

**Dive trip log for MV Plancius
Antarctica Whale Watching and Antarctic Polar Circle
21st of March until 1st of April 2024**

Dive Team Leader: Michael Green

Dive Guides: Tanja Bayer, Rick Gannon, Wilmar Salazar

Divers:

**Jason Klym, Martha Fernandez Torres, María Macouzet Sitges,
Alejandra Ramírez Vidal, Herlina Salazar Galindo, Erick Lopez
Illescas, Luis Sánchez Chavez, Alejandro Treviño Delgado,
Alejandro Garza Espinosa, Thomas Roubinet, Carlos Sedano
Zapata, Marta Sanfeliu, Elisabet Baena**



Neko Harbour - 64° 50.857'S / 062° 32.361'W

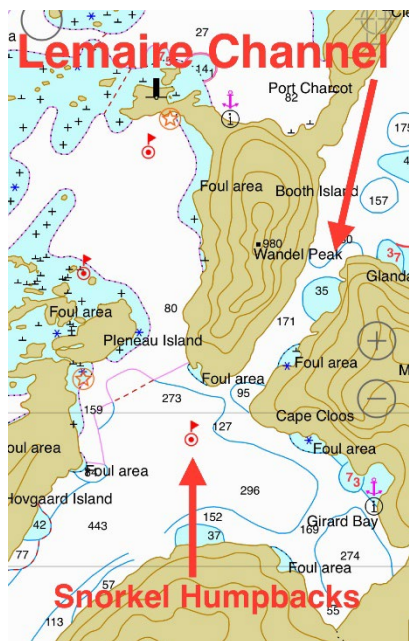
Sunday 24th March 2024



Following our crossing of the Drake Passage we tested our kit and buoyancy on the check dive in front of Neko Harbour. We choose a nice beach south of the landing site. This beach was full of penguins and also 2 elephant seals were hanging around there. After the 13 divers kitted up for the first time in the Zodiac and made a backroll entrance, the divers adjusted the weights and went for a dive along the beach. Every now and then some penguins swam along and had a look at the bubbles. Everybody was happy and we returned to the ship after the dive.

Planeau Island - 65° 07.245'S / 064° 01.309'W

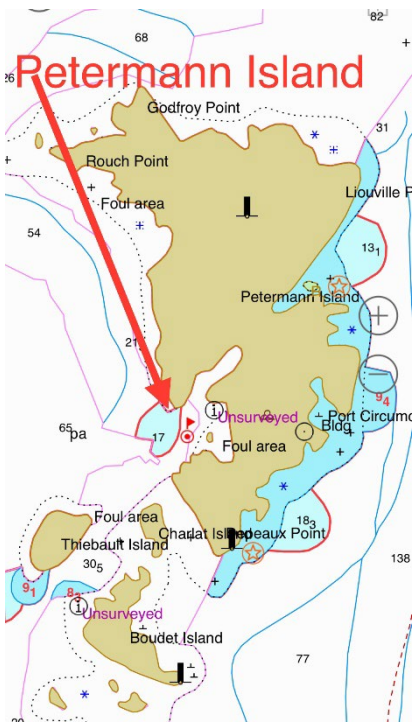
Monday 25th March 2024



After navigating through the famous Lemaire Channel in the morning, we found Plancius surrounded by humpback whales. The whales were resting and logging at the surface and some of them were so close to the ship, that the Dive Team Leader decided to try to snorkel with them. We launched our 3 dive zodiacs and looked for some friendly whales. We found different groups and everybody went in to have a look at the friendly giants. Some of them were even breaching in the distance and some turned around amongst the snorkelers and waved with their flippers. Groups of penguins came across and were also swimming between the snorkelers. After nearly an hour in the water, we decided to add a little zodiac cruise around the icebergs and then return to the ship. Everybody was very happy about this great encounter!

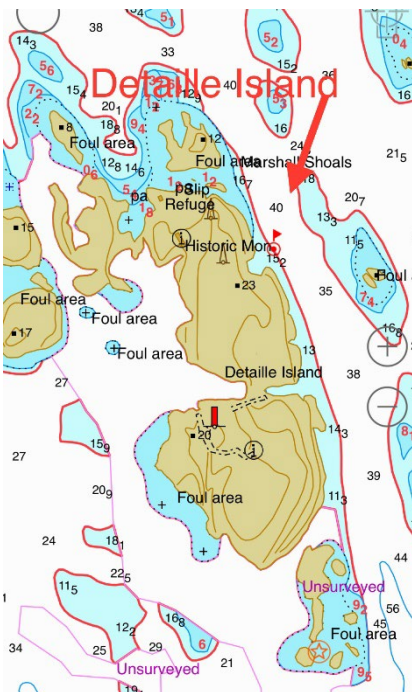
Peterman Island - 65° 10.556'S / 064° 08.733'W

Monday 25th March 2024



We set off for a dive in Circumcision Bay in the southwest of Petermann Island. We found the Bay blocked by some large icebergs and decided to find a nice piece of ice to dive on. We found a nice stable piece and entered the water after the safety briefing about diving on icebergs. It is important to be ready to adjust the buoyancy to the fresh water melting from the iceberg and the salt water of the surrounding sea. Visibility was good and the ice showed great shapes of flukes and big scalloping around. On the ground we also found seastars and anemones in different colours. Although this area is scratched by the passing icebergs a lot, there was a lot of life around. In the red kelp we found small seastars, and amphipods all around. The rocks were covered with limpets and all divers returned happily to the ship.

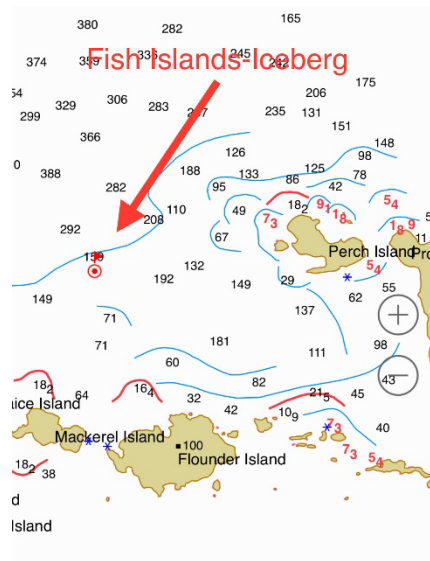
Detaille Island - 66°52.047'S, 66°47.163'W
 Tuesday 26th March 2024



In the morning we crossed the Antarctic Circle and did a zodiac cruise at Liard Island. After lunch the ship navigated to Detaille Island in the west. Detaille Island was home of a British Antarctic science Station from 1956 until 1959. The scientist had to leave in a rush with the dog sledges, because the supply ship could not make it to the station. 30 miles north of the station they were stopped by ice. In the northeast of the island, we found a nice wall to dive on. If you took your time and looked in every little hole between the rocks, you could find a lot of small stuff like isopods, amphipods, and sea stars. Some pieces of ice were also floating around. After the dive we took a little cruise around some ice floats and found some crabeater seals. Waiting for our turn to approach the landing site, we cruised around in a shallow bay west of the landing site. Weddell Seals, crabeater seals and Adelie penguins were on the snow and we watched them running up the hill. The divers then had the chance to see the hut with all the stuff that the scientists had to leave back. What a great day of diving, scenery, history, and wildlife south of the Antarctic Polar Circle!

Fish Islands - 66°00.692'S, 65°24.342'W

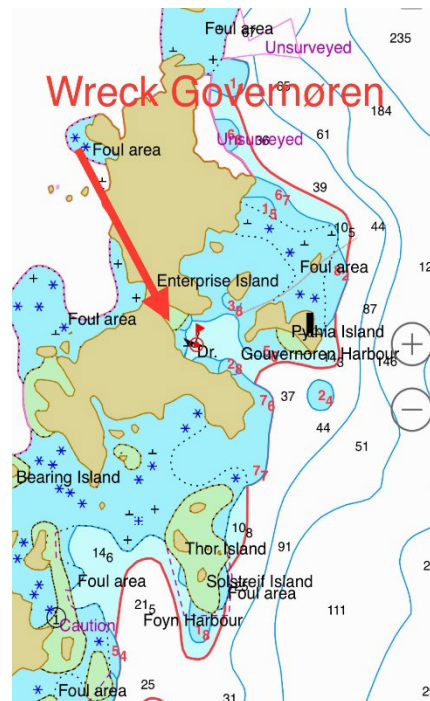
Wednesday 27th March 2024



During the night we navigated back across the Polar Circle. In the morning we had a beautiful sunrise at the fish islands. These islands are named fish islands, because they all have fish names. Perch Island, Flounder Island, Mackerel Island, Plaice Island, Salmon Island and Trout Island. This morning we saw that the sea ice is beginning to form. What a great opportunity to dive on an iceberg between these islands. The water was so clear and the iceberg we found had a great blue colour. The tidal current around the fish islands is quite strong and some divers had to fight with current and the changing buoyancy close to the iceberg. But all surfaced safely and afterwards we had playtime on an ice float. What a great opportunity to take real Antarctic pictures!

Enterprise Island / Wreck Gouvernoren - 64° 32.480'S, 061° 59.736'W

Thursday 28th March 2024



We arrived in front of Enterprise Island in the morning. The sea was calm and the sun was shining. Another great sunrise and a lot of whales already around the ship. 2 dive boats took off for a little zodiac cruise around the islands of Foyen Harbor. We saw the water boats, which were used to bring water to the whaling ships that were anchored in the bay. Just around the corner we found a Leopard seal on an ice float, some fur seals and a very friendly Weddell seal. What a great morning this already was. Just behind the Leopard seals ice float, we could see the bow of the Gouvernoren. The Gouvernoren was a huge Norwegian whaling factory ship. It is about 100m long, 16,5m wide and 20m high. This whaling ship sank on the 27th January 1915, just 9 days after Shackleton's Endurance got caught in the ice of the Weddell Sea. The Gouvernoren caught fire, when the whalers were having a end of season party. It was a very successful season, so they had loaded 22 000 gallons of whale oil. During the party a lamp fell on the floor and the fire spread quickly because of the whale oil in the barrels. To save the precious oil barrels, the captain decided to run the ship on ground and sank it.

The bow still sticks out of the water and during our dive we could surround the ship. The giant propeller and rudder are breathtaking. A lot of sponges, sea stars, anemones and nudibranchs are around, Yellow, orange, red and pink colors all around the wreck. We could also see some whale bones around the wreck. On the deck the divers

identified the boilers, which were used to extract the oil. What a great dive on this historical monument. On the way back we looked at some remains of oil barrels on a nearby island. Some more encounters with whales on the way back to ship made this morning perfect. All divers were super happy about this great dive and morning!



**THANK YOU DIVING WITH US HERE AT OCEANWIDE EXPEDITIONS WE ENJOYED
SHOWING YOU THIS PLACE AND YOUR COMPANY WHILST ENJOYING THE SEAS OF
ANTARCTICA.
SAFE TRAVELS.**