



Polar Bears AND WILDLIFE OF SPITSBERGEN

WITH CHRIS LEAHY

JULY 9-19 2012



Mass Audubon

www.massaudubon.org 800-289-9504

The Polar Bears & Wildlife of Spitsbergen

EXPEDITION CRUISE TO ARCTIC NORWAY

JULY 9-19, 2012

A DECADE AGO WE OFFERED OUR FIRST VOYAGE TO SPITSBERGEN and the Svalbard Archipelago. At that time many clients predicted word would quickly spread that Spitsbergen was easily on par with such venerated nature and wildlife destinations as Antarctica, East Africa and the Galápagos. Clearly they were impressed with the animals and spectacular arctic landscapes they saw with us in Spitsbergen!

We've operated several Spitsbergen cruises since that first voyage, and many people have learned about the joy of traveling to arctic Norway's polar wonderland! Today, we can say with unequivocal certainty that there are even more compelling reasons to visit this incredible unspoiled wilderness.

For starters, Spitsbergen is one of the world's best locations—if not the best location—to view polar bears in an unspoiled wilderness. On past trips, we've watched bears hunting seals on the pack ice, swimming between ice floes, traveling with cubs and sparring with rivals over freshly-caught prey. As they roam their crystalline kingdom, they do so amid a backdrop of rugged coastal mountains, expansive calving glaciers and open water leads. Bear watching doesn't get any better than this!

For polar bear viewing, the comparison to Churchill, Manitoba is unavoidable. Yet, compared to Churchill, Spitsbergen offers travelers much more to see and do. Besides seeing polar bears, there's a wealth of other captivating experiences. Walruses, reindeer, arctic foxes, bearded, ringed and harp seals, Minke, beluga and, occasionally, humpback whales are among the mammals you're likely to see—often at very close range. We'll board inflatable Zodiac boats and cruise along the foot of towering sea cliffs, home to tens of thousands of raucous seabirds. All of these wildlife sightings are made in the relatively benign weather (and calm seas) of Spitsbergen's summer, as opposed to the extreme biting cold of interior Canada in winter or the frequently wild seas experienced during an Antarctic voyage.

From the comfort of our stabilized ship we'll travel through scenery that is both awe-inspiring and uplifting. Our trip is offered at a time when we can reasonably expect plenty of pack ice—prime habitat for bears. Each day will uncover new wonders and we will take advantage of many wildlife viewing opportunities as they unfold.

Throughout the journey you will be guided by a team of expert naturalists. During our excursions to shore, as well as during formal and informal presentations throughout the cruise, your leaders will help you gain a deeper appreciation of all we see in Spitsbergen and the Arctic. Their passion for, and knowledge of, the region's flora, fauna, history and geology is second to none, but you'll also find them entertaining, as well as thoroughly enjoyable travel companions! Join us on our unique and extraordinary journey to the Arctic to see **The Polar Bears & Wildlife of Spitsbergen**.

Please join me for this adventure. To get more details or sign up, call Karen O'Neill at 800-289-9504.

Chris Leahy
Massachusetts Audubon Society



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The Polar Bears & Wildlife of Spitsbergen

There is no northern place more beautiful and chock-full of wildlife than the pristine arctic islands of Svalbard. Few lucky travelers have visited this spectacular realm of the polar bears and fewer still on an expedition cruise that is totally dedicated to the interests of wildlife and nature enthusiasts!

More than ten degrees north of the Arctic Circle, the Norwegian archipelago of Svalbard comprises four large mountainous islands and hundreds of smaller ones. Spitsbergen—the largest island in the archipelago—has four settlements including Longyearbyen, the world’s most northerly town. With a mild climate due to the northernmost influence of the Gulf Stream, the summer snow line recedes to between 1,600 and 2,300 feet, uncovering verdant patches of green and red mosses and delicate wildflowers. Two national parks, 15 bird sanctuaries and two plant reserves protect half of Svalbard’s spectacular landmass.

On the northern edge of the archipelago, drifting pack ice crowds the shore and it is common to find polar bears hunting seals and walrus. The Norwegian Polar Institute has estimated that there are over 2,000 polar bears in the Svalbard region. It is also home to enormous concentrations of seabirds, including large colonies of dovekies, black-legged kittiwakes, thick-billed murre and northern fulmars. Veteran TravelWild tour leader Wayne Lynch reports:

“Svalbard is the most beautiful arctic destination I have ever seen, and surpasses anything in North America. In only a week of travel I saw 13 polar bears, several of which were on seal kills. I even watched a subadult bear stalk a pair of walrus lounging on the ice. The walrus were another highlight. We used Zodiacs to approach the animals snoozing on the pack ice and were able to get so close that we could photograph them with a wide-angle lens. Then, while cruising back to the ship, an ivory gull and a Ross’s gull flew over our Zodiac—two of the most glamorous birds in the arctic. Wow, what a day!”

Our cruise begins and ends in Longyearbyen. Our primary focus is navigating through the pack ice and into glacier-filled fjords in search of polar bears as the bears, in turn, hunt for their primary focus—ringed and bearded seals. In addition we make many Zodiac landings to view walrus, Svalbard’s unique reindeer, extensive bird colonies, and circumpolar plants, many of which are in full bloom. Unlike some cruises, there is no wasted “at sea” time—wildlife-viewing starts the moment



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moment the ship is underway. The seas around the islands are usually remarkably calm and make a very pleasant cruising experience.

If following polar bears as we slowly make our way through the pack ice, hiking across wildflower-flecked tundra, Zodiac-cruising through the shifting glitter of the pack ice, encountering walrus groups on ice floes, visiting teeming colonies of vociferous seabirds, and watching the midnight sun sketch golden patterns across the ice is your idea of the ideal summer adventure, this trip is definitely for you! Join Chris Leahy, Wayne Lynch, Dennis Mense, and Chris Morgan on an unforgettable cruise to one of the most remote and uniquely beautiful locations on Earth.

“It was better than we expected, and we expected a lot!”

— E. Chejlava, Spitsbergen Cruise Participant



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WHAT'S INCLUDED IN THE CRUISE FEE

- 10-night cruise on the *Polar Pioneer*
- All meals aboard the ship
- All land excursions by Zodiac throughout the cruise
- Series of lectures and slide presentations throughout the cruise
- TravelWild Expeditions staff—all expert naturalist guides

Longyearbyen Land Package

An optional land package is available for \$350 per person in double-room occupancy or \$450 per person for single-room occupancy. The package includes a hotel night in Longyearbyen, a group welcome dinner, breakfast the morning of embarkation, and three passenger transfers with two additional and separate luggage transfers.



Please note: Round trip flights between your home airport and Longyearbyen are not included in the tour fee.

Since flights into Longyearbyen are limited, we recommend you plan to arrive on July 8, 2012, the day before embarkation.



The Polar Bears & Wildlife of Spitsbergen

DAY-BY-DAY ITINERARY: JULY 9-19, 2012

We highly recommend arriving in Longyearbyen a day before embarkation and we offer an optional land/transfer package for your convenience. This includes a night at the historic Spitsbergen Hotel, a transfer from the hotel to the ship on embarkation day and, at disembarkation, a transfer to town for exploration and lunch before transferring to the airport for your flights home (flight SK4425 only). If you would like to have even more time to explore and enjoy Longyearbyen, we can easily add an additional night at the Spitsbergen Hotel.

DAY 1 (JULY 9) We begin our journey in Longyearbyen, Spitsbergen's largest community. We embark the *Polar Pioneer* between 4 PM and 5 PM in the afternoon. As we steam westward out of Isfjorden, we encounter numerous seabirds, including dovekies, thick-billed murre, northern fulmars, black-legged kittiwakes and, perhaps, a puffin or two. (D)



DAYS 2–10 These next nine days are dedicated to exploring the Svalbard Archipelago, especially the environs of its biggest and most spectacular island—Spitsbergen. Our exact day-by-day itinerary remains flexible, depending on local weather, ice and wildlife conditions, but the ship is totally at our disposal to go where and when we please. At the top of our “to do” list is polar bear watching. We head to the pristine pack ice to search for the great white bears and also hope to encounter them swimming, hunting and inquisitively inspecting our ship. In addition to searching for bears, we spend our days discovering and learning about other wildlife, as well as the flora, geology and history of Svalbard. We are very likely to experience up close meetings with Svalbard reindeer grazing along mossy banks, walrus on land and amid the ice floes, arctic foxes, bearded and ringed seals and, possibly, whales. Birdlife is abundant and throngs of wheeling seabirds, including millions of dovekies, are commonly seen. Other interesting High Arctic species include red-throated loons, barnacle and pink-footed geese, common and king eiders, long-tailed ducks, arctic terns, red phalaropes, purple sandpipers, ivory and glaucous gulls, long-tailed, pomarine and parasitic jaegers, great skuas, Atlantic puffins, black guillemots, rock ptarmigans and snow buntings. We have a remarkable amount of time available for wildlife viewing, exploring and taking photos in the 24 hours of daylight. (BLD)



DAY 11 (JULY 19) We arrive back in Longyearbyen during the night and disembark as a group after breakfast. Participants may disembark earlier to meet morning flights home. (B)

**email travel@massaudubon.org
or call 1-800-289-9504 today!**

The Polar Bears & Wildlife of Spitsbergen

“POLAR PIONEER”

The *Polar Pioneer's* size and maneuverability are perfectly suited for small group polar expedition travel. This ice-strengthened research ship plied



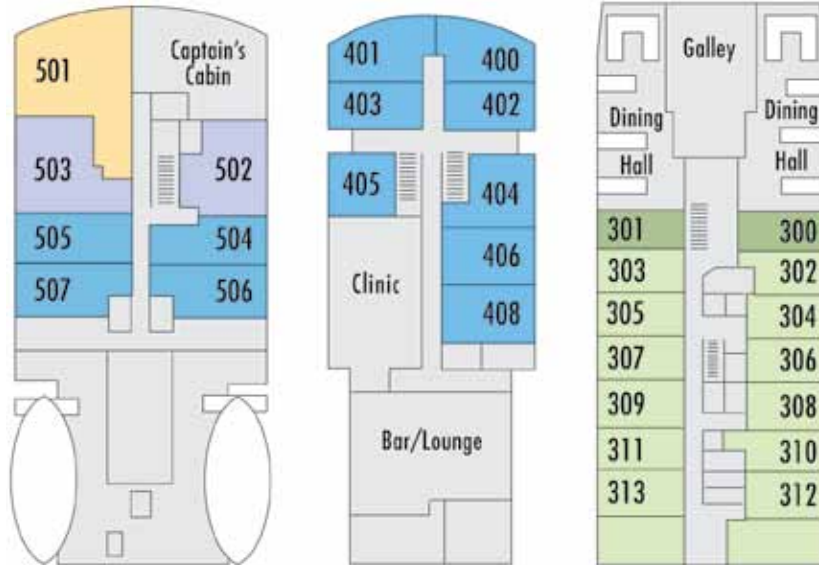
offer excellent wildlife-viewing opportunities, while a fleet of inflatable Zodiacs transport passengers to shore for close-up wildlife viewing.

the waters of the USSR's northern coast for many years and was refurbished in 2000 to provide comfortable, safe accommodations for 54 passengers.

The captain and crew are among the most experienced ice navigators in the world. The ship's bridge and viewing decks

All cabins have outside portholes and ample storage space. A common area with a bar/lounge/library complements the simple and spacious accommodations. Meals are prepared by European chefs and served by Russian wait staff.

Deck Plan



Triple Shared
 Twin Shared
 Twin Private
 Mini Suite
 Suite

TOUR DATES: JULY 9-19, 2012

Cruise Fees

CABIN CATEGORY	FEE
Triple, Shared Bath	\$ 5,995
Twin, Shared Bath	\$ 6,695
Twin, Private Bath	\$ 7,695
Mini Suite, Private Bath	\$ 8,795
Suite, Private Bath	\$10,295

Prices are per person and listed in US Dollars. Due to the remote location of this cruise,

Emergency Evacuation Insurance is required. Information on how you can purchase this insurance will be included with your confirmation packet after you register for the trip.

The Polar Bears & Wildlife of Spitsbergen

EXPEDITION STAFF

Our cruises are floating classrooms where we experience wildlife and natural history in the field and then interpret what we've seen through a series of lectures, discussions and presentations. Integral to this approach are the leaders we choose for your expedition. In addition to planning the day's activities, guiding you safely to shore and making evening presentations, they will introduce you to the wonders of Spitsbergen, dramatically enriching each encounter with the island's flora and fauna. There is truly no better way to experience the splendor of the Arctic!



Chris Leahy currently holds the Gerard A. Bertrand Chair of Natural History and Field Ornithology at Mass Audubon. He has been a professional conservationist for more than 35 years and served as Director of Mass Audubon's Center for Biological Conservation. His interests in natural history are comprehensive, and he is a recognized authority on birds and insects. His published works include *Birdwatcher's Companion to North American Birdlife*, *The First Guide to Insects*, and *The Nature of Massachusetts*. He has also edited a series of authoritative books on the flora and fauna of New England. Chris has designed and led natural history explorations to over 70 countries on all of the continents, including many ventures to the Arctic and Antarctic. He is especially fascinated with the world's great remaining wilderness areas and biodiversity hot spots such as Gabon, Madagascar and Mongolia. He lives with his family in Gloucester, Massachusetts.



Dr. Wayne Lynch is a former emergency physician who has worked for more than 30 years as a full-time naturalist, science writer and photographer. We credit Wayne with introducing us to the wonders of Spitsbergen. After visiting the Svalbard Archipelago in 1997, he proclaimed it, "the most beautiful arctic destination he had ever seen." That is indeed high praise coming from someone who has traveled the world over—including much of the Arctic—and who has led more than 150 trips worldwide! With Wayne's knowledge, help and a little prodding, we developed our highly-successful Spitsbergen cruises. In addition to the fantastic work he does for TravelWild, Wayne is the author of award-winning books and television documentaries, a popular guest lecturer, and Canada's best-known and most widely-published professional wildlife photographer. His photo credits include hundreds of magazine covers and tens of thousands of images published in over two dozen countries. He lives in Calgary, Alberta.



Chris Morgan is a veteran TravelWild Expeditions leader and renowned ecologist and environmental educator. Chris has an exceptional ability to convey his passion for wildlife and bear conservation and make it accessible through filmmaking and presentations. His latest project, *Bears of the Last Frontier*, airs May 2011 on the PBS NATURE series. Chris is also producer and host for BEARTREK, a global campaign for bear conservation using research, filmmaking and social media, and he is the leader of the acclaimed Grizzly Bear Outreach Project (GBOP) in the North Cascades in Washington State. (GBOP's work encompasses wolf and cougar conservation as well.) British-born and a dedicated adventurer, he has spent the last 20 years studying bears on every continent where they exist. With an M.S. in Advanced Ecology, Chris was honored as Outstanding Environmental Educator of the Year and has been a frequent lecturer at Western Washington University's Huxley College of Environmental Science in Bellingham.



Dennis Mense is recognized throughout the nature and adventure travel industry as one of the most respected, trusted and sought-after expedition leaders in the business. By any standards his knowledge of, and experience working in, polar regions is impressive, spanning more than 20 years of planning and leading dozens of expedition cruises and land-based tours to remote destinations, including Antarctica, the Russian Far East, the North Pole, Spitsbergen, Franz Josef Land, Greenland, Arctic Canada, Alaska and many more. With a degree in marine biology from the University of Hawaii and many years conducting marine-related research, Dennis is an excellent interpreter of nature as well. While he has traveled the world extensively, seeing and doing more than most, he still has a genuine enthusiasm for nature and wildlife that is sure to rub off on all who travel with him. Dennis is Sales Director for TravelWild Expeditions and lives with his family on Cortes Island in the Canadian Gulf Islands.

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ENROLLMENT INFO

RESERVATIONS A deposit of 25% of the trip fee and a completed and signed **Personal Information/Registration/Release Form** will reserve a place for you on this trip. An additional 25% of the trip fee is due on 9/14/11. Final payment is due on 2/3/12. Deposits and trip payments may be made by check or bank transfer in US dollars. For deposits only we accept VISA and MasterCard. Final payment of the trip fee is due 150 days before departure. If final payment is not received when due, we reserve the right to treat your reservation as cancelled, as if in writing, as per our cancellation policy below. Trip fees are quoted in US dollars and must be paid in US dollars.

CANCELLATIONS /REFUNDS We must receive written notice of your cancellation, at which time the following are nonrefundable:

IF CANCELLATION IS MADE	CANCELLATION FEE
9-16-2011 or prior	50% of deposit
9-17-2011 to 1-4-2012	25% of trip fee
1-5-2012 to 3-15-2012	50% of trip fee
3-16-2012 or after	100% of trip fee

No partial refunds are made for unused portions or services of a trip for any reason whatsoever. Trips are sold as a package only. This policy also applies to tour extensions and independent travel arrangements. Cancellation fees are not transferable.

HEALTH CONSIDERATIONS Our trips are within the capabilities of average people in good health. Some of these trips require the capability of walking for several miles over uneven trails, stepping from a small boat to a wave-washed rocky beach, flying in small planes and helicopters, and occasionally hiking at high elevations. If you have concerns about your own capabilities and/or fitness as it relates to a trip, please inquire with our office before reserving a space. **By forwarding a signed Personal Information/Registration/Release Form and trip deposit, you certify that you do not knowingly have any physical or other conditions of disability that would create a risk for you or other trip participants.** We reserve the right to request a doctor's statement of good health. The company's or trip leader's judgment shall provide the ultimate determination of an individual's ability to embark upon or to continue a trip. Once a trip has been confirmed, medical circumstances will not be considered as exceptions to our cancellation policy. We assume no responsibility for medical care or for special dietary requirements.

INSURANCE Emergency evacuation insurance is required of all participants. Because we travel to remote areas, we suggest you purchase more than the minimum evacuation coverage. Additionally, all participants are strongly urged to purchase comprehensive travel protection insurance (many such policies include emergency evacuation coverage.) Information about insurance will be sent with your enrollment confirmation.

CONTACT SCHEDULE Participants will receive three mailings before the trip departs: **1. Initial Tour Information** confirms the deposit and provides pre-departure information. **2. Invoice, Practical Information** provides clothing and gear recommendations, climate data, applicable health advisories and reading list. **3. Final Itinerary/Tour Information** includes arrival instructions, itinerary revisions (if any), hotel addresses, trip telephone contact information and participant list. We welcome your calls or email messages to info@travelwild.com.

TRAVELWILD EXPEDITIONS COSTS Pre-departure information supplied upon enrollment describes the specific costs that are included in your trip fee. Generally these costs include lodging in double room occupancy, all meals (specified in each trip's itinerary as BLD denoting breakfast, lunch or dinner), ground transportation during the trip in vans or small busses, air transportation as specified, meal and baggage, tipping, and guide services provided by the trip leaders. **Not included** are airfare or other transportation from your home to the trip staging location, airport departure taxes, insurance, beverage and bar expenses, bottled water, tips and gratuities to local guides abroad, phone calls, passport or visa expenses, laundry or items of a personal nature. Gratuities to TravelWild Expeditions trip leaders are optional and always appreciated. Rates are based on group tariffs; if the trip does not have sufficient registration, a small party supplement may have to be charged.

Single accommodations are available for a supplemental cost in many locations; please see the pre-departure trip information or call our office for details. You will be charged the single supplement fee if you desire single

accommodations or if you wish to have a roommate, but one is not available. In some remote locations, clients with single rooms are infrequently compelled to share a room due to circumstances beyond our control. In such cases, appropriate per diem refunds will be made reflecting the direct cost of the single room at the facility where clients are required to share. There is no additional single supplement fee on ship-based cruises if you request a roommate and one is not available.

Cost increases may occur unexpectedly due to rising costs of airfares, ground transport, accommodations and currency fluctuations, among others. TravelWild Expeditions may be compelled to amend prices, and we reserve the right to do so without prior notice. An increase in trip prices shall not be sufficient grounds for any refund of funds paid for the trip other than as determined by the terms of our cancellation policy.

LOGISTICS Whenever possible, our trip participants are lodged in comfortable, modern hotels. We select from among the best available accommodations, but refrain from extravagance. Meals are always a special part of our trips for the camaraderie they engender and the opportunity to try new foods from different areas. Depending on the trip and specific locale, participants order restaurant meals from the full menu or, less frequently, table d'hote. Some trips include picnic lunches in the field. Participants are responsible for their own beverage and bar tabs at meals. Our itineraries are intended as examples only. Participants should allow for flexibility due to changes in weather, natural history or cultural events, or other logistical arrangements deemed necessary by TravelWild Expeditions or our leaders.

RESPONSIBILITY TravelWild Expeditions, and/or their Agents act only as agents for the passenger in regard to travel including, but not limited to, sightseeing, meals, lodging, transportation, and all other services whether by railroad, motorcar, motor coach, boat, ship or aircraft and they assume no liability for injury, damage, loss, accident, delay or irregularity which may be occasioned either by reason of defect in any vehicle or for any reason whatsoever, or through the acts or default of any company or person engaged in conveying the passenger or in carrying out the arrangements of the trip.

They can accept no responsibility for losses or additional expenses due to delay or changes in air or other services, sickness, weather, strike, war, quarantine or other causes. All such losses or expenses will have to be borne by the passenger, as trip fees provide for arrangements only for the times and locations stated. Baggage is at the owner's risk entirely.

The right is reserved to 1) substitute hotels of similar category for those indicated and to make any changes in the itinerary or transport where deemed necessary or caused by changes in air schedules or equipment substitution; 2) cancel any trip prior to departure, in which case full refund of the paid trip funds will be given, but TravelWild Expeditions is not responsible for any other trip preparation expenses such as penalized or non-refundable air tickets, visa fees and medical related expenses; 3) substitute trip leader(s) for the leader(s) originally specified, in which case the substitution is not a basis for participant cancellation or refund other than provided by our normal cancellation policy; or 4) accept or retain any person as a member of any trip.

Trip prices are based on tariffs and exchange rates in effect at the time prices are originally set, and are subject to adjustment in the event of any change therein.

A Release and Assumption of Risk form must be signed by each participant prior to the commencement of the trip. Participation by any trip member will be declined in the absence of the signed release of liability form, with no trip fee refund. No modification to the terms of the Release and Assumption of Risk form will be accepted.

Should TravelWild Expeditions or anyone acting on their behalf be required to incur attorney's fees and costs to enforce this agreement, the enrolling trip participant(s) agree(s) to indemnify and hold them harmless for all such fees and costs. In the event a lawsuit is filed, the enrolling participant(s) agree(s) to do so solely in the County of King in the State of Washington. Certain ship owners require the use of pre-printed ticket forms which limit the ship owner's and operator's liability. When such tickets are used, the passenger is bound by the terms of these tickets with respect to the passenger's legal relationship to the owners and operators of the ship, their agents (TravelWild Expeditions), and the ship's crew. The payment of a deposit or any part or full payment for a reservation on any trip shall be deemed to constitute consent to the conditions contained herein.

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