



OCEANWIDE
30 YEARS OF EXPEDITIONS

Arctic Ocean - Foula, Jan Mayen, Ice edge, Spitsbergen

26th May – 6th June 2024



M/V Plancius

MV Plancius was named after the Dutch astronomer, cartographer, geographer, and minister Petrus Plancius (1552 - 1622). Plancius was built in 1976 as an oceanographic research vessel for the Royal Dutch Navy and was named Hr. Ms. Tydeman. The ship sailed for the Royal Dutch Navy until June 2004 when she was purchased by Oceanwide Expeditions and completely refit in 2007, being converted into a 114-passenger expedition vessel. Plancius is 89 m (267 feet) long, 14.5 m (43 feet) wide and has a maximum draft of 5 m, with an Ice Strength rating of 1D, top speed of 12+ knots and three diesel engines generating 1230 hp each.

Captain Ernesto Barria

and his international crew

Chief Officer: **Elizbar Kadaria**

2nd Officer: **Don Buren**

3rd Officer: **Anar Babaiev**

Chief Engineer: **Daniel Liliac-Zajontz**

Hotel Manager: **Oleksandr Lyebyedyev**

Assist. Hotel Manager: **Bogdan Manevski**

Head Chef: **Ivan Yuriychuk**

Ships Doctor: **Bastiaan van Nieuwenhuizen**

Expedition Leader: **Jan Belgers**

Assist. Expedition Leader: **Eduardo Rubio Herrera**

Expedition Guides: **Paolo Bellezze**

Michelle van Dijk

Koen Hoekemeijer

Matthias Kopp

Tiphanie May

Alexander Romanovskiy

Day 1 – 26th May

Vlissingen - Embarkation Day

12:00 GPS Position: 51°27.6'N / 003°41.8'E

Wind: var, Sea State: Port, Weather: Sunny, Air Temp: 15.6°C, Sea Temp: 13°C



Finally, the big day has arrived! We gathered at Vlissingen train station, where we were picked up by two coaches to bring us to Plancius, our home for the next 12 days. When we arrived at the pier to embark on Plancius around 16:00h, we were greeted by the Expedition Team members. They all were very friendly and helped us a great deal with our luggage, which was tagged

carefully and transferred to the ship. After sorting our luggage, we had to report to the customs, prior to boarding the vessel. We were lucky to be able to use the coach as a waiting room, while in the meantime it started raining cats and dogs. Onboard we received a warm welcome from the Oceanwide hotel department. Soon after, our expedition leader Jan welcomed us on board and invited all of us to the observation lounge for a mandatory safety briefing and a ship's safety drill.

After completing the mandatory drill, the sun was out again, and we went out on deck. Departing the home port of the vessel, we were waving to the other Oceanwide vessels, and those crew were waving at us. We were also greeted by the horn of Ortelius. We were on our way!

At 19:00h it was dinner time, although we already had some delicious canapés, it was now time to further enjoy our galley team's buffet in the dining room. We enjoyed our food while sailing close past Vlissingen.

After dinner we were greeted by our captain Ernesto Barrera. A toast to a good and safe voyage, of which Expedition Leader Jan explained about the plans of the coming days. In the late evening, some were still out to watch for wildlife, while others dreamed about it.



Day 2 – 27th May

Day at Sea – Towards Aberdeen

12:00 GPS Position: 53°38.2'N / 000°49.0'E

Wind: S-2, **Sea State:** Slight, **Weather:** Partly Cloudy, **Air Temp:** 12°C, **Sea Temp:** 18°C

Most of us enjoyed a good night with a slight movement of PLANCIUS. We woke up having the coast of Great Britain in sight and we followed that coast the whole day, aiming for Aberdeen.

After a good breakfast it was time to get fresh air, enjoying the scenery in all aspects. However, not just wildlife surrounded us, but also numerous windfarms, producing energy with the blowing slight wind. Later during the morning hours Koen gave an interesting lecture about wildlife photography.



The weather developed becoming friendlier, with sunshine and some clouds and it was very pleasant staying on the outside decks. A lot of seabirds were all around us, amongst them, the largest ones up here in the north, the Gannets, but also nice smaller species like the Common Tern and Guillemot and Puffins. In the afternoon we got the rubber boots and the life jacket which we both need for our outings by zodiac. By getting those, we discovered new parts of the PLANCIUS. While we sailed with good speed along the coast

towards our first destination, Matthias gave an informative talk about seabirds. After seeing them on the screens in the lounge it was time to enjoy them in real outside. Our first day on board PLANCIUS was great, looking forward for more. Jan, our Expedition Leader presented the plan for the next day in the surrounding of Aberdeen during a meeting in the lounge. Having nice conversations during the dinner and afterwards the day ended with a beautiful sunset.



Day 3 - 28th May

Aberdeen

Sands of Forvie, Bullers of Buchan & Foot Dee

12:00 GPS Position: 57°08.6'N / 002°05.1'W

Wind: WSW-2, Sea State: Port, Weather: Partly cloudy, Air Temp: 13°C, Sea Temp: 17°C



As soon as we woke up, we all felt a sharp desire to wear a kilt and play the bagpipes.

What happened, you might ask?

The answer is simple – Plancius, our ship, was approaching the shores of Scotland. Through the binoculars, we could already see the green fields, where various grains and other plants grew, pastures with shaggy, funny-looking cows grazing on them, and small villages scattered along the coastline and inland. Directly ahead of us was the large city

of Aberdeen. Just north of the city, enormous wind turbines rose straight out of the sea. Their blades slowly rotated in the wind, allowing the generators to produce electricity. The sight was mesmerizing but, admittedly, somewhat eerie.

Plancius approached the harbour and slowed down. A few bottle-nosed dolphins, which had taken to escorting our ship and probably hoped to do some bow riding, swam away disappointed and confused. Soon, while manoeuvring through the port area, Plancius turned stern-first and slowly backed up further. The dolphins, seeing this scene, were completely bewildered, and decided that something was definitely wrong with this ship, swam away to frolic in the waves and wait for another vessel.

Meanwhile, Plancius was securely moored next to one of the quay walls, and as soon as the gangway was lowered, strict border guards promptly climbed aboard. The expedition team politely greeted them and escorted them to the main lounge on deck 5. We lined up in a long queue and one by one, passport in hand, visited the border guards to ensure there were no spies or wrongdoers among us. Once the border control procedure was completed, we descended the gangway to the pier, where buses were already waiting for us.



The weather was simply wonderful – warm and sunny – and an exciting, adventure-filled day awaited us.

We boarded the buses and sped through the narrow streets of Aberdeen, and after leaving the city, we zoomed down the highway towards Sands of Forvie, an incredibly interesting natural site. Many of us were not used to seeing a bus drive on the left side of the road, and the steering wheel of our vehicle was on the "wrong" side, but seeing the unflappable confidence with which the driver did his job, we quickly calmed down and began to look out the windows, admiring the Scottish pastoral scenes.

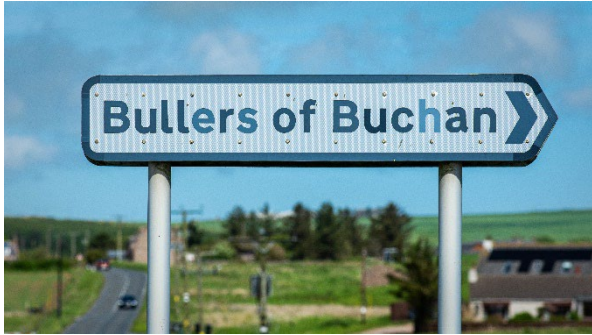
What are Sands of Forvie? It is a picturesque spot on the ocean shore, representing the estuary of the River Forvie, surrounded by grass and shrub-covered sand dunes. But the most interesting thing about Sands of Forvie is not even its natural beauty, but the animal inhabitants that have chosen the riverbanks as their home. These include primarily eider ducks and some other birds, and also seals! Sometimes, they say, up to three thousand of them can gather there.



The buses parked at a lot near a small hotel with a restaurant, and we walked along a narrow asphalt path towards the sea. Soon, the asphalt turned into a wooden boardwalk, and eventually, we had to walk on sand. Around us, bushes with bright yellow flowers were growing densely. There were so many flowers that it seemed like some kind of carpet.



Soon, we reached the estuary of the River Forvie. The tide was out, and the ocean had retreated, exposing algae-covered rocks, mud, and tightly packed sand. There were no seals on the shore, but there were plenty of ducks! Those of us who were into birdwatching set up their tripods with spotting scopes and began observing the feathered horde, while the rest of us strolled along the shore. The River Forvie isn't wide: if you took a stone and threw it with a good swing, you could reach the opposite bank. (But don't do that, remember there are many birds!) From time to time, strange-shaped heads with disproportionately large nostrils could be seen surfacing in the middle of the river – these were grey seals. They snorted and eagerly and curiously sniffed the air filled with unfamiliar scents.



The time allotted for our walk flew by surprisingly quickly, and soon it was time to return to the buses and head to the next natural attraction, called Bullers of Buchan, whatever that meant. Another bus ride, another road, more pastoral scenes, and after half an hour, we arrived at a car park, where, after getting off the buses, we found a sign with an arrow saying "Bullers of Buchan." After walking a couple of hundred meters and

passing several charming Scottish houses with front gardens, we found ourselves on a high and steep seaside cliff. The cliffs were exceptionally picturesque, but the most important thing was the sheer number of birds: black-legged kittiwakes, guillemots, Northern fulmars, razorbills, and others. Our ornithologists, glowing with enthusiasm, began walking along the edge of these steep cliffs, stopping from time to time to set up their tripods with spotting scopes, adjusting the eyepieces, and occasionally taking a break from their observations to take a few shots with their cameras. Those who were not interested in birds simply enjoyed the natural beauty, fresh air, and good weather. It was already two o'clock in the afternoon, so many of us, finding a suitable spot, settled down for lunch, pulling out sandwich packs from our backpacks, which we had prepared earlier in the morning during breakfast. Delicious!



Before we knew it, it was time to return to Aberdeen. With a sense of satisfaction from a day well spent and filled with impressions of the local natural beauty, we returned to the buses and took our seats. The road back to Aberdeen didn't take much time. Along the way, we even managed to stop by a supermarket and spent half an hour shopping. To tell you the truth, the main purpose of visiting the supermarket was to withdraw cash from the ATM located there, but alas, the ATM was out of order,

so everyone faced a major disappointment. However, against the backdrop of all the day's events, this failure seemed like a triviality, and no one was upset.



Aberdeen greeted us with warm but no longer cloudless weather. Before returning to the ship, we made one more stop in a village called Foot Dee or Fittie. The village, located near the harbour, has long since become part of the city, but it retained its fairy-tale charm and uniqueness. Walking through it, it felt like stepping into the pages of Charles

Dickens' novels. Narrow streets, front gardens, benches, cats, knick-knacks in the windows, and laundry hanging on lines. Even the hearts of the most hopeless sceptics of man-made attractions melted and were touched. Truly, the village of Fittie was the cherry on top and a fitting conclusion to this wonderful day.



As soon as we returned to the ship, Plancius was unmoored, after which it set course northward – to the island of Foula. The dolphins, apparently deciding to make amends and apologize for their morning behaviour, escorted our ship into the sunset, bustling around and waving us with their dorsal fins.

Day 4 – 29th May

Foula

12:00 GPS Position: 60°07.9'N / 002°01.9'W

Wind: var 1, **Sea State:** Smooth, **Weather:** Sunny, **Air Temp:** 14°C, **Sea Temp:** 17°C



We awoke to our expedition leader Jan Belgers calling us over the intercom that it was a beautiful day outside and we should get up and prepare for the day. We headed to the dining room to have a delicious breakfast and make our packed lunches for the day.

We were scheduled to have our zodiac briefing later in morning, but Jan called us again after breakfast and gave us the good

news that we were arriving at Foula earlier than expected and could be disembarking as early as 11am. So, we all filed up to the lounge to have the zodiac briefing we would need before we could take our first zodiac ride. At the same time our expedition leader Jan gave us a briefing about our expedition to the island giving us options of a medium or long hike. After the briefing we went outside to enjoy the approach to Foula. It is a beautiful summer's day in Scotland.

At 10:15 the zodiacs started to be set to the water ready to take us on our adventure. We were all ready and excited to make our first zodiac landing. At 11:00 we were called to the gangways and alighted our zodiacs for the short trip to shore. We were dropped at the pier to meet our local guides Sheila and Magnus who would take us on our hikes. The long hikers would head to the north coast of the island to visit the Gaada stack. A beautiful rock formation out in the sea and hopefully see some puffins along the way. The medium hikers went south along the coastal walking route hopefully to also see some puffins.





The sun shone bright as all the groups went their separate ways. Both were lucky enough to see the puffins and the man other nesting birds along the cliff edges. Sheep and Shetland ponies grazed the cliff tops as we wandered along Foula's incredible coastline. Harbour seals lazed in the inlet in the sunshine while Northern Fulmars nested all along the grassy banks. The puffins we did see bobbed about on the water from where some flew up to the burrows treating us to their funny gait as they rushed home.



On our way back to the landing site we stopped by the school with only 5 students who had worked hard to make trinkets for us to buy from them. Each child had their own stall with their

own handmade wares including painted shells and funny pictures of the sheep.



After a hot beverage in the school, it was soon time to head back to the landing site and back to the Plancius. We put back on all our waterproof gear, loaded into our zodiacs and headed for home.



On board we headed to the outer decks to enjoy our last views of the cliffs of Foula before it was

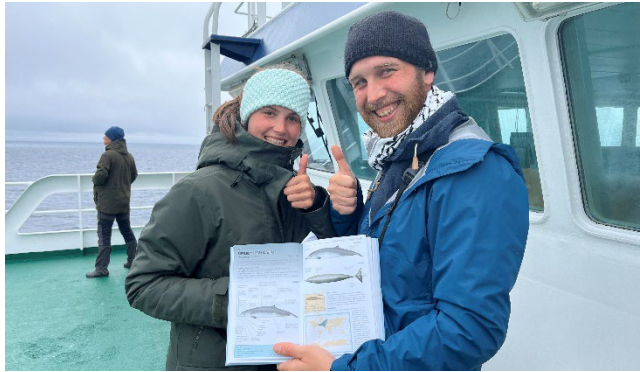
time for a delicious dinner. What an adventure!

Day 5 – 30th May

Day at sea

12:00 GPS Position: 63°23.8'N / 004°04.9'W

Wind: W 4, Sea State: Slight, Weather: Overcast, Air Temp: 7°C, Sea Temp: 10°C



Today we were woken up by the news that there's pilot whales and perhaps dolphins outside! We turned the vessel, reduced speed and soon we were standing in the water enjoying dozens of pilot whales and white sided dolphins swimming near Plancius.

After the usual delicious breakfast, we headed out on deck again and this time the youngest birders spotted a small pod of the rare Sowerby's Beaked Whale at 9 o'clock from the ship, close and swimming towards us. It was a brief sight but enough for most people on the outer deck behind the bridge to see it. New Species to most of us!

During the day we also enjoyed a mind-bending presentation by Eduardo on the deepest oceans in the world where the sunlight never reaches. Alien places thousands of meters deep where 'strange to us' creatures' live lives under different principles. Michelle gave us today a detailed, anecdote full account on how to identify whales.



The sea day carried on in good weather. Overcast but with great visibility and calm sea conditions.



Then in the afternoon, once again another pod of pilot whales, again we slowed down and then yet again another pod, this time with a Humpback whale in the mix. Where the pilot whales rounding up and shoaling fish that the humpback was benefiting from? Maybe, they all seemed to be having a good feeding session.

Towards the end of the day, one final surprise was in store for us, a tall straight blow in the horizon, a large baleen whale!



We still don't know for sure what it was, but she came close at one point. The ship was divided, half the observers thought it was a Sei Whale, the other half thought it was a small/young Fin. True is... nobody could tell for sure. Perhaps if we had seen its right jaw, we would have been able to identify it with more

confidence. Fin whales display a white right jaw.



Another day at sea and so many sightings!

Day 6 – 31th May

Day at Sea

12:00 GPS Position: 67°39.1'N / 006°36.7'W

Wind: SW-4, **Sea State:** Slight, **Weather:** Overcast, **Air Temp:** 6°C, **Sea Temp:** 8 °C

Today we woke up into a blue-greyish sea. The clouds were relatively low in the sky and the sea was calm. These conditions marked our entrance to a new region of the world, the arctic region. Officially, we crossed the Arctic circle today at around 6:30. This circle is an imaginary line drawn by the learned man over centuries ago that divides the region where the Sun shines for at least 6 months a year, from sometime around March 21. to September 23. The other half of the year is a zone of perpetual dusk and darkness, having a very cold period from November to February. This was the first event of the day.

After a very energetic wake up call made by our Expedition Leader, we enjoyed a good breakfast and then we started the activities of our daily program.

Jan reunited everybody around 10 in the Lounge, in order to offer a short explanation of our current position and to share with everybody the charts of the region of the world where were sailing. The first of those activities was a lecture given by Eduardo with the title "Navigation, Einstein, Clocks and GPS". In this presentation he described the problem of how to navigate across the world and how it



was solved firstly by astronomers, watchmakers and sailors since the late 17th Century until the middle of the 20th Century. Then Eduardo described how the ideas of



Albert Einstein, the concept of space-time revolutionised our understanding of nature, allowing us to build the networks of satellites with accurate clocks that we use today to navigate, the Global Positioning System -GPS. The GPS is our modern way to navigate, and the system needs to take into account the details of space-time in order to work accurately.

Lunch came at noon and with it, we all recovered our energies.

Timely, shortly after lunch a pod of Killer Whales appeared in the horizon. We estimate that we saw about 20 of these whales swimming and displaying around our ship. It was a fantastic sight given the calm conditions of the ocean. The animals displayed very well, allowing us to identify a couple of big and tall dorsal fins, -the males of the group. We also could identify a couple of big females and a couple of small calfs swimming among the waves. This was a magnificent sight for everybody on board.



Later starting around 14:30, Michelle gave a presentation about the early history of whaling in the Arctic. She presented a lot of interesting material covering this subject. Among all the themes presented by Michelle, perhaps the most interesting one was to hear the human side of this endeavour; here she described for example the garments, clothing and tools used by these early visitors. Similarly, her presentation showed how the acts of these early

visitors affected the wildlife and how in their pursue, they exterminated whales, bears and birds also in this beautiful area of the world. Michelle got a good number of questions at the end and a good applause from the public.

In the late afternoon Tiphonie presented a lecture with the title "The Island of Jan Mayen". In this presentation, she introduced all the guests to the history and geography of this desolated island. Being herself an islander, she found many parallels between her native Falkland archipelago and the life at Jan Mayen for the members of the station. Her presentation also showed images of the military and meteorological base located there describing how rare are the flights from mainland Norway to the island carried by the Lockheed Hercules C-130 planes of the Norwegian Air Force. With vivid images and good descriptions, of the whole island, her presentation earned a big applause at the end.

At 18:30 we had our daily recap, where Jan described the details of the plan we had for Jan Mayen, as well as the regulations that apply to the island under the Arctic Expedition Cruise Operators --AECO. Today was our first evening without 'night' because we have reached such a high latitude that the Sun stops setting.

As we sailed the remote far North Atlantic, our vessel Plancius plough into the weaves against the wind, and into the fog and the twilight of the night.

Day 7 – 1st June

Jan Mayen

12:00 GPS Position: 71°00.7'N / 008°39.5'W

Wind: S-3, **Sea State:** Slight, **Weather:** Overcast, **Air Temp:** 3°C, **Sea Temp:** 10°C

The bright and already northerly low sun bathed the turbulent ocean in light. It wasn't exactly stormy, but the waves were quite high, and their crests foamed now and then. Rocking and tilting alternately to the right and then to the left, the Plancius moved northward. It was still very early in the morning when we began to discern the shapes of a huge mountain emerging through the mist—straight ahead lay Jan Mayen Island.

We stood on the open decks, armed with binoculars. We were dressed up in warm jackets. The wind tousled our hair, and a sense of adventure filled the fresh air. We were full of hope, as a landing was planned for today!



Plancius rounded the western tip of the island and was now moving northeast towards Kvalross Bay. According to local regulations, this is the only place where travelers allowed to land, and take a walk a few kilometers inland. Huge waves furiously crashed against the shore, sending myriad sprays into the sky. This filled our hearts with anxiety, but we continued to hope for a favorable outcome.

There is no dock on Jan Mayen Island—it is simply impossible to build one because, as with most other volcanic islands, the depth increases rapidly. Can you drive piles into a nearly vertical cliff? No, you can't. Therefore, the landing was planned to be carried out by beach landing using our Zodiacs.

Upon reaching Kvalross Bay, the ship stopped. The expedition team, already fully equipped, boarded two Zodiacs and set off to scout. They needed to assess the conditions and find a place on the shore where the landing would be safe. All we could do was watch them go and empathize.



The two Zodiacs sped confidently towards the shore, raising sprays. The swell was large, so sometimes the Zodiacs simply disappeared from view, hidden behind the crests of the waves, only to reappear a few moments later. Almost reaching the shore, they suddenly stopped and hovered on the water's surface, being rocked up and down by the big waves. It seemed this was the moment when the expedition leader, with the help of his

colleagues, was making a decision. We, in turn, also froze, watching this from the open decks of the Plancius. So, what was it going to be? Landing or no landing? The Zodiacs moved again and, passing along the shore to the place where the sandy beach ends in a wall of sheer cliffs, set a course back to the ship.

As the Zodiacs approached the lowered gangway, Jan, our expedition leader, just looked at us and shook his head. That was enough to understand that there could be no question of a landing. It was too dangerous, and Jan, more than anyone, knew the cost of a possible mistake. The Zodiacs were lifted onto the deck, the gangway was raised, and we continued our journey.

The captain decided not to head north immediately. Instead, we followed the northeast along the coast of Jan Mayen and spent a few hours admiring the views of the island and especially the huge volcano, Beerenberg. Its slopes were covered with glaciers, and the summit was hidden in clouds. This is probably how J.R.R. Tolkien envisioned the Lonely Mountain, in whose depths, after driving out all the dwarves, the dragon Smaug settled.

After some time, we finally set the course North, and Jan Mayen Island, now behind the Plancius, gradually began to recede and fade into the mist. Well, we hope that the island will be a bit more hospitable to other travelers.

We spent the rest of the day watching a film about orcas and observing wildlife from the open decks.



Some of us occasionally spotted bottlenose dolphins, seals, and various seabirds. We continue moving north.

Day 8 – 2nd June

Day at Sea

12:00 GPS Position: 75°45.1'N / 006°07.1'W

Wind: SE-2, **Sea State:** Slight, **Weather:** Fog, **Air Temp:** 1°C, **Sea Temp:** 2°C

Good morning Plancius!

Today we woke up in a white world. Not because we had reached the ice already, but because the ship was surrounded by a thick layer of fog. No wind is always nice because it means a comfortable and stable ship, but in the high arctic it also means that we're often encountering fog. For today it wasn't so bad as we still had to sail quite a distance to reach the pack ice. However, for spotting wildlife, fog is quite a dealbreaker as it simply limits our visibility. Still, many of our guests took the opportunity to be outside for some fresh air and to keep an eye out for arctic animals.



In the lounge Michelle kicked off the lecture program with a very interesting presentation about polar bears. She prepared us well with lots of information and now we kept our fingers crossed hoping that we would see one of these impressive animals in the ice from the ship. With so many bird lovers onboard our chances of spotting a bear

would be a lot higher since the birders are keen on seeing ivory gulls. And when you spot ivory gulls, quite often a bear is around since the ivory gulls feed on the carcasses killed by polar bears. Michelle illustrated that with a good sense of humor ;).

After another delicious lunch it was time for a small snooze before our house astronomer Eduardo recited his Climate Change lecture. A very interesting and eye-opening presentation that made quite an impact and led us to think about the future. Eduardo shared the causes of climate change, where we are heading if we don't undertake any action, and what influence climate change will have on our natural and wildlife world. But it wasn't all about doom scenarios, Edu also talked about initiatives taken related to new clean energy sources, a changing economic model and future innovations that might contribute to influencing climate change positively.

The afternoon snack was a delicious home baked chocolate chip cookie and with a warm coffee or tea at hand our excitement increased as we could reach the pack ice at any moment now.

The very first tiny bit of ice was spotted by our guests outside on deck 7 and when they saw it, they produced a loud cheer!





The ice we encountered unfortunately was too fragmented and that's usually not 'good' ice to spot polar bears. Polar bears prefer larger ice shelves as this helps them to maintain good energy levels because they don't have to swim and climb back onto the ice as much. Therefore, expedition leader Jan and captain Ernesto decided to leave this ice in search of more suitable polar bear ice. And with that also increasing our chances of potentially seeing bowhead whales. Fingers crossed for tomorrow!

Good night!



Day 9 – 3rd June

Day at the Ice

12:00 GPS Position: 77°08.5'N / 002°05.4'W

Wind: N-5, **Sea State:** Slight, **Weather:** Fog, **Air Temp:** 0°C, **Sea Temp:** 0°C



Since the early morning, the weather didn't bode well: a strong northern wind blew, the low sky ominously hung over the ocean, fierce waves continuously crashed against the bow of our ship, the Plancius. We continued moving north. The idea was to reach the pack ice and explore it for representatives of the local fauna.

The Arctic seemed quite unwilling to welcome us into its domain. Whether we arrived too early or somehow angered the local gods (or any other

kind of justice under the sky) by excessively enjoying life during our Scottish landings on the shore – it was unclear. What was clear, however, was that the weather conditions put us to the test.

Closer to noon, the gray low sky on the horizon started to take on a lighter, whitish hue – a sure sign that the pack ice was nearby. And indeed, within minutes, the first ice floes emerged from the mist and gray clouds, followed immediately by others, forming a dense ice belt. There it was – the ice!

The Plancius, staying at a distance of several dozen meters from the ice edge, moved in a northern direction. We all poured out onto the open decks and, setting up our tripods to which binoculars and scopes were attached, began scanning the surface of the ice for representatives of the local wildlife – seals and perhaps even those large, white, furry beasts that hunt these seals.

The ice remained absolutely lifeless, but at one moment, right near the edge, a Bowhead whale emerged for a few seconds and spouted! A rare representative of cetaceans. Many of us managed to capture this moment, and if not take a photograph, then at least simply observe this unique animal.

After lunch, we continued scanning the space around the ship for wildlife, but had no particular success. Moreover, the weather continued to deteriorate, the wind strengthened, and the waves grew higher and higher. Unfortunately, some of us began to show symptoms of seasickness.

The Plancius patiently moved northward, the bow of the ship, lifted by yet another huge wave, soared up and then fell down, cutting through the water and sending billions of splashes that flooded the windows even on the uppermost decks, up to the captain's bridge. The captain even had to order the closure of some open decks, as it was unsafe to be on them.

A barbecue was planned for the evening, but it had to be canceled too, because the elements were not to be trifled with. No big deal, though, dining in the restaurant – a pleasant thing in any weather. Late in the evening, at 20:45, Sasha, one of the guides, gathered us all in the main lounge and told us his story of relations with Spitsbergen and shed light on some episodes of his life in one of the Russian settlements of the archipelago. Those of us who weren't laid low by seasickness listened with pleasure. Spitsbergen is getting closer and closer!



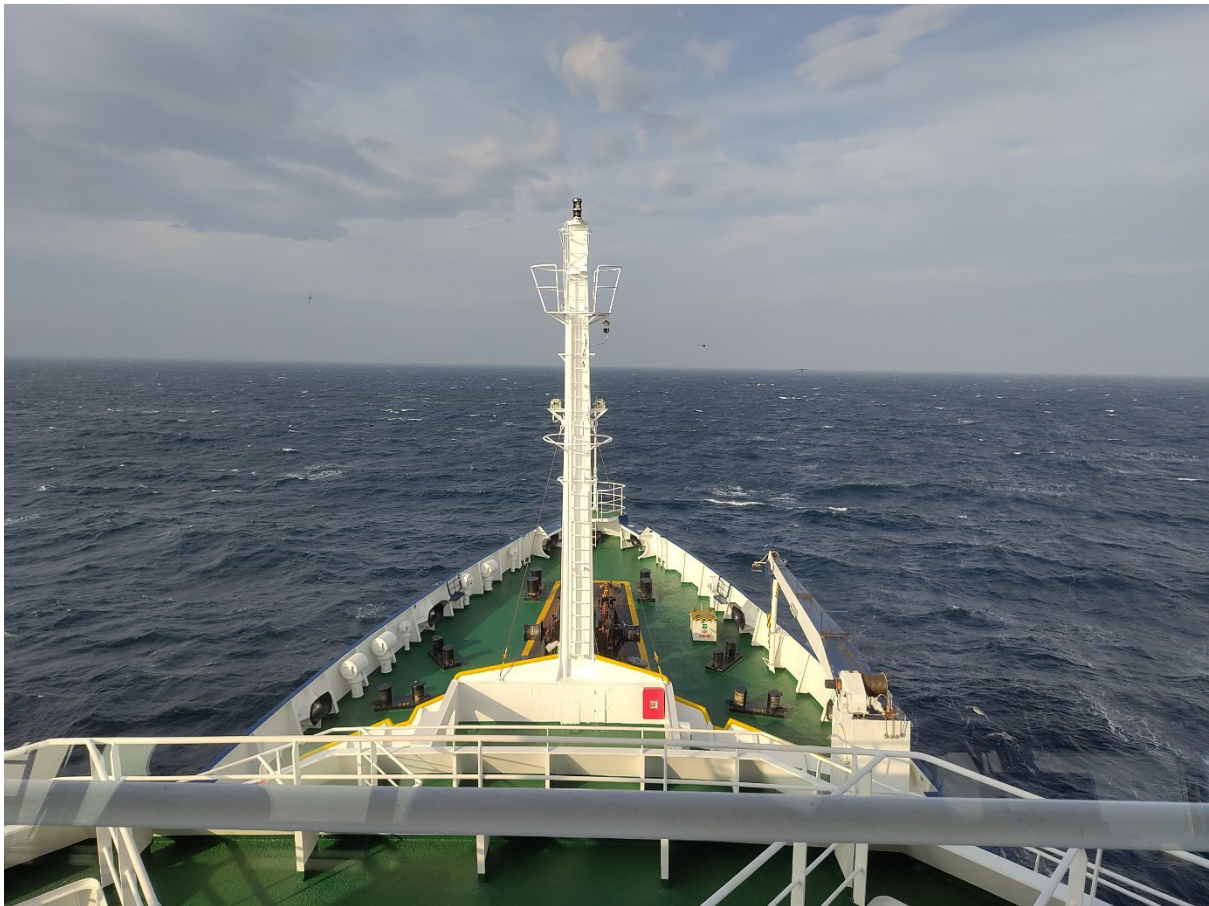
Day 10 – 4th June

Day at Sea

12:00 GPS Position: 78°00.8'N / 007°39.3'E

Wind: ENE-4, **Sea State:** Slight, **Weather:** Overcast, **Air Temp:** 4°C, **Sea Temp:** 4°C

We once again awoke to the sound of our expedition leader Jan Belgers calling over the PA. He had good news for us that the wind was finally dying down and though we hadn't made as much progress in the night as we hoped during the storm, he had a plan. After a hearty breakfast we made our way to the lounge for our first talk of the day at 10 am.



Jan would give us a briefing of the plan for today, and also give us the mandatory polar bear briefing. So, the new plan was to cruise the sea shelf of Svalbard where good upwellings would entice whales! After our mandatory polar bear briefing we were treated to a wonderful lecture from our expedition guide Michelle van Dijk entitled "Discovery of Spitsbergen and the political situation today". It was interesting to find out what an interesting and complex place it is to live.

After the lecture it was then lunch time, but we didn't have too long to relax as we soon arrived at the sea shelf and the sun began to shine. We enjoyed some time on the deck every now and then sighting a blow in the distance. At one point we were treated to White Beaked Dolphins bow riding next to the ship. We spent most of the afternoon navigating along the shelf, there were several blows but unfortunately none were too close.



In the late afternoon at 4:30 it was time for another lecture this time from our expedition guide Paolo Bellezze entitled "A Brief History of North Pole Exploration". After the lecture we are heading back outside again. Peeking out of the mist we started to view the snowy mountains of Svalbard! So exciting!

We had a delicious dinner later and then spent the rest of the evening admiring the views coming out of the mist. As we sailed into St. Jonsfjord and got closer to the land a polar fox was sighted and a little later another one, and another one, running along the coast.



Day 11 – 5th June

Poolepynten & Ymerbukta

Day at sea

12:00 GPS Position: 78°21.1'N / 012°20.9'E

Wind: NE 5, **Sea State:** Slight, **Weather:** Overcast, **Air Temp:** 1°C, **Sea Temp:** 2°C



We are finally here! We woke up in Svalbard! The night was windy, but conditions have improved, and our expedition team heads out to assess conditions and scout for polar bears. There is a first scouting session done from the bridge and outer decks with binoculars and telescopes before sending zodiacs ashore and confirm no polar bears are on sight.

Once all is given the green light we are called by group and the first little adventure of the day is called “swell at the gangway!” boarding the zodiacs

is challenging but working as a team with guests, Able Seamen and Guides we are all soon on our way to shore where our second little adventure awaits! landing.

There is a bit of a swell, and the landing is a little splashy but fun, after some ‘sit and slide’ towards the bow, we swing our legs towards the driver and climb out with the help of the guides ashore.

We are now in Poolepynten, named after Jonas Poole, a British Whaler. A wide-open plain with long beaches and a Walrus colony at the point!

There are a couple of these charming, blubber full walrus in the water as well as some hauled out at the beach.

We get chance to snap many pictures... we will remember this encounter.



After heading back to the ship, once again we are served a delicious lunch as we relocate to our afternoon location, Ymerbukta. The expedition team has planned a zodiac cruise. Winter has only started to retreat here, and we wrap up warm for a wind chilled ride accompanied by sleet.

As we slowly plod into the waves, we approach the coast and Jan first spots a swimming walrus, then a flock of eider and king eider ducks. Not long after we find them a few more eiders arrive, and a mighty fight starts between them! Someone was not happy with the new arrivals for sure!



We then cruised towards a glacier front until reaching the fast ice remaining from winter. We followed the ice edge and find harbor seals, a walrus climbed on an iceberg, guillemots, eider ducks, long tailed ducks, barnacle goose, etc.

It was a great cruise, a chilly one for sure, but a fitting end to our Arctic adventure.

Once back on the ship, it was an emotional last evening. The captain said goodbye and the final slide show reminded us of all the things we've seen, from sunny Vlissingen, Aberdeen and Foula, the sea days, Arctic ice edge and Svalbard.

It really was something very special enjoyed in the best company.



Day 12 – 6th June

Disembarkation

12:00 GPS Position: 78°13.8'N / 015°36.2'E

Wind: N-4, **Sea State:** Port, **Weather:** Partly Cloudy, **Air Temp:** 4°C, **Sea Temp:** 1°C

Our bags were packed and left outside our doors for the staff to collect. After a last breakfast, we disembarked the ship and said goodbye to Jan and his team. We can't thank him and the rest of the staff enough for all their hard work. Except for some who will stay on for the next trip, we leave with some sadness but also with many fond memories we will never forget. A few of us are already thinking about coming back to the Arctic.



Thank you for your enthusiasm and support, but most of all for joining us on this exploratory North Atlantic voyage. We hope to see you again in the future, wherever that might be!

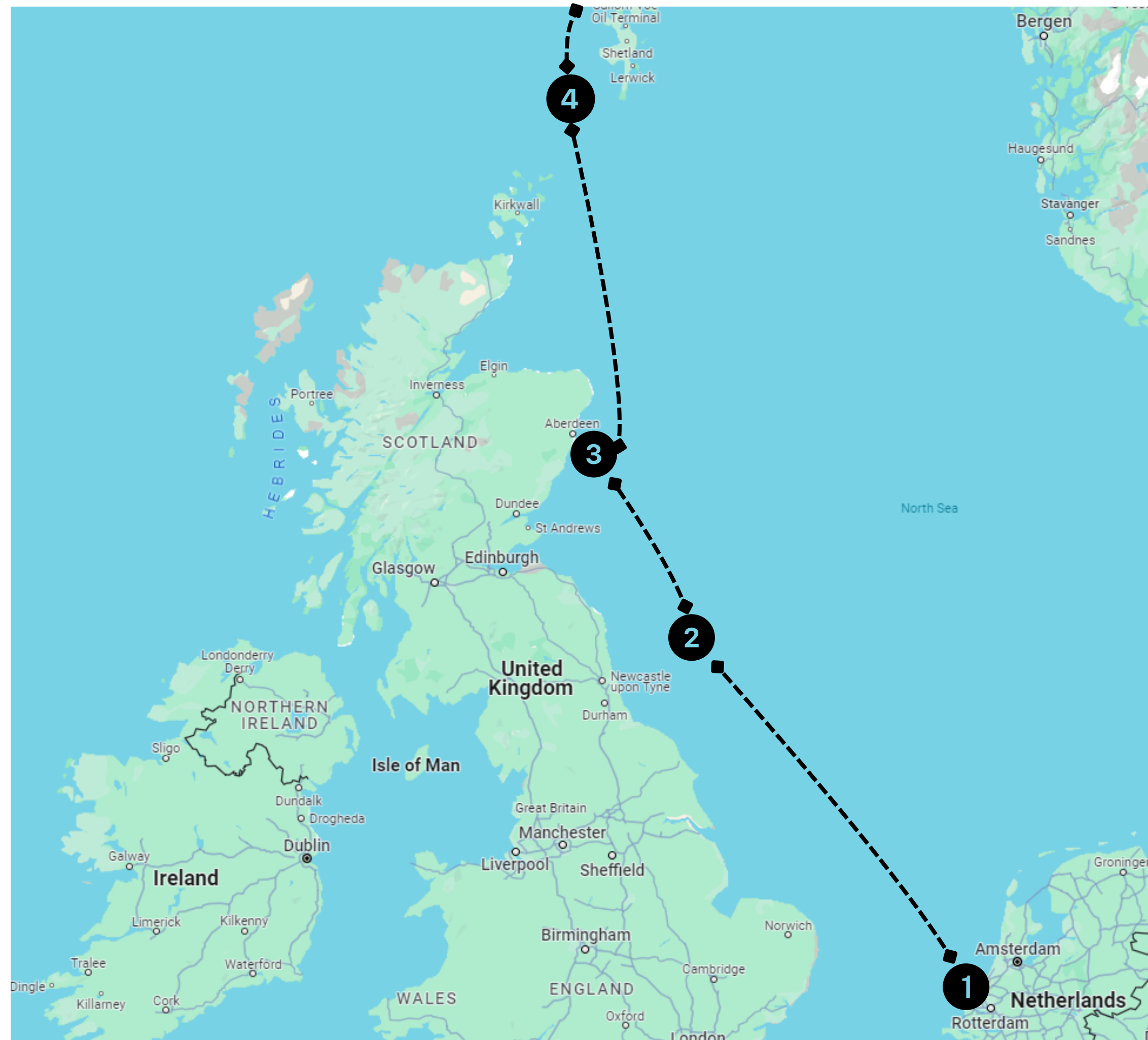
Total distance sailed: 2291 nautical miles

Farthest north: 78°20.0'N / 009°47.8'E

On behalf of Oceanwide Expeditions, Captain Ernesto Barria, Expedition Leader Jan Belgers, Hotel Manager Oleksandr Lyebyedyev, and all the crew and staff of M/V Plancius, it has been a pleasure travelling with you!

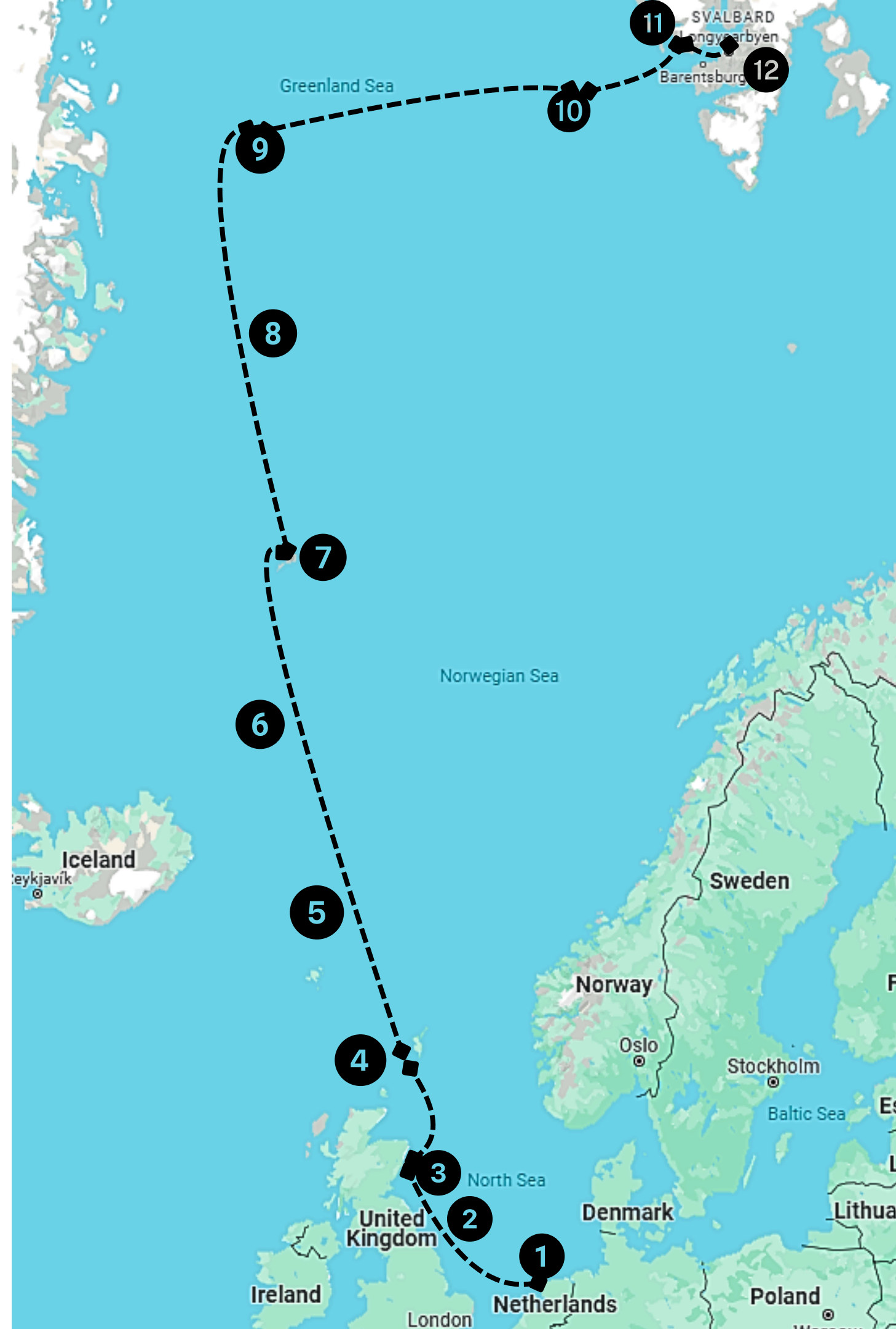
Trip map

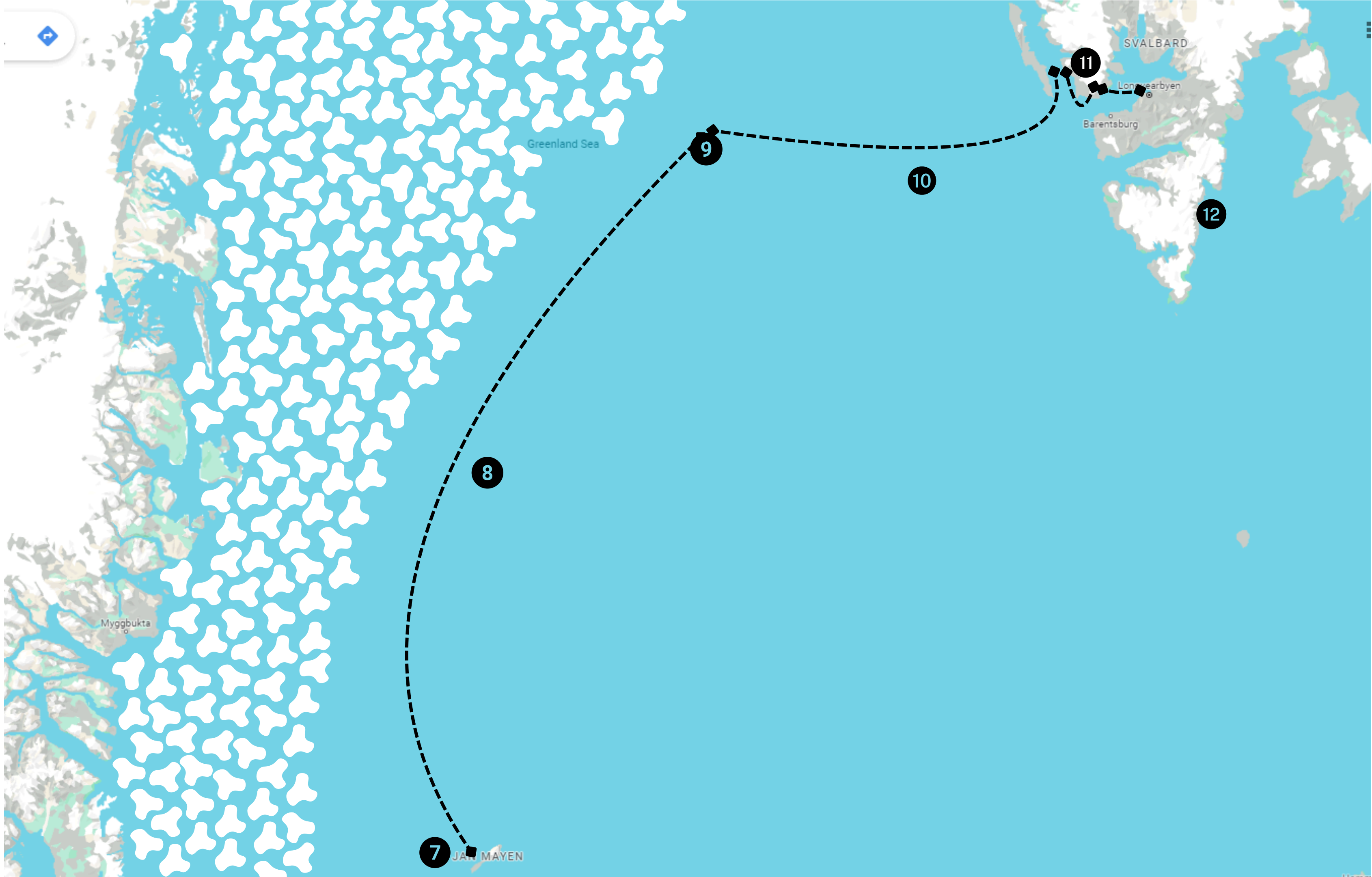
- Day 1: Leave Vlissingen
- Day 2: At sea to Aberdeen
- Day 3: Aberdeen
- Day 4: Foula (Shetland Islands)
- Day 5: At sea to Jan Mayen
- Day 6: At sea to Jan Mayen
- Day 7: Jan Mayen
- Day 8: At sea to pack ice
- Day 9: Pack ice
- Day 10: At sea to Svalbard
- Day 11: Poolepynten & Ymerbukta
- Day 12: Longyearbyen

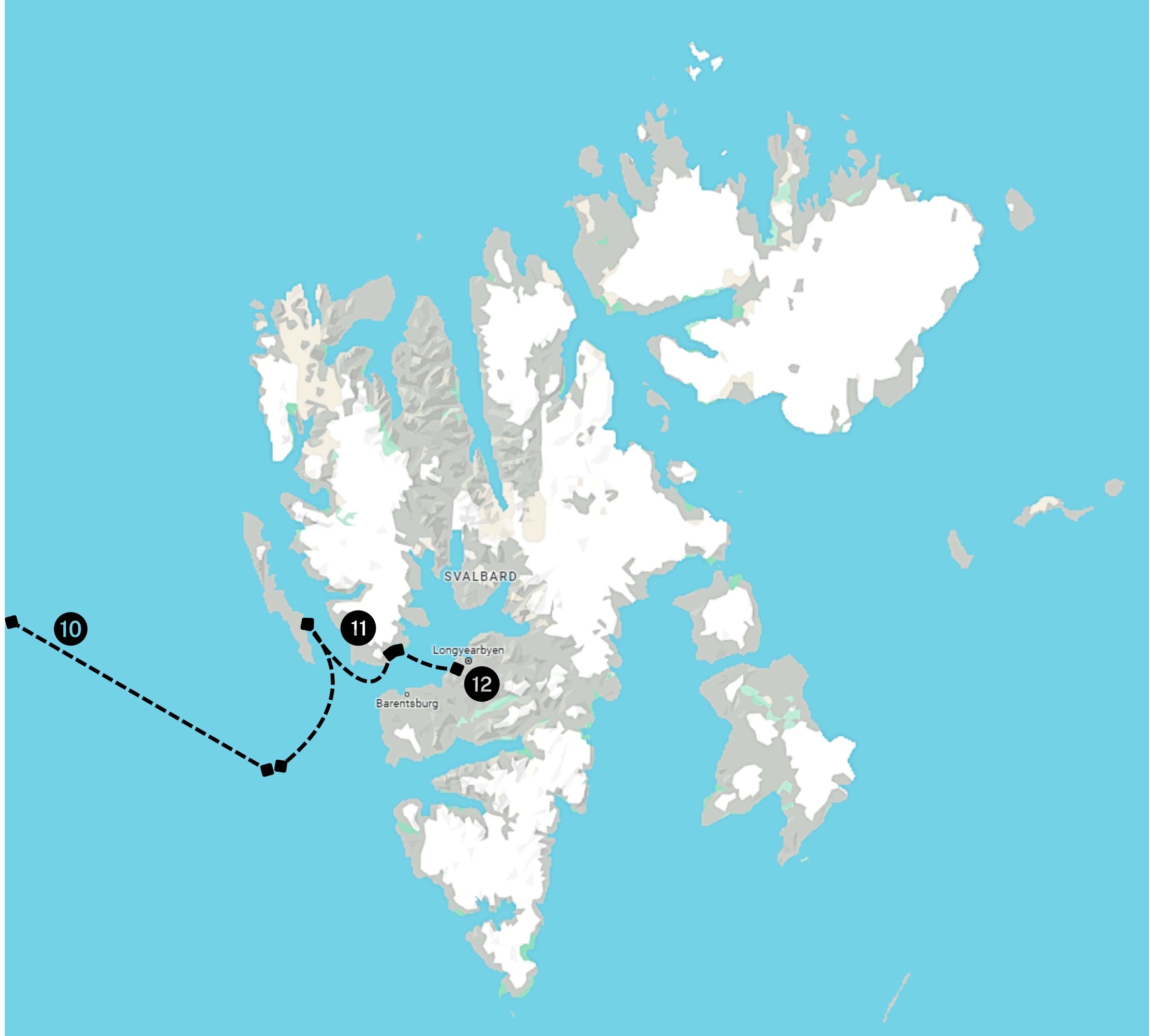


Trip map

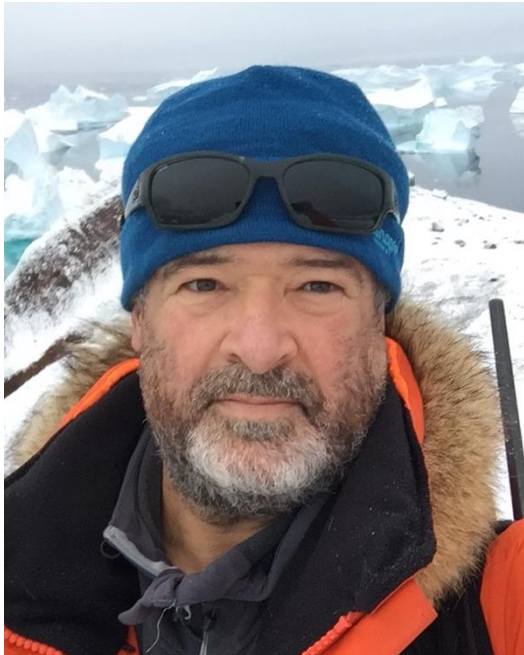
- Day 1: Leave Vlissingen
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- Day 5: At sea to Jan Mayen
- Day 6: At sea to Jan Mayen
- Day 7: Jan Mayen
- Day 8: At sea to pack ice
- Day 9: Pack ice
- Day 10: At sea to Svalbard
- Day 11: Poolepynten & Ymerbukta
- Day 12: Longyearbyen







Jan Belgers - Expedition Leader



Jan Belgers, from the Netherlands, has been working as a professional outdoor guide and expedition leader in the Polar regions for many years now. Travelling and guiding in wildernesses all over the world are his passion. His work as a guide brought him from the high mountain ranges of the Himalayas and Andes to the extreme latitudes of Spitsbergen and Antarctica.

His first experience with the Polar Regions was in 1990 when he joined a scientific expedition from Iceland to Kapp Farvell in Greenland for the “World Ocean Circulation Experiment” (WOCE). In 1992 he joined the “Winter Weddell Gyre Study” (WWGS) with the German scientific icebreaker Polarstern into the remote Weddell Sea, in the Antarctic and wintered there. During these expeditions Jan got bitten by the Polar Bug and therefore he has been returning to the Polar regions frequently, joining in more than 180 Polar expeditions.

Jan's professional background is marine ecology, but he quitted science a long time ago. Since 1998 he works full-time as a professional guide and expedition leader for Oceanwide Expeditions, in the high northern and southern latitudes.

Jan is a keen nature and outdoor enthusiast and feels at home on the sea, due to his background in marine biology. He lectures on natural history, biology and polar history and is a polar literature fanatic.

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 an 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.

Paolo Bellezze – Expedition Guide



Born in Argentina (Dec 80') and raised in Italy, Paolo finally moved to Scotland where he settled in 2006. Nowadays, when not at sea, he splits his time between Argentina and Scotland.

Before expedition cruises Paolo spent 12 years working shoreside in merchant shipping. He was a Product Manager for a Norwegian company developing Voyage Planning and Marine Weather Forecasting Systems for merchant ships.

He also started Paragliding at the age of 14 and has been very involved in the sport as a school owner instructing both beginners and advanced courses for over 20 years. When not paragliding, Paolo likes to sea kayak and he mixes Field Guide with Kayak Guide roles onboard.

In 2021 he started working full time in expedition cruises, since then he has guide in several expeditions such as Antarctica, South Georgia, Falklands, Greenland West coast, Greenland East coast, Iceland, Faroes Islands and British Isles.

Aside from sea kayaking and flying he is into hiking, motorbikes and spending time with friends. He is passionate about polar regions and sharing the experience with our guests.

“Happiness is only real when shared” (Chris McCandless)

Languages: English, Spanish, Italian.

Michelle van Dijk – Assistant Expedition Leader



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 home base 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 also lived in Sweden & Iceland.

Her first visit of 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 and recently she published a book about Sjef van Dongen, who took part in the rescue operation after Nobile's airship crashed in 1928.

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

Koen Hoekemeijer – Expedition Guide



Koen Hoekemeijer was born in 1974 in The Netherlands. When it comes to nature and wildlife Koen was quite a late bloomer as he had always been more into nightlife and sunny beaches. But that all changed when he discovered his passion for wildlife and photography in 2009 in Costa Rica. It was during this trip that Koen saw his first humpback whales and he fell in love with them instantly. Not only did it make him eager to see more and different types of whales in locations all over the world, but he also wanted to learn to take better photos of these amazing creatures. And with the love for whales

and photography, came a broader passion for all sorts of wildlife.

Since that memorable vacation in 2009, Koen has been travelling the planet to see and photograph the world's most beautiful places. Usually from boats, jeeps or simply face down in the mud, but since 2016 also underwater. Snorkeling in the presence of whales and orcas is bringing Koen pure happiness.

Among his favourite animals are whales, orcas, penguins, tigers and jaguars. But in between safaris, he also likes to do street photography and capture life and portraits of people all over the world.

Koen believes that travelling does not only enrich your life, it also makes you more humble, more appreciative and it provides new levels of perspective and understanding. Koen has won the prestigious WWF Frans Lanting Photo contest, and in 2020 he won the Ellen Fitzgibbon Memorial Photography competition. It's Koen's dream to one day have a Vizsla dog and own a small cabin somewhere in northern Norway surrounded by snow and trees ;).

Matthias Kopp – Expedition Guide



Matthias live most of the year in Thuringia/ Germany. After school he started an apprenticeship to become a wholesale dealer but decided after a couple of years settled work right next to the home village, to do a great step in direction uncertainty. He started studying biology at the University in Jena. Matthias' main interests were Ecology and Ornithology. He wrote a diploma thesis about the breeding biology of Antarctic Skuas in the area of the Antarctic Peninsula. But also after that degree,

Matthias kept on studying those impressive animals for a couple of years. While studying both, his interest and his network brought Matthias all over the world. Thereby most impressive for him were the Polar Regions. Matthias stayed for his studies with the Skuas in total 5 summer seasons at Antarctic bases and meanwhile 10 seasons in the high Arctic as a Tour guide onboard vessels.

Currently Matthias is predominantly settled, based again in the village of his childhood, but now with wife, 3 young girls, 2 cats, a couple of bee colonies and a wide-ranging garden, who all need him. However, his wife knows that for Matthias the high summer in Germany is much too warm. For that reason, he is together with you in the high north – also to escape the heat.

Tiphanie May - Expedition Guide



Tiphanie is an 8th generation Falkland Islander living in Stanley. She was raised on a small group of islands called Speedwell Island Group, owned and worked by her parents as a sheep farm and family crab business.

Tiph was raised surrounded by Falkland's wildlife with her family island boasting rookeries of Magellanic penguins, Gentoo penguins as well as several other breeding birds. The islands also include haul outs of South American sealions and elephant seals. Surrounded by all this wildlife it was of no surprise that she found nature

fascinating. From the penguin couple that lived under her house to the wonderful variety of creatures found in the crab pots, marine life was a theme. This led to her to travel to the UK at 16 to study to be a marine biologist.

Tiph spent 6 years in the UK studying to get her BSc (HONS) Marine Biology and MSc in Marine Biology. Using her holidays to volunteer in the Falklands for various conservation projects to gain experience. Upon completing her studies, she joined the Government Fisheries Department, spending 200 days per year at sea monitoring seabird activity and collecting research material. The sea has been a big part of her life, from a young age she worked to haul crab pots with her father's boat. Later she went on to work for an experimental sustainable fish farm which allowed her to get her RYA qualifications in Power Boat. Tiph currently works full time operating a small boat in the Falklands.

Tiphanie started working in the tourist industry at the age of 23. Having grown up with no roads her whole life, 4X4 tour driving just made sense. Tiph has worked to provide a variety of tours such as hiking, 4X4 and penguin colony visits. In 2018, Tiphanie was offered the amazing opportunity to go to Antarctica and South Georgia with Oceanwide as guide. She fell in love with the scale of the landscape and has never looked back.

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!

Bastiaan van Nieuwenhuizen-

Ships Doctor



Bastiaan is 38 years old and lives with his wife and two children in Middelburg in the Netherlands. His son David is 6 years old, and his daughter Emily is 2.

In 2013 he got his medical degree in Leiden and since then worked 2 years as a UCI doctor and 8 months as a resident at the cardiac surgery department before he entered the 3-year GP training in Amsterdam. During his training as a GP he worked at multiple GP-practices in the Netherlands, as well as the paediatric department at the Amsterdam hospital “Slotervaart”, the psychiatric ward of the Zaandam

correctional facility and the hospice “Bardo” in Hoofddorp which offers end-of-life care to terminal patients.

Currently Bastiaan runs his own GP-practice of 10.000 patients in Oost-Souburg in Zeeland. In his practice he strives to provide human centred care for all residents of Oost-Souburg and Ritthem. He loves the outdoors and the freedom nature provides. Bastiaan grew up in the coastal town of Scheveningen where he developed a special connection with the sea.

Bastiaan will be happy to provide assistance with all your medical needs and questions.



DAILY PROGRAM

Welcome aboard!

Day 1, Sunday, May 26 **Embarkation Vlissingen**

16.00 hrs Embarkation. Once you have found your cabin, please feel free to explore the ship. First check if you found all your luggage in your cabin and if not, inform the reception.

Tea, coffee, and some snacks are available in the observation lounge (deck 5)

+/-17.00 When all are on board, first meeting in the Observation Lounge on deck 5. Introduction to the ship & mandatory Safety and Lifeboat Drill.

18.00 Departure! We are leaving the pier in Vlissingen. Please stay off the bridge during the departure and while we are sailing out of the port in Vlissingen. It will be announced when the bridge will be open for visitors.

19.00 Dinner buffet is ready in the Dining Room. Enjoy your meal.

+/-20.00 Welcome meeting in the Lounge/Bar – on deck 5. Have a toast with the captain, learn to know your expedition guides and hear about our plans.

Soon after departure from Vlissingen we enter the North Sea. It will take us about one and a half day to reach our first destination, Aberdeen in Scotland. It is about 400 Nautical Miles from Vlissingen to Aberdeen (1 nm. is around 1.9 kilometres so about 750 km.). We plan to arrive there on Tuesday morning, May 28.

Please note that tonight we will be sailing into the open sea. Take your seasickness medication before you feel the movements of the vessel. Make sure that all your belongings are put away safely and that doors and drawers in your cabin are tightly closed. Walk slowly on the ship, always use one hand for yourself and one for the ship and beware of your fingers because of doors jamming!



DAILY PROGRAM

Day 2, Monday, May 27

At Sea

- 07.30 Wake-up call
- 08.00 – 09.00 Breakfast buffet in the dining room.
- 10.00 Lecture in the observation lounge by Koen: 10 tips to improve your wildlife photography.
- 12.30 Lunch buffet
- 14.30 Zodiac briefing in the observation lounge.
After the briefing we will hand out rubber boots. You will be called deck by deck to the boot room on deck 3. Take thick socks with you to find the good size of boots!
- 16.00 Lecture by Matthias: Seabirds
- 18.15 Recap and briefing in the bar with information on tomorrow's plans in Aberdeen. This briefing is compulsory for everyone!
- 19.00 Dinner

Today we will be the whole day on the open sea. It is about 400 Nautical Miles from Vlissingen to Aberdeen (1 nm. is around 1.9 kilometres so about 750 km.). We plan to arrive there on Tuesday, May 28.

When special wildlife is seen, we will announce this through the intercom. Also, during lectures, we will make announcements and when needed, pause a lecture so everybody has the chance to go outside.

Remember: walk slowly on the ship, never rush. Keep one hand for yourself, and at least one hand for the ship. Shut all doors firmly!



DAILY PROGRAM

Day 3, Tuesday, May 28

Aberdeen

Tonight, the night between May 27 and 28, we will change the time on the ship. We will change to British time: at 03:00 o'clock tonight the clock will go one hour backwards, instead of 03:00 it will become 02:00. Therefore, we will have 1 extra hour of sleep!

02.00	Time Change (-1 h.)
07.00	Wake-up call
07.30 – 08.30	Breakfast. Do not forget to prepare your packed lunch.
± 07.00	Pilot Station
± 08.00	Arrival Aberdeen. Customs come on board.
± 09.00	Leaving the ship - bus tour starts.
± 17.00	Back at the ship.
18.00	Departure from Aberdeen and sailing to Foula. Please stay off the bridge during the departure and while we are sailing out of port. It will be announced when the bridge will be open for visitors.
19.00	Dinner
+/-21.00	Welcome meeting (Only for the passengers that embarked today in Aberdeen) in the dining room (deck 3). Here you will meet the expedition team, hear about our plans, and have the zodiac safety briefing. After this meeting we will hand out the rubber boots (wellies). Take thick socks with you to find the right size.

Today we will visit Aberdeen. We expect to arrive there around 08.00. The busses for the tours will be ready in the harbour in the morning at 08.30 and plan to be back at the ship at 17.00. Make sure you have been cleared by customs before you go off the ship and do not forget to take your passport with you when you go ashore. On the pier we are not allowed to wander of on our own, we need to be accompanied by officials who will walk us to the bus.

The ship needs to depart at 19.00 to reach the island of Foula in time so please be on the ship not later than 17.00. It is about 188 nm. from Aberdeen to Foula and we plan to arrive there tomorrow around noon, Wednesday, May 29.



DAILY PROGRAM

Day 4, Wednesday May 29

The Shetlands: Foula

- 07.00 Wake-up call
- 07.30 – 08.30 Breakfast. Please prepare your packed lunch during your breakfast
- 09.00 Zodiac briefing and information on our landing on Foula.
- +/- 13.00 Landing by zodiac on Foula (lifejacket, rubber boots!)
- 16.00 – 18.00 Zodiac shuttle service back to the ship
- 18.00 Last zodiac back to the ship
Departure and sailing towards Jan Mayen
- 18.30 Recap in the bar
- 19.00 Dinner.

Today we will visit Foula, one of Scotland's most remote inhabited islands. In the morning, we will land by zodiac on the east side of the island, at the hamlet of Ham. The highlights of Foula are the bird-cliffs and seabirds, such as the Puffins. It will be possible to visit the school where there is a toilet and where coffee and tea will be available and where some souvenirs are for sale. You can wander around on your own or join the walk to the north.

After Foula we continue our voyage towards Jan Mayen. It is about 700 nm or 1300 km. to Jan Mayen, which will take us about two and a half days.



DAILY PROGRAM

Day 5, Thursday, May 30

At sea to Jan Mayen (day 1)

Tomorrow during the daytime, on Thursday May 30, we will change the time on the ship. We will change back to Middle European Time. During lunch, at 12:30 the clock will go one hour forward. Instead of 12:30 it will become 13:30.

- 07.30 Wake-up call
- 08.00 – 09.00 Breakfast buffet in the dining room.
- 10.00 Lecture by Eduardo: Eternal darkness, exploration of the bottom of the ocean.
- 12.30 Lunch buffet
At 12.30 we will change time!
- 14.30 Lecture by Michelle: Whale identification.
- 16.30 Lecture by Tiphonie: Whale adaptations.
- 18.30 Recap in the bar
- 19.00 Dinner

Today we will be for the whole day on the open sea, the first of the two days. It is about 700 nautical miles, or 1300 kilometres to Jan Mayen and it will take us two and a half days to reach this remote island. We expect to arrive there on Saturday morning, June 1.



DAILY PROGRAM

Day 6, Friday, May 31 **At sea to Jan Mayen (day 2)**

Sometime in the early morning we will cross the Arctic Circle (66° 33' 41.410" N)

- 07.30 Wake-up call
- 08.00 – 09.00 Breakfast buffet in the dining room.
- 10.00 Lecture by Eduardo: How Navigation works; Einstein, Clocks and GPS
- 12.30 Lunch buffet
- 14.30 Lecture by Michelle: Early Whaling history
- 16.00 Lecture by Tiphanie: Introduction to Jan Mayen
- 18.30 Recap in the bar with information on our landing on Jan Mayen. Please all attend this meeting!
- 19.00 Dinner

Today we will be for another whole day on the open ocean. It is about 700 nautical miles, or 1300 kilometres to Jan Mayen and it will take us two and a half days to reach this remote island. We expect to arrive there on Saturday morning, June 1.



DAILY PROGRAM

Day 7, Saturday, June 1

Jan Mayen

06.00 – 07.00 Approach to an interesting wildlife area, close to Jan Mayen

07.00 Wake-up call
Pastry for breakfast in the Lounge

10.00 Brunch

TBA Landing by zodiac in Kvalrossbukta

TBA Last zodiac back to the ship

18.30 Dinner buffet

Today we expect to reach Jan Mayen. In the early morning, we sail through an area where we often find whales. As the topography of the sea bottom allows biological up-welling, it provides nutrients for phytoplankton and so food for whales. Be on the lookout!

We plan to arrive at the southwest side of Jan Mayen around 07.00. Then the ship will sail along the spectacular west coast of the island to Kvalrossbukta. Here we plan to land by Zodiac after the brunch. The exact time will be announced.

The landing can only be carried out under favourable conditions. In case of too much wind or waves on the gangway or beach, the landing will be cancelled. Cancellation can happen at the last moment, or even during the landing operations!

TBA = To Be Announced



DAILY PROGRAM

Day 8, Sunday, June 2 **At sea to the pack ice**

07.30	Wake-up call
08.00 – 09.00	Breakfast
10.00	Lecture by Michelle: Polar Bears
12.30	Lunch
14.30	Lecture by Eduardo: Climate Change
TBA	Sometime later in the afternoon or evening we hope to reach the pack ice edge.
18.30	Recap
19.00	Dinner

Today we will be on the open ocean. It is about 300 nautical miles, or 555 kilometres to the pack-ice edge. But bear in mind, the pack-ice is not stationary, and its limits change all the time. It normally takes us a full day to reach the first ice, but as we left Jan Mayen early, we might reach the edge already today, sometime in the afternoon or evening.



DAILY PROGRAM

Day 9, Monday, June 3

The Pack Ice

07.30 Wake-up call

08.00 – 09.00 Breakfast

12.30 Lunch

18.30 Recap

19.00 Dinner

Sometime in the evening we need to leave the ice and start sailing towards Spitsbergen.

Today we plan to stay in and around the pack-ice for the whole day and evening.

Life on the pack-ice has an uneven distribution, it is very patchy. Sometimes there is little life, and then suddenly a lot. We therefore will be flexible in our approach. We might go out of the ice again to find a different spot where we hope to find more animals.

Be on the lookout, the more we all look, the more we will see. Whales are often swimming along the pack ice edge, and seals might be resting on ice flows. With some luck we might even meet the King of the Arctic, the Polar Bear.

We have not planned any lectures but could announce one if there is a good reason, such as the occurrence of fog.

Sometime during the evening, we will leave the pack ice and set course to Spitsbergen, where we plan to arrive on Wednesday morning, June 5.



DAILY PROGRAM

Day 10, Tuesday, June 4 **At Sea towards Spitsbergen**

- 07.30 Wake-up call
- 08.00 – 09.00 Breakfast
- 10.00 Polar Bear safety briefing.
The briefing will be followed by a lecture: A Brief History of Spitsbergen.
- 12.30 Lunch
- 14.30 Lecture: TBA
- 16.30 Lecture by Paolo: A Brief History of North Pole Exploration.
- 18.30 Recap in the bar.
- 19.00 Dinner.

Unfortunately, we had to leave the ice during the evening, and we had to start sailing towards Spitsbergen. It is still more than 250 nautical miles to Poolepynten, near the entrance of Isfjorden. We plan to arrive there on Wednesday morning, June 5.



DAILY PROGRAM

Day 11, Wednesday, June 5

Spitsbergen

-
- | | |
|---------------|---|
| 07.00 | Wake-up call |
| 07.30 – 08.30 | Breakfast |
| +/- 09.00 | Landing by zodiac at Poolepynten. |
| 11.30 | Last zodiac back |
| 12.30 | Lunch. During lunch, please make a choice from the evening menu and pre-order the drinks you might like to have in the evening! |
| 14.00 | Short meeting in the lounge, with information on the zodiac cruise. |
| +/-15.30 | Zodiac cruise in Ymerbukta |
| 18.00 | Last zodiac back |
| 18.30 | Farewell meeting in the lounge |
| 19.30 | Dinner. We have a plated service for the last dinner. Please be on time! |

Today will be our last expedition day. In the morning, we will land at Poolepynten, which is located on the large island of Prins Karls Forland. We hope to see Walruses here, that often haul out on the beach. We land in three groups. Please sign up on one of the three lists at the reception.

In the afternoon, we plan to make a zodiac cruise near the glacier front of Esmarkbreen, in Ymerbukta. In this beautiful bay often, interesting birds are seen.

After the Zodiac cruise we would like to invite you all for a farewell drink in the bar.

The ship will proceed towards Longyearbyen, where we plan to arrive during the night.



DAILY PROGRAM

Day 12, Thursday, June 6 **Disembarkation Longyearbyen**

07.00 Wake-up call

07.30 Breakfast

For passengers that leave the ship, please put your heavy luggage in the corridor near your cabin before breakfast, at the latest at 7.30. The crew and staff will carry the luggage to the pier.

Passengers that stay on board, please keep your luggage in your cabin, do not put it in the corridor.

Please leave your keycard holder at reception.

09.00 Time to say goodbye! All passengers leave the ship.

Buses have been arranged to take you to Longyearbyen or the airport.

- For passengers flying today, check that you have put the blue label on your luggage, before you put it in the corridor. On the pier, check that all your luggage is there. You can leave your luggage on the pier; it will be picked up at the pier by a luggage truck and taken to the airport.
A bus will drive you to the town center, near the Svalbard Butikken. In the afternoon, at 13.00, the bus will pick you up again at the Svalbard Butikken and take you to the airport. Here you need to pick up your luggage outside the building.
- Passengers on other flights or with a hotel, make sure you take your luggage from the pier and take it on the bus. You will be taken to the town center, near the Svalbard Butikken.

Dear passengers, we enjoyed having you on board. Have a nice and safe journey home. Hopefully we meet again somewhere, sometime, in the Polar regions!

Farewell!