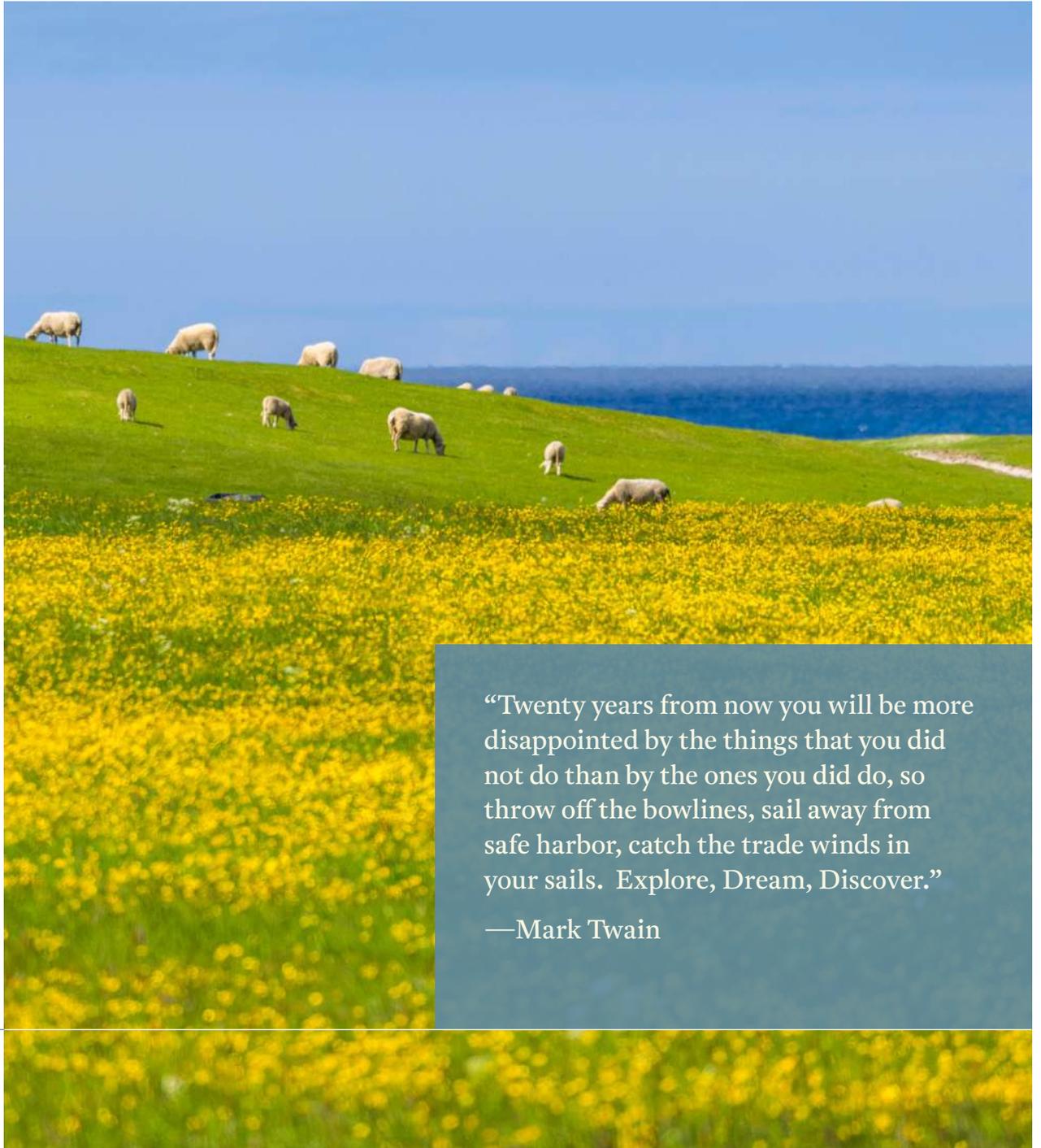


Across the Arctic Circle

Aboard *Greg Mortimer* | 7 – 20 June 2024





“Twenty years from now you will be more disappointed by the things that you did not do than by the ones you did do, so throw off the bowlines, sail away from safe harbor, catch the trade winds in your sails. Explore, Dream, Discover.”

—Mark Twain

Across the Arctic Circle

7 – 20 June 2024

Aberdeen

DAY 1 | Friday 7 June 2024

Latitude:
57° 14.0'N
Longitude:
001° 54.0'W

Course:
206°
Speed:
8.2 knots

Wind Speed:
22 knots SSW
Barometer:
1023 hPa

Air Temp:
11°C

Today we started our day by exploring 'The Granite City', visiting some of Aberdeen's most famous landmarks, including the magnificent King's College Chapel, which is a fantastic example of Gothic architecture, and the St Machar Cathedral, a 12th-century church with beautiful stained-glass windows.

The morning took us to Glen Garioch distillery, a 200-year-old distillery situated in the sheltered heart of the Valley of the Garioch. Blessed as it is with the north-east's mild climate, plentiful sunshine and not too much rain, the valley has long been renowned as the finest barley growing area in the country.

Afterwards, we enjoyed a scenic drive to the Huntly Falconry Centre, which was established in 1991 and one of the first falconry centres in Scotland.

By late afternoon it was time to wrap up our tour and make our way to Blaikie's Quay to board the *Greg Mortimer*.

Once checked in, the ship's crew helped us navigate the decks to our cabins – our home away from home for the next 13 nights.





At Sea, Mousa Broch, Isle of Noss

DAY 2 | Saturday 8 June 2024

Latitude:
58° 46.9' N
Longitude:
001° 27.0' W

Course:
006°
Speed:
14.6 knots

Wind Speed:
37 knots W
Barometer:
1016 hPa

Air Temp:
9°C

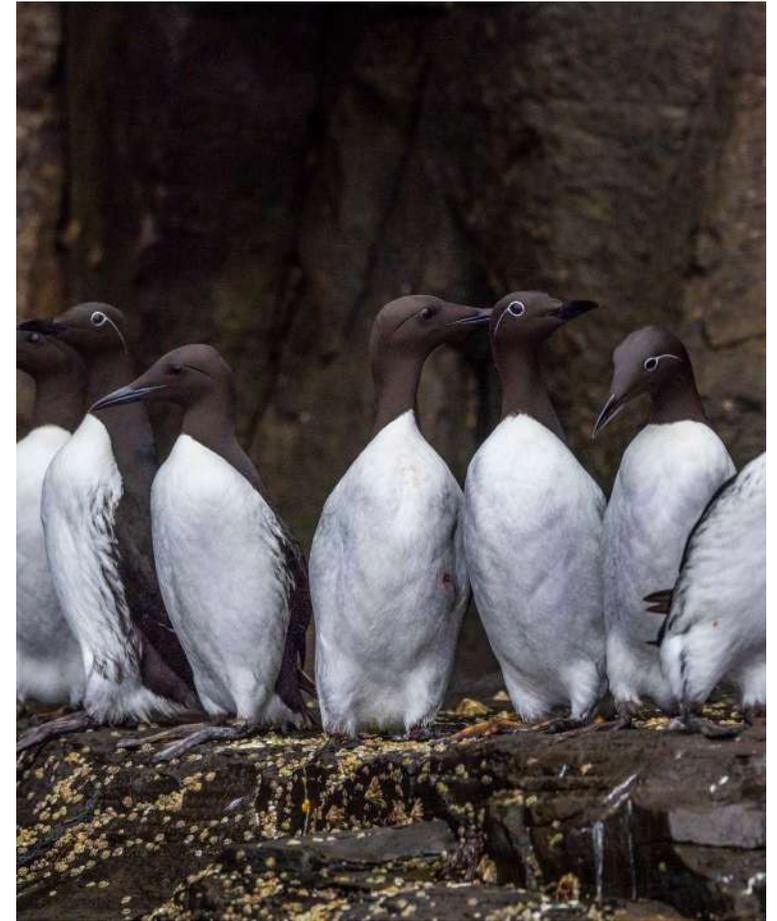
Scotland welcomed us in the only manner befitting of this wild place – with gusting wind, fleeting sunshine and lashing rain, all while providing a rolling swell to the beam of the vessel for much of the morning.

The island of Mousa is often known in the context of the Icelandic Sagas as the temporary home to two young lovers (Thora and Bjorn), forced to flee disapproving family in Norway for the welcoming shores of Iceland. The broch itself is a testament to the building practices of its time, standing for more than nearly a thousand years.

The ship made its way to the isle of Noss, a small island recognised for the incredible ecosystem that thrives there, supporting a vast diversity of birdlife.

With the many attempts to disembark us safely from the ship into Zodiacs, we eventually made our way to the back marina deck, where calmer conditions helped us on our way.









Fair Isle

DAY 3 | Sunday 9 June 2024

Latitude:
59° 42.2' N
Longitude:
001° 24.6' W

Course:
195°
Speed:
9.4 knots

Wind Speed:
27 knots NW
Barometer:
1014 hPa

Air Temp:
9°C

Today, we managed to land on stunning Fair Isle, a remote gem nestled between the Orkney and Shetland islands.

Our first encounter was with the island's famous puffins. We sat in the grass and enjoyed watching these charming birds as they fluttered around their nests; their bright beaks and comical expressions bringing smiles to our faces.

After our delightful time with the puffins, we made our way to the community hall. Here, the welcoming locals greeted us with delicious baked goods and showcased their exquisite craftsmanship.

Tables were adorned with beautifully knitted sweaters, buffs, hats and gloves, each piece a testament to the island's rich knitting tradition. The local artists proudly displayed their creative work, adding to the vibrant cultural tapestry of Fair Isle.

Following a wonderful lunch, we jumped into the Zodiacs to explore the island's scenic cove. As we navigated the waters, we marvelled at the steep bird cliffs teeming with life. Puffins, fulmars, a few eiders, black guillemots and common guillemots created a lively spectacle, with the sky and water bustling with activity.





Baltasund & Hermaness, At Sea

DAY 4 | Monday 10 June 2024

Latitude:
60° 31.9'N
Longitude:
000° 50.3'W

Course:
072°
Speed:
7.9 knots

Wind Speed:
26 knots NW
Barometer:
1020 hPa

Air Temp:
8°C

Our destination today was the Hermaness National Nature Reserve and its famed cliffs full of seabirds. As the 2.5-kilometre hike along the beautifully constructed boardwalk to the cliffs began, the wind and rain decided to grow in strength and settle in. The walk was relatively easy, but the conditions at this early stage were not.

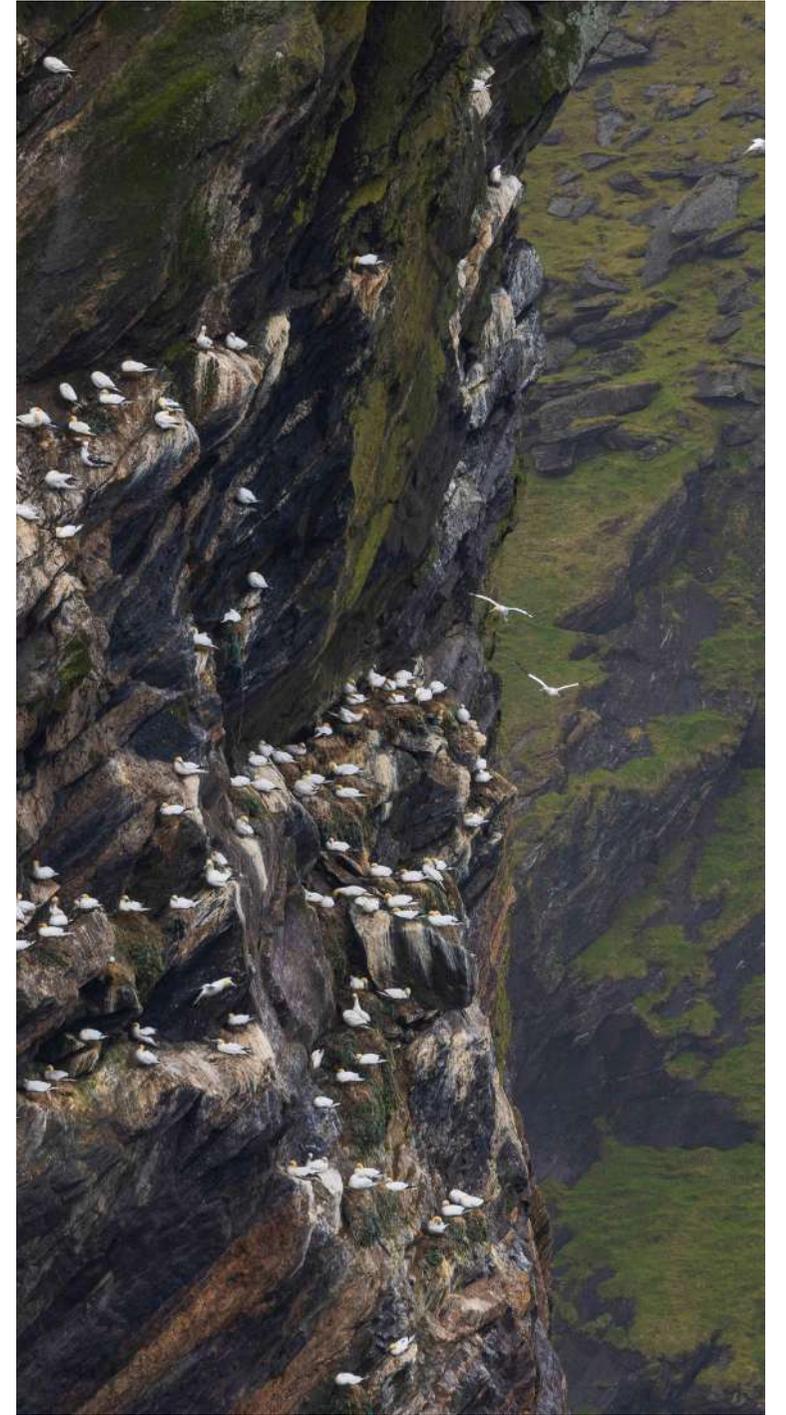
We walked through, passing streams, footbridges and many plants as we progressed towards the cliffs. Cotton grass, orchids, lousewort, sphagnum and deer grass were but a few of the species that kept us scanning busily through the rain as we walked. Finally, as the rain eased, we reached the viewing point and the ocean greeted us. In

the distance, the lighthouse sat proudly in brief breaks of sunshine, among numerous bird colonies on the cliffs.

These cliffs extended vertically from the windswept waves crashing at their base, becoming increasingly covered by gannet colonies as they rose in flight. The gannets were joined by fulmars, the odd puffin, and black-backed gulls, the dark rocks peppered with white signs of life. What a sight, and well worth the walk.

We slowly returned to the ship, accepting our fate that these unforgettable cliffs were the last we would see of Great Britain on this voyage as it was now time to head towards Norway.







At Sea, on our way to Norway

DAY 5 | Tuesday 11 June 2024

Latitude:
62° 40.4' N
Longitude:
003° 58.0' E

Course:
052°
Speed:
10.5 knots

Wind Speed:
32 knots NNW
Barometer:
1022 hPa

Air Temp:
8°C

The first full day at sea began with a well-enjoyed sleep-in as the ship headed north towards Norway. The morning kicked off with Avi's informative lecture at 10.00am, where she delved into the rich history of Norway, setting the stage for the next phase of our voyage.

The afternoon was initiated by Vicky, who engaged everyone in some citizen science activities out on deck. Our expeditioners on board *Greg Mortimer* conducted cloud surveys and engaged in birdwatching, contributing valuable data while enjoying the natural surroundings. This was followed by a fascinating lecture at 3.00pm,

where the topic was the challenging and adventurous experience of sailing the North Atlantic in a Viking boat.

A delightful treat of crepe suzette was served, adding a nice touch to the day followed, by arts and crafts with Steph. The evening recaps were particularly enlightening, with a variety of topics covered by the team.

Steph shared intriguing insights about bogs, Teal recounted the touching story of Bamse the sea dog, Avi addressed questions about Norway from this morning's lecture, and Katja explained the significance of the Gulf Stream.





At Sea, Brønnøysund (Lofoten)

DAY 6 | Wednesday 12 June 2024

Latitude:
64° 451.5'N
Longitude:
011° 15.2'E

Course:
042°
Speed:
9.0 knots

Wind Speed:
7 knots W
Barometer:
1023 hPa

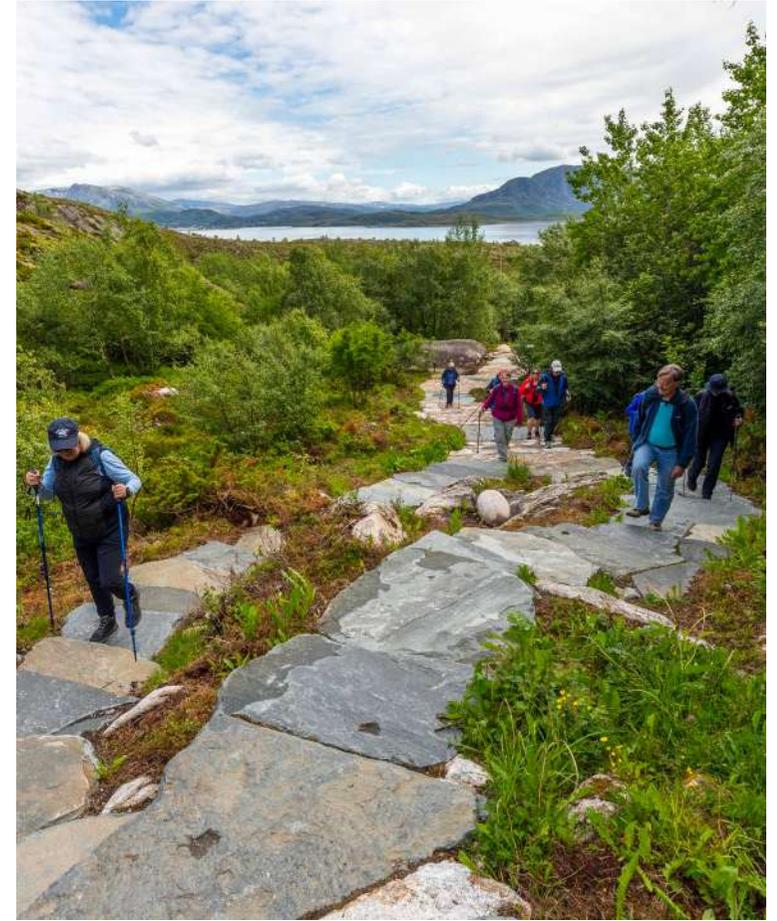
Air Temp:
9°C

In a change to usual procedures, Captain Oleg and his team brought the ship alongside a sturdy quay and we disembarked via the gangway rather than Zodiac ride to the shore, to set foot on Norwegian soil for the first time. Some of our number departed for the aquaculture centre and fish hatchery, to learn about the development of the sector and its importance to the local economy.

The remainder set out to explore Torghatten, a mysterious mountain in the realm of the trolls. Brave souls, not even armed with a leg of lamb or some iron nails!

The distinctive granite mountain is pierced by a tunnel, formed by an arrow shot in rage from the bow of the spurned horseman, Hestemann, at the beautiful Lekamøya as she made her escape from his unwanted advances. However, the quick-thinking troll king of Sømna threw his hat in front of the arrow, saving her from death, but unfortunately not the fate of all trolls as they meet the rising sun. And absolutely nothing to do with post-glacial isostatic rebounding of the earth's crust over several millennia!







Reine & Leknes (Lofoten)

DAY 7 | Thursday 13 June 2024

Latitude:
67° 42.6' N
Longitude:
013° 10.5' E

Course:
357°
Speed:
9.7 knots

Wind Speed:
12 knots NE
Barometer:
1027 hPa

Air Temp:
11°C

Our first stop was the Blacksmith of Sund and Sund Fisheries Museum. Here we watched how simple pieces of metal became wonderful, elegant wrought-iron cormorants in the hands of blacksmith Tor Vegard Mørkved. The glass shop, the quirky fishery museum, and the cinnamon buns in the cafe were further highlights.

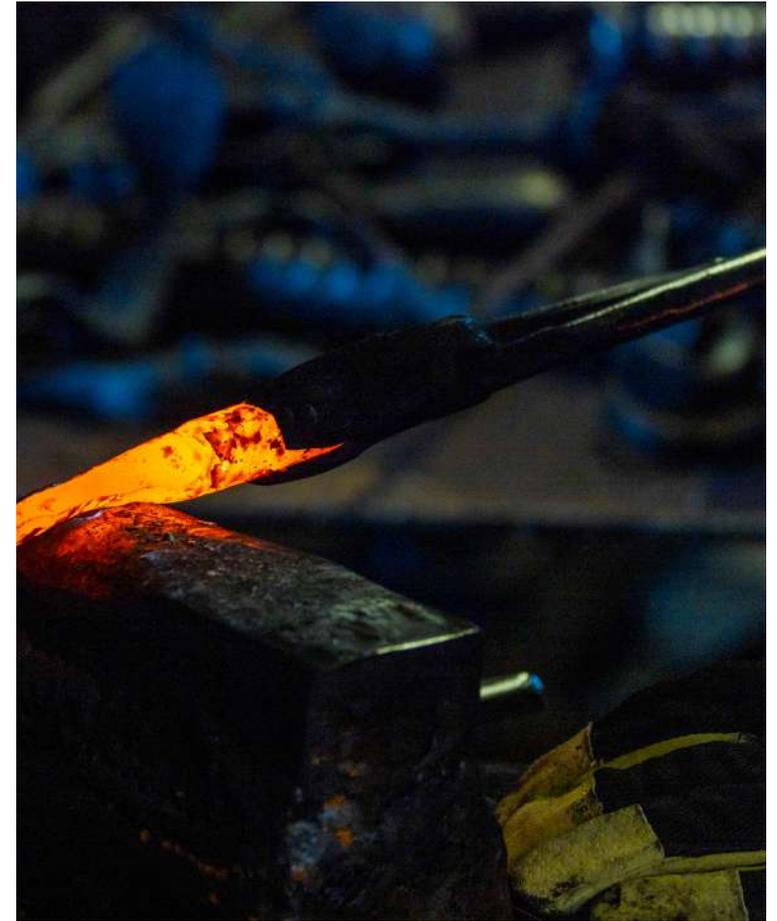
The buses followed the beautiful coastline, even ducking under water when using the tunnel between the Islands of Flakstadøya and Vestvågøya. At Uttakleiv, most of us left the buses and walked the four kilometres to the white-sand Haukland Beach. The weather was wonderful. Blue sky and sunshine made the walk along this easy

coastal path very enjoyable.

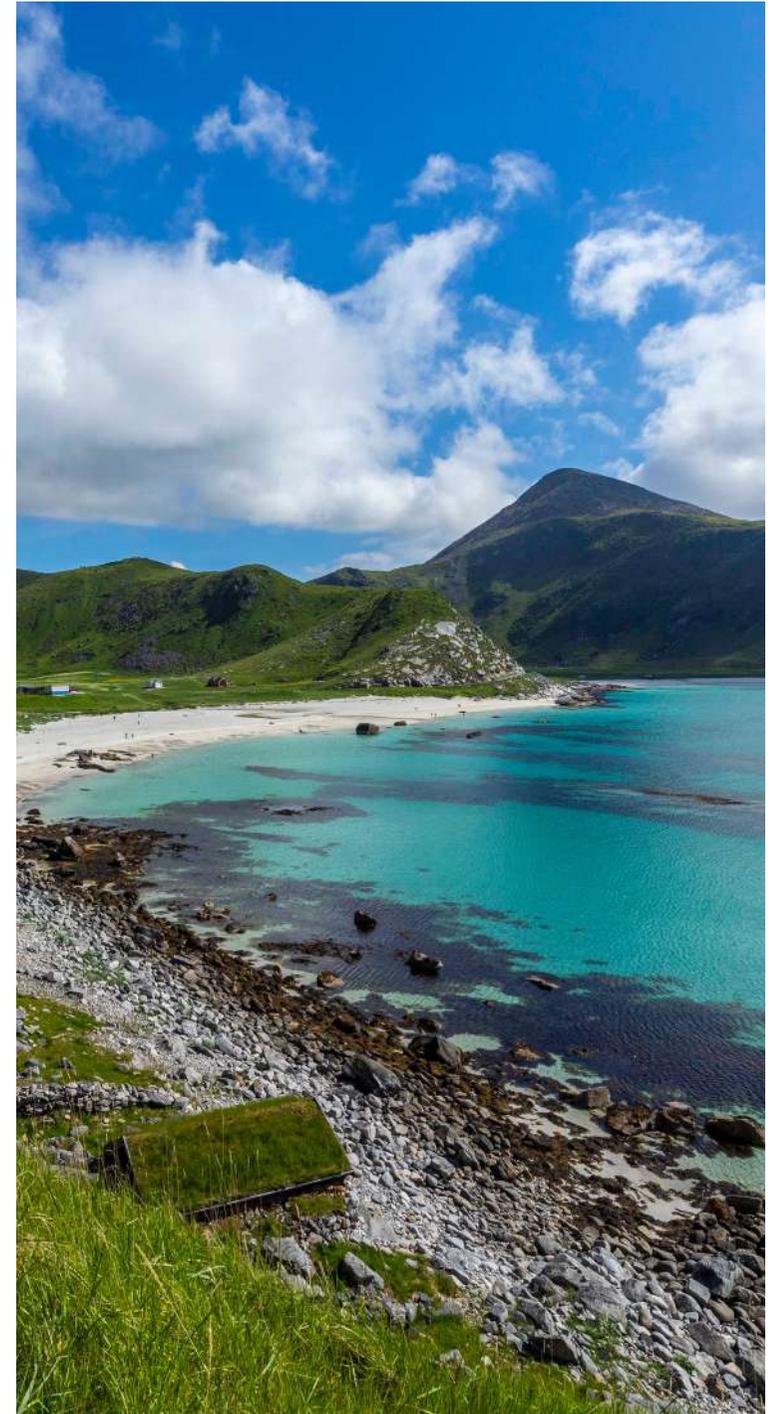
The bus then took us to our next stop, the Lofotr Viking Museum near the small village of Borg. Here we could immerse ourselves in the Viking era.

After the meal, we had time to explore the Viking Museum by ourselves. Some hunted for the Viking ship; others tried on heavy helmets and chain mail – looking fierce and threatening. We could also try to make fire, using sticks, and spinning sheep wool by hand, using a spinning top. The modern cafeteria and souvenir shop enchanted many to part with silver coins.











Svolvær (Lofoten)

DAY 8 | Friday 14 June 2024

Latitude:
68° 13.5'N
Longitude:
014° 34.7'E

Course:
Alongside
Speed:
0 knots

Wind Speed:
1 knot E
Barometer:
1025 hPa

Air Temp:
13°C

For the morning, one group headed out on a guided stroll around Svolvær, visiting the boat repair yards, old fishermen's huts, and of course the wooden fish-drying racks – *hjell*. We were given the chance to try the dried stockfish, which most sensibly refused, and those who accepted soon regretted.

The walk took us across the elegant Svinøya Bridge arching over the harbour and we were shown the distinctive Svolværgeita (The Goat) pinnacle of the mountain behind.

In the afternoon, the hikers began walking a steep, winding trail up Tjeldbergtinden. Splitting into three groups, the fastest hikers desperately tried to keep up with the local guide! It couldn't have

been a more stunning day to take in the majesty of these jagged granite peaks rising straight up from the pristine azure waters. The steep rocky trail emerged above the birch forest at over 1000' above sea level, where we were treated to spectacular 360-degree panoramic views of the Vestfjord, Svolvær, Kabelvåg and Vågan, and all the way over to mainland Norway in the east. Several athletic expeditioners scrambled right to the summit and were treated to the spectacle of a white-tailed sea eagle soaring above.









At Sea, on our way North to Svalbard

DAY 9 | Saturday 15 June 2024

Latitude:
68° 27.0' N
Longitude:
012° 23.9' E

Course:
020°
Speed:
12.1 knots

Wind Speed:
32 knots NE
Barometer:
1025 hPa

Air Temp:
9°C

The day was at sea, en route to Bjørnøya (Bear Island), the southernmost island of the Svalbard archipelago. Days at sea are for relaxation, reflection and education. The latter component began with Avi and her presentation on the history of Svalbard. The archipelago has a rich history, beginning with its European discovery by the Dutch navigator Willem Barentsz. Many others would follow – whalers, sealers and other profiteers, looking to exploit resources such as coal, marble and minerals, and others willing to risk much more so as to leave their mark in the annals of polar exploration.

This lecture was followed by Katja and her presentation focusing on all matters pertaining to ice. Roughly 60 per cent of Svalbard is

covered in ice, and depending on the season, ringed by an even greater extent of frozen sea. Ice is what defines this extreme group of far-north islands. To understand the ecology of the realm, one must have a firm grasp of ice in all its forms. Katja covered this concept with balance and a well-honed delivery.

As the day drew to a close, the sky remained grey and ominous. The winds and swells began to subside, but the air remained decidedly chilly. Indeed, the icy tendrils of the Arctic were wrapping themselves around our vessel. Anticipation was mounting. What would tomorrow bring?





At Sea, Bjørnøya

DAY 10 | Sunday 16 June 2024

Latitude:
73° 16.7'N
Longitude:
017° 31.3'E

Course:
028°
Speed:
11.2 knots

Wind Speed:
21 knots NE
Barometer:
1029 hPa

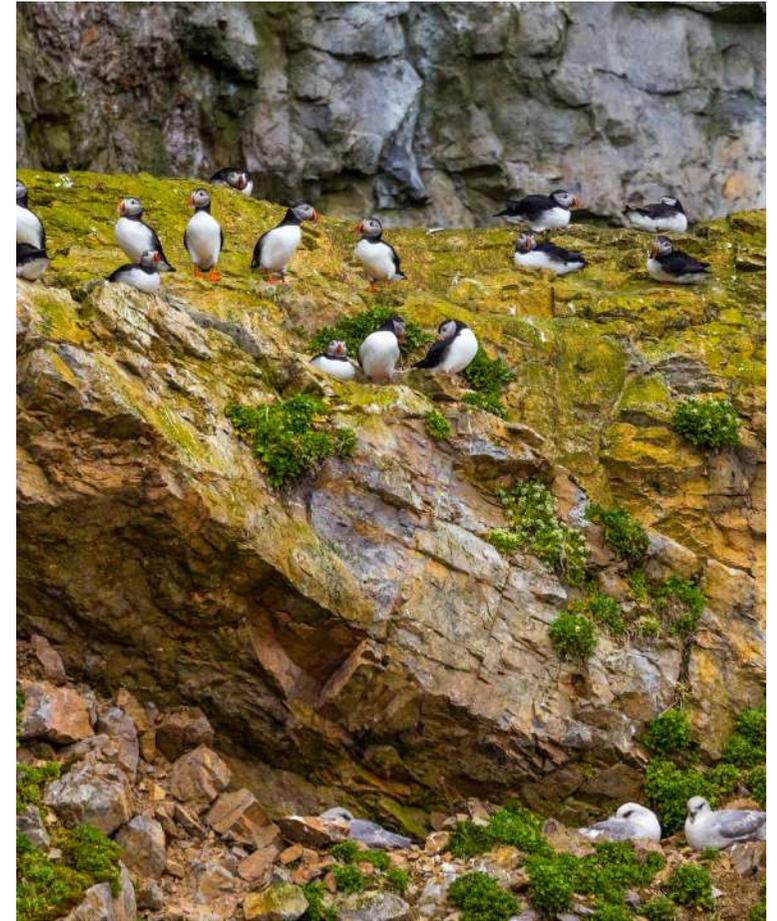
Air Temp:
9°C

Morning on the *Greg Mortimer* began at a relaxed pace. Expeditioners and Expedition Team spent time on deck and in the observation lounge, looking at passing birds, and the occasional whale. Humpback whales and minke whales were spotted in the distance by a few keen eyes. The sea state was incredibly calm for these waters, creating perfect conditions for wildlife watching, and even yoga, led by Natalie.

In the afternoon, Bjørnøya (Bear Island) came into sight. Its tall imposing cliffs, sparse vegetation, and sea-stacks seemed as uninviting to us as it must have seemed to Barentsz's crew when they discovered the island in 1596 – and they weren't viewing it from a ship with in-floor heating and a sauna!

After lunch, the ship entered a protected cove on the southern tip of the island. From here, expeditioners disembarked into Zodiacs and kayaks, and cruised the cliffs, caves and sea-stacks, observing the kittiwake and guillemot nesting colony. The gentle swell rolling into the caves made a deep rumbling noise, and the sound of the birds added to the auditory experience. In the words of kayak guide Teal, the afternoon was 'wow, just wow'.







At Sea, Bamsebu

DAY 11 | Monday 17 June 2024

Latitude:
76° 40.6'N
Longitude:
014° 51.7'E

Course:
335°
Speed:
11.2 knots

Wind Speed:
10 knots SE
Barometer:
1037 hPa

Air Temp:
2°C

The day began with our first views of the island of Spitsbergen, looming to the east as we sailed northwards towards our destination of Bamsebu. John started us off with his lecture Polar Bear – Part 2, covering reproduction, genealogy and distribution. This was followed by another lecture from Avi about the infamous SA Andrée's Arctic balloon expedition, known for its ingenuity, such as using hot air balloons made from silk.

As we reached Bellsund, the fog started to lift, revealing an incredible sunny day in the Arctic. With the weather on our side and everyone ensuring the area was clear on approach, we went for lunch where many of us enjoyed the brilliant baked potato bar. With our bellies

full, the Expedition Team headed ashore to prepare the landing site, ready for us to set foot on Spitsbergen for the first time and stretch our legs after a couple of days at sea.

As we were preparing for the landing, Justine announced over the PA system that we had beluga whales about half a kilometre astern from the ship. After enjoying some cetacean watching, it was finally time to go ashore. Once on land, Dan gave us a briefing on where we could explore and highlighted some of the sights, including red phalaropes spotted by Katja. Bamsebu itself is one of the best-preserved beluga whaling sites in Svalbard, evident from the sheer number of beluga bones piled next to the hut.







Poolepynten, St. Jonsfjorden

DAY 12 | Tuesday 18 June 2024

Latitude:
78° 23.1'N
Longitude:
012° 07.7'E

Course:
335°
Speed:
6.6 knots

Wind Speed:
11 knots N
Barometer:
1036 hPa

Air Temp:
4°C

Today began with our first landing at Poolepynten. The calm morning air greeted us as we set foot on this remarkable arctic landscape, where we encountered a group of walrus lounging by the shore.

After soaking in the stunning scenery and wildlife, we returned to the ship, where the buffet lunch awaited us. As we dined, the ship made its way towards St. Jonsfjorden. Our journey was briefly paused by the potential sighting of an unidentified animal. Though we never confirmed what it was, everyone at least agreed that it was white, sparking much excitement and speculation among us all.

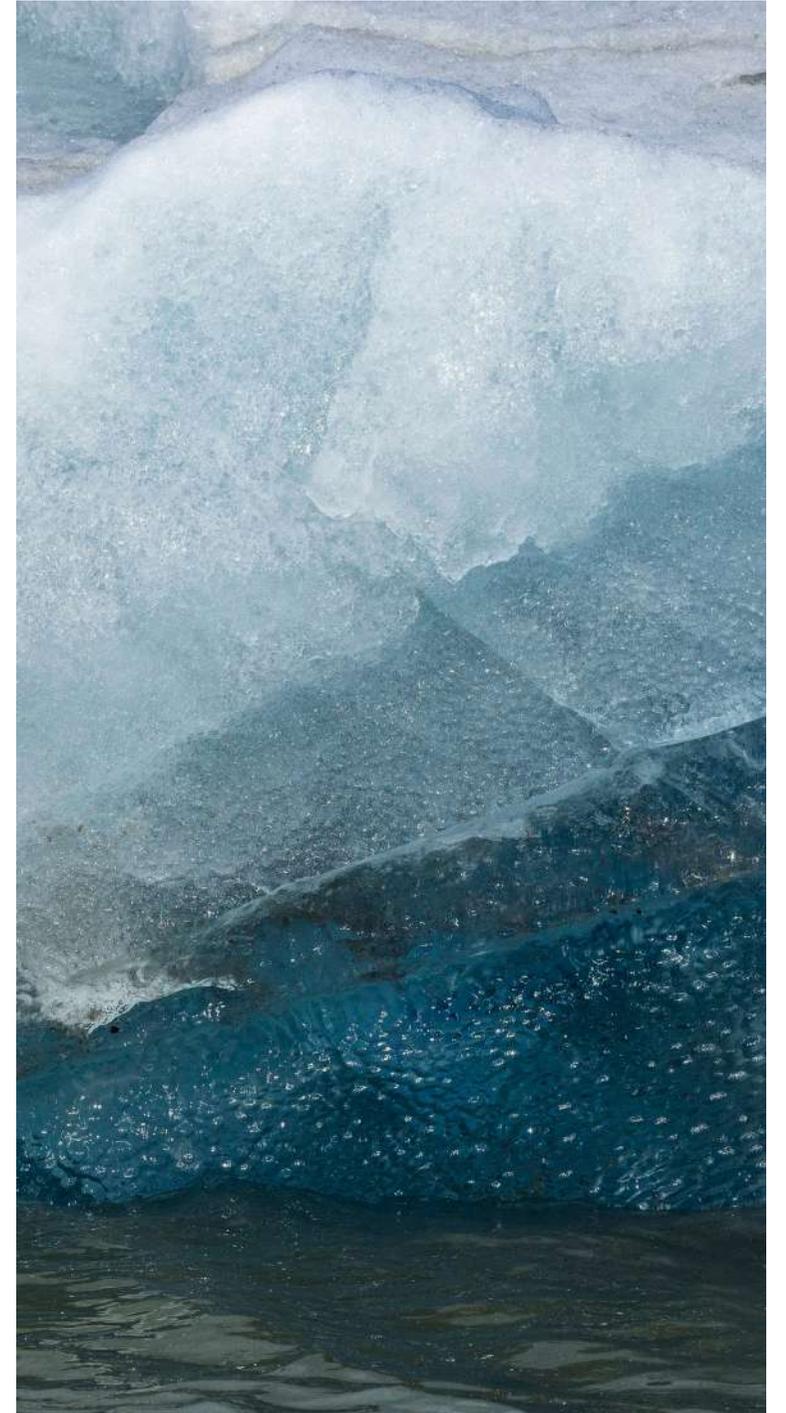
We reached the head of the fjord and embarked on a Zodiac cruise around two awe-inspiring glacial valleys. The beauty of the ice

formations and the serene environment left us stunned. During the cruise, we were fortunate to spot a herd of reindeer gracefully moving along the ridgeline. We also observed bearded seals and ringed seals resting on the fast ice and occasionally swimming in the fjord. Black guillemots were seen on the water, while fulmars flew gracefully overhead.











Skansbukta, Ekmanfjorden

DAY 13 | Wednesday 19 June 2024

Latitude:
78° 23.9' N
Longitude:
015° 26.3' E

Course:
059°
Speed:
7.6 knots

Wind Speed:
7 knots NW
Barometer:
1030 hPa

Air Temp:
7°C

We entered Isfjorden, Svalbard's great western fjord and home to its capital, Longyearbyen, with strong winds lashing from the east-south-east. By the time we entered Skansbukta near the eastern terminus of the grand warren, winds had abated, and we mounted an operation. Notable history, botany and geology were the highlights.

Daniel, our Expedition Leader, had no solid plan at the beginning of the day. After lunch and a discussion with the bridge team, he did. It was a simple plan – yet bold. He played a hunch gleaned from his acumen – find fast ice (sea ice held fast to the land), and we increase our chances of spotting a polar bear. It was a hunch, but a calculated one. We found the ice, and then we found the bear striding upon it. It settled into a nap; we launched Zodiacs and moved in for more intimate observations. There was no finer way to cap such an expedition.

Our final transit westwards through Isfjorden to Longyearbyen is a striking contrast to the initial north from Aberdeen, in that it is marked by giddy anticipation of sights yet unseen. Heading to Longyearbyen, we are satiated from our 13-day adventure. From the amazing sights of gannets on the wing to swarming clouds of auks, from reposing seals to stately icebergs, from coveted first accomplishments to enduring pelting inclement weather in Scotland and revelling in blazing daylight glare in northern Norway, from rugged, ice-covered mountains in brilliant sunshine to the amusing antics of Atlantic puffins, and from the pungent odor of seabird guano to the crispness of salty, sea air, and finally to and from our encounter with the Arctic's signature animal, our senses have been filled to their limits.









Longyearbyen

DAY 14 | Thursday 20 June 2024

Latitude:
78° 14.4 N
Longitude:
015° 35.8' E

Wind Speed:
5 knots SSE
Barometer:
1026 hPa

Course:
340°
Speed:
9.1 knots

Air Temp:
3°C

Aurora Expeditions thanks you for joining us aboard *Greg Mortimer* as we crossed the Arctic Circle from Scotland and sailed along the coast of Norway to Svalbard. We hope to see you on the high seas again some day!

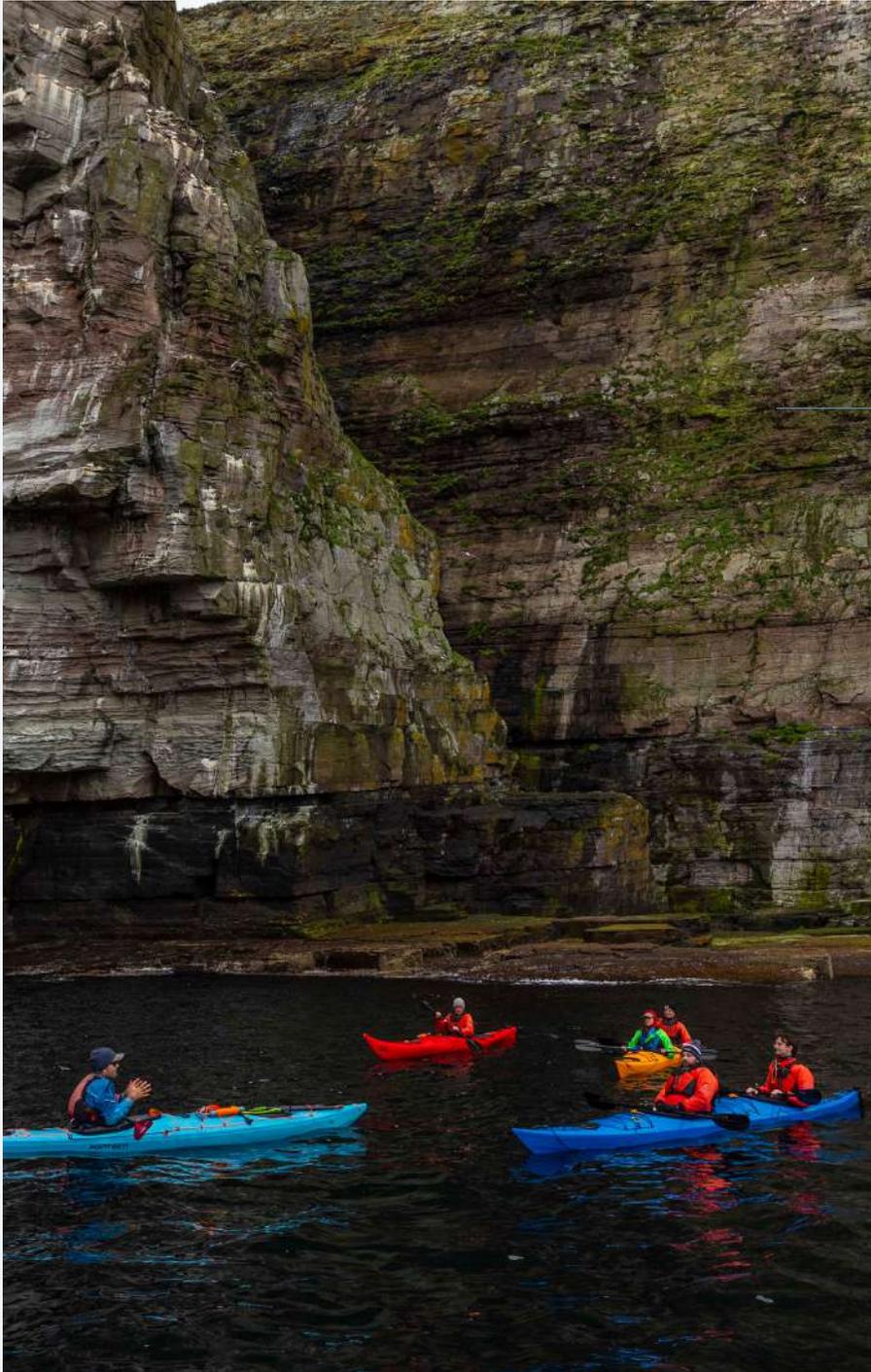


BBQ

DAY 11 | Monday 17 June 2024







Kayaking Log

with Kayak Guides: Peter Wainwright & Teal Morgan

Saturday 8 June, PM – Noss Island
7.2 km

While conditions were slightly 'stiff' for our first outing and it looked a bit intimidating from the ship, we knew we could take advantage of the shelter under the huge cliffs of Noss head. We loaded into the Zodiac for the first time and towed the kayaks over to the base of the island. Tens of thousands of gannets, guillemots and fulmars – with a couple of great skuas thrown in the mix – soared overhead, creating a cacophony of bird calls and activity. Overwhelmed by the sheer quantity of birdlife choking the skies above us, swirling around us, and wheeling overhead on their way to and from their nests, we took five minutes to simply just absorb this sensory overload. Once we felt we could turn our attention back to kayaking, we lowered ourselves into the kayaks, and began working on a few skills. With refined paddle strokes and improved control of the kayaks we began exploring the dramatic

coastline beneath the nesting seabird cliff, which towered over 180 metres above our heads. We took turns reversing into a deep-sea cave until we could no longer see any light behind us. Paddling to the south we ventured into the channel between Cradle Holm and Noss Island, however, the tide was too low to allow full passage. Despite this we still marvelled at the determination of the sheep farmers in the 17th century who strung a rope bridge across this channel, to allow additional sheep to cross and graze the sea-stack. We also came across a wall covered by several large, pink sea urchins. We could have continued exploring this amazing site for hours, but it was time to get back to the ship and join the Captain for drinks.



Number of Kayakers: 7
Total Paddle Outings: 8
Total Distance Paddled: 64.7 km

Kayakers:
Kevin Edgar
Chris Martin
Paul Martin
Peter Martin
Wes McNeil
Bops (Christine) Menefee
Liz Ryder

Sunday 9 June, AM – Fair Isle 3.5 km

The wind was blowing from the north-west, so luckily, we were able to get shelter below the impressive coastline of the island. We started off weaving our way through some narrow channels underneath two arches. Continuing with the wind behind our backs we paddled towards Goorn, where we took shelter in a cove, to develop our skills ready for some more intricate manoeuvres later in the paddle. We covered draw strokes, which help us to move our kayaks sideways. While paddling around Goorn, we encountered half a dozen seals hauled out on the rocks. It was hard to know what to focus on between the fulmars, puffins, gannets, common guillemots, black guillemots and grey seals. We reached Sheep Rock to find three huge arches going straight through, over 200ft long. Deciding on the middle and largest arch, we made our way through. Once through the arches, we saw another half-dozen seals playing around in the swells and currents running through. The bay south of south rock offered many more

opportunities to explore the caves and archways that Fair Isle has to offer. Towards the end of the trip, we found a few narrow channels to get through. Timing the swells, we would paddle, letting the water take us through.

Sunday 9 June, PM – Fair Isle 2.8 km

It was very exciting to be able to get a second outing on Fair Isle, which was far from guaranteed given the challenging anchorage for the ship. Within minutes of launching, we were paddling through multiple intricate arches. Even the smaller caves often contained a surprise tunnel. But the real prize was at Sheep Rock. This monolith rising hundreds of metres above the sea and barely connected to the main island, has three parallel tunnels – each running more than 200' feet through the island – a wonder of rock architecture that highlights the sheer ceaseless power of the ocean. We passed back and forth through each of the tunnels, unable to get enough of this natural cathedral-like feature, but the highlight was the narrowest channel.

Too narrow by far to use our paddles, we palmed our way along the slanted rock walls on each side, driven along by a current from behind us while being thrust up and down by a rolling swell that met us head-on. If sea kayak guides could design the ultimate kayaking playground, it would surely be based on elements of Fair Isle.

We were wanting to continue on farther south of Sheep Rock to explore yet more tunnels and through-caves, however, we spotted what at first seemed to be a common seal playing with a fishing buoy. Upon closer inspection however, we realised the seal was actually caught in a nasty fishing line that was snagged to the sea floor. After several failed attempts to cut the line with our kayak knives, Teal fetched Vicky, our naturalist, to assist from the Zodiac. After several close calls with seal teeth, they successfully managed to cut the line and free the seal completely. It was very gratifying to see the seal swim off and then haul out on some rocks – likely exhausted, but free to live and feed again.

Friday 14 June , AM & PM – Svolvær 22.5 km

Beginning the paddle in the skerries to the west of Litlmolla, our intention was to circumnavigate the island. We began by paddling eastward along the North shore next to the low-lying woodland of the island primarily arctic birch. We rounded the northeastern corner and headed south following the coastline looking out to the sharp peaks of mainland Norway. Round the south end of the island we discovered the most beautiful scenery yet. Here the pink granite cliffs rose steeply right above the beaches, and these beaches were a gorgeous white sand that extended out into a lagoon ringed by small islands.

After lunch it was decided we would continue the paddle to the south to the island of Skrova and explore the beautiful little islands and white sand coves at the north end. From here we wound our way west and under a little bridge to enter into the main harbour for the island.



Sunday 16 June, PM – Bjornøya 7.8 km

We dropped anchor in the bay at Sørhamna. Once ready, we hopped into our Zodiacs and drove towards a waterfall, where we dropped our kayaks into the water. We paddled southwards along the cliffs, where we found a nice cave wide enough for us all to fit into for a group photo. Continuing around the point we found another bigger cave filled with nesting kittiwakes, which we entered one kayak at a time. We had the opportunity to do some rock gardening, and further develop the skills and 'timing with swell' that we had begun to learn in Fair Isle. The swells were around one metre high, travelling westwards and crashing against the cliff line, creating a big booming noise. We found the shipwreck of the Russian refrigerated cargo ship, the *MS Petrozavodsk*, which ran aground in 2009. We made our way to Kapp Kolthoff where the current was ripping past. On the south side of the cape there was a huge arch, which we paddled into. Coming to the end of our journey, we paddled behind the shelter of a large sea-stack with enough guillemots on it that it looked like black grassland.

Monday 17 June, PM – Bamsebu 6.7 km

A pod of beluga were spotted to the north of the ship and we were able to make out the backs of these white whales surfacing in the distance, from the back of the ship, just before we launched. The scout party was still scanning the shore as we paddled in and began paralleling the coastline and raised beaches north towards Kapp Toscana. With the tide quite low, we were only just able to paddle through some of the shallow channels. There were numerous eider ducks and arctic terns everywhere. We passed by four old rowing boats lying upside down on the beach that were used up until the 1930s in a white-whale fishery. At the headland of Richardodden, we paddled around a couple of islands and poked our heads around the corner towards Malbukta. However, we were keen to also land in front of the private cabin at Bamsebu, so we loaded the kayaks into the Zodiac, dropped them off at the ship and returned to shore.

Tuesday 18 June, PM – St. Jonsfjorden 8.4 km

It's rare to have the option of two glacier fronts to choose from, but this afternoon was one of those days. From the headland that was previously covered with ice where the two glaciers once met we paddled north, exploring a cleft bay and then following a lead into the extensive sea ice. Fortunately, this lead opened up to another, bigger lead, in front of the fast ice below the main glacier front. Here we spent some time watching the curious harbor seals that kept coming up to check us out. Eventually we let them be, and started working our way back out through the sea ice and over to the west shore where we could paddle among the small grounded bergy bits. All around us there were surreal backdrops of incredible mountain scenery, and the reflections were stunning. Sadly, the time came to load into the Zodiac and head back to the ship, after a wonderful afternoon in flat calm conditions.

Wednesday 19 June, AM – Skansbukta 5.8 km

We headed for the old trappers' cabins first on the southern shore, before getting a radio call that several walrus were hauled out near there. We turned downwind, admiring the waterfalls on either side of the bay. The long fetch from the south-easterlies across Isfjorden were generating some quite nice waves, and we experienced a little surfing into the bay. Pretty soon we were passing the landing site and the old remains of the short-lived gypsum mining operations from the early 20th century. We kept going, keen to see the puffin cliffs around the corner, where a small subspecies of the Atlantic puffin nest on cliff ledges rather than in the normal burrow. The waves got a little bigger and Paul had a wave break right over him. Past the puffin cliffs, a sighting of an arctic fox kept us paddling a little farther, and everyone got a glimpse of the animal slinking off up the slope, hunting birds. Here we loaded the Zodiac up and motored back to the landing site for a walk among the cultural remains, and Peter outperformed anyone by being the only one on the ship to go for a dip at the beach.





Mammal Sightings

Bird Species	June													
	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
Wheatear*			●	●										
Meadow Pipit			●	●										
Rock Pipit		●					●	●						
House Sparrow			●	●		●	●							
Blackbird			●	●			●							
Robin						●								
Skylark			●	●			●							
Snow Bunting											●	●	●	●
Chaffinch						●	●	●						
Twite			●	●										
White / Pied Wagtail							●	●						
Willow Warbler*						●								
Chiffchaff*						●	●	●						

Mammal Species	June													
	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
Grey seal			●	●										
Common seal			●								●			
Ringed seal												●		
Bearded seal												●		
Walrus												●	●	
Minke whale			●	●										
Humpback whale											●		●	
Beluga												●	●	
Common dolphin		●												
White-beaked dolphin										●	●			
Polar bear														●
Arctic fox														●
Reindeer											●	●	●	●

Map

ACROSS THE ARCTIC CIRCLE 7-20 June 2024 Scottish Isles

- Sites visited:
- 1 Aberdeen
 - 2 Noss Island
 - 3 Fair Isle
 - 4 Bhaltaisund / Hermaness Nature Reserve



ACROSS THE ARCTIC CIRCLE 7-20 June 2024 Norwegian Coast

- Sites visited:
- 5 Brønnøysund & Torghatten
 - 6 Lofoten – Reine & Leknes
 - 7 Svolvær
 - 8 Bjornøya



ACROSS THE ARCTIC CIRCLE 7-20 June 2024 Svalbard

- Sites visited:
- 9 Ahlstrandhaløya (Bamsebu)
 - 10 Poolepynten
 - 11 St Jonsfjord
 - 12 Skansbukta
 - 13 Dickson Fjord (Polar Bear!)
 - 14 Longyearbyen





Our Expeditioners

Prashant Aghnihotri

Jane Archer

James Baker

Eleanor Baker

Srimanta Basumallik

Marilyn Blythe

Michael Blythe

Janelle Bradley

Janet Bruce

Peter Bull

Hilary Bull

Helen Cawley

Jonathan Cawley

Aparna Chaturvedi

Narelle Crux

John De Graaff

Deborah De Lazzari

Roberto De Lazzari

Jenny Douglas

Mark Ebdon

Kevin Edgar

Amanda Edgar

Anne Findlay

Neal Fogarty

Barbara Fogarty

Pablo Garcia Saldana

Eve Gauden

Stan Gauden

Stephen Gray

Jan Gray

Carol Griffiths

Alberto Guadarrama

Betty Hack

Alan Harvey

Wendy Harvey

Mike Head

Gillian Head

Lucy Healey

Vauri Henre

Michael Holics

Natalie Houlding

Hazel Kettle

Richard Kettle

Penny Krause

Mark Krause

Cornelia Lafferty

Michael Lafferty

Susan Larsen-Sorterup

Richard Lewis

Sheree Lewis

Elizabeth Loughnane

Peter Martin

Paul Martin

Christopher Martin

Peter Mason

Janet McKinlay

Wes McNeil

James McNicol

Janice McNicol

Lindy Mead

John Mead

Christine Menefee

Nicholas Merriman

George Michael

Jen Northey

Jane Panton

Linda Pearsall

Jonathan Pearsall

Rona Pozner

Louis Pozner

Kit Randall

Beno Rojo

Liz Ryder

Jane Schurmann

Helen Scivyer

Jeff Shaw

Marlies Shaw

Russell Smith

Wendy Smith

Arthur Sulzer

Swee Tan

Anne Urquhart

Anthony Waite

Nigel Webb

Lady Felicity Wheeler

Sir Roger Wheeler

Expedition Team

Expedition Leader: Daniel Stavert
Assistant Expedition Leader: Isabelle Howells
Assistant Expedition Leader Trainee: Tamsin Both
Onboard Expedition Manager: Justine Bornholdt
Firearms Manager: Jeff Nagel
Naturalist and Citizen Science Coordinator: Vicky Inglis
Geologist: Ben Comeskey
Marine Biologist: John Kernan
Historian/Archaeologist: Avi Schluter
Climatologist/Glaciologist: Katja Riedel
Photography Guide: Adrian Wlodarczyk
Lead Kayak Guide: Peter Wainwright
Kayak Guide: Teal Morgan
Expedition First Responder/Medic: Steph Kempton
Onboard Expedition Assistant: Ana Prado
Zodiac Master: Sergei Hincu

Senior Officers & Heads of Department

Master: Oleg Kapko
Chief Officer: Andrey Zakalashnyuk
Safety Officer: Vladimir Kolesnikov
Bosun: Bobby Payumo
Deck Cadet: Carlos Florido Carvalo Da Silva
Ship Doctor: Javier Martinez Rodriguez
Support Doctor: Eliana Caro Garzon
Chief Engineer: Dimitar Vasilev
First Engineer: Iurii Peretiaka
Hotel Director: Alex Barkar
F&B Manager: Rajesh Murao
Chief Purser: Pia Blanca
Executive Chef: Edgar Mangalinao
Sous Chef: Hubert Ramiro Barreto

Head Waiter: German Orlando Cayasso Wilson
Hotel Controller: Orlando Costa
IT Officer: Ihor Yesmienieiev
Receptionist: Joy Acelar
Receptionist: Jonathan Valdez
Head Stateroom: Roniel Garcia
Spa Manager: Venila Vythilingum
Able Seaman: Angelo San Antonio
Able Seaman: Iwan Setiawan
Able Seaman: Hardik Dipakbhai Rao
Able Seaman: Roberto Ixtan Mejia
Able Seaman: Nikola Georgiev
Able Seaman: Francis Marvin Linga

Photography thanks to:

Adrian Wlodarczyk

Peter Wainwright

Teal Morgan



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