernmost camping site. Working as a guide, this campsite has been her homebase since 2004.

Living in a tent, she spends three months a year on Spitsbergen guiding day trips, trekking & expedition cruises. These days she mainly works on ships, as guide or expedition leader.

She believes that there is no better way to get closer to a place than to work there – she has also lived in Sweden & Iceland. Her first visit to Spitsbergen was back in 2001 and instantly she fell in love with this remote archipelago.

Although she picked plants as her specialism, Michelle is a generalist. She took the course Arctic & Antarctic studies at Groningen University whereafter she published a book about Sjef van Dongen, who took part in the rescue operation after Nobile's airship crashed in 1928. Her second book was a Dutch Spitsbergen guidebook, in collaboration with Rolf Stange.

Michelle has been working as a guide in Antarctica, the Falklands, Faroe Islands, Greenland, Iceland, Jan Mayen, South Georgia, Spitsbergen and Sweden.

### Deutsch

Michelle besitzt Longyearbyen Camping, den nördlichsten Campingplatz der Welt. Als sie 2001 zum ersten Mal die Arktis besuchte, verliebte sie sich in diese karge, minimalistische Landschaft. Sie arbeitete anschließend als Naturführerin auf Tages- und Trekkingtouren sowie Expeditionskreuzfahrten.

Sie lebte in Schweden und Island und arbeitete dort, denn sie glaubt, dass man einem Land am besten nahe kommt, wenn man dort auch zur Arbeit geht.

Michelle hat an der Universität Groningen einen Kurs in Arktischen und Antarktischen Studien belegt. Sie hat in der Antarktis, auf den Falklands, Faröer-Inseln, Grönland, Island, Jan Mayen, in Schweden, auf Spitzbergen und Südgeorgien gearbeitet.

Sie können Michelle in verschiedenen Sprachen ansprechen, aber sie wird nur in Holländisch, Englisch, Deutsch oder Schwedisch antworten.

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# Chloé Maréchal – Expedition Guide

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Chloé is a dedicated diver with an insatiable passion for marine life and exploration. Armed with a European master's degree in Marine Biodiversity and Conservation, she's on a mission to share her expertise and promote the conservation of the marine environment. But here's the twist—while everyone else is busy oohing and aahing over flashy dolphins and majestic whales, Chloé's heart belongs to the unsung heroes of the ocean—the often underrated world of plankton and the mysteries of unseen microbes. She's here to show that even the tiniest organisms can have big personalities!

In April 2013, Chloé's dedication and skills were recognized when she was chosen as the prestigious 2013-14 European Rolex Our World Underwater Scholar. This remarkable opportunity allowed her to work alongside renowned leaders in the fields of marine science and diving industry, providing her with diverse experiences and invaluable insights. During this transformative year, her first encounter with Antarctica left an indelible mark, igniting a lifelong passion for polar exploration.

Chloé isn't just a science nerd with a thing for plankton. She's an adventurous soul with an insatiable curiosity. She's dived across all continents, lived in 20 countries, and now sails on her 12-meter aluminum boat. Together with her partner she has recently crossed the challenging waters of the North Sea.

Currently, Chloé calls northern Norway her home, residing just above the polar circle. When not guiding, she explores underwater wonders, uncovers forgotten wrecks, and maps uncharted underwater caves. Her passion for the ocean, sailing, and work with Oceanwide Expeditions fuel her relentless pursuit of adventure.

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# Irene Kastner – Expedition Guide

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In her ordinary life, Irene was working as an accountant for a major Norwegian company in Tromsø. However, she has a hard time sitting still for long periods and has a strong urge to explore the outdoors. Luckily for her, she lived in Longyearbyen, Svalbard with access to both fibre cable internet providing her with the chance to attend to her customers online, and impressive wildlife right outside her bedroom.

She first came to Longyearbyen in 1999 to help her best friend move back to the mainland after a year at the local university. They could have saved themselves the effort, since they both were back on the archipelago the year after. Several years of commuting back and forth followed and eventually, Irene surrendered to the Polar Bug and moved to Longyearbyen for good.

Irene's special interest is sled dogs. She has been working with Alaskan Huskies for over ten years, both at racing kennels and with tour operators. Her own team of eager huskies is taken care of by fellow mushers while she joins us on our expeditions to areas where sled dogs have been the main form of transport during winter for centuries.

## Deutsch

Irene Kastner arbeitet eigentlich als Buchhalter für einen größeren Konzern in Tromsø. Aber das länger Stillsitzen war noch nie ihre Stärke, und sie hat einen unwiderstehlichen Drang, ihre Umgebung zu erkunden.

Glücklicherweise wohnt sie in Longyearbyen auf Spitzbergen. Hier hat man nicht nur eine sehr schnelle Internet-Verbindung, die einem die Kundenbetreuung online ermöglicht, auch liegt die faszinierende und vielfältige Natur hier gleich vor dem Schlafzimmer.

Glücklicherweise wohnt sie in Longyearbyen auf Spitzbergen, wo sie nicht nur eine sehr schnelle Internet-Verbindung hat, die ihr das Fernstudium im Fach Buchhaltung und Rechnungswesen ermöglichte, sondern auch die faszinierende und vielfältige Natur gleich vor der Tür.

Irene kam 1999 zum ersten Mal nach Spitzbergen, um einer Freundin beim Umzug zu helfen. Die Mühe hätten beide sich sparen können, denn noch nicht mal ein Jahr später waren beide zurück auf der Insel. Nach mehreren Jahren hat sich Irene dem Polavirus letztendlich ergeben. Irenes Spezialgebiet sind Schlittenhunde. Sie arbeitet seit mehr als fünfzehn Jahren mit Alaskan Huskys, sowohl im Rennsport als auch im Tourismus, und hat acht eigene Hunde



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# Elodie Bouvier - Expedition guide

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Born in the Swiss Alps, Elodie has always had a passion for mountains; climb them, discover them but also better understand the landscape, the dynamics and the evolution of glaciers and permafrost. After undertaking studies in alpine geomorphology at the University of Lausanne, she took the direction of Quebec in Rimouski where she carried out work on the deglaciation of the Laurentide ice sheet which used to cover a large part of North America.

The polar regions attract her inexorably; this passion led her to the Svalbard archipelago in 2015 for a semester to specialize in nivology and glaciology. Since then, the polar bug has infected her in a way she cannot stop returning year after year up in the North.

Elodie has also worked on the creation of educational trails that raise awareness among hikers of the impacts of climate change in high mountains environment in Switzerland. To her mind, educational communication and sharing knowledge are essential to all scientific activities.

Her passion for the great wilderness led her to discover Norway and Svalbard by ski, on foot and by sail. Elodie is particularly interested in the interpretation of the landscape and in reading the forms left by glaciers during the last ice ages.

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# Frigga Kruse - Expedition Guide

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Frigga comes from the beautiful county of Schleswig-Holstein in northern Germany. She makes her living as an archaeologist, geologist, and guide.

When she travelled to the South Shetland Islands and the Antarctic Peninsula in 1999, there was nothing to suggest that the polar regions would become her place of work. In 2008, she first visited Svalbard to carry out archaeological fieldwork as part of her PhD research on the British mining history of the Arctic Archipelago, which resulted in the book *Frozen Assets* (2013).

She has since become a regular. Her current research focuses on 420 years of natural-resource exploitation (whaling, sealing, fur-hunting, and mining) in and around Svalbard and Jan Mayen and the lasting impact on Arctic marine and terrestrial ecosystems. Since 2015, she has been sharing her broad polar knowledge and a knack for story-telling as a guide and lecturer on Oceanwide's expedition cruises. You can approach her in German, English, and Dutch.

## Deutsch

Frigga stammt aus dem herrlichen Holsteinland in Norddeutschland. Sie verdingt sich als Archäologin, Geologin und Guide.

Als sie 1999 die Südshetlandinseln und die antarktische Halbinsel besuchte, ließ noch nichts vermuten, dass die Polarregionen später ihr Arbeitsplatz werden würden. 2008 reiste sie das erste Mal nach Spitzbergen, um archäologische Feldarbeiten für ihre Doktorarbeit in der britischen Bergbaugeschichte des Archipels auszuführen, was zu dem Buch *Frozen Assets* (2013) führte. Seitdem gehört sie zum arktischen Inventar.

Ihre derzeitigen Forschungen konzentrieren sich auf 420 Jahre Rohstoffausbeutung in Spitzbergen und Jan Mayen. Welchen bleibenden Umwelteinfluss hatten Wal- und Robbenfang, Pelzjagd und Bergbau? Seit 2015 teilt sie ihr breitgefächertes Wissen und ein Händchen zum Geschichtenerzählen als Guide und Lektorin auf Oceanwide's Expeditionskreuzfahrten. Ihr könnt sie auf Deutsch, Englisch und Niederländisch ansprechen.

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# Ross Wheeler – Expedition Guide

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Ross lives in a small town in Cornwall, which is located in the south western corner of the UK. As he grew up in a coastal town he has always been fascinated by marine wildlife and the marine environment.

Having completed an undergraduate degree and master's degree in environmental sciences / conservation biology at Plymouth University he then went on to use his passion and education to work as an environmental consultant and researcher in the coastal

and marine field.

This progressed into the offshore sector where he worked as a marine mammal observer and passive acoustic monitoring operator in the offshore seismic and renewable industry sectors. This role took him to a wide range of areas throughout the North Atlantic, Central Africa and Southern Africa where he conducted marine mammal and sea bird surveys aboard various survey vessels. After a few years in this industry he then moved into the environmental compliance side of the cruise ship industry where he continues to work for six months of the year today. Whether he is working on ships around the world, volunteering for conservation based organisations or travelling in his 'time off' he is constantly seeking opportunities to photograph wildlife in their natural environment.

Feel free to ask him any questions about marine mammals, seabirds or anything environmentally related with the shipping industry.



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# Pierre Gallego – Assistant Expedition Leader

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Pierre is a veterinarian specialised in marine mammal medicine. He has been working in the field of marine biology for 18 years, and has been organising marine mammal research internships around the world since 2004. He represents the Government of Luxembourg at the International Whaling Commission and CCAMLR, and works with numerous international NGOs to promote marine mammal conservation and to fight cetacean captivity.

He is currently carrying out his PhD with the Oceanology Lab of the University of Liege, Belgium. His PhD thesis deals with pollutants and stable isotopes in humpback whales off Ecuador and Mozambique.

He is a keen birdwatcher and enjoys photography. The ocean is his passion, and water is his element!

## Deutsch

Pierre ist Tierarzt und hat sich auf Meeressäuger spezialisiert. Er arbeitet im Gebiet der Meeresbiologie seit 18 Jahre und organisiert Ausbildungen über Meeressäuger rundum die Welt seit 2004. Er vertritt die Regierung Luxemburgs an der Walfangkommission und CCAMLR, und arbeitet mit mehreren internationalen Umweltschutzorganisationen um die Erhaltung von Meeressäuger zu promovieren und deren Gefangenschaft zu bekämpfen.

Er macht gerade eine Doktorarbeit am Ozeanologie Lab der Universität Lüttich in Belgien. Seine Doktorarbeit beschäftigt sich mit stabile Isotopen und Schadstoffen in Buckelwalen aus Mosambik und Ecuador.

Er ist ein eifriger Vogelbeobachter und hat viel Spass an Fotografie. Das Meer ist seine Leidenschaft, und Wasser ist sein Element.

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# Veronique Verhoeven – Ship's doctor

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No one wants to get sick on the ship!!

....but if you do, you are in the good hands of ship's doctor Veronique.

When she was nine years old, her grandma gave her for Christmas a book on Christopher Columbus, which fascinated her so much that she decided she wanted to become an explorer too.

For years she fell asleep at night dreaming of future great adventures.

However, soon she found out that many of these explorers die young, poor and miserable, and she decided to change career.

That is how she ended up being an emergency doctor and a Professor in general practice at the University of Antwerp, Belgium.

Her first experience in the polar regions was a trekking expedition with scientists in Svalbard in 2005, where she acted, besides as the doctor, also as a cook and a watch keeper for polar bears at night. Since this wonderful experience, she has returned to the Arctic and the Antarctic every year, with Oceanwide Expeditions.

Among her hobbies are whitewater kayaking, kitesurfing and playing the oboe in an orchestra.



## Welcome aboard!

Date: Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> August 2023

Day 1

**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:

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

thereafter **mandatory safety and lifeboat drill** in the Lounge/Bar – Deck 5.

19:00        We like to invite you in the Lounge/Bar for a **toast to our voyage** and meet the **captain** and your **expedition staff**.

19.30        **Dinner** is served in the Dining Room – Deck 3. Enjoy your meal.

**After dinner** We will call you deck by deck, to collect your **rubber boots** in the boot-room (Deck 3 forward).

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

*Robert Service, The Call Of The Wild*





## Smeerenburg & Fuglefjord

Monday 21<sup>st</sup> August 2023

Day 2

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### IMPORTANT FOR TOMORROW:

If you want to join us on land, the morning briefings are mandatory.

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- |            |  |
|------------|--|
| 07.45      | Wake up call.  |
| 08.00      | Breakfast buffet for <b>one hour</b> in the Dining Room.   |
| 09.15      | <b>Mandatory</b> briefing in the lounge on Deck 5 about <b>how to behave in Polar Bear country and on Zodiac operations.</b>   |
| thereafter | <b>Landing: Smeerenburg.</b> This morning we intend to have a landing at the sandy beach of Smeerenburg which Walrus have made one of their favourite haul out points. An impressive first landing and a good moment to put in practice the do's and don'ts we learn during this morning's briefing. |
| 13.00      | <b>Lunch-Buffer</b> for one hour in the Dining Room.   |
| t.b.a      | Exploring the scenic <b>Fuglefjord</b>   |
| 18.30      | <b>Recap</b> of today and briefing for tomorrow in the lounge on deck 5.   |
| 19.00      | <b>Dinner</b> is served in the Dining Room. Enjoy!   |

**t.b.a = to be announced**

*Adventure is just bad planning.*

*Roald Amundsen (1872 - 1928), polar explorer.*



## Day at sea towards Greenland

Tuesday 22<sup>st</sup> August 2023

Day 3

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**The distance from Spitsbergen to Greenland is 632 NM (1170 Km)**

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- 07.45**      **Wake up call.**
- 08.00**      **Breakfast** buffet for **one hour** in the Dining Room.
- 10.00**      **Lecture** about the **whaling history**.  
This will be held in English in the Lounge  
Dieser Vortrag wird auf Deutsch im Restaurant angeboten.
- 12.30**      **Lunch-Bufferet** for one hour in the Dining Room.
- 15:00**      **Lecture** about the **Polar Bears**.  
This will be held in English in the Lounge  
Dieser Vortrag wird auf Deutsch im Restaurant angeboten.
- 18.15**      **Recap** of today and briefing for tomorrow in the lounge on deck 5.
- 19.00**      **Dinner** is served in the Dining Room. 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*



## Day at sea towards Greenland

Wednesday 23<sup>rd</sup> August 2023

Day 4

- 07.45**      **Wake up call.**
- 08.00**      **Breakfast** buffet for **one hour** in the Dining Room.
- 10.00**      **Lecture** about the **Drifting life**.  
This will be held in the Lounge.
- 12.30**      **Lunch-Buffer** for one hour in the Dining Room.
- 15:00**      **Lecture** about the **Photography**.  
This will be held in the Lounge.
- 16:30**      **Lecture** about the **Archaeological cultures of Greenland**.  
This will be held in the Lounge.
- 18.15**      **Recap** of today and briefing for tomorrow in the lounge.
- 19.00**      **Dinner** is served in the Dining Room. Enjoy!

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*

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**We will change our ship time one hour back on the night of 23/24 of August 2023**

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## Arriving at Greenland

Thursday 24<sup>th</sup> August 2023

Day 5

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**We will change our ship time one hour back on the night of 23/24 of August 2023**

Don't forget to turn back your clock before going to bed.

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**07.45**      **Wake up call.**

**08.00**      **Breakfast** buffet for **one hour** in the Dining Room.

**TBA**      We still expect to meet some sea ice.  
Depending on our progress we hope to arrive at **Myggbukta** (meaning Mosquito Bay) at some time in the morning and plan to do a **landing**.

**13.00**      **Lunch-Buffer** for one hour in the Dining Room.

**After lunch**      **Ship cruise** through **Geologfjord**.  
The fjord was named in 1899 by Swedish Arctic explorer and geologist Nathorst during the expedition he led to Greenland in search of survivors of Andrée's Arctic balloon expedition of 1897. The name was chosen owing to the spectacularly colored strata and rock formations in the shores of the fjord

**18.15**      **Recap** of today and briefing for tomorrow in the lounge.

**19.00**      **Dinner** is served in the Dining Room. Enjoy!

**t.b.a = to be announced**

*The shortest way through the sea ice is to go around*

*Roald Amundsen (1872 - 1928), polar explorer.*



## Segelsällskapetfjord & Alpefjord

Friday 25<sup>th</sup> August 2023

Day 6

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**We will change our ship time one hour back on the night of 24/25 of August 2023**

Don't forget to turn back your clock before going to bed.

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**07.45**      **Wake up call.**

**08.00**      **Breakfast** buffet for **one hour** in the Dining Room.

**9:30**      Due to the expanse of sea ice observed during our sea days, we will arrive in Greenland through the Davy Sund and continue in Kong Oscar Fjord. We plan to do a **landing** along the Southern edge of the famous and colourful **Segelsällskapetfjord**.

**12.30**      **Lunch-Bufferet** for one hour in the Dining Room.

**After lunch**      **Ship cruise** through **Alpefjord**.  
The combined snouts of two glaciers, Gully Glacier and Sefstrøm Glacier are calving icebergs into the Alpefjord.  
According to the situation, we might offer a landing or zodiac cruise.

**18.30**      **Recap** of today and briefing for tomorrow in the lounge.

**19.00**      **Dinner** is served in the Dining Room. Enjoy!

*"I must say that the charm of the Arctic, its infinite diversity, its aloofness from the rest of the world, made it a field which gives its own reward. Only those who have seen the magnificent sunsets over the ice, who have...been buffeted by storms... can appreciate the spell which always draws us back there."*

*Louise Arner Boyd (1887 - 1972)*



## Blomsterbugt & Antarctic Sund

Saturday 26<sup>th</sup> August 2023

Day 7

- 06:00** Ship will be positioned at the mouth of Geologfjord
- 07.45** **Wake up call.**
- 08.00** **Breakfast** buffet for **one hour** in the Dining Room.
- 09:30** We plan to do a **landing** at Blomsterbugt.
- 12.30** **Lunch-Bufferet** for one hour in the Dining Room.
- After lunch** **Ship cruise** through **Antarctic Sund**.  
If time allows, we might offer a landing at **Margerie Dal**.
- 18.30** **Recap** of today and briefing for tomorrow in the lounge.
- 19.00** **Dinner** is served in the Dining Room. Enjoy!

*Love is life's snow. It falls deepest and softest into the gashes left by the fight -  
whiter and purer than snow itself.  
Fridtjof Nansen*





# DAILY PROGRAM

## Ella Ø

Sunday 27<sup>th</sup> August 2023

Day 8

- 07.45**      **Wake up call.**
- 08.00**      **Breakfast** buffet for **one hour** in the Dining Room.
- 09:15**      We plan to do a **landing** at **Ella Ø**.  
Named by the 1899 Swedish East Greenland expedition led by A.G. Nathorst as Ellas Ö, after his wife Amy Rafaela (Ella) Windahl [1858-1936].
- 12.30**      **Lunch-Buffer** for one hour in the Dining Room.
- After lunch**      We make are way towards **Scoresbysund**.
- 15:00**      **Lecture** about the female Polar expolerer **Louise Arner Boyd** (1887-1972).
- 18.15**      **Recap** of today and briefing about tomorrow's plan in the lounge.
- 19.00**      **Dinner** is served in the Dining Room. Enjoy!

*"We need the tonic of wildness... At the same time that we are earnest to explore and learn all things, we require that all things be mysterious and unexplorable, that land and sea be indefinitely wild, unsurveyed and unfathomed by us because unfathomable. We can never have enough of nature."*

*Henry David Thoreau (Walden: Or, Life in the Woods)*



## Vikingbugt & Charcot Havn

Monday 28<sup>th</sup> August 2023

Day 9

- 07.45**      **Wake up call.**
- 08.00**      **Breakfast** buffet for **one hour** in the Dining Room.
- 09:30**      We plan to do a **zodiac cruise** at Vikingbugt.  
This large bay between Kap Stevenson and Helgenæs, named by Laurits Bruhn during the 1931-34 Treårsekspeditionen.
- 12.30**      **Lunch-Bufferet** for one hour in the Dining Room.
- t.b.a**        **Landing at Charcot Havn.**  
It commemorates Jean-Baptiste Charcot, whose expeditions had carried out geological work in the vicinity between 1925 and 1936.
- 18.30**      **Recap** of today and briefing for tomorrow in the lounge.
- 19.00**      **Dinner** is served in the Dining Room. Enjoy!

**t.b.a = to be announced**

*A journey is a person in itself; no two are alike.  
And all plans, safeguards, policies and coercion are fruitless. We find after  
years of struggle that we do not take a trip;  
a trip takes us.  
John Steinbeck (1902 - 1968)*



# DAILY PROGRAM

## Sydkap & Ø fjord

Tuesday 29<sup>th</sup> August 2023

Day 10

**07.45**      **Wake up call.**

**08.00**      **Breakfast** buffet for **one hour** in the Dining Room.

**09:30**      We plan to do **Landing at Sydkap**.  
Hunters from Scoresbysund spent long periods here from about 1934, with great success, and the ruins of their houses are found west of the cape. A more substantial house and store-house were built at the cape in 1946 by a Danish telegraphist and his Greenlandic wife to fish for salmon and shrimps, a venture abandoned after a year. Some reports say his wife found it too lonely.

**12.30**      **Lunch-Bufferet** for one hour in the Dining Room.

**After lunch**      60 miles long **Ships cruise** through the spectacular Ø fjord.  
Long fjord between Renland and Milne Land. Discovered and named by the 1891-92 Den Østgrønlandske expedition led by Carl Ryder during the exploration of the Bjørneøer in September 1891.

**18.30**      **Recap** of today and briefing for tomorrow in the lounge.

**19.00**      **Dinner** is served in the Dining Room. Enjoy!

*The greatest peril of life lies in the fact that human food consists entirely of souls. All the creatures that we to kill and eat, all those that we have to strike down and destroy to make clothes for ourselves, have souls, souls that do not perish with the body and which must therefore be pacified lest they revenge themselves on us for taking away their bodies*

*Knud Rasmussen (1879 - 1933)*





## Rødefjord, Røde Ø & Føn fjord

Wednesday 30<sup>th</sup> August 2023

Day 11

**07.45** Wake up call.

**08.00** **Breakfast** buffet for **one hour** in the Dining Room.

**morning** **Ships cruise** through the spectacular **Rødefjord**, named by the 1891-92 Den Østgrønlandske expedition led by Carl Ryder. The west side of the fjord is largely formed by conspicuous cliffs of red conglomerate.

**12.30** **Lunch-Bufferet** for one hour in the Dining Room.

**t.b.a.** **Zodiac cruise** and **landing at Røde Ø**.  
Named Røde Ø by the 1891-92 Den Østgrønlandske expedition led by Carl Ryder because it was composed of red conglomerate.

**18.30** **Recap** of today and briefing for tomorrow in the lounge.

**19.00** **Dinner** is served in the Dining Room. Enjoy!

**After Dinner** **Evening cruise** through the **Føn fjord**.  
Also named by the 1891-92 Den Østgrønlandske expedition led by Carl Ryder. Føn fjord because strong winds were encountered here on their first day of exploration in August 1891.

*Icebergs now came sailing out of the in a strong current, and with very frequent calving perhaps because of the warm temperature*

*Carl Hartvig Ryder  
(about naming Føn fjord in 1891)*



## Ittoqqortoormiit

Thursday 31<sup>st</sup> August 2023

Day 12

- 07.45**      **Wake up call.**
- 08.00**      **Breakfast** buffet for **one hour** in the Dining Room.
- 09:30**      We plan to do a **landing** at **Ittoqqortoormiit**.  
This is your chance to send **postcards** and purchase local **souvenirs**, so don't forget your wallet. We also recommend visiting the local **museum**.
- 13.00**      **Lunch-Bufferet** for one hour in the Dining Room.
- After lunch**      We make are way towards **Iceland**.
- 15:00**      **Lecture** about the **International Whaling Commission** (IWC) and **CCAMLR** and the conservation work they do.
- 18.15**      **Recap** of today and briefing for tomorrow in the lounge.
- 19.00**      **Dinner** is served in the Dining Room. Enjoy!

*" And one can better understand figures in arctic exploration so obsessed with their own achievement that they found it irksome to acknowledge the Eskímos, unnamed companions, and indefatigable dogs who helped them."*

*Barry López, Arctic Dreams*



# DAILY PROGRAM

## Day at sea towards Iceland

Friday 1<sup>st</sup> September 2023

Day 13

- 07.45**      **Wake up call.**
- 08.00**      **Breakfast** buffet for one hour in the Dining Room.
- 10.00**      **Lecture** about the **Photography**.  
This will be held in the Lounge.
- 12.30**      **Lunch-Buffer** for one hour in the Dining Room.
- After lunch**      It time to **settle your account**, we will call you deck by deck.
- 15:00**      **Lecture** about **Sled dogs**.  
This will be held in the Lounge.
- 16.00**      **Muck Boot Retrieval** During the afternoon we will call deck by deck to bring back the Muck Boots to the Boot Room on Deck 3.
- 18.00**      **Farewell Cocktail** with the Captain & last official meeting.  
Please join us for a toast on our voyage!
- 19.00**      **Dinner** is served in the Dining Room. Enjoy!

*A journey is a person in itself; no two are alike.*

*And all plans, safeguards, policies and coercion are fruitless. We find after years of struggle that we do not take a trip;*

*a trip takes us.*

*John Steinbeck (1902 - 1968)*



# DAILY PROGRAM

## Akureyri

Date: Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2023

Day: 14

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

**Important:** Please put your check-in luggage into the corridors before 7:30! So that we can bring it on shore.

**07.30** **Breakfast** is available.

**08.30** **Last landing: Akureyri.**

**09.00** Busses Group 1 & 2 are leaving.

**Important:**

Group 1: Booked transfer Akureyri to Reykjavik, Radhus Reykjavikur

Group 2: IKARUS booked transfer Akureyri to Keflavik Airport, Konvin Hotel (IKARUS)

Group 3: No transfers – own arrangements

You can pick up a luggage tag at the reception.

*We wish you a very good voyage home or to your further destination and hope to meet you again on another trip of Oceanwide Expeditions!*