



North Spitsbergen Basecamp

19th June 2026 – 26th June 2026

On board *m/v Ortelius*



M/V Ortelius was built in 1989 in Gdynia, Poland as a special-purpose research vessel for the Russian Academy of Science. She was originally named “Marina Svetaeva” after a well-known Russian poet. The vessel was purchased by Oceanwide Expeditions in 2011, re-flagged in The Netherlands, and re-named Ortelius. She was extensively re-fitted in 2019 and complies with the latest SOLAS-regulations (Safety Of Life At Sea). *M/V Ortelius* is 91.25 m long, 17.2 m wide and has a maximum draft of 5.4 m. She has ice class UL1 (Equivalent to 1A), 10.5 knots average cruising speed and propulsion is 6 ZL 40/48 SULZER. Ortelius is named after the Dutch cartographer Abraham Ortelius (1527-1598) who published the first modern world atlas, the *Theatrum Orbis Terrarum* (Theatre of the World) in 1570. Her home port is Vlissingen.



Captain Ernesto Barria

[Chile]

and his international crew of 58

Chief Officer:	Don Buren	[The Netherlands]
Second Officer:	Sander Witsenburg	[The Netherlands]
Third Officer:	Ian Vicente	[Philippines]
Chief Engineer:	Andrej Abakumov	[Lithuania]
Second Engineer:	Ionut Daraban	[Romania]
Third Engineer:	Twan Boeije	[The Netherlands]
Chief Electrical Engineer	Stefan Kirov	[Bulgaria]
Hotel Manager:	Volodymir Cherdnychenko	[Ukraine]
Assistant Hotel Manager:	Charlotte Laumen	[The Netherlands]
Head Chef:	Heinz Hacker	[Austria]
Sous Chef:	Edward Nunag	[Philippines]
Sous Chef	Sergiy Sklyarov	[Ukraine]
Bosun:	Eniano Agarin	[Philippines]
Bosun:	Lauren Malatag	[Philippines]
Bartender:	Raquel Queri	[Philippines]
Expedition Leader:	Ali Liddle	[United Kingdom]
Assistant Expedition Leader:	Claudio Ghiglione	[Italy]
Expedition Guide:	Beth Hitchcock	[United Kingdom]
Expedition Guide:	Gabi Kolodko	[Poland]
Expedition Guide:	William Kennedy	[France]
Expedition Guide:	Marco Rosso	[Italy]
Expedition Guide:	Emily Clarke	[United Kingdom]
Expedition Guide:	Werner Kruse	[South Africa]
Expedition Guide:	Enric Sangra	[Spain]
Expedition Guide:	Tom van Hoof	[The Netherlands]
Dive Team Leader:	Henrik Enckell	[Sweden]
Dive Guide:	Sid Paul Dewfall	[Gibraltar]
Dive Guide:	Clara Iachetti	[Argentina]
Dive Guide:	Gonzalo Sabattini	[Argentina]
Kayak Leader	James Bruton	[United Kingdom]
Ship's doctor:	Duncan Gray	[United Kingdom]

WELCOME YOU ON BOARD!

Day 1 – Friday 19th June, Longyearbyen, Embarkation Day

12:00 GPS Position: 78°14.8' N / 015°03.2' E

Wind: SW-23 • Sea: Smooth • Weather: Part. Cloudy • Air Temperature: +3 °C



The day of our departure clouds drifted low over Adventfjorden, at times descending into fog that obscured the landscape and unsettled airport staff, then rising again to reveal the snow-clad peaks across the fjord. While the people of Longyearbyen went about their everyday lives, largely

indifferent to the scenery that surrounded them, we lingered in cafés, strolled along the settlement's pedestrian street, and gazed from hotel windows, gradually acclimating to both the beauty and the harsh realities of the Arctic.

Ortelius was moored at the coal pier — a distant dock you could not even reach on foot, because that is prohibited. Therefore a shuttle was arranged for us, departing from the main pier at 4:00 p.m. — safe, and no need to walk for half an hour.

And there she was, our ship! Standing there beautifully at the pier. The crew was busy, members of the expedition team were hauling our luggage back and forth, and the hotel manager and his lovely assistant were gradually collecting our passports.



The process moved very quickly, so within about a quarter of an hour we were all on board.

Once we had all received the keys to our cabins and made sure that all our suitcases were with us as well, the mandatory part began — the safety briefing, followed by the abandon ship drill. We all gathered in the observation lounge on Deck 6, where a video covering all aspects of safe life on board was shown to us, after which Chief Officer Don addressed us.



Then we were told to return to our cabins and, once the signal was given, take our orange life jackets and come back to the observation lounge.

The alarm sounded, and one of the watch officers addressed us over the loudspeakers,

instructing us to begin the procedure for abandoning the ship. Needless to say, it was also made clear that all of this was taking place purely for training purposes. We were escorted to the lifeboats and then dismissed.

After putting our life jackets back in their place, we went out onto the open decks to watch the crew busily winding up the mooring lines with the winches. The engine roared, Ortelius gently rocked and slowly began to move away from the pier. Right around the corner on a small spit of sand a couple of walrus were waving us goodbye

The journey had begun!

After some time we were invited back into the observation lounge, where refreshments and a glass of champagne awaited each of us. Our hotel manager Vova spoke to us, as did our expedition leader Ali Liddle, and, of course, Captain Ernesto Barria himself.

And so, amid the bustle and in a fairly intense rhythm, the first couple of hours of our stay aboard Ortelius passed. At 7:30 p.m. we were invited to dinner, and after dinner we were given our Muck Boots.

Meanwhile, Ortelius had left Isfjorden and set course north!



Day 2 – Saturday 20th June, Ny London & Ny Ålesund

12:00 GPS Position: 78°57.4'N / 012°02.1'E

Wind: NE-1 • Sea: Glassy • Weather: Clear • Air Temperature: 5°C

Our day began with a gentle wake-up call at 7:15 from our expedition leader, Ali, who informed us of the outside temperature, weather conditions and welcomed us to Ny-London. After breakfast, we gathered in the lounge for the mandatory polar bear safety briefing, which highlighted the importance of safety in the Arctic, the guides carrying rifles, and the protocols in place to protect both guests and of course the polar bears.



We experienced a little bit of swell at the gangway during our first Zodiac embarkation, but equipped with the knowledge of the sailor's grip, it wasn't a problem. Once away from the ship the water was calm for the short ride to shore. After landing, we were offered a choice of long, medium, and leisurely hikes, as well as a photography workshop. Divided into groups, we set off with our guides to enjoy the beautiful sights of our first Arctic

landing. We discovered the history of Ernest Mansfield's old marble mining operation, saw flowers beginning to bloom, encountered Svalbard reindeer, and observed a variety of bird species, including the impressive long-tailed skua. With sunshine and blue skies overhead, it felt like the perfect start to our expedition.

Back on board, we enjoyed a delicious buffet lunch while Ortelius repositioned across the bay to Ny-Ålesund, the world's northernmost settlement. Alongside the quay, we walked ashore to explore the area, with many of us joining William and Gabi for an interesting talk about Amundsen and the airship expeditions. During our visit, some of us were lucky enough to catch a glimpse of our first Arctic fox as it ran across the tundra while being dive-bombed by Arctic terns.

Back on board once more, we were preparing for the evening recap and hearing the plans for the following day when Ali made an announcement over the PA system: a polar bear had been spotted. It was incredible.





We quickly added extra layers and headed out onto the outer decks and up to the bridge, watching in awe as our first polar bear came into view. Walking along the edge of a cliff, clear as day, was a large and healthy-looking male. Although his pace seemed casual, it was impressive to see the distance he covered effortlessly

as he followed the hillside before descending towards the water. As if that were not enough, a minke whale was also surfacing ahead of the ship. It was the perfect end to an amazing first day in the Arctic.

Still buzzing with excitement, we gathered in the lounge where Ali recapped the day's events. There was plenty of applause, and an enthusiastic atmosphere filled the room.

After another excellent buffet dinner, it was a beautiful evening. Many of us relaxed in the bar, reflecting on the magic of the day before heading to bed, ready for our journey north towards the pack ice.





Dive 1

Our first dive of the voyage took place at NY London, serving as both a checkout dive and an opportunity to become familiar with the equipment and conditions of Arctic diving. Divers entered calm polar waters to confirm weighting, buoyancy, and equipment configurations before the expedition's more adventurous dives. While the primary objective was to ensure everyone was comfortable and prepared for the days ahead, the dive also provided a first glimpse into Svalbard's underwater world. With confidence established and equipment functioning well, the team surfaced excited for the expedition to begin in earnest.



Day 3 – Wednesday 21st June, In the pack ice

12:00 GPS Position: 80°36.5'N / 011°48.4'E

Wind: WSW-2 • Sea: Ice 7/10 • Weather: Overcast • Air Temperature: +1°C

The day began at 07:45 with a cheerful wake-up call from Expedition Leader Ali. His voice echoed through the ship, welcoming everyone to another exciting day in the Arctic. Looking out of the cabin windows, passengers were greeted by a stunning panorama of sea ice



stretching across the horizon. The Ortelius was making its way through the frozen waters, searching for wildlife in one of the most remote regions of the planet.

At 08:00, breakfast was served in the dining room

on Deck 4. The buffet offered a wide selection of hot and cold dishes, allowing everyone to fuel up for the day ahead. Over coffee and breakfast, passengers exchanged stories from previous days and discussed the possibility of spotting polar bears as the ship continued north through the pack ice.

The morning was spent enjoying the incredible scenery from the outer decks and the bridge. The sea ice created a constantly changing landscape of white floes, blue shadows, and frozen channels. Every movement on the ice attracted attention, as everyone hoped to catch sight of Arctic wildlife.

At 11:30, Werner hosted a mobile phone photography workshop in the lounge. Passengers brought their phones and learned useful techniques for capturing the beauty of the polar environment. With endless ice formations and dramatic Arctic light outside, there was no shortage of inspiration for photographers of all levels.

Lunch was served at 12:30 in the dining room. The buffet provided a welcome break and a chance to warm up after spending time on deck. Conversations focused on the



remarkable ice conditions and the wildlife everyone hoped to encounter during the afternoon.



At 14:30, Marco gave an informative presentation about sea ice. As the *Ortelius* continued sailing through the pack ice, passengers learned how sea ice forms, how it changes throughout the seasons, and why it plays such a vital role in the Arctic ecosystem. Looking out the lounge windows while listening to the lecture made the experience even more meaningful, as the very subject being discussed surrounded the ship in every direction.

The search for wildlife continued throughout the afternoon. Guests spent hours scanning the ice with binoculars, watching for seals and, hopefully, polar bears. The atmosphere on board was filled with anticipation as the ship carefully navigated through the frozen landscape.

At 16:30, Emily presented a fascinating lecture on polar bears, the undisputed icons of the Arctic. She explained their behaviour, hunting strategies, adaptations to life on the ice, and the challenges they face in a rapidly changing environment. The presentation gave everyone a deeper appreciation for these magnificent animals and made the prospect of seeing one in the wild even more exciting.

As the day drew to a close, passengers gathered in the lounge at 18:30 for the daily recap and briefing. Members of the expedition team shared the highlights of the day, reviewed wildlife sightings, and outlined plans for the following day. It was also an opportunity to ask questions and reflect on the experiences of the day.

Dinner was served at 19:00 in the dining room on Deck 4. It has to be eaten quickly this time since the staff team had spotted a few whale blows in the distance. We immediately wore our jackets and outer garments and rushed to the outer decks and the bridge to witness the spectacle. Slowly and steadily, our capable bridge team, led by Captain Ernesto, maneuvered the ship closer to inspect the marine mammals.

Soon it appeared we were in the presence of two or perhaps three individuals of Blue Whales and one Fin whale, spouting closer and closer to the bow, stern and starboard side of the ship. The Blue Whale is the largest animal ever known to have lived on Earth, reaching lengths of up to 30 meters (100 feet) and weighing as much as 180 tons. These magnificent marine mammals inhabit oceans around the world and primarily feed on tiny shrimp-like creatures called krill. Despite their enormous size, blue whales are gentle animals and spend most of their time feeding in the open oceans, or like tonight, near the continental shelf located in the northern side of Svalbard.



A memorable event to wrap up this unique day in and around the sea ice.

Day 4 – Monday 22nd June, Hamiltonbukta and Buchananhalvoya

12:00 GPS Position: 79°43.0'N / 012°03.9'E

Wind: SW-5 • Sea: Slight • Weather: Clear • Air Temperature: +6°C

We were woken by our Expedition Leader at 07:15, inviting us out on deck to enjoy the spectacular morning as we arrived in Raudfjord. The sun was shining on the bay as we approached Hamiltonbukta on our starboard side. On the bridge, the Guide team and Bridge team were eagerly looking through their binoculars, scouring the coastline for wildlife and admiring the glassy calm conditions we were so lucky to have.



Once we had finished breakfast, the anchor was down and zodiacs were being dropped ready for us

to join the guides and explore the inlet. Nestled between towering mountains and tumbling glaciers with a scattering of islands to play between, it seemed like a beautiful place to explore.

From the zodiacs, we approached the tall cliffs on the south side of the bay. Before reaching them, we came across large rafts of Brunnichs Guillemots in the water, congregating before they disappeared off on a feeding trip. In the water we could see their black upper side and the white lower side in the water. As we heightened our senses, we were met with a strong smell coming from the cliff above us. The persistent noise of the guillemots rang in our ears. Occasionally a slapping of the water was heard where a pair of guillemots fell to the water in a squabble. Through the background ring, we heard snow buntings singing, he further north songbird, as they flew from one rock to another.



We continued along the base of the bird cliff, our eyes peeled to investigate anything that moved. A call came over the radio from the zodiac in the lead saying that they had seen an arctic fox. We adjusted our position and looked up at the glacier above. To our amazement, the tiny daring arctic fox was seen running along the crest of the glacier front. With the steep drop to the sea on its left and into a deep crevasse on its right.



The Arctic Fox was in its summer coat, making it easier to spot while it was on the snow. We all helped one another in our zodiacs to spot the fox. As it scurried along the slopes, it was sniffing around following scents that it picked up on and leaving its own too. The kayakers came along to join us and were also delighted to get a close-up view from a different perspective.

After we had our fill of the endearing Arctic Fox, it was time to move further into the bay through the brash ice and towards the glacier front. We could now hear the crackling of the ice as the air was released and the occasional boom from the glacier as cracks formed and small calvings eroded the blue glacier front.

Our zodiac drivers carefully navigated between the shallows as we observed the abundant bird life surrounding us. The wind had picked up slightly making it slightly cooler as the dense cold air descended off the glaciers. It was time to head back to Ortelius for lunch.



In the afternoon, we enjoyed a delicious lunch to fuel us up for the long afternoon hikes at Buchananhavoya. This is a large peninsula on the south side of Raudfjord where the terrain lends itself to long walks due to the lack of steep cliffs, which dominate the land to the west. Our guides pointed out the abundance of colourful flowers from purple saxifrage and arctic buttercups to mountain avens and sorrel. The main attraction of this hike, however were the spectacular landscapes we could see all around us, with the sun casting huge shadows of the jagged mountains across the smooth snow-topped glaciers.

The sun, wind and walking sapped our energy, leaving everyone happy and tired as we all retreated to Ortelius. Ali presented the plans for tomorrow before some more information was given about the significance of where we were traveling by Gabi and Beth.

KAYAK - BLUE GROUP

The first group of kayakers enjoyed an outing led by James in calm weather and beautiful sunshine. As we paddled along the rocky coastline, a fox was spotted and everyone eagerly gathered to enjoy the small creature roaming the shoreline in search of prey. After a very entertaining encounter we paddled across the fjord towards a stunning glacier where we were able to play around in brush ice. The gentle popping sound of the ice turned out to be the highlight for many. Kayaking gives a very different perspective and lets us feel really one with the surrounding nature.



KAYAK - GREEN GROUP

A windy afternoon did not discourage any of the kayakers and we went out with James to play around in the soft swells. We found shelter in shallow rocky terrain in front of an epic glacier and enjoyed a very eventful, though not easy, paddle. Birds hovered around and as we got in the groove we ended up paddling all the way back to Ortelius across what seemed as enormous open waters from the tiny kayaks.

Dive 2 – Hamiltonbukta

Our first true Arctic dive took place at Hamiltonbukta, positioned beneath the northern end of the towering seabird cliffs. Visibility was exceptional, allowing divers to fully appreciate the rich underwater landscape below. Extensive rows of kelp and algae covered the seabed, creating a habitat bustling with life. Among the kelp and rocky substrate, divers encountered crabs,

colourful sea stars, delicate comb jellies, and an Arctic sculpin resting among the rocks. The clear water and abundance of marine life made this one of the most enjoyable dives of the voyage. Following the dive, guests enjoyed a zodiac cruise through the bay, where several Arctic foxes were spotted along the shoreline. Numerous icebergs, recently calved from the nearby glacier, drifted silently through the fjord, completing a memorable Arctic experience above and below the waterline.

Dive 3 – Buchananhalvøya

The afternoon dive took place at Buchananhalvøya. Conditions above water had changed significantly, with increasing winds sweeping through the area. Beneath the surface, divers found a familiar Arctic ecosystem, with kelp, sea stars, crustaceans, and other invertebrate life present throughout the dive site. However, unlike the crystal-clear conditions experienced earlier in the day, visibility was greatly reduced by glacial meltwater flowing into this side of the fjord. Layers of suspended sediment created a dramatically different atmosphere, reminding divers how quickly Arctic underwater conditions can change. Despite the reduced visibility, the dive provided an excellent example of the influence glaciers have on the surrounding marine environment.



Day 5 – Sunday 23rd June, Texas Bar & Monacobreen

12:00 GPS Position: 79°36.6'N / 012°43.4'E

Wind: SW-4 • Sea: Slight • Weather: Clear • Air Temperature: 6°C



The morning sun over Svalbard brought with it the crisp, biting promise of true Arctic exploration. By 08:45, our expedition team had guided us ashore at the legendary Texas Bar, an area famed for housing one of the most remarkably preserved historic trapper huts in the entire archipelago. Stepping onto the rugged coastline, our hiking groups dispersed to explore the undulating lower hills. As we trekked across the tundra, the vastness of the

landscape opened up before us, offering breathtaking vantage points where the distant, frozen expanse of Monacobreen could be glimpsed cutting through the mountains.

The morning's grand finale, however, required a different kind of fortitude. Back at the shoreline, the call went out for the infamous Polar Plunge. With the expedition team providing towels and a healthy dose of encouragement, a brave group of souls stripped down and plunged directly into the icy Arctic waters. It was a brief, freezing, and utterly exhilarating rite of passage that left everyone roaring with laughter and buzzing with adrenaline.

By afternoon, the ship positioned itself deep within the fjord for our main event: a Zodiac cruise along the towering face of Monacobreen.

Named after Prince Albert I of Monaco to honor his pioneering oceanographic expeditions at the turn of the 20th century, this glacier is a monstrous wall of ancient, electric-blue ice. Navigating through a dense field of brash ice, we witnessed the raw power of nature



firsthand as the glacier calved, sending thunderous cracks echoing across the water and



dropping massive blocks of ice into the sea. Above us, hundreds of seabirds swirled and swarmed near the glacier face, feeding in the nutrient-rich waters stirred up by the meltwater.

To crown an unforgettable day, the evening called for a transformation of the ship's heli-deck on Deck 6. Bundled up

against the cold, we gathered under the Arctic sky for a Special Arctic BBQ Dinner. With great food, lively music, and the stunning polar scenery as our backdrop, the deck quickly turned into a dance floor where crew and expeditioners celebrated together long into the midnight sun.



KAYAK - WHITE GROUP

Some would say we went out in winds and waves but we say we went out in fun conditions. As all the hikers disappeared on the horizon we entered a lovely sheltered bay around the corner from Texas bar and paddled among tens of Eider ducks. The competitive spirit of some of our fellow kayakers translated into quite a few races around the shoreline, and as we finished our session. Gabi and James got all of us out to visit the Texas Bar Hut, learn more about its

history of it and some of us ditched the wetsuits for bathers... and took a dip with other brave and bold polar plungers.



KAYAK - DIVERS 1

Divers became kayakers for one afternoon and took on a mesmerizing route following the glacier front of Monacobreen. From the perspective of the kayak the magnitude of the glacier could be appreciated even more. Calvings, brush ice, bergy bits, growlers and hundreds, if not thousands of kittiwakes and terns kept us busy and in awe of what the Arctic is truly about.

Dive 4 – Texas Bar

This morning we dived at Texas Bar, entering the water just southwest of the historic hut and landing site. As divers prepared to descend, the long-hiking group could be seen high above on the surrounding slopes, providing a unique connection between the expedition activities taking place both above and below the water. Visibility was once again good, allowing divers to explore the rocky seabed and kelp-covered terrain. A gentle current flowing toward the southwest added a little movement to the dive and required divers to pay attention to their positioning throughout the exploration. The combination of good visibility, interesting topography, and the iconic setting made Texas Bar another memorable Arctic dive.



Day 6 – Wednesday 24th June, Signehamna and Fjortende Julibukta

12:00 GPS Position: 79°16.2'N / 011°34.1'E

Wind: S-1 • Sea: Calm • Weather: Overcast • Air Temperature: 7°C



This morning we escaped a vicious storm in northwest Spitsbergen and sought shelter within the Krossfjorden system. Our first landing was at Signehamna, a small, sheltered bay on the western side of Lillehöökfjorden. The morning hikes took us across a stretch of tundra to a partially frozen lake, where delicate needle-shaped ice crystals lined

the shore. The lake's remaining ice was crowded with Black-legged Kittiwakes, which suddenly took flight as an Arctic fox trotted across a nearby snowfield. The fox paid little attention to the birds, however, as it was carrying the head of a reindeer toward its den. On the far side of the lake lay the remains of a German weather station from the Second World War, destroyed by Norwegian forces after its discovery. Rusting fragments of the installation still remain scattered across the tundra, a reminder of the Arctic's strategic importance during the war.

Across the fjord, the immense Lilliehöökbrean could be seen stretching deep into the interior of Spitsbergen. One of the largest glaciers in the region, Lilliehöökbrean forms a vast ice stream fed by numerous tributary glaciers descending from the surrounding mountains. Its broad, sweeping front and heavily crevassed surface testify to the powerful forces that continue to shape the Arctic landscape. Although the glacier has retreated significantly over the past century, exposing new stretches of coastline and seabed, it remains an impressive reminder of the scale of Svalbard's ice cap. The glacier's brilliant blue crevasses, towering ice cliffs, and floating fragments of ice created a spectacular backdrop for our excursion.

In the afternoon MV Ortelius repositioned towards the southern entrance of Krossfjorden, finding a little bay in the east where she dropped the anchor. Fjortende Julibukta, or Fourteenth of July Bay, is one of the most scenic locations in Krossfjorden.





Named after France's national day by early explorers, the bay is framed by steep mountains and the striking Fourteenth of July Glacier, which descends directly into the sea. The combination of glacier ice, rugged landscapes, and thriving bird colonies makes the bay a classic example of the beauty and ecological richness of western Spitsbergen.

Wildlife was equally abundant. A bearded seal lounged lazily on a drifting ice floe, seemingly posing for photographs, while a curious harbour seal surfaced repeatedly beside several



Zodiacs to inspect its visitors. Nearby, a small bird cliff hosted nesting Brünnich's guillemots and Atlantic puffins. Puffins are often called the clowns of the seabird world, thanks to their colourful beaks and somewhat comical, fast-beating flight.

Following an extended recap by Claudio on Arctic foxes and a preview of tomorrow's walrus encounters, we gathered once more for dinner, bringing another memorable day in the High Arctic to a close.

KAYAK - RED GROUP

For almost two hours, our little group paddled along the shoreline of Signehamna and even though the landscape was breathtaking, it was the tens of Eider ducklings and multiple Barnacle goslings that stole the show. Getting up close and personal with these lovely chicks as they learn to brave the cold Arctic waters was truly special. Without the murmurs of the engine at moments it did really feel like we are at the world's end.

KAYAK - YELLOW GROUP

What a paddle! We made the most of the kayaking experience by getting onto them at a distance from wildlife and slowly making our way in a little cluster towards a very charismatic bearded seal hauled out on ice. With no artificial sound in earshot, we could get really close and appreciate the vibrissae, the smart face and really take in the calm and composed nature of the animal. Afterwards, we got into brush ice and felt like polar explorers, powering through all the way to the entrance of the fjord, where Gabi picked us up and took us on a little cruise along the puffin cliffs.



Dive 5

Our fifth dive brought us to Signehamna, where the Arctic reminded us that conditions can change dramatically from one site to the next. Shortly after entering the water it became clear

that visibility was extremely limited, with suspended sediment reducing the underwater world to only a few metres. Rather than push on in challenging conditions, most divers chose to end their dive early.

A handful remained underwater for a little longer, using the opportunity as a valuable low visibility training dive to practise buoyancy, communication, and navigation. Although the marine life remained



hidden behind the murk, the dive highlighted an important aspect of expedition diving: adapting to whatever nature presents. Not every dive is about spectacular scenery, and even challenging conditions provide valuable experience.

Dive 6

The following dive took us to Julibukta, where hopes were high for another Arctic adventure beneath the surface. Unfortunately, visibility again proved disappointing and, after around twenty minutes underwater, the decision was made to abort the dive and return to the surface.

What followed, however, became one of the unexpected highlights of the expedition. Before returning to Ortelius, divers spent time floating amongst the drifting sea ice, carefully making their way from one bergy bit to another. Cameras appeared, laughter echoed across the bay, and everyone took the opportunity to capture photographs surrounded by beautifully sculpted ice. It was a reminder that some of the most memorable moments on an expedition happen



above the surface, simply enjoying the extraordinary Arctic environment.

Day 7 – Thursday 25th June, Poolepynten and Alkhornet

12:00 GPS Position: 78°17.3'N / 012°27.0'E

Wind: S-4 • Sea: Smooth • Weather: Fog • Air Temperature: +6°C

Early call to start our last day of the expedition, which promised to be a long day full of interesting sightings. At first MV Ortelius made her way to Forlandsundet, the strait that separates Spitsbergen from Prins Karls Forland. Prins Karls Forland is a long, narrow island located off the west coast of Spitsbergen, known for its dramatic mountain landscapes, glaciers, and rich wildlife. The island is part of a protected nature reserve that provides important habitats for seabirds, Arctic foxes, and marine mammals.



One of its most famous sites is Poolepynten, a low-lying headland renowned for its large walrus haul-out, our set up goal for the morning. Called right after breakfast we split in three small groups which allowed us to approach the walrus at a close and safe distance. The Walrus is a large Arctic marine mammal easily recognized by its long tusks, whiskered snout, and thick layer of blubber that helps it stay warm in icy waters.

Walrus spend much of their time in shallow coastal areas, where they use their sensitive whiskers to locate clams, mussels, and other prey on the seafloor. They are highly social animals and often gather in large groups, known as haul-outs, on beaches, sea ice, or rocky shores. Their tusks are used for defense, establishing social dominance, and helping them climb onto ice. As an important part of Arctic ecosystems, walrus are closely linked to sea ice habitats and are affected by changes in the polar environment.

However the original plan had to be changed due to a furry surprise that was walking on land. A younger and curious individual Polar bear, probably a male, was scavenging on the shoreline a few hundred meters away from the Sysseman hut located at the cape. Immediately our staff members reacting to the surprise maintained the position of the zodiacs in the water to observe the bear from a respectful distance. The bear seemed to be uninterested and slowly walked to the opposite direction of the walrus haul out site. A quick and surprising encounter with the king of the Arctic, nonetheless magnificent and unique in its way considering it in the context of the morning operation.



Once the site was secured, we eventually quickly made a split landing to observe a few walrus that were resting on the shore, and later on made our way back to the ship which got on her way to the next destination.



Then during lunch time, Captain Ernesto and the bridge team repositioned the ship towards the entrance of Isfjorden, where we landed at Alkhornet. A striking mountain located on the western coast of Spitsbergen. Rising steeply from the tundra to a height of about 500 meters, it is known for its dramatic cliffs that provide nesting sites for thousands of seabirds during the summer. The area around Alkhornet is also rich in Arctic wildlife, including reindeer and Arctic foxes, making it one of the most popular natural attractions in Svalbard. Its impressive shape and scenic surroundings make it a favorite destination for the majority of the staff on board and soon for us as well.

Guided in small groups, we roamed around the area, in the lush lower tundra dominated by ice-wedges, carpeted by flowers and dotted by Svalbard Reindeers, whilst some of us ventured higher up on the slopes near the cliff face, accompanied by sweeping vistas of Isfjorden and the occasional visit of the Arctic Fox pups. Skirting among the calcareous boulders and winding our way through the slopes, we eventually had to wrap up the landing an hour earlier than planned due to a deterioration in the visibility. Slowly but steadily, the mist came in from the mouth of Isfjorden and for a good half an hour completely hid the ship from our eyes.

Back on board, we started packing our gear, and around 7 pm we gathered at the lounge for the Captain's cocktail. Cheering and thankful words were spent by Captain Ernesto and Expedition Leader Ali for the success of the trip, which was ending with a perfect Arctic wildlife encounter.

KAYAK - DIVERS 2

What a last session! A small group of divers ventured out on kayaks to discover all the Alkhornet coast has to offer. Guillemots, kittiwakes, Eider ducks, geese, puffins – all around! But today it was the landscape that captivated our hearts. The rugged terrain, the colorful cliffs from the low perspective of the kayaks, the stream coming down the mountain cascading into the sea... what a view! With moody weather and eerie fog coming in and out we experienced a very atmospheric Arctic. Its allure is undeniable.

Dive 7 – Alkhornet (Sagaskjeret)

Our final dive of the expedition had Ortelius set up base beneath the towering bird cliffs of Alkhornet, one of western Svalbard's most spectacular landmarks. Entering the water near Sagaskjeret, divers descended through countless jellyfish and delicate comb jellies before reaching a flourishing kelp forest below.

Following the rocky wall, the seabed revealed a colourful Arctic community of anemones, sea urchins, crabs, and numerous other invertebrates thriving on every available surface.

It was a fitting finale to an unforgettable week of Arctic diving. From crystal-clear kelp forests and glacier-fed fjords to drifting icebergs, and abundant marine life, each dive had revealed a different side of Svalbard's underwater world. As we packed away our equipment for the final time, we left with a deeper appreciation of this



remarkable High Arctic wilderness and memories that will stay with us long after the expedition had ended.

Day 8 – Friday 26th June – Longyearbyen, Disembarkation Day

07:00 GPS Position: 78°14.7' N / 015°33.5' E

Wind: SW-2 • Sea: Slight • Weather: Overcast • Air Temperature +7°C

A calm morning with the remaining spring snow sprinkled on the plateau-shaped mountains surrounding Adventfjorden and the small settlement of Longyearbyen, where our journey had begun only less than a week ago. MV Ortelius manoeuvred by Captain Ernesto aided by the rest of the bridge team, expertly docked the ship at the Coal pier. A few of us were enjoying a morning cup of coffee in the bar on Deck 6.

Ali, our expedition leader, woke us at 7:15 a.m. We placed our packed suitcases outside our cabin doors and headed for breakfast, while members of the expedition team collected our luggage and arranged it in neat rows on the pier.

Soon the bus appeared in the distance once again. Slowly pulling up to the gangway, it opened its doors, and we took our seats, saying goodbye to the expedition team. Our unforgettable adventure had come to an end.

Till next time, Ortelius! Until next time, Spitsbergen! This is not goodbye.

On behalf of Oceanwide Expeditions, Captain Ernesto Barria, Expedition Leader Ali Liddle, Hotel Manager Volodymir Cherdnychenko and all the crew and staff of *M/V Ortelius*, it has been a pleasure and a privilege travelling with you.

Total distance sailed on our voyage: 785.5 nautical miles

Most northern point sailed: 80°40.3' N, 012°23.3' E



Your Oceanwide Expeditions Team

North Spitsbergen Explorer

M/V Ortelius 19/06 – 26/06/26

- 19/06 1) **Longyearbyen** - Embarkation
- 20/06 2) **Ny-London** - Landing
- 3) **Ny-Ålesund** - Landing
- 21/06 4) **Pack Ice**
- 22/06 5) **Hamiltonbukta** - Zodiac Cruise
- 6) **Buchananhalvøya** - Landing
- 23/06 7) **Texas Bar** - Landing
- 8) **Monacobreen** - Zodiac Cruise
- 24/06 9) **Signehamna** - Landing
- 10) **Julibukta** - Zodiac Cruise
- 25/06 11) **Poolepynten** – Landing
- 12) **Alkhornet** – Landing
- 26/06 13) **Longyearbyen**- Disembarkation



Birds and Mammals of Svalbard - OTL 05

English	Latin	Dutch	German	19-Jun	20-Jun	21-Jun	22-Jun	23-Jun	24-Jun	25-Jun
Great Northern Diver	<i>Gavia immer</i>	Ijsduiker	Eistaucher							
Red-throated diver	<i>Gavia stellata</i>	Roodkeelduiker	Sternaucher		X					
Northern Fulmar	<i>Fulmarus glacialis</i>	Noordse stormvogel	Eissturmvogel	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Northern Gannet	<i>Morus bassanus</i>	Jan-van-gent	Basstöpel							
Whooper Swan	<i>Cygnus cygnus</i>	Wilde zwaan	Singschwan							
Bean Goose	<i>Anser fabalis</i>	Taigarietgans	Saatgans							
Pink-footed Goose	<i>Anser brachyrhynchus</i>	Kleine rietgans	Kurzschnabelgans		X			X		X
Barnacle Goose	<i>Branta leucopsis</i>	Brandgans	Weisswangengans		X		X	X	X	X
White-fronted Goose	<i>Anser albifrons</i>	Kolgans	Blässgans							
Greylag Goose	<i>Anser anser</i>	Grauwe gans	Graugans							
Brent Goose	<i>Branta bernicla</i>	Rotgans	Ringelgans							
Snow Goose	<i>Chen caerulescens</i>	Sneeuwgans	Schneegans							
Eurasian Wigeon	<i>Anas penelope</i>	Smient	Pfeifente							
Eurasian Teal	<i>Anas crecca</i>	Wintertaling	Krickente							
Mallard	<i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>	Wilde eend	Stockente							
Northern Pintail	<i>Anas acuta</i>	Pijlstaart	Spießente							
Tufted Duck	<i>Aythya fuligula</i>	Kuifeend	Reiherente							
Common Eider	<i>Somateria mollissima</i>	Eidereend	Eiderente	X	X		X	X	X	
King Eider	<i>Somateria spectabilis</i>	Konings eider	Prachteiderente		X					
Steller's Eider	<i>Polysticta stelleri</i>	Stellers eider	Scheckente							
Long-tailed Duck	<i>Clangula hyemalis</i>	Ilseend	Eisente		X					
Black Scoter	<i>Melanitta nigra</i>	Zwarte zee-eend	Trauerente							
Common Goldeneye	<i>Bucephala clangula</i>	Brilduiker	Schellente							
Rock Ptarmigan	<i>hyperboreus</i>	Alpensneeuwhoen	Alpenschneehuhn		X					
Eurasian Oystercatcher	<i>Haematopus ostralegus</i>	Scholekster	Austernfischer							
Ringed Plover	<i>Charadrius hiaticula</i>	Bontbekplevier	Sandregenpfeifer		X			X		

European Golden Plover	<i>Pluvialis apricaria</i>	Goudplevier	Goldregenpfeifer							
Sanderling	<i>Calidris alba</i>	Drieteenstrandloper	Sanderling							
Pectoral Sandpiper	<i>Calidris melanotos</i>	Gestreepte strandloper	Graubruststrandläufer							
Purple Sandpiper	<i>Calidris maritima</i>	Paarse strandloper	Meerstrandläufer		X			X		
Red Knot	<i>Calidris canutus</i>	Kanoetstrandloper	Knutt							
Dunlin	<i>Calidris alpina</i>	Bonte strandloper	Alpenstrandläufer							
Whimbrel	<i>Numenius phaeopus</i>	Regenwulp	Regenbrachvogel							
Common Redshank	<i>Tringa totanus</i>	Tureluur	Rotschenkel							
Ruddy Turnstone	<i>Arenaria interpres</i>	Steenloper	Steinwölzer							
Grey Phalarope	<i>Phalaropus fulicarius</i>	Rosse franjepoot	Thorshühnchen							
Red-necked Phalarope	<i>Phalaropus lobatus</i>	Grauwe franjepoot	Odinshühnchen		X					
Pomarine Skua	<i>Stercorarius pomarinus</i>	Middelste jager	Spatelraubmöwe		X					
Arctic Skua	<i>Stercorarius parasiticus</i>	Kleine jager	Schmarotzerraub-möwe		X		X	X	X	X
Long-tailed Skua	<i>Stercorarius longicaudus</i>	Kleinste jager	Falkenraubmöwe		X					
Great Skua	<i>Stercorarius skua</i>	Grote jager	Skua							
Sabine's Gull	<i>Xema sabini</i>	Vorkstaartmeeuw	Schwalbenmöwe						X	
Black-headed Gull	<i>Larus ridibundus</i>	Kokmeeuw	Lachmöwe							
Common/Mew Gull	<i>Larus canus</i>	Stormmeeuw	Sturmmöwe							
Glaucous Gull	<i>Larus hyperboreus</i>	Grote Burgemeester	Eismöwe		X		X	X		X
Iceland gull	<i>Larus glaucooides</i>	Kleine burgemeester	Polarmöwe							
Herring Gull	<i>Larus argentatus</i>	Zilvermeeuw	Silbermöwe							
Lesser black-backed Gull	<i>Larus fuscus</i>	Kleine mantelmeeuw	Heringsmöwe							
Great black-backed Gull	<i>Larus marinus</i>	Grote mantelmeeuw	Mantelmöwe							
Kittiwake	<i>Rissa tridactyla</i>	Drieteenmeeuw	Dreizehenmöwe		X	X	X	X	X	X
Ross' Gull	<i>Rhodostethia rosea</i>	Rossmeeuw	Rosenmöwe							
Ivory Gull	<i>Pagophila eburnea</i>	Ivoormeeuw	Elfenbeinmöwe			X				
Arctic Tern	<i>Sterna paradisaea</i>	Noordse stern	Küstenseeschwalbe		X		X	X	X	X
Common Guillemot	<i>Uria aalge</i>	Zeekoet	Trottellumme							
Brunnich's Guillemot	<i>Uria lomvia</i>	Dikbekzeekoet	Dickschnabellumme				X	X	X	
Black Guillemot	<i>Cephus grylle</i>	Zwarte zeekoet	Gryllteiste	X	X		X	X	X	X

Little Auk	<i>Alle alle</i>	Kleine alk	Krabbentaucher		X	X	X			
Puffin	<i>Fratercula arctica</i>	Papegaaiduiker	Papageitaucher		X	X	X	X	X	
Barn Swallow	<i>Hirundo rustica</i>	Boerenzwaluw	Rauchschwalbe							
White Wagtail	<i>Motacilla alba</i>	Witte Kwikstaart	Bachstelze							
Meadow Pipit	<i>Anthus pratensis</i>	Graspieper	Wiesenieper							
Wheatear	<i>Oenanthe oenanthe</i>	Tapuit	Steinschmätzer							
Blackbird	<i>Turdus merula</i>	Merel	Amsel							
Snow Bunting	<i>Plectrophenax nivalis</i>	Sneeuwgor	Schneeammer	X	X		X	X	X	X
Redpoll	<i>Carduelis flammea</i>	Barmsijs	Birkenzeisig							
Lapland longspur	<i>Calcarius lapponicus</i>	Ijsgors	Spornammer							
Fieldfare	<i>Turdus pilaris</i>	Kramsvogel	Wacholderdrossel							
Redwing	<i>Turdus iliacus</i>	Koperwiek	Rotdrossel							
Brambling	<i>Fringilla montifringilla</i>	Keep	Bergfink							
Gyr Falcon	<i>Falco rusticolus</i>	Giervalk	Gerfalke							

MAMMALS

English	Latin	Dutch	German	19-Jun	20-Jun	21-Jun	22-Jun	23-Jun	24-Jun	25-Jun
Walrus	<i>Odobenus rosmarus</i>	Walrus	Walross	X						X
Bearded seal	<i>Erignathus barbatus</i>	Baardrob	Bartrobbe			X			X	
Ringed seal	<i>Phoca hispida</i>	Ringelrob	Ringelrobbe			X			X	
Harp seal	<i>Pagophilus groenlandicus</i>	Zadelrob	Sattelrobbe							
Hooded seal	<i>Cystophora cristata</i>	Klapmuts	Klappmütze			X				
Common /Harbour seal	<i>Phoca vitulina</i>	Gewone zeehond	Seehund		X				X	X
Minke Whale	<i>Balaenoptera acutorostrata</i>	Dwergvinvis	Zwergwal	X	X	X	X			
Sei Whale	<i>Balaenoptera borealis</i>	Noordse vinvis	Seiwal							
Blue Whale	<i>Balaenoptera musculus</i>	Blauwe vinvis	Blauwal			X				
Fin Whale	<i>Balaenoptera physalus</i>	Gewone vinvis	Finnwal			X				
Humpback Whale	<i>Megaptera novaeangliae</i>	Bultrug	Buckelwal							

Bowhead whale	<i>Balaena mysticetus</i>	Groenlandse walvis	Grönlandwal						
Sperm Whale	<i>Physeter macrocephalus</i>	Potvis	Pottwal						
Narwhal	<i>Monodon monoceros</i>	Narwal	Narwal						
Northern Bottlenose Whale	<i>Hyperoodon ampullatus</i>	Butskop	Entenwal (Dögling)						
Orca (Killer Whale)	<i>Orcinus orca</i>	Orka	Schwertwal (Orca)						
White-beaked Dolphin	<i>Lagenorhynchus albirostris</i>	Witsnuitdolfijn	Weisschnauzendelphin			X			
Beluga	<i>Dephinapterus leucas</i>	Beloega	Weisswal						
Polar Bear	<i>Ursus maritimus</i>	Ijsbeer	Eisbär		X				X
Arctic Fox	<i>Alopex lagopus</i>	Poolvos	Polarfuchs		X		X		X
Spitsbergen Reindeer	<i>platyrhynchus</i>	Rendier	Svalbard Renntier	X	X		X		X
Sibling vole	<i>Microtus rossiaemeridionalis</i>	Oostelijke veldmuis	Südfeldmaus						
Short tailed Vole	<i>Microtus agrestis</i>	Aardmuis	Erdmaus						

Ali Liddle – Expedition Leader



Originally from the UK, Ali spent 15 years living in the Falkland Islands where she worked as a Primary school teacher both teaching out in ‘camp’ and at the school in Stanley.

Latterly, she was employed as Education Officer for Falklands Conservation and shared her time between classroom teaching and conservation. In 1997, she spent 9 months living on South Georgia where she ran the Post Office and took every opportunity to hike, ski and explore the surrounding peaks and coastline.

She has published three books to date: *Plants of the Falkland Islands* and two art and craft books for children using penguins and albatross as the inspiration. Ali is a keen runner, having completed three marathons in the Falkland Islands and two in the UK, and she also enjoys cycling, hiking and camping. Ali has been working on Antarctic and Arctic expedition cruises with Oceanwide for more years than she cares to remember and works on all of the Oceanwide vessels at some point during the year. She has recently relocated from Northumberland to the Isle of Skye where she is renovating a cottage and enjoying the hiking opportunities of the island.

Her particular interest is natural history and the wildlife, and she enjoys sharing her knowledge of and passion for the polar regions.

Claudio Ghiglione – Asst. Exp. Leader



Claudio was born in Italy in 1983. He is a marine ecologist specialised in polar regions, expedition guide and nature photographer.

Interested in science and nature since he was very young, he graduated first in *Marine Environmental Sciences* (BA) and then in *Marine Science* (MA). In March 2017 he obtained a *PhD in Earth, Environmental and Polar Sciences* run in cooperation with the Italian National Antarctic Museum (Italy) and the British Antarctic Survey in Cambridge (UK).

For several years he worked as a polar researcher focusing his work mainly on the South Pole (Antarctica); his objective is to analyse and evaluate information used for ecological modelling and possible future scenarios following global warming. During his academic career, he actively takes part in some scientific expeditions both in Arctic and in Antarctica in cooperation with Norway and England.

His passion for travel, mainly to cold and often inhospitable places, and his career as a photographer led him to travel a lot, creating and managing – often in complete autonomy – itineraries and logistics. In 2017 – thanks to his professional experience, the skills acquired over the time and the need to spend more time on the field – he starts working full time as a guide Oceanwide.

Specialised in nature, scientific and travel photography, Claudio uses his photos as a means of telling stories to draw attention mainly to his main subjects, namely animals, nature and environment. In the 2019 he published his first book ‘Polar Lights’ with whom he shares the passion for nature photography.

Beth Hitchcock – Expedition Guide



After graduating from her Geology honours degree in 2018 at Glasgow, Beth balanced two jobs until she succumbed to full time in the guiding world in 2021. Beth worked as a deckhand / guide on a tall ship and, when on the land, as an Engineering Geologist working mainly on Scotland's road and railway networks.

On the tall ships, Beth visited many places around the Atlantic Ocean from the Azores to Cape Town and Tristan da Cunha. In the austral summers she guides on the ship when they visit Antarctica and South Georgia. These

are ideal places to interpret the landscape and explain to the guests how the glaciers and geological processes have carved what we see today. The incredible human history in these regions has a significant impact on the regional geological story and on our understanding of geology globally.

Beth also enjoys spending time in the mountains of Scotland where she works when she is not guiding on board ships. She grew up sailing around the islands of the west coast of Scotland - home to some fascinating geology where she spent many field trips during her undergraduate years. This sparked the desire to explore and embark on adventures to discover new landscapes and cultures around the world.

Gabi Kolodko – Expedition Guide



Having been exposed to the pristine wilderness of Alaska, Canada, and Lapland before turning ten, Gabi developed a deep-rooted passion for cold climates and the great outdoors. Each summer, she devoted herself to sailing, and in 2012, her adventures included crossing the Baltic Sea from Poland to Scandinavia and back aboard the *Zawisza Czarny*, a historic 42-meter vessel originally built in 1952.

With a Master's in Fine Arts and a fascination for art, culture, and history, Gabi's curiosity led her to explore the unique human-animal relationships in polar regions, combining her interest in zooanthropology with the stories of Antarctica's early exploration and modern conservation. Her first journey to Antarctica in 2019 only deepened her connection to the continent's striking landscapes and rich history.

Gabi's enthusiasm for the cold extends beyond her travels; she actively practices the Wim Hof method and regularly takes on ice baths, walrusing, and cryotherapy throughout the year. A memorable encounter with a herd of Musk Oxen in 1993 at Herschel Island off the Canadian Arctic coast sparked her love for Arctic wildlife, with the Gentoo Penguin now topping her list of favorites in Antarctica.

She loves being part of life-changing voyages, rediscovering the polar regions with each new group of guests. Driven by a passion for adventure and a genuine desire to share the wonders of the poles, Gabi aims to inspire awe and respect for these breathtaking and fragile landscapes, offering others a transformative glimpse into the natural world.

William Kennedy – Expedition Guide



William was brought up in the west coast of France in an Irish household. From a very young age he travelled to visit relatives on the emerald isle and the bug for discovering other cultures and lifestyles caught him.

Curiosity brought him all over Europe, working as a farmer in Iceland, building cabins in the Pyrenees, bartending in Scotland, carpentering in Norway and becoming a kitchen chef in Sweden. While living yet another adventure on the remote archipelago of Svalbard, he discovered the polar world and its famous adventurers.

He since then has been sailing the Arctic and Antarctic waters, blending his passion for history, storytelling, and travel by shining the light on unsung polar heroes, events and adventures.

When not on the ships he lives in Malmö, Sweden where he found a place to call home. Hiking and sailing are his main past times along with playing rugby and ice hockey, depending on the season.

Marco Rosso – Expedition Guide



Marco was born in the region of Prosecco & Tiramisù in Northern Italy.

He graduated in Mechanical Engineering at the University of Padua, his native city, and subsequently achieved a Master's degree in "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 his 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 Natales, Chile; leading groups as a trekking guide and tour leader in some of the most beautiful and rugged trails of Patagonia and for four years has started to join expeditions to the Arctic and the Antarctic on board of Oceanwide vessels.

Emily Clarke – Expedition Guide



Emily grew up by the ocean and has always found it a source of inspiration and wonder. She has a strong sense of adventure and embraces opportunities whenever they arise, which has resulted in some amazing journeys.

A passion for wildlife conservation, travel and working with people has led her to work onboard expedition vessels.

Familiar with life at sea, Emily divides her time between two fairly different roles. The first as an expedition guide, and the second as a Marine Mammal Observer in the oil and gas industry, working onboard seismic vessels; protecting marine mammals from anthropogenic sound sources in the ocean.

Emily has over 15 years' experience working with wildlife, both in natural habitats and in rehabilitation. She has spent over ten years working with gorillas, which saw her travel to remote parts of Africa collecting data on wild gorillas, and taking part in conservation and community development projects addressing human-wildlife conflicts.

During her time off, Emily enjoys paddle boarding, kayaking and diving, in-between preparing her latest lectures and planning her next adventure.

Werner Kruse - Expedition Guide



Werner Kruse is a well-seasoned traveller and an experienced filmmaker, photographer and expedition guide. He has worked on numerous international productions and produced travel 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.

Enric Sangrà Mòdol – Exp. Guide



“Connecting Science with People” – This is Enric’s mission.

He holds a **Master’s degree in Scientific Communication** from Valencian International University and a **Bachelor’s degree in Geology** from the University of Barcelona. With extensive experience as a science communicator in various research institutes in Spain, he has worked closely with researchers to effectively communicate their discoveries.

Enric is passionate about **making Earth Science accessible to the public**. He bridges the gap between researchers and society, transforming complex scientific results into clear and engaging messages. His skills led him to become one of the ten finalists in the national scientific monologue competition in Spain, "Solo de Ciencia," where the country’s top science communicators were selected.

Enric’s expertise spans a wide range of Earth Science topics, from geology to environmental issues. **He is really excited about guiding in polar regions**, where the unique geological features, including ancient rock formations, meteorite-rich fields, and glacial landscapes, offer invaluable insights into Earth’s history. By sharing the fascinating stories of these remote regions, Enric brings the Earth’s geological history to life, making science both accessible and engaging for all audiences.

Enric’s hobbies are always outdoor sports, including alpinism, mountaineering, hiking, climbing, trail running, and backcountry skiing. His favorite spots are the Catalan and Aragonese Pyrenees, where he has summited Aneto (3,404 m) during the winter period.

Ask him anything about geology and of “quartz” he will give you the best explanation.

Tom van Hoof - Expedition Guide



I visited the polar regions for the first time in 2001. As a PhD student I attended a course at the University Centre of Svalbard and fell in love with the Arctic Wilderness of Spitsbergen. After finishing my PhD in palaeo-climate research at Utrecht University, the Netherlands, I lived for a while in Arizona. When returning home, I started to work for the Dutch Geological Survey where I got the chance to do fieldwork in the Arctic again.

Over the years I participated and organized several geological field campaigns in Spitsbergen where I spent the most precious moments of my life in tents, remote cabins or small ships. In 2015 I came into contact with Oceanwide Expeditions during a scientific expedition on M/V Ortelius. Shortly after, I started working as an expedition guide for Oceanwide Expeditions in both polar regions. Besides expedition guiding I also still help with the field logistics on Arctic scientific expeditions.

My day-to-day job nowadays is for the Netherlands Polar Program, a section of the Dutch Science Council (NWO). This organization funds Dutch polar scientific research and manages the Dutch polar infrastructure. I am a fanatic outdoor enthusiast, and I recently finished a training for Hike and Survival instructor. I live in the Netherlands with my wife, three daughters and two Leonberger dogs who all like to camping, preferably in winter conditions.

Henrik Enckell – Dive Team Leader



Henrik is an experienced dive instructor and rebreather instructor trainer. He was one of the first persons to bring tourists diving in Antarctica

He has been diving for over 30 years and as a Rebreather Instructor Trainer he is teaching all levels of recreational and technical diving up to Advanced Trimix CCR.

Henrik is a keen wreck diver and has been involved in deep wreck expeditions all over the world. Some of the interesting wrecks he has visited are the WW2 disasters General von Steuben and Wilhelm Gustloff in the Baltic and HMS Victoria ("the vertical wreck") at 145 meters/475 feet off the Lebanese coast.

He has a military background having served in peace keeping and peace enforcing missions in the Middle East and former Yugoslavia. He has also led dive expeditions in the Antarctic and Arctic regions for more than 20 years and has supervised thousands of dives in polar waters. Henrik also works as a submersible pilot and surface officer.

Henrik holds a M.Sc. degree in Electrical Engineering and has previously lived and worked in Japan and India several years before becoming an expedition guide full time. He now lives in Sweden with his wife, his three daughters and his son.

Sid Paul Dewfall – Dive Guide



Sid Dewfall is a professional dive instructor and expedition guide with a strong background in marine science and field operations. Originally from Gibraltar, he has built his career around a passion for the ocean and a fascination with remote environments. Sid holds a Master of Science degree in Marine Science and Climate Change and has been involved in research and conservation projects ranging from coral restoration in the Mediterranean to community-based citizen science initiatives.

With thousands of dives completed around the world, Sid has developed his particular expertise in polar diving and the unique demands it brings. Working in challenging conditions has given him a deep respect for safety, teamwork, and careful preparation. His focus is on helping guests explore the polar regions with confidence, while sharing insights into the ecosystems and wildlife encountered along the way.

On board, Sid can often be found supporting dive operations, guiding Zodiac cruises, or assisting guests during landings. He enjoys working closely with people, making sure each experience is both safe and memorable. His approachable style and enthusiasm for the natural world make him a valued member of the team.

Away from the polar regions, Sid continues to pursue underwater research and outdoor adventure. Whether in the water, on the mountainside, or travelling by motorcycle, he is most at home in environments that demand resilience and curiosity. He believes that time spent in wild places fosters a lasting connection with nature and he is proud to help guests experience that in the Arctic and Antarctic.

Clara Iachetti – Dive Guide



Clara is Argentinean, who is born in Buenos Aires. Since she was a child Clara loved the ocean and the adventure. In 2011 she obtained her bachelor's Marine Biology-oriented degree in Biological Sciences, at the Universidad de Buenos Aires and a European M.Sc. in Marine Environment and Resources (MER) in 2012. Since 2012 she has been working in the Austral Centre of Scientific Investigations (CADIV- CONICET) at Ushuaia, Tierra de Fuego (Argentina). Firstly, on her PhD on plankton dynamics, then with her postdoctoral project on harmful algal blooms, and nowadays as a researcher at CADIC. For the last 10 years she has participated of several research expeditions to the South Atlantic and Antarctica, even spending some time in the Shetland Islands, at the Argentinean Base "Carlini".

On top of her scientist career, she is a member of Beagle Secretos del Mar, a non-profit organisation that supports marine conservation in which she is responsible for the education program, lecturing and diving. Living in Ushuaia (and previously in Bariloche) has also led her passion towards mountaineering, mainly backcountry skiing and climbing.

Gonzalo Sabattini- Dive Guide



Gonzalo Sabattini was born in Córdoba, Argentina in 1987. Son of Cecilia and Juan and brother to Matias and Marcos.

Since a young kid his life was connected to water because his family owns fishing boats in Los Molinos Lake in Córdoba. Summers and weekends were endless among friends and family, swimming, and fishing.

As time passed by, swimming in the lake evolved into diving; Gonzalo received his first diving certification as a Argentinian Federation of Subaquatic

Activities (FAAS_CMAS)-One Star Diver at the age of 16.

During his twenties Gonzalo was an active member of the local diving school collaborating as a volunteer as he continued his formation as a diver.

In 2013 he was invited to work to Cozumel, Mexico as a dive guide guiding certificate and first-time divers. At the island, he gained a lot of experience working with international tourism and he spent more than a year diving daily.

When he came back to his country, he set sails to a new adventure. Decided to move to Ushuaia, Tierra del Fuego, where diving and weather conditions are a challenge. For the last 6 years he has become a cold-water diver, mastering the dry suit and the rest of cold-water equipment. On 2018 he was certified as a dive instructor (FAAS – CMAS) and since then, works at a diving school lecturing new cold-water divers and guiding national and international divers who marvel with the kelp forests that characterize dives in the Beagle Channel.

On top of diving Gonzalo has always been as sportive person, he loves snowboarding, fishing, and spending time in nature and wilderness, and he found in Ushuaia a perfect playground.

James Bruton – Lead Kayak Guide



With over 25 years of experience in the outdoor industry, James has been working professionally as a kayak and mountaineering instructor and guide since 2000. Throughout his career, he has delivered high-quality instruction and guided experiences across a wide range of environments and countries.

James holds high level qualifications in both paddlesport and mountaineering disciplines, enabling him to instruct and guide in a variety of challenging settings, creating enjoyable and rewarding experiences for participants of all abilities.

Alongside his professional work, he has undertaken numerous personal expeditions and adventures around the world. These include kayaking expeditions to India, Nepal, Peru, Uganda and South East Asia as well as extensive travel and exploration throughout Europe.

He remains passionate about sharing outdoor experiences with others, whether introducing beginners to their first adventure, developing aspiring leaders and instructors, or supporting experienced participants in achieving their personal goals in the mountains and on the water.

Duncan Gray - Ship's Doctor



Duncan is an Emergency Medicine Doctor from Scotland. He worked as a Consultant in Glasgow for 18 years and is also registered as a General Practitioner (Family Doctor).

He has extensive experience as an expedition doctor, in desert, jungle, mountain and polar areas. He regularly teaches on expedition medical courses for doctors and believes that some humour is essential for good learning.

He is keen on outdoor sports, in the winter goes ski touring in the Cairngorm mountains near his home, and in the summer, sea kayaking on the west of Scotland. He enjoys wilderness journeys, with four self guided hut to hut ski trips in Norway and four self guided canoe river trips in the Yukon.

Almost as a hobby, he attends many courses and collects qualifications, including advanced sea kayak leader, winter mountain leader, powerboat and VHF radio operation, rafting guide, chain saw operation, numerous jungle survival courses and even basket weaving! He is a level two (BASI) alpine ski instructor and Coastal Skipper (Yachting).

He has worked as a ski patroller in Canada, for the Flying Doctor Service of Australia and on the Helicopter Emergency Medical Service in London.

He has been to the south pole as a doctor four times, including the south pole marathon, has taken part in two himalayan mountaineering trips and a transatlantic yachting race. He has skid across Svalbard and South Georgia.

He was a doctor in the British airbourne forces, including the Iraq war or 2002.

WELCOME ABOARD!

Luggage will be delivered to your cabin. Please make check to make sure you have received all your luggage. If you have any extra luggage in your cabin – please notify a crew member.

**** Tea and coffee are always available in the lounge on deck 6 ****

±1700 **Welcome & safety briefing** - Please join us in the **lounge (deck 6)** for a **mandatory** safety briefing and lifeboat drill. **All passengers must attend.** Thank you.

Lifeboat Drill

All guests please collect your orange lifejackets from your cabin and proceed to the passenger MUSTER STATION in the **lounge (deck 6)**.

1845 **Welcome Meeting.** Please join your hotel manager Volodymyr in the **lounge (deck 6)** for an introduction to our ship Ortelius.

1900 The meeting will be followed by welcome drinks with Captain Barria and a chance to meet the Expedition team and learn more about our voyage around North Spitsbergen.

1930 **Buffet Dinner** is available in the **dining room** for 1 hour (deck 4)

After dinner we will issue rubber boots. Please listen for announcements.

We will sail into open sea this evening and the ship may move – please secure your belongings and be careful when moving around the ship. Take your seasickness medication before we head out into open sea- the doctor will be available in the lounge after dinner to assist.

As we approach Kongsfjord, all Bluetooth and WiFi must be switched off as they interfere with the scientific equipment on shore.

- 0715 **Wake up call** - Good Morning!
- 0730 **Breakfast Buffet** is available in the **dining room** for 1 hour (deck 4).
- 0830 **Mandatory Polar Bear safety briefing and Zodiac briefing followed by our plans for the day. All passengers please attend.**
Please be prompt at the meeting. The sooner we finish the meeting, the sooner we can get out and explore!
Divers Please listen for announcements regarding your 'Check Out Dive' this morning.
- TBA **Ny London, Blomstrandhalvøya.** For our first landing we hope to take you ashore at Ny London where we will offer our hiking groups for the morning. There is a historic hut at the landing site and the relics of a marble mine. We sometimes see reindeer here and there are small lakes which are good for bird watching.
Long Hikers please come to the gangway first.
Divers please listen for announcements regarding your activity this morning.
- 1300 **Lunch Buffet** is available in the **dining room** for 1 hour (deck 4).
- TBA **Ny Alesund.** This afternoon we hope to take you ashore at the settlement of Ny Alesund which claims to be the most northerly settlement in the world. Please stay on the roads and do not enter any buildings apart from the museum and shop. You can send cards from the most northerly Post Office! CARD PAYMENTS ONLY. There will be a chance to walk out to the historic balloon mast, but you must only do this with a guide. Timings will be arranged. **Do not leave the settlement on your own.**
- 1900 **Recap** – Please join the Expedition team in the lounge (deck 6) for our daily recap and briefing.
- 1930 **Buffet Dinner** is available in the dining room for 1 hour.

We will be arriving at the ice edge before breakfast and will spend the day in the ice enjoying the frozen wilderness and looking for wildlife. Please join us on deck to help with the search and experience the Arctic pack ice.

If we find any special wildlife, we postpone presentations during the day.

- 0745 **Wake up call** - Good Morning!
- 0800 **Breakfast Buffet** is available in the **dining room** for 1 hour (deck 4).
- 1030 **Kayak Briefing.** If you would like to kayak during this trip please attend this mandatory briefing. You will be allocated the group for your kayak outing later in the day.
- 1130 **Mobile Phone Photography workshop.** Bring your phone and join Werner in the Lounge to learn some new photography skills with your mobile phone.
- 1230 **Lunch Buffet** is available in the **dining room** for 1 hour (deck 4).
- 1430 **Sea Ice.** We will be sailing through sea ice today in search of wildlife but if you would like to learn more about the ice and how it forms then please join Marco in the Lounge.
- 1630 **Polar bears.** These are the most iconic species in the Arctic and we all hope to see them during this voyage so if you would like to learn more about these animals then please join Emily in the Lounge.
- 1830 **Recap** – Please join the Expedition team in the lounge (deck 6) for our daily recap and briefing.
- 1900 **Dinner** is served in the dining room on deck 4.

- 0715 **Wake up call** - Good Morning!
- 0730 **Breakfast Buffet** is available in the **dining room** for 1 hour (deck 4).
- 0845 **Hamiltonbukta.** This morning we hope to take you out on a zodiac cruise in Hamiltonbukta. Here there are high seabird cliffs where we see nesting guillemots and kittiwakes and we sometimes we see Arctic foxes along the shore. Please dress warmly for your cruise.
Kayakers [BLUE GROUP](#) Please listen for announcements.
Divers please listen for announcements.
- 1230 **Lunch Buffet** is available in the **dining room** for 1 hour (deck 4).
- TBA **Buchananhalvøya.** Further down into Raudfjord we come to the peninsula where we hope to take you ashore to explore the area. We will divide into our hiking and walking groups so we can all enjoy the landing at a pace that suits us.
Long Hikers please come to the gangway first and everyone else can follow straight away afterwards.
Kayakers [GREEN GROUP](#) Please listen for announcements.
Divers please listen for announcements.
- 1900 **Recap** – Please join the Expedition team in the lounge (deck 6) for our daily recap and briefing.
- 1930 **Buffet Dinner** is available in the **dining room** for 1 hour(deck 4)

- 0715 **Wake up call** - Good Morning!
- 0730 **Breakfast Buffet** is available in the **dining room** for 1 hour (deck 4).
- 0845 **Texas Bar.** This morning we hope to take you ashore at Texas Bar where there is one of the best trapper huts in Svalbard. Maybe the bar will be open!
It is also a really good place hike in the lower hills so we will offer our usual hiking groups.
At the end of the landing we will offer you the chance to take a Polar Plunge – a swim in the Arctic waters! We'll bring the towels, you bring the insanity!
Long hikers Please come to the gangway first.
Kayakers WHITE GROUP Please listen for announcements.
Divers Please listen for announcements.
- 1230 **Lunch Buffet** is available in the **dining room** for 1 hour (deck 4).
- TBA **Monacobreen.** This afternoon we hope to take you out on a zodiac cruise at the impressive Monacobreen. This is one of the most iconic glacier fronts in Svalbard. It is named after Prince Albert I of Monaco, for his 1898-1907 oceanographic expedition to map the area. Dress warmly and enjoy the ice. We will be looking for seals and other wildlife.
Kayakers DIVERS 1 Please listen for announcements.
- 1830 **Recap** – Please join the Expedition team in the lounge (deck 6) for our daily recap and briefing.
- 1900 **Special Arctic Dinner** is served on Deck 6 on the heli deck. Dress warmly and join us for our BBQ!

- 0715 **Wake up call** - Good Morning!
- 0730 **Breakfast Buffet** is available in the **dining room** for 1 hour (deck 4).
- 0845 **Signehamna.** This morning we hope to take you ashore at Signehamna where we will walk up to the lake and explore the tundra. We sometimes see reindeer on the lower hills. There are the historic remains of a World War II weather station.
Long Hikers Please come to the gangway first.
Kayakers **RED GROUP**
Divers Please listen for announcements
- 1230 **Lunch Buffet** is available in the **dining room** for 1 hour (deck 4).
- TBA **14 Julibukta.** This afternoon we hope to take you on a zodiac cruise in 14th Julibukta where we will cruise past some small cliffs where we often see puffins. There are high cliffs where colonies of kittiwakes and guillemots nest and on the slopes below we sometimes see reindeer and foxes. We will cruise up to the glacier for some 'nice ice' views.
Kayakers **YELLOW GROUP**
Divers Please listen for announcements
- 1830 **Recap** – Please join the Expedition team in the lounge (deck 6) for our daily recap and briefing.
- 1900 **Dinner** is served in the dining room.

- 0645 **Wake up call** - Good Morning!
- 0700 **Breakfast Buffet** is available in the **dining room** for 1 hour (deck 4).
- 0800 **Poolepyntyn.** We hope to go ashore at Poolepynten to see the walrus that often haul out on the beach. We need to do this in small groups. You will all have the same amount of time on shore and will have a chance to explore the beach and lagoon area.
- 0800 **BLUE WALRUS Group to the gangway to go ashore.**
- 0830 **RED WALRUS Group to the gangway to go ashore.**
- 0900 **GREEN WALRUS Group to the gangway to go ashore.**
- 1230 **Lunch Buffet** is available in the **dining room** for 1 hour (deck 4).
- TBA **Alkhornet.** This afternoon we hope to go ashore at Alkhornet where we will explore the area in our hiking groups. There is a huge cliff where over 60,000 kittiwakes nest along with Brünnich's guillemots. It is often a good place to see reindeer feeding on the grassy slopes and we sometimes see Arctic foxes amongst the rocks below the cliffs.
Long Hikers Please come to the gangway first.
Kayakers DIVERS 2 Please listen for announcements
Divers Please listen for announcements
- 1845 **Captain's Cocktails.** Please join us in the Lounge for a farewell drink with Captain Barria and the expedition team. We will also explain plans for disembarkation in Longyearbyen and look back on our voyage.
- 1930 **Farewell Dinner** is served in the **dining room** (deck 4)

- 0715 **Wake up call** - Good Morning! Please place your large check in luggage outside your cabin before you go to breakfast.
- 0730 Breakfast Buffet is available in the dining room for 1 hour.
- 0900 All guests on Flight **SK4491 (10:45)** will take a bus from the ship to the airport. Please put a **BLUE LABEL** on your luggage. Your luggage will go to the airport on a truck.
- 0900 All guests on Flight **SK4493 (13:05)** will take a bus to town. Please put an **RED LABEL** on your luggage. Your bus to the airport will leave town at **11:00**. Your luggage will be waiting for you at the airport in a truck.
- 0900 All guests staying in town take the bus to town and make your way to your hotel. Please do **NOT** put any label on your luggage. Take it on the bus with you.

From the Captain, all the crew and the Expedition Team on board the MV Ortelius, we wish you safe onward travel, and thank you for sharing this incredible voyage with us. We look forward to sailing with you again in the future.