

NORTH SPITSBERGEN EXPLORER

Versatile Landscape, Sea Ice and Wildlife

Longyearbyen - Longyearbyen

3rd June - 10th June 2025

On board m/v Plancius



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



Captain Artur lakovlev (Russia)

and his international crew of 50 sailors

Chief Officer: Don Buren [Netherlands]

Second Officer: Giovanie Simene [Philippines]

Third Officer: Aleksandrs Spiridonovs [Lathvia]
Hotel Manager: Oleksandr Lyebyedyev [Ukraine]

Asst. Hotel Manager: Victoria Bridgwood [UK]
Head Chef: Bawa Gaurav [India]

Sous Chef: Oleksii Shvets [Ukraine]

Ships doctor: Bastiaan Cornelis Van [Netherlands]

Expedition Leader: Jan Belgers [Netherlands]

Asst. Expedition Leader: Eduardo Rubio Herrera [Guatemala]

Expedition Guide: Andrew Crowder [UK]

Expedition Guide: Koen Hoekemeijer [Netherlands]

Expedition Guide: Mark Whiffin [UK]
Expedition Guide: Marco Rosso [Italy]

Expedition Guide: Christophe Gouraud [France]

Expedition Guide: Werner Kruse [South Africa]

WELCOMES YOU ON BOARD!



Day 12 - Tuesday, June 3. Longyearbyen, Embarkation

20h00 GPS Position: 78°12.2'N / 004°17.8'E

Wind: NE-4 • Sea: Calm • Weather: Part. Cloudy • T Air : 3°C • T Sea : 4°C

The air buzzed with excitement as passengers gathered at the edge of the world—Longyearbyen, nestled in the stark, stunning wilderness of Svalbard. The sun hung high in a clear Arctic sky, casting brilliant reflections off the icy fjords. It was a rare sunny day, and the light made everything shimmer: snow-dusted mountains, the deep blue water, and the eager eyes of adventurers boarding the zodiacs.



The ride out to *M/V Plancius* was exhilarating. The zodiac skimmed over the choppy water, rising and falling with each swell as it made its way from the jetty in Longyearbyen toward the ship anchored just offshore. Sunlight sparkled off the sea, turning each spray of saltwater into a burst of light. Passengers clutched the ropes and grinned into the wind, their cheeks stung by the cold and the thrill. Behind them, the colorful buildings of Longyearbyen faded into the dramatic, snow-streaked mountains, while ahead, the deep blue silhouette of *M/V Plancius* grew larger—steadfast and waiting, ready to carry them into the Arctic wilderness.

Once on board we had the opportunity to familiarize ourselves with the ship's layout—its winding corridors, cozy cabins, and the various decks that would soon become our floating home. Friendly crew members and expedition staff, always smiling and welcoming, were quick to introduce themselves, offering help and answering questions as we explored.

Soon, we gathered in the panoramic lounge, its large windows offering sweeping views of the surrounding Arctic seascape. There, we attended the mandatory safety drill, followed by an informative presentation by our Expedition Leader Jan, outlining the voyage ahead—our route, the planned landings, and what to expect in the coming days.





Afterwards, we headed to the dining room for our first dinner on board. The atmosphere was warm and lively, with the hum of conversation and clinking cutlery filling the space. Over a delicious meal, we began to settle in, bonding with fellow passengers and sharing the growing anticipation of the journey into the Northern area of the Svalbard archipelago.

Day 2 - Wednesday, June 4. Smeerenburgfjorden and Hamiltonbukta

12h00 GPS Position: 79°58.6'N / 011°20.5'E

Wind: SE-4 • Sea: Calm • Weather: Clear Sky • T Air : 3°C • T Sea : 4°C

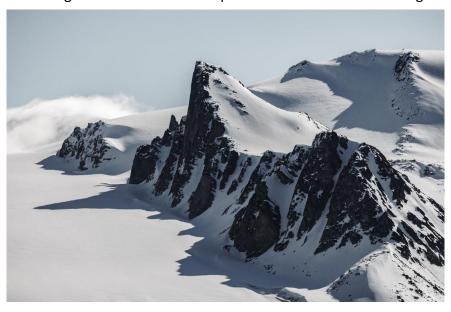
Our first full day of expedition cruising in the Arctic! And what a beautiful scene to greet us – sunshine, blue skies and sea and the spectacular, snow covered mountains of the north-east coast of Spitzbergen on our starboard side. We soaked it all in before heading for breakfast, after which we gathered in the lounge to receive our mandatory for zodiac and polar bear safety. Both are absolutely essential and as we listened carefully it became clear, if we hadn't realised fully before, just why they call this expedition cruising. We were truly in the arctic and its not a theme park!





After this we were able to relax whilst Plancius transported us into Smeerenburgfjorden. As we turned into the fjord from the open sea a fabulous vista opened out in front of us. Beautiful calm, blue water reflecting the snow covered mountains on either side and, at the far end, the majestic glacier itself. We slowly made our way in with everyone out on deck, taking the scenery and wildlife. In the water we spotted Brunnich's Guillemots, Atlantinc Puffins and Common Eiders, joined by a relaxed Harbour Seal that came close to the ship at one point. An Arctic Skua was seen sitting on a piece of ice on the port side with many Arctic Terns doing the same on the starboard side of the ship. A Lesser Black-backed Gull of the sub-species intermedius was a good find for the birders. We then sailed through the channel to Smeerengburg itself, an old whaling station on the end of spit of land. Several centuries ago it

was a hive of activity with up to 300 men working there during the arctic summer, catching whales and walrus and rendering the carcasses to extract the oil from the blubber, which was then distributed, sold and widely used in western Europe.





We dragged ourselves and went down to an excellent lunch whilst we sailed to our afternoon of destination of Raudfjorden. By the time we got to Hamiltonbukta by mid-afternoon the weather had changed significantly. The clear blue skies had become leaden with dark clouds which, of course, hid the sun. The wind was brisk and the sea a lot more lively than the flat calm of this morning. Again, we were reminded that this is the arctic. Our first (proper) zodiac cruise was certainly a learning experience; despite the best efforts of our experienced boathandlers it was difficult to stay completely dry from the spray from the bow and staying warm was a luxury for those who knew what to expect. For the future, the rest of us learned quickly!! However, we all had the consolation of a warm ship and a hot shower on our return.



At recap, Jan told us the plans for this evening of a ships cruise in Raudfjorden, looking for wildlife on the glacier front. He also produced our first Plan B for tomorrow; thick ice meant that our planned landing at Texas Bar was not possible and we would head to Mushamna to assess the conditions for a possible hike in the snow. So to dinner and a walk on deck to view the amazing scenery. *Plancius* had moved deeper into the southern part of Raudifjorden and with good reason since eventually a small white-yellow creamy dot was spotted by the bridge and some of us walking from east to west along the fast ice: the platform of sea ice fasten on land that was still present at the beginning of the summer.



Our first polar bear, right after at the end of our first day up in the far north of the Svalbard archipelago. Despite being from a considerable distance, yet it was a magical moment, seen an apex predator in its natural habitat. The scene was incredible with the snow capped mountains, the reflective shelf of sea ice connecting two sides of the bay and the bear walking, galloping, rolling, sniffing, diving into a hole in the ice, hauling himself out, then resting again and so forth. A very active behaviour that we respectfully observed from a good distance with binoculars and scopes.



Day 3 - Thursday, June 5. Mushamna and Liefdefjorden

12h00 GPS Position: 79°40.2'N / 014°09.9'E

Wind: NE-2 • Sea: Calm • Weather: Overcast • T Air : 3°C • T Sea : 2°C

Arrival at Mushamna brought a quiet Arctic welcome — snowflakes drifting gently through a veil of fog. As the sun began to burn off the fog, the outline of the cabins gradually emerged, their silhouettes taking shape against the softening light. Behind them, the mountain landscape revealed itself, streaked with exposed rock that resembled the stripes of a tiger.

Once ashore, the expedition split into three groups for a snow excursion: sportive, medium-paced, and leisurely. Along the shoreline, Purple Sandpipers flitted nimbly between patches of exposed beach and snow-dusted stones.





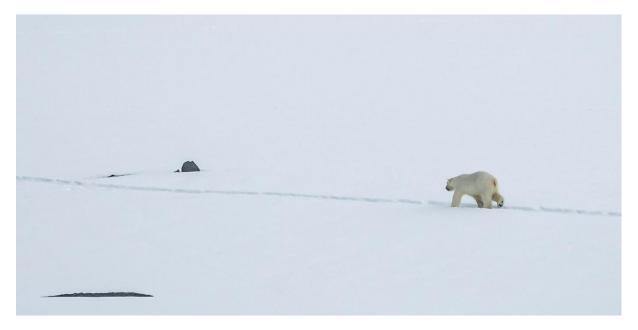


Nestled on the eastern shore of Woodfjorden, Mushamna is more than just a cabin — it stands as a symbol of Arctic resilience. Built in 1987 by trapper Reidar Hovelsrud using driftwood, it remains the largest trapper's cabin in northern Svalbard. Today, it's maintained by the Governor of Svalbard and serves as a seasonal base for overwintering trappers and visiting researchers. Around the site, fresh reindeer tracks

crisscrossed the snow, while old polar bear prints hinted at past activity. The morning's soundtrack was provided by singing Snow Buntings, their cheerful calls echoing across the tundra. Arctic Terns, newly returned from their epic migrations, perched watchfully around the cabins, their sharp eyes tracking every movement.

Just twenty minutes after our return to the ship, excitement rippled through the ship - a Polar Bear was spotted strolling along the shoreline. We watched in silence as it sniffed the air, slowly following our snowshoe tracks toward the cabins. Two polar bear encounters in as many days — can our streak of Arctic luck continue?





Later in the afternoon, we set out on a Zodiac cruise through the icy waters of Liefdefjorden. The ice was alive with wildlife: groups of Brünnich's Guillemots displaying on the floes, while both Brünnich's and Black Guillemots fished in open water. We were also treated to close encounters with feeding Minke Whales along the ice edge and some fantastic views of Reindeer along the shoreline. Cameras clicked nonstop as we soaked in the spectacle, reluctantly returning to the ship our cruise continued onward.



The plan for the following day was presented by Expedition Leader Jan, followed by Koen's tips to improve photographic skills and Werner quiz of North vs Sout Then species. dinner was served while M/V**Plancius**

sailed north towards the 80 degrees rounding the small island of Moffen, where walruses and many species of birds were seeing flying around and hauling out into this protected sanctuary at the northern tip of Spitsbergen.





Day 4 - Friday, June 6. Alkefjellet and Whalenbergfjorden

12h00 GPS Position: 79°34.1'N / 018°52.9'E

Wind: SE-6 • Sea: Slight • Weather: Snow • T Air: -1°C • T Sea: 1°C

Overnight we sailed east following a parallel trajectory along the northern part of the island of Spitsbergen. Early in the morning, our heading changed towards the east-south south-east aiming to the entrance of the Hinlopen strait. Since it is early in the season, we had fear that the entrance could be covered with sea ice, consequently, our plan-A could be thwarted.



Operating in this area requires endless patience and a good bunch of luck in terms of ice conditions and weather. These last two have the last word over any activity we propose.

As we entered the Hinlopen strait, the conditions were calm and visibility was excellent. However, as the time to wake up the ship



came, visibility dropped and turned against us. When our expedition leader came to the bridge visibility dropped to a few tens of meters, the wind increased to more than 25 knots and snow started to fall. Little we imagined that the forecast was going to be more extreme than expected. We approached our intended site for activities, the imposing area of Alkefjellet - The Cliffs of the Auks. This incredible geological feature made of dolerites, is the place where thousands of birds auks, kittiwakes and various types of gulls among other species of birds nest. As we approached the place we commenced our operations launching our zodiacs. We managed to launch three zodiacs, however as our operation continued conditions deteriorated, visibility reduced and the wind started to gust up to 30 knots. Safety of our operations is of utmost importance for us and knowing that the forecasted wind was due to increase, our Expedition Leader Jan and our Assistant Expedition Leader Eduardo decided to cancel the operation. Hence, zodiacs came back in a choppy sea. We retrieved all passengers from the first three zodiacs back on board and shortly after, we brought all our zodiacs back on board.



We stayed in the area a couple of hours keeping a distance of about one kilometre to the cliff so our ornithologists could enjoy a few views of the cliffs and the nesting birds at least. By midday we relocated our vessel and we started to head towards our next target, Torrellneset. This transit was very pleasant and by 2 in the afternoon we started to see the polar caps as well as the raised beaches of Nordaustlandet. Immediately to our port side, towards East was the Vestfona ice cap showing its smooth-rounded shaped ice.



The landscape turned dramatically. From the jagged peaks we got used to see during the first days of our cruise, to these smooth ice caps and some table-shaped mountains. By 2:00 as we approached Torellneset the South wind that



had been blowing over the last hours pushed large brash ice into the area of our landing site. Both landing possibilities at Torellneset, either in the south or towards the west, were blocked by densely packed brash-ice making zodiac operations impossible. Consequently we decided to reverse our course, and sail back along the Hinlopen strait towards the Wahlenbergfjord.

Named after the Sweedish naturalist Göran Wahlenberg, this vast fjord penetrates 46 kilometres into the eastern part of Nordaustlandet. This is the fifth largest fjord in the Svalbard Archipelago and offers unique views of this desolate-almost alien-landscape. The fjord has a smaller bay, called Palanderbukta, after a Swedish naval officer, Louis Palander. As we entered the main fjord, we could see that half of it was still covered in sea ice; the perfect place to find polar bears. Hence, our naturalist on board, our guides and officers in the bridge, started to comb every corner of the distant fjord. Many seals lying in the ice were soon identified as well as large flocks of birds like guillemots and kittiwakes. An ocasional walrus came to the surface to breath. Scouting with all the instruments on board we could see sings of life in this desolate landscape and soon, Eduardo announced the sight of a distant polar bear in the area of Idunfjellet, exactly between the Idunbreen and Frazerbreen glacier fronts. The bear could be



seen walking in the distance for a while. About half an hour after, another bear was Eduardo spotted. it and announced indeed, far distance, at the base of Zeipelfjellet mountains, a bear could be seen walking slowly among the ice.



This were two telescopic bears that despite their distance, proved that wildlife exist here.



The sun shone for a while making the sight of these bears agreeable in the outer decks. Around 17:30 we left the area of Whalenbergfjord and headed towards the north. In our way out, we pass the island of Gyldénoøyane, where to our surprise we found a third bear lying on the ice! After a careful inspection of this area, we found a fourth bear! Now we think this couple was a mother and a cub, having a break after having a meal. Close to them we identified a carcass from which a few birds were still feeding. This mother and her cub were a bit closer, and gave good sights to all of us.

Day 5 - Saturday, June 7. Northern Svalbard Drifting Pack Ice

12h00 GPS Position: 81°11.9'N / 019°25.3'E

Wind: ENE-6 • Sea: Slight • Weather: Overcast • T Air : -1°C • T Sea : 0°C

After last night's sighting of mother and semi adult cub, we were ready to have a *classic* polar bear on the ice. We woke up seeing the edge of the Arctic pack ice from our windows and soon we would navigate into it. That would be after breakfast as pushing ice floes will cause the ship to shake and make sudden movements which is not so comfortable during the breakfast service. First things first, right?!





After we had filled our bellies, we moved more into the ice and we enjoyed the amazing landscapes that lay ahead of us. In the meantime, many of us were scouting the ice floes for that furry creamy dot. The expedition staff was on the bridge and outside doing the same eager to find us another bear. However, finding a bear in this environment is a true challenge. Despite the landscape being *open*, the ice surfaces aren't flat and it is very easy for a bear to go out of sight. And then there's the infinite distances that require the highest concentration, and more importantly, a big dose of patience.

At one point we reached 81° 18'N and at that moment we were the most northerly civilian ship in the world. That was pretty cool! If the ice we were in would freeze together we could literally have walked towards the North Pole. Maybe not the best idea as it was still a bit more than 900km away, but being out there it felt as if we were almost there. Fantastic!

While scouting the ice, suddenly a Beluga whale surfaced. Unfortunately, it was very brief as the *white whale* submerged immediately leaving us wondering where it could surface again. We didn't find it again, but it was a good sign that more Belugas might be around as they often



travel in bigger groups. That proved to be true as soon after we spotted more Beluga's. In the ice it is hard to give clear and easy directions as to where to look, but it looked like many of us were able to see a glance of the



creamy white whales. Belugas are well adapted to living in between the ice and the lack of having a dorsal fin is one example of that. A dorsal fin would not be practical when swimming right below the surface as it would easily damage their skin and thus evolution took care of it.

Being outside in the cold had made us quite *hungry* so when lunch was called, we made our way to the restaurant for a hot soup and then more delicious food. The galley team had outdone itself once again and we ate more than we had anticipated.

After lunch some of us went for a small nap whereas others joined the expedition team in their search for more wildlife. As time progressed hopes slowly faded away, but the expedition team assured us not to give up as very often we find a bear at the end of the day.

At 16:00 our expedition leader Jan did a presentation on Arctic exploration and some of its heroic expeditioners. Jan talked about Salomon Andrée and his attempt to reach the North Pole by hydrogen balloon. Unfortunately, Salomon's attempt failed and he and his men died after their balloon had crashed. Jan also talked about



famous Norwegian explores Nansen and Roald Amundsen. The latter being the the first person to sail through the North-West Passage, the first man to reach the South Pole and the first to take a transarctic flight across the North Pole.

At 18:30 it was time for our daily recap. After Jan had explained the plans for the day ahead, it was Koen who told us a bit more about the Beluga whale before Edu started his creative recap on why ice often looks blue or greenish. His recap involved many of the expedition team members which made for a highly fun and entertaining way to share with us a scientific explanation for a beautiful nature phenomenon.

The day wasn't over yet. The galley and hotel team had prepared a BBQ dinner, however due to the cold wind many of us decided to enjoy the grilled food inside the warm and cozy dining



room. Some of us were brave enough to sit outside on the back deck, but soon they also made it inside as M/V Plancius' dance captain Prince started showing us his incredible dance moves. And this inspired us to join him instantly.



We didn't find a bear today, but the day had been wonderful. Being in such a remote and unique environment was a wonderful experience and something we would never forget.

Day 6 - Sunday, June 8. Sailing along Svalbard Continental Shelf

12h00 GPS Position: 80°42.6'N / 009°50.3'E

Wind: SE-4 • Sea: Slight • Weather: Overcast • T Air : 2°C • T Sea : 1°C

We woke up this morning to a peaceful scene: the ship gently resting at the edge of the sea ice, surrounded by a vast frozen landscape stretching all the way to the horizon. A quiet, cloudy sky hung above us—not dramatic, not gloomy, just a soft Arctic grey that made everything feel still and timeless. Basically, the perfect setting for sipping coffee in your fleece.



Despite a slightly slower start (last night's BBQ party may or may not have involved an impromptu dance floor), guests rallied surprisingly well. After coffee (or two), spirits were lifted—especially by the promise of wildlife.

We spent the morning navigating

through the sea ice in the northwest corner of Svalbard, scanning the horizon for signs of Arctic fauna. Fulmars, kittiwakes, guillemots and even a few ivory gulls accompanied us. To everyone's delight, hot chocolate was served on the back deck. For those who needed a little extra "boost morale" there was the optional splash of rum!

Just as we were preparing to leave the ice behind and head south, excitement rippled through the decks: *a polar bear had been spotted!*

It was wandering across the ice at its own relaxed pace, occasionally vanishing behind ridges and hummocks of sea which had been pushed up by floes collisions. The mighty bear moved like it had a flair for suspense. It gave us hope by changing direction toward the ship... then, as if remembering it had other plans, it turned and wandered away again. A brief, beautiful encounter—just enough to remind us who really runs the Arctic.





We enjoyed another excellent lunch (honestly, how are we going to go back to normal food after this?). The afternoon brought us a fascinating presentation by Eduardo on extraterrestrial life. From the deep seas to the moons of Saturn and Jupiter, he made space feel just a little closer.

As the *MV Plancius* continued her way south toward more biologically productive waters, the clouds lingered peacefully overhead. The atmosphere was mellow, perfect for settling into the observation lounge for a BBC polar bear documentary—which, it must be said, featured several bears less camera-shy than ours.

The day ended with the daily recap hosted by Jan and the expedition team, followed by satisfying dinner. Later that evening, a few dolphins were spotted. A calm, cloudy, and classic Arctic



day—with just the right amount of surprise, ended.



Day 7 - Monday, June 9. Poolepynten and Alkhornet

12h00 GPS Position: 78°26.5'N / 011°37.4'E

Wind: NE-3 • Sea: Slight • Weather: Overcast • T Air: 6°C • T Sea: 4°C

After a few days sailing in the northern coast of Svalbard, early in the morning M/V *Plancius* moved slowly, easing into Forlandsundet—the narrow channel that separates the island of Spitsbergen from Prins Karls Forland.

Prins Karls Forland rose to the west, a long and slender island fringed with ice and crowned with snow-covered peaks. The island is a protected nature reserve, home to colonies of seabirds, reindeer, and walrus hauled out on sandy shores. Historically, the island holds a quiet place in the early era of Arctic exploration. It was first sighted in 1610 by the English explorer Jonas Poole, during a voyage commissioned by the Muscovy Company in search of whales and new trade routes. He named the island "Prince Charles's Foreland" in honor of the future King Charles I of England.



Later in the morning, divided into small groups, we set foot on the island at Poolepynten, a low-lying sand spit on the eastern side of Prins Karls Forland, named after Jonas Poole himself.

Guided by our team we followed an unmarked path across gravely terrain dotted by drifted wood and from a respectful distance, we observed the small group of Arctic pinnipeds sprawled across the beach. Their massive, tusked bodies piled together like driftwood. Atlantic walruses can weigh over 1,500 kilograms and use their tusks not only for defense but also to haul themselves out of the water and onto ice or shore. Social and often vocal, they grunted



and snorted, occasionally lifting their heads to eye us with mild curiosity. Despite their bulk and awkward gait on land, in the water they are graceful swimmers, perfectly adapted to the icy Arctic seas.



It was hard to picture their underwater lives as watched them doze on the beach. Walruses are expert benthic feeders, using their sensitive whiskers (vibrissae) to detect clams buried in the seafloor. With powerful suction, they can extract the soft parts of a clam without cracking the shell. An adult may eat thousands of clams in a single day, playing a key role in stirring up the seabed and maintaining the balance of the Arctic marine ecosystem.

During lunch time the ship repositioned navigating southeast towards the mouth of Isfjorden and into

Trygghamna.

The shelter waters of this natural harbour used since the XVII century by whalers, was a perfect place for landing and stretching our legs into the tundra still covered with snow patches. Long and middle hikers had the chance to approach the cliffs of Alkhornet, observing

on the way Pink-footed geese, Snowbuntings, some close encounters with Svalbard Reindeers and a couple of Polar foxes. A marvellous way to end our expedition in this remote corner of the Svalbard archipelago.







Back on the ship we gathered for the farewell cocktail. Words of appreciation for the trip were spent by multiple people, including captain Artur and Expedition Leader Jan. After watching the fantastic slide show made by Marco, we had one last dinner before returning our boots and packing our luggage for the next day

Day 8 - Tuesday, June 10. Longyearbyen, Disembarkation

08h00 GPS Position: 78°14.1'N / 015°36.8'E

Wind: E-2 • Sea: Calm • Weather: Overcast • T Air: 3°C • T Sea: 4°C

The day began in the serene stillness of Adventfjorden, where calm seas mirrored the soft morning light. Our ship, Plancius, laid quietly at anchor, marking the peaceful close of our expedition. After enjoying a final breakfast onboard, we packed our bags and made our way to the gangway, ready to step ashore one last time. Farewells were exchanged—with the dedicated crew who had guided us, and the fellow travellers who had become friends.

Our last zodiac ride, across still waters, brought us to the jetty of the northernmost city in the world. Some of us stayed to explore the quiet charm of Longyearbyen, while others prepared for their flights home. As we looked back one last time at Plancius, gently resting in the bay, we reflected on the unforgettable moments shared—and perhaps already began dreaming of future adventures.



Total distance sailed on our voyage: 1005 nm Northernmost position: 81º 18.3'N / 018º 24.8'E

On behalf of Oceanwide Expeditions, the Captain, Crew and Expedition staff would like to thank you for pleasant times, it has been a pleasure travelling with you.







North Spitsbergen Explorer

6-10 June 2025

- MV Plancius -

- 1- Longyearbyen
- 2- Smeerenburgfjorden
- 3- Hamiltonbukta
- 4- Raudfjorden
- 5- Mushamna
- 6- Liefdefjorden
- 7- Moffen
- 8- Alkefjellet
- 9- Torrellneset
- 10- Wahlenbergfjorden
- 11- Sea-ice (Northern most position: 81°18,3 N)
- 12- Sea-ice
- 13- Poolepynten
- 14- Alkhornet

@ Christophe Gourand

Birds and Mammals of Svalbard

English Name	Scientific	3-jun	4-jun	5-jun	6-jun	7-jun	8-jun	9-jun	10-jun
Great Northern Diver	Gavia immer								
Red-throated diver	Gavia stellata	Х						Х	
Northern Fulmar	Fulmarus glacialis	Х	Х	Х	Х	Х	Х	Х	
Northern Gannet	Morus bassanus								
Whooper Swan	Cygnus cygnus								
Bean Goose	Anser fabalis								
Pink-footed Goose	Anser brachyrhynchus		Х	Х				Х	
Barnacle Goose	Branta leucopsis		Х	Х				Х	Х
White-fronted Goose	Anser albifrons								
Greylag Goose	Anser anser								
Brent Goose	Branta bernicla	Х		Х				Х	
Snow Goose	Chen caerulescens								
Eurasian Wigeon	Anas penelope								
Eurasian Teal	Anas crecca								
Mallard	Anas platyrhynchos								
Northern Pintail	Anas acuta								
Tufted Duck	Aythya fuligula								
Common Eider	Somateria mollissima	Х	Х	Х	Х	Х		Х	Х
King Eider	Somateria spectabilis		Х	Х	Х			Х	
Steller's Eider	Polysticta stelleri								
Long-tailed Duck	Clangula hyemalis							Х	
Black Scoter	Melanitta nigra								
Common Goldeneye	Bucephala clangula								
Rock Ptarmigan	Lagopus mutus hyperboreus								Х
Eurasian Oystercatcher	Haematopus ostralegus								
Common Ringed Plover	Charadrius hiaticula							Х	
European Golden Plover	Pluvialis apricaria								
Sanderling	Calidris alba							Х	
Pectoral Sandpiper	Calidris melanotos								
Purple Sandpiper	Calidris maritima		Х	Х	Х			Х	Х
Red Knot	Calidris canutus								
Dunlin	Calidris alpina								
Whimbrel	Numenius phaeopus								

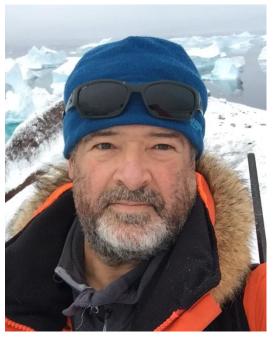
Common Redshank	Tringa totanus								
Ruddy Turnstone	Arenaria interpres						Х	Х	
Grey Phalarope	Phalaropus fulicarius							Х	
Red-necked Phalarope	Phalaropus lobatus								
Pomarine Skua	Stercorarius pomarinus								
Arctic Skua	Stercorarius parasiticus		Х	Х	Х		Х	Х	
Long-tailed Skua	Stercorarius longicaudus								
Great Skua	Stercorarius skua		Х	Х				Х	
Sabine's Gull	Xema sabini			Х					
Black-headed Gull	Larus ridibundus								
Common/Mew Gull	Larus canus								
Glaucous Gull	Larus hyperboreus	Х	Х	Х	Х	Х	Х	Х	Х
Iceland gull	Larus glaucoides								
Herring Gull	Larus argentatus								
Lesser black-backed Gull	Larus fuscus		X						
Great black-backed Gull	Larus marinus								
Black-legged Kittiwake	Rissa tridactyla	Х	Х	Х	Х	Х	Х	Х	Х
Ross' Gull	Rhodostethia rosea								
Ivory Gull	Pagophila eburnea				Х	Х	Х		
Arctic Tern	Sterna paradisaea	Х	Х	Х	Х	Х		Х	Х
Common Guillemot	Uria aalge								
Brunnich's Guillemot	Uria Iomvia	X	X	Х	Х	X	X	Х	
Black Guillemot	Cepphus grylle	Х	Х	Х	Х	Х	Х	Х	Х
Little Auk	Alle alle	Х	Х	Х	Х	Х	Х	Х	
Atlantic Puffin	Fratercula arctica	Х	Х			Х			Х
Barn Swallow	Hirundo rustica								
White Wagtail	Motacilla alba								
Meadow Pipit	Anthus pratensis								
Northern Wheatear	Oenanthe oenanthe								
European Blackbird	Turdus merula								
Snow Bunting	Plectrophenax nivalis	X	Х	Х	Х			Х	Х
Redpoll	Carduelis flammea								
Lapland longspur	Calcarius Iapponicus								
Fieldfare	Turdus pilaris								
Redwing	Turdus iliacus								
Brambling	Fringilla montifringilla								

	<u> </u>				
Gvrfalcon	Falco rusticolus				
Cyriaicon	r aloo raolicolao				

MAMMALS

English	Scientific	3-jun	4-jun	5-jun	6-jun	7-jun	8-jun	9-jun	10-jun
Walrus	Odobenus rosmarus				Х	Х		Х	
Bearded seal	Erignathus barbatus		Х		Х	Х			
Ringed seal	Phoca hispida								
Harp seal	Pagophilus groenlandicus								
Hooded seal	Cystophora cristata								
Common /Harbour seal	Phoca vitulina		Х					Х	
Minke Whale	Balaenoptera acutorostrata			Х		Х			
Sei Whale	Balaenoptera borealis								
Blue Whale	Balaenopentera musculus								
Fin Whale	Balaenoptera physalus								
Humpback Whale	Megaptera novaeangliae								
Bowhead whale	Balaena mysticetus								
Sperm Whale	Physeter macrocephalus								
Narwhal	Monodon monoceros								
Northern Bottlenose Whale	Hyperoodon ampullatus								
Orca (Killer Whale)	Orcinus orca								
White-beaked Dolphin	Lagenorhynchus albirostris						Х		
Beluga	Dephinapterus leucas					Х			
Polar Bear	Ursus maritimus		Х	Х	Х	Х	Х		
Arctic Fox	Alopex lagopus		Х					Х	
Spitsbergen Reindeer	Rangifer tarandus platyrhynchus			Х	Х			Х	
Sibling vole	Microtus rossiaemeridionalis								
Short tailed Vole	Microtus agrestis								

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 therefor 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 – Asst. Exp. Leader



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

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

His interests vary from history of exploration to the intricacies of

astronomy. During the trips he has undertaken, he offer lectures about polar explorers, the science carried out in Antarctica (astronomy in particular), about our Universe, and the mysteries of our ocean's depths, to mention some. At sea, besides being and engaged guide and lecturer, he loves to show constellations to people, pointing out their names and their lore. In every trip he made, he always aim to raise the enthusiasm of guests towards science, and their awareness towards the unique and fragile planet where we live. Born in Guatemala (1978), he speaks English, Spanish and German.

Andrew Crowder – Expedition Guide



Andrew is an experienced naturalist with a life long history of observation, study and sheer enjoyment of wildlife. His interest in natural history started as a young boy watching birds and they remain his first passion. Focusing mainly on Western Palearctic species, he has travelled extensively and accrued a wealth of knowledge. As part of that journey of discovery, he has also developed self-taught skills in wildlife photography.

Andrew has always been drawn to the sea and is a CMAS Class 2/BSAC qualified Advanced Scuba Diver; he has

had the privilege of experiencing incredible marine life which few others get to see. Time spent exploring the underwater world helped spawn his other main interest: cetaceans. Andrew has over twenty years of experience with these amazing animals, undertaking scientific surveys and guiding on cruise ships in UK, European and Polar waters.

Andrew recognizes the powerful emotional reaction in humans when they have amazing wildlife encounters. He uses his knowledge and enthusiasm to help more people share such inspirational experiences and thereby promote the conservation of our precious natural world.

Koen Hoekemeijer – Exp. Guide



Koen Hoekemeijer was born in 1974 in The Netherlands. When it comes to nature and wildlife Koen was guite 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 photos these better of amazing creatures. And with the love for whales

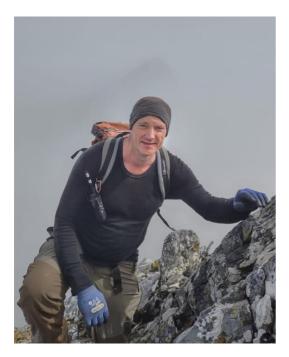
and photography, came a broader passion for all sorts of wildlife.

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;).

Mark Whiffin - Expedition Guide



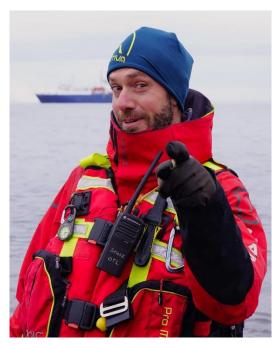
Mark holds a Master's Degree in Conservation Biology and is an ornithologist and birder with extensive field experience. His passion for birds and travelling started from a very young age in East Sussex, England and expanded from there.

After finishing studying at university, he participated in, and led numerous expeditions and scientific research projects to remote areas of the world in search of birds with a particular emphasis on threatened and endemic species.

Mark first visited Antarctica in 2018 employed by the British Antarctic Survey, and subsequently spent five years living and working on Bird Island, South Georgia as a Zoological Field Assistant working with the penguins and petrels. He developed a deep love for the Southern Ocean, its scenery and the birds that call it home, "seeing the first Cape Petrels on any trip always gives a feeling of arriving home".

In his free time Mark enjoys trekking, running or cycling. He is also a keen photographer and videographer who enjoys documenting and sharing his passion for birds, travel and wild places, his images have been used various NGOs, employers, newspapers and online. He looks forward to sharing your expedition with you.

Marco Rosso – Expedition Guide



Marco was born in the region of Prosecco & Tiramisù in Northern Italy. graduated Mechanical in Engineering at the University of Padua, his native city, and subsequently degree achieved master's а "Turbomachinery and Fluid Dynamics" at the Von Karman Institute in Brussels, Belgium.

Currently he is studying Earth Science at Stockholm University, Sweden.

After a few years working in the automotive industry, he decided to embark himself on a new quest. For two

years he backpacked from the tropical forests of Central America, through the snowy peaks of the Andean Cordillera, rolling all the way down to the tip of South America.

The raw and powerful beauty of Patagonia convinced him to swap Mother Nature wonders for mankind artifacts. Fascinated by applied geophysics, he therefore decided to use is deep and broad knowledge in thermodynamics and fluid mechanics to satisfying his innate curiosity, thereby started to study Earth Science.

During the last decade he has been living in Puerto Natale, Chile; leading groups as a trekking guide and tour leader in some of the most beautiful and rugged trails of Patagonia and since a couple of years has started to join expeditions to the Arctic and the Antarctic on board of Oceanwide vessels.

Christophe Gouraud – Exp.Guide

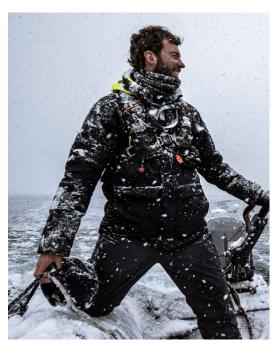


Christophe was born in France and has been passionate about birds ever since he was a child. After spending five years in Canada studying ecology, Christophe travelled to Alaska. He lived on the tiny Middleton Island as a research assistant to study the ecology of seabirds, mainly the Black-legged Kittiwake. He explores polar and tropical regions since 2007 and joined many cruises from Spitsbergen to the Russian Far East, from Antarctica to South Georgia, and from Amazonia to the Seychelles.

Christophe also worked with birds as a biologist field worker in Morocco,

United Arab Emirates and Kazakhstan. Christophe found another way to travel by inventorying collections of birds that have been collected worldwide during the 18th and 19th centuries.

Werner Kruse - Expedition Guide



Werner Kruse is well-seasoned а traveller and an experienced filmmaker, photographer and expedition guide. He has worked on numerous international produced productions and documentaries, including wildlife and expedition documentaries in Africa. His film, The Boy from the Wild, premiered at the Royal Geographic Society in London as well as the Wildlife Conservation Film Festival in New York City. Currently the film is available on Amazon Prime Video.

After completing his studies, he travelled extensively, making documentaries all

over the world. He explored places such as Petra, Machu Picchu, Great Barrier Reef and Rapa Nui, Spitsbergen, Iceland as well as his favourites, the Hawaiian and Tahitian Islands. He is currently based in Cape Town, South Africa, working on TV shows, documentaries, commercials and corporate productions. He frequently travels abroad for various video and photographic assignments.

Werner is extremely passionate about conservation, particularly wildlife and the ocean and supports various environmental causes. His work depicting Gentoo penguins in Antarctica was featured by National Geographic, and his annual return to Antarctica remains a highlight for him. His travels have taken him to 112 countries, enabling him to capture a richly diverse spectrum of images.

Bastiaan van Nieuwenhuizen-Doctor



Bastiaan is 38 years old and lives with his wife and two children in Middelburg in the Netherlands. His son David is 7 years old, and his daughter Emily is 3.

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. Last year was his first year as a ship doctor and the experience left him wanting more.

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



Welcome aboard!

Day 1, Tuesday, June 3 Embarkation Longyearbyen

Your luggage will be delivered to your cabin as soon as possible. Please check to make sure you have received all your luggage!

- * Tea and coffee are always available in the observation lounge bar on deck 5 *
- ±17.15 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 of the Plancius. Please stay off the bridge during these operations.
- ±18.30 Welcome meeting in the observation lounge on deck 5. Have a toast with the captain, learn to know your expedition guides and hear about our plans.
- 19.30 Dinner is served in the dining room (deck 3).
- +/- 21.00 Handing out rubber boots in the boot room (deck 3). We will call you deck by deck.

After dinner, rubber boots will be distributed at the boot room on deck 3. Take thick socks with you to find the good size! You will be called deck by deck.

The first part of the evening we will sail through the large Isfjord towards the open sea. Then we head north, along the outer coast of Spitsbergen, towards the far northwest. We stay on the outside of the long and narrow island of Prins Karls Forland, as the passage between this island and Spitsbergen is too shallow. The total distance will be around 150 nautical miles (1 nm. is around 1,9 kilometres so about 280 km) and it will take us approximately 13 hours to reach our destination: Smeerenburgfjorden.

Please note that tonight we will be sailing into the open sea. Take your seasickness medication before you really 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!





Day 2, Wednesday, June 4 Smeerenburgfjorden - Raudfjorden

07.00	Wake-up call.
07.30	Breakfast buffet in the dining room (Deck 3). When you go to breakfast, check on a paper at the reception, on which departure flight you will be (morning or afternoon), and mark this on the paper. We need this information for the shuttle buses.
08.30	Mandatory meeting in the observation lounge: guidelines, zodiac operations and our plans for today!
09.30	Ships cruise in Smeerenburgfjorden.
12.30	Lunch buffet (deck 3).
14.30	Zodiac cruise in Hamiltonbukta.
18.30	Recap in the bar.
19.00	Dinner is served.
20.30	Ships cruise in Raudfjorden

We expect to arrive in Smeerenburgfjorden, in the northwest of Spitsbergen, in the morning. Here we plan to have a ships cruise in this magnificent fjord, in front of the large Smeerenburgbreen (gletscher).

In the afternoon we have planned a zodiac cruise in Hamiltonbukta, in Raudfjorden. In the bay there are bird-cliffs where large numbers of Kittiwakes and Brünnich's Guillemots nest. Under the cliffs fertile green slopes have developed, where often Reindeer graze and Arctic foxes roam around.

After dinner we planned another ships cruise in Raudfjorden, another majestic fjord. Often whales are spotted in this area.

Late in the evening we will sail out of Raudfjorden and head for Liefdefjorden.





Day 3, Thursday, June 5 Liefdefjorden

07.00	Wake-up call.
07.30	Breakfast.
08.30	Short meeting in the bar on the landing.
09.00	Landing at "Texas Bar"
12.00	Last zodiac back to the ship
13.00	Lunch.
14.30	Zodiac cruise and ships cruise near the ice edge of the fast ice in the fjord.
19.00	Dinner

We plan to spend the whole day in the beautiful Liefdefjorden. This is not only a fjord of outstanding beauty, but it is also a place which has abundant wildlife.

In the morning, we plan to land at "Texas Bar". This area has beautiful landscape and a historic hut that was used by Trappers that hunted for Polar Bears and foxes. We will offer shorter and longer walk. For this, we split up into groups. The keen photographers and botanists will have more time in the leisurely walking group. Please note, once the groups have started, you cannot change anymore!

After lunch, we sail into deeper into the Liefdefjorden. Here we will cruise with the zodiacs near the edge of the fjord ice. Ivory Gulls, Beluga's and Polar Bears are sometimes seen here.

In the evening we head of again, towards the northeast of Spitsbergen.



Day 4, Friday, June 6 Alkefjellet and Torellneset

07.00	Wake-up call.
07.30	Breakfast.
09.00	Zodiac cruise at Alkefjellet.
12.00	Last zodiac back to the ship.
12.30	Lunch.
14.30	Landing at Torellneset
17.30	Last zodiac back to the ship.
18.30	Recap in the bar
19.00	Dinner.

In the morning, we plan to cruise with the zodiacs along the spectacular bird cliff of Alkefjellet (Auk Mountain). Here thousands of Kittiwakes and Guillemot's breed on the steep ice-capped cliffs.

In the afternoon we plan to land at Torellneset, on the second largest island of the Svalbard archipelago, Nordaustlandet. At the beach of this polar desert often walrus haul-out.

After the landing we will sail out of Hinlopen again, and head north, towards the Sjuøyane islands and the pack ice.





Day 5, Saturday, June 7 Sjuøyane – Phippsøya - Pack Ice

07.30 Wake-up call.

08.00 Breakfast.

09.00 PLAN A: We plan to go ashore at Phippsøya, in the Sjuøyane

islands.

12.30 Lunch.

In the afternoon we plan to sail towards the pack ice

18.30 Recap.

19.00 Arctic Dinner!

Today we will reach our northernmost landing at Phippsøya, in the Seven Islands archipelago, north of Nordaustlandet. Here we will be at 81 degrees north, just 540 miles (about 900 kilometres) from the geographic North Pole. Polar Bears inhabit this region, along with walruses and Ivory Gulls.

The island is named after C. J. Phipps, an English navigator who tried to reach the North Pole here in 1773. He only got as far as 80°48'N. One of the members of this expedition was the then just 14 years old Horatio Nelson, who, as the story goes, landed on one of the islands because he wanted to get a Polar bear skin as a present for his parents. He was discovered while fighting a bear. Fortunately, the bear was then killed and that saved Nelson's life and changed European history.

After the landing we will head towards the west, into the pack ice. As we do not know what this will bring us, no further plans have been made so far.





Day 6, Sunday, June 8 Pack ice - the Continental Shelf

Wake-up	call.
	Wake-up

08.00 Breakfast.

We continue following the pack ice edge towards the west.

12.30 Lunch.

Sometime in the afternoon, we will leave the pack-ice and sail south, following the edge of Continental Shelf

18.30 Recap

19.00 Dinner.

During the morning and part of the afternoon, we plan to stay in and around the pack.

Life on the pack-ice has an uneven distribution, it is very patchy. Sometimes there is little life, and then suddenly a lot. We therefor 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, on which also Polar bears roam, in search of the seals.

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

Sometime in the afternoon we need to say goodbye to the pack ice and turn south. We will follow the edge of the Continental Shelf and hope to see more whales there. The edge of the shelf is 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!





Day 7, Monday, June 9 Poolepynten - Alkhornet

07.00	Wake-up call.
07.30	Breakfast buffet.
09.00	Landing at Poolepynten
12.00	Last zodiac back to the ship
12.30	Lunch.

During lunch, you have the possibility to pre-order the drinks you might like to have in the evening! After lunch you will be asked to pay your bar bill at reception.

+/-14.30	Landing at Alkhornet
17.30	Last zodiac back to the ship.
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 check your color (blue, orange, green) on the list in the lounge, and stick to this color during the landing at Poolepynten.

In the afternoon, we plan to land at Alkhornet. Alkhornet, the "Auk Horn", is a huge bird cliff where Guillemots and Kittiwake's breed. Below the cliff there is a lush tundra where reindeer graze and Arctic Foxes roam.

At 18.30 we would like to invite you all for a farewell drink in the lounge.

After dinner we will announce how to deliver the rubber boots back in the boot room at deck 3. You will be called deck by deck.

The ship will proceed towards Longyearbyen, where we plan to arrive in the morning.





Day 8, Tuesday, June 10 Disembarkation - Farewell

07.00 Wake-up call

07.30 Breakfast

All passengers, 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.

Please leave your keycard holder at reception.

As we will be at anchor, we will shuttle you by Zodiac to the pier. Keep your waterproof jacket and trousers out of the luggage, and wear this, with the inflatable life jacket, during the zodiac shuttle!

08.30 Time to say goodbye! All passengers leave the ship by Zodiac.

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

- For passengers flying early today (SK4491), 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 and take it on the bus to the airport.
- Passengers on the afternoon flight (SK4425), put a yellow tag on your luggage. Check your luggage on the pier. The luggage will go into a luggage truck to the airport where you will pick it up before your flight. You will be taken 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 who are going to a hotel in Longyearbyen, 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!

