

ITINERARY
SPITSBERGEN & SVALBARD ARCHIPELAGO
A Cruise to the Norwegian Arctic
July 2-14, 2024



The Polar Bear and the Ivory Gull, two icons of the high Arctic, will be on our list of must-see animals. We've had excellent experiences with both on recent tours. Photograph by participant Amy Sheldon.

We include here information for those interested in the 2024 Field Guides Spitsbergen & Svalbard Archipelago cruise:

- a general introduction to the tour
- a description of the birding areas to be visited on the tour
- an abbreviated daily itinerary with some indication of the nature of each day's birding outings

These additional materials will be made available to those who register for the tour:

- an annotated list of the birds recorded on a previous year's Field Guides trip to the area, with comments by guide(s) on notable species or sightings (may be downloaded from our web site)
- a detailed information bulletin with important logistical information and answers to questions regarding accommodations, air arrangements, clothing, currency, customs and immigration, documents, health precautions, and personal items
- a Field Guides checklist for preparing for and keeping track of the birds we see on the tour
- after the conclusion of the tour, a list of birds seen on the tour

With its rugged mountains, sweeping tundra, and enormous ice-caps, Spitsbergen embodies the high Arctic. The largest island in the Svalbard Archipelago—part of Norway to its south—the island lies just 600 miles from the North Pole. Beginning in the capital of Longyearbyen, we'll sail completely around the island (*depending on ice conditions*) aboard the 110-passenger *Plancius*. *Plancius* is excellent for expedition travel and is comfortable, eminently practical, and perfectly designed for smooth cruising in Arctic waters with great viewing from various decks.

Known as a region that is uncompromising to those species that inhabit it, the Arctic is one of the most beautiful and yet least birded areas of the world. The list of birds occurring in the far North is small when compared to tropical reaches, but the quality of the species is great. The magnificent bird cliffs along the Spitsbergen coast are a breeding ground for

tens of thousands of Black Guillemots and Thick-billed Murres, with Atlantic Puffins, Dovekies, Northern Fulmars, and Black-legged Kittiwakes also in abundance on or around the cliffs. On the flowering tundra, Arctic Terns, Common Ringed Plovers, Purple Sandpipers, Great Skua, and jaegers thrive alongside fantastic scenery. And then there are those elusive gulls—Sabine’s, and the ghostly Ivory, a bird so dependent on ice-covered environs it seems to have mystical qualities. Spitsbergen’s coastal waters support several seal species including Bearded and Ringed, and the small Beluga, or white whale, and Minke, Fin and even Blue whales are often seen. Walrus can be found lounging on the ice-floes and on the beaches, and the lush tundra is home to the indigenous Svalbard Reindeer and Arctic Fox. And, with 20 percent of the world’s Polar Bear population, one of the largest carnivores in the world, we have excellent opportunities to see these magnificent creatures. Each of our past tours has had several sightings of this most engaging of mammals.



Many seabirds nest on the cliffs of the Svalbard Archipelago, and we'll have a chance to see several species of alcids, including the tiny Dovekie. Photograph by participant Becky Hansen.

It is important to note that our dependable operators will do their best to stick to the itinerary as planned, but remember that the expedition leader will work with the captain, and s/he will make decisions that may deviate from our itinerary based on weather, ice conditions, safety, etc. Also, each expedition leader has his/her favorite sites so no two sailings are the same.

We want to be sure you are on the right tour! Below is a description of the physical requirements of the tour. If you are concerned about the difficulty, please contact us about this and be sure to fully explain your concerns. We want to make sure you have a wonderful time with us, so if you are uncomfortable with the requirements, just let us know and we can help you find a better fitting tour! Field Guides will not charge you a change or cancellation fee if you opt out within 10 days of depositing.

Physical requirements of this tour

- **TRAILS & WALKING:** We usually do a morning and afternoon landing on shore each day unless we are in the pack ice. There will be moderate amounts of walking (up to 2 miles per day) on soft ground that will be wet and muddy in places. You will need to wear your rubber boots for all shore excursions. During shore excursions, the expedition staff usually offers three options, e.g., a longer hike to climb a ridge or ice field; a more moderate hike, where more time is available for photography and birding and might also entail going uphill; or a more leisurely walk for those who do not wish to venture far. Typically, our birding walks will be the moderate option.

- **POTENTIAL CHALLENGES:** We travel between ship and shore by zodiac, a sturdy inflatable boat designed for shore landings. Participants should be able to climb into the zodiacs by stepping down the gangway which requires good balance and some agility. Wet landings on shore require stepping into 6-8 inches of water with your rubber boots for a step or two to reach the beach. This is all reversed when returning to the ship. Everyone boarding a zodiac is required to wear a life vest. Access to some vista points and seabird nesting cliffs may require some short scrambles up steep, icy, or muddy slopes that may be covered in tussock grass. Rough seas are not usually a problem, but wind, salt spray, and rain are to be expected at times.
- **PACE:** Spitsbergen lies well above the Arctic Circle, so it experiences the midnight sun from April to August. In 24-hour daylight, it is easy to forget to rest or sleep, but we keep the tour to a standard routine of eating and sleeping hours.
- **WEATHER:** Temperatures could range from the mid-30s to the low 50s, but winds often make temperatures feel cooler. Rain showers are possible. A sunny day with little wind can seem quite balmy on deck.
- **BATHROOM BREAKS:** We use modern facilities aboard the ship.
- **OPTING OUT:** All shore excursions are optional and participants can easily opt to sit out a day or sometimes a half-day when we are aboard the ship.

Additional Information: This is a trip on which to relax and soak in the sights and the scenery: We are either confined to the ship or—during the landings—our wanderings are constrained by the geography and the need to stay in a group. This gives the opportunity to observe behavior, take photographs, learn from specialists about more than just birds, and make friends (with people and wildlife!). While on land, we will be in potential areas for Polar Bears, so each group is required to stay together. At least two members of the expedition staff will be with each group and will be carrying rifles and noise making flares to drive bears away if we happen to encounter one.

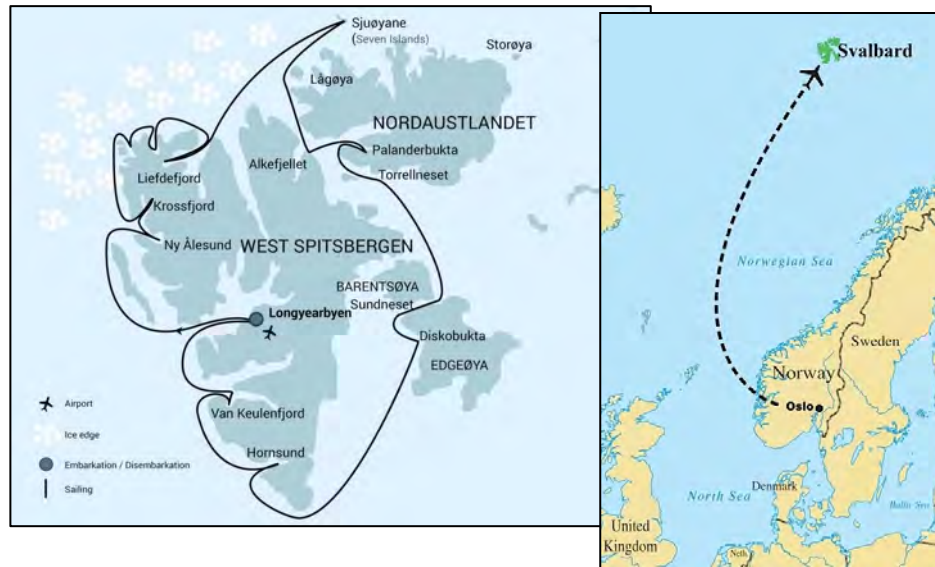
Although Spitsbergen is close enough to the North Pole to become an Arctic freezer in winter, because the Gulf Stream delivers warm water to its coast, it has a remarkably mild climate. The average temperature on the west coast in summer is around 41°F (5°C), and in winter, 10°F (-12°C). In general, the temperatures on the east side are lower than on the west. As Spitsbergen lies far above the Arctic Circle, it experiences the midnight sun from April to August. In 24-hour daylight, it is easy to forget to rest or sleep, but we will do our best to keep the tour to a fairly standard routine of eating and sleeping hours.

If you are uncertain about whether this tour is a good match for your abilities, please don't hesitate to contact our office; if they cannot directly answer your queries, they will put you in touch with the guide.



*Pink-footed Geese and other waterfowl will be nesting on the tundra during our visit.
Photograph by participant Becky Hansen.*

Itinerary for Spitsbergen & the Svalbard Archipelago: A Cruise to the Norwegian Arctic



Arrival in Norway—The tour begins in Longyearbyen; however, to travel to Longyearbyen it is necessary to fly from Oslo, Norway. We strongly recommend arriving in Longyearbyen on July 3 to avoid any flight delays that could jeopardize boarding the ship the following day, July 4. The flight from Oslo to Longyearbyen is currently scheduled to depart at 9:55 a.m. on July 3. While it may be possible to travel from the US to Oslo and on to Longyearbyen without staying an extra night in Oslo, we strongly advise that all participants arrive in Oslo by July 2 and spend the extra night there. **For most travelers on US airlines, staying the extra night means that you will need to depart the US on July 1.**

Many participants on this tour come early to Norway to visit the museums and sites in Oslo and they find hotels on their own that fit their itinerary; however, we recommend staying at the Park Inn by Radisson Airport Hotel Oslo West, which is only ten minutes from the airport. The hotel is located in a semi-rural setting and the area within a few blocks of the hotel is home to such widespread European birds as White Wagtail, Jackdaw, Blue and Great tits, Fieldfare, and Chaffinch, among others.

Those who stay at the Park Inn by Radisson Airport Hotel Oslo West on July 2 may plan to gather for a no-host dinner (at your expense) at the hotel restaurant at 6:00 p.m., then do a bird walk near the hotel to see some generally widespread northern European birds if we have enough light. Your guide will be staying at the Park Inn by Radisson Airport Hotel Oslo West, and those staying there will transfer together to the airport on July 5 for the flight to Longyearbyen. (Flights to and from Longyearbyen are not included in the tour fee or land fee, and are important to book as soon as the tour is operational.) **Participants staying elsewhere must make their own way to the Oslo airport for the morning flight.**

Pre-tour accommodations and expenses in Oslo are not covered in the tour fee and will be at the clients' expense. The "Land Fee" portion of the tour cost will cover the pre-cruise night in Longyearbyen on July 5 and the post-cruise night of July 15 in Oslo.

Day 1, Tue, 2 July. Arrival in Oslo. This will be the arrival day into Oslo for those not wishing to come early. Those participating in the "Land" portion of the tour should make their way to the Park Inn by Radisson Airport Hotel Oslo West by way of the shuttle bus described in the information bulletin. Make sure you are headed to the Oslo **West** as there is another Radisson located at the airport itself.

Day 2, Wed, 3 July. Depart Oslo for flight to Longyearbyen. After breakfast at our hotel in Oslo—for those staying there—we will transfer to the airport for the flight to Longyearbyen, the administrative capital of the Svalbard archipelago. After arriving at the Longyearbyen airport in the afternoon, we will transfer to our hotel in the main business district of this small town. We will likely do a bird walk along the tidal flats where we could find Barnacle Geese, Common Eiders, Common Ringed Plover, Purple Sandpiper, Arctic Terns, and perhaps a surprise. There will also be time, for those who

wish, to stroll around this former mining town, whose parish church and Polar Museum are well worth visiting. We will have dinner in town and enjoy the midnight sun. Night in Longyearbyen.

Day 3, Thu, 4 July. Longyearbyen; boarding the ship in the afternoon. After breakfast at the hotel, we will do another bird walk in the vicinity of Longyearbyen, where Ivory Gull is a distinct possibility, and have more time to explore the town. It doesn't take long. After checking out of our rooms in the late morning, we will store our luggage at the hotel before having lunch in town. **Lunch will be on your own today** (see information bulletin). Later in the afternoon we will retrieve our luggage and transfer to the pier to board *Plancius*, usually about 4:00 pm. After getting settled into our cabins there will be a required safety and lifeboat drill before we set sail, and we will have dinner as we head out of Isfjorden. All nights will be on the *Plancius*.



*On the tidal flats near Longyearbyen, we'll watch for birds such as this female Common Eider and her fluffy chick.
Photograph by participant Doug Clarke.*

Day 4, Fri, 5 July. Krossfjorden and on to Ny Ålesund. Heading north along the west coast of the island, we'll arrive by morning in Krossfjorden; from here we'll take zodiacs for a cruise along the 14th of July Glacier and probably make a landing. A colorful variety of flowers will be in bloom on the slopes near the glacier, while large numbers of kittiwakes and Thick-billed Murres nest on the nearby cliffs. There is also a good chance of spotting Arctic Fox here, patrolling the base of the cliffs just in case a chick falls from its nest, and Bearded Seals may also be cruising the fjord.

In the afternoon we'll sail to the small town of Ny Ålesund, the world's most northerly settlement. Once a mining community served by the world's northernmost railway, which can still be seen, Ny Ålesund is now an Arctic research center. Near the town is a breeding ground for Barnacle and Pink-footed geese and Arctic Terns, and the ponds around town might produce a few shorebirds and, perhaps, Red-throated Loon. Visitors interested in the history of Arctic exploration may want to walk to the anchoring mast used by Amundsen and Nobile on the airship *Norge* before their flights to the North Pole in 1926.

Day 5, Sat, 6 July. Liefdefjorden and tundra walk at Reindyrflya. Near the mouth of Liefdefjorden, we will go ashore for a walk on the tundra of Reindyrflya. Sailing into Liefdefjorden, we will cruise near the face of the impressive Monaco Glacier. The waters of the glacier front are a favorite feeding spot for thousands of Kittiwakes and the fjord is known for summering Polar Bears.

Days 6-7, Sun-Mon, 7-8 July. Landing at Phippsøya, into the pack ice north or west of Phippsøya. We will have our northernmost landing at Phippsøya in the Seven Islands north of Nordaustlandet. Here, we will be at 81 degrees north, roughly 600 miles from the geographic North Pole. Polar Bears inhabit this region, along with Walrus, and perhaps, Ivory Gulls. After landing, we will sail to the pack ice and cruise the edge. We may sit for several hours in the pack ice, taking in our spectacular surroundings and watching for Polar Bears and Ivory Gulls near the ship. When the edge of the pack ice is several miles north of the Seven Islands, we will spend a second day to get to and in the sea ice. Alternatively, we may also visit Sorgfjord where we may find a herd of Walrus not far from the graves of 17th century whalers. We may encounter Rock Ptarmigan on a shore visit here.



Walrus are one of the iconic mammals of the Arctic, and we'll visit several areas where we may find them lounging on the beach, or swimming to cool off. Photograph by participant Becky Hansen.

Day 8, Tue, 9 July. Nordaustlandet and the Hinlopen Strait. Today we will sail into Hinlopen Strait. We'll explore the bird cliffs of Alkefjellet where tens of thousands of Thick-billed Murres and Black-legged Kittiwakes nest, and Arctic Foxes are often encountered. On the east side of Hinlopenstrait, the island of Nordauslandet, the second largest in the Svalbard Archipelago, we'll attempt a landing at Torrelneset where Walrus are often on the beach. Here we will also explore the polar desert of Nordaustlandet, next to the world's third largest ice cap, which meets the sea nearby. We will walk along beautiful coastline covered in smooth rocks, sculpted by the surf over thousands of years.

Day 9, Wed, 10 July. Barentsøya and vicinity. In Freemansundet we plan to land at Sundneset on the island of Barentsøya to visit an old trapper's hut and then take a walk across the tundra in search of Svalbard Reindeer, Barnacle Goose, Common Ringed Plover, and Purple Sandpipers. Later we will cruise south to Diskobukta on the west side of Edgeøya. After a Zodiac cruise through the shallow bay, we plan to land on a beach littered with whale bones and tree trunks, which have drifted here from Siberia. We can also climb to the rim of a narrow gully that is inhabited by thousands of Black-legged Kittiwakes, Black Guillemots, and piratical Glaucous Gulls. During the breeding season, the base of the cliffs is patrolled by Arctic Fox and sometimes Polar Bear, especially females with young cubs, searching for young birds that have fallen from the nesting ledges.

Day 10, Thu, 11 July. Hornsund in southern Spitsbergen. We start the day quietly cruising the side fjords of the spectacular Hornsund area of southern Spitsbergen, enjoying the scenery of towering mountain peaks. Hornsundtind

rises to 4700 ft., while Bautaen shows why early Dutch explorers gave the name “Spitsbergen” (pointed mountains) to the island. There are also 14 magnificent glaciers in the area and very good chances of encounters with seals, Polar Bear, and Dovekie.

Day 11, Fri, 12 July. Ahlstrandhalvøya; Recherchefjorden; evening return to Isfjorden. Today we will land on Ahlstrandhalvøya at the mouth of Van Keulenfjorden. Here, piles of Beluga skeletons, the remains of 19th century whaling days, are yet another reminder of the consequences of thoughtless exploitation. Fortunately, Beluga were not hunted to the edge of extinction and may still be seen locally. Indeed, there is a good chance that we will come across a pod here. Cruising into Recherchefjorden during the afternoon, we can explore an area of tundra at the head of the fjord where many reindeer feed, before sailing back in to Isfjorden where our ship will overnight near the harbor in Longyearbyen.

Day 12, Sat, 13 July. Disembark in Longyearbyen; flight to Oslo. After breakfast on the ship, we’ll disembark at Longyearbyen this morning and from there fly south to Oslo. Depending on departure flight times we may have more time to visit Longyearbyen where there are a handful of shops or do some nearby birding before transferring to the airport for our flight to Oslo. Currently the flight is scheduled to arrive into Oslo in the late-afternoon or early evening on July 15; since most flights to the US depart earlier than this, those returning to the US will likely need to spend the night. Night in Oslo.

Day 13, Sun, 14 July. Flights home. We are likely on various flights heading home today. The hotel offers early breakfast for those on the first flights out of Oslo. We’ll make sure everyone has airport shuttle tickets. Bon voyage.

PLEASE NOTE: As of November 2023, Scandinavian Air did not have a flight scheduled on July 13, 2024 from Longyearbyen to Oslo. We are hopeful this flight will be added back in in the coming months. If not, an extra night in Longyearbyen (at the clients’ expense) will be required. If you purchase the Land Option (see **FINANCIAL INFORMATION** below) and the flight to Oslo is not available on July 13th, as we’d like, and we are instead forced to fly on July 14th, Field Guides will cover the hotel night of July 14th in Oslo and clients will be responsible for covering the hotel night of July 13th in Longyearbyen; see **TOUR INCLUSIONS/EXCLUSIONS (below)** for more information.

About Your Guide

John Coons combines birding excellence with a natural ability as a tour guide. He has been leading tours since 1985. Since then, his great group skills, attention to detail, easy laugh, and unfailing sense to spot (and remember!) what’s fascinating in things large and small have brought delight to innumerable Field Guides participants on tours from the High Arctic to the tip of South America and throughout Australasia.

When not on tour, John enjoys exploring and birding the remote mountains, canyons, and mesas of his home in northern Arizona. His ambition of developing a completely sustainable yard of native wildflowers, grasses, trees, and shrubs is an unending goal that consumes more time than expected each spring and summer.

John has a special affinity for the Arctic region, having led many trips to the far north over the last 30 years including trips to Churchill, Baffin Island, and Iceland, as well as our Spitsbergen expeditions.

*“Brilliant guide. **John Coons** is thoughtful, very skilled at considerate group management, endlessly patient, and terrific at finding birds.” P.A., Texas Coast Migration Spectacle*

About Your Ship

The *m/v Plancius* is a 293-foot vessel, perfectly suited to expedition travel in polar regions with great viewing areas from the various decks and the observation lounge. With an ice-strengthened hull it is able to navigate waters more comfortably than many other ships of similar size, and in normal conditions average travel speed is about 10-12 kts. It is one of the quietest ships operating in the Arctic. It was built in 1976 as a research vessel for the Royal Dutch Navy, but was sold in 2007 and then completely refurbished and re-outfitted for expedition travel and now passes for one of the world’s best-appointed expedition cruise vessels on the high seas, containing comfortable quarters for 110 passengers. In addition to cabins, the ship contains an infirmary, library, dining room, and an observation lounge with a bar and coffee/tea/hot chocolate available 24 hrs/day and nice windows for viewing. The ship’s crew is international, and the

expedition staff is largely European. *Plancius* carries 11 zodiacs of which 9 are in use and 2 on reserve. Announcements, briefings, and lectures will be in English and, in keeping with the spirit of expedition travel, dress is informal. Internet service on board is limited and for a fee, and it is available only for urgent and important communications, but the ship is equipped with satellite phone (pricey) and facsimile systems. There is power in all cabins and electricity is of the European 220-volt variety. American travelers will require an adapter for any electronic devices. Laundry service is available on board for a fee. A doctor will travel with us on board, and the infirmary is well provisioned with medicines and equipment. Those passengers on regular medication should bring with them an adequate personal supply, and participants concerned about seasickness are encouraged to consult with their physicians before departure.

We have reserved 6 berths, all in twin private cabins. Twin private cabins have a private bathroom with shower, washbasin, and toilet, two lower twin bed berths, a desk, ample storage space, and a window. Available on request are deluxe and superior cabins.

To learn more about the cabins on the ship, and view the deck plan, please visit:

<https://oceanwide-expeditions.com/our-fleet/m-v-plancius> .

Financial Information

CRUISE FEE: \$7700 (Porthole); \$8300 (Window); \$9000 (Deluxe); \$10000 (Superior); all fees are per person in double occupancy, from Longyearbyen.

LAND FEE: \$1275 per person in double occupancy

DEPOSIT: 20% of the cruise fee per person; *please let your tour manager know your cabin category preference by calling our office or sending an email at the time of registration.*

FINAL PAYMENT DUE: January 4, 2024

SINGLE SUPPLEMENT: 1.7 times the published cruise fee. Single travelers who wish to share their cabin/hotel room should indicate this on the registration form. The published per person twin occupancy fare is guaranteed in this case, whether or not a cabinmate is available. Single travelers who require sole occupancy of cabins will be charged at 1.7 times the published fare.

The single supplement for the land portion of the tour is \$325

LIMIT: 9

Price Changes—Oceanwide Expeditions (from whom we have an allotment of cabins) reserves the right to impose surcharges (price increases) up to 60 days before departure due to unfavorable changes in exchange rates, increases in airfares or other transportation costs, increases in local operating costs, harbor dues, duties, taxes, or government action.

Insurance—Oceanwide Expeditions requires that travelers obtain insurance that will cover personal injury, medical, repatriation, and evacuation expenses. The cost of emergency evacuation and medical care can be very high. A minimum of \$75,000 is required and it is strongly recommended that coverage be extended to include cancellation and trip interruption. Coverage offered through CSA on the Field Guides Comfort Plan meets these minimums.

Please review the following link for Oceanwide Expeditions most up-to-date terms and conditions:

<https://oceanwide-expeditions.com/page/terms-and-conditions>

All participants will be required to confirm they will have completed a full COVID vaccination course at least two weeks prior to the tour (which includes a booster for those eligible to have one). Note too, that many travel destinations may still require proof of vaccination for entry to bypass testing delays or quarantine, and that entry requirements for a destination can change at any time. Proof of a booster shot, too, may be a requirement for some travel destinations.

Other Things You Need to Know

TOUR MANAGER: The manager for this tour is Sharon Mackie. Sharon will be happy to assist you in preparing for the tour. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to call her!

DOCUMENTS: A current passport valid for six months beyond the date of your return is necessary for US citizens to enter Norway. No visa is required.

If you are a citizen of another country, please check with the Norwegian consulate nearest you for entry requirements. Information about consulates and requirements is generally available online or you can contact us and we will be happy to

look this up for you. Passports should have an adequate number of blank pages for the entire journey. Some countries require a blank page for their stamp and as a precaution it is best to have one blank page per country you will visit or transit.

AIR ARRANGEMENTS: Field Guides is a full-service travel agency and your tour manager will be happy to assist you with flights to join this tour. Field Guides does not charge a service fee for these services to clients booking a tour. However, we understand that tech-savvy clients often prefer to shop online or that you may wish to use mileage to purchase tickets. Regardless of which method you choose, your tour manager will be happy to provide assistance regarding ticket prices and schedules, along with rental cars and extra hotel nights as needed.

Please be sure to check with your tour manager prior to purchasing your ticket to make sure the flights you have chosen will work well with the tour itinerary and that the tour is sufficiently subscribed to operate. Once purchased, most airline tickets are non-refundable and carry a penalty to change. Field Guides cannot be responsible for these fees.

Also, it is imperative that we receive a copy of your comprehensive flight itinerary—including any and all flights not covered in the tour fee—so that we may track you in the event of missed connections, delays, or other mishaps.

LUGGAGE: Please be aware that many airlines have recently modified their luggage policies and are charging additional fees for checked bags. Updates could easily occur before your departure, so you may wish to contact your airline to verify the policy. Additional charges for bags on any flights, whether these are covered by the tour fee or not, will be the client's responsibility.

TOUR INCLUSIONS/EXCLUSIONS: The **cruise fee** from Longyearbyen includes the voyage aboard the vessel as indicated in the itinerary; all meals throughout the voyage aboard the ship including snacks, coffee, and tea; all shore excursions and activities throughout the voyage by zodiac; program of lectures by noted naturalists, leadership by experienced expedition staff, and the guide services of your Field Guides leader; all miscellaneous service taxes and port charges throughout the program; and comprehensive pre-trip material. Tipping at group meals and for drivers, porters, and local guides is included in your tour fee and will be handled for the group by your Field Guides leader(s). However, if you would like to recognize your Field Guides leader(s) or any local guide(s) for exceptional service, it is entirely appropriate to tip. We emphasize that such tips are optional and not expected.

The **land fee** of \$1275 is for one person in double occupancy from Longyearbyen. It includes lodging for the night pre-sailing in Longyearbyen and one night in Oslo post-sailing, two dinners, one breakfast, ground transportation in Longyearbyen, transport at the end of the tour from the airport to the hotel in Oslo, and the guide services of the tour leader. NOTE: Lunch in Longyearbyen the day we board the boat is **not** included in the land fee.

The above fees do not include your airfare to and from Longyearbyen, airport taxes, visa fees, any checked or carry-on baggage charges imposed by the airlines, any alcoholic beverages, museum entrance fees, the customary gratuity at the end of the voyage to the boat crew (guidelines will be provided), phone calls, laundry, or other items of a personal nature.

The **single supplement** for the land portion of the tour is \$325. If you do not have a roommate but wish to share, we will try to pair you with a roommate from the tour; but if none is available, you will be billed for the single supplement. Our tour fees are based on double occupancy; one-half the cost of a double room is priced into the tour fee. The single supplement is calculated by taking the actual cost of a single room and subtracting one-half the cost of a double room (plus any applicable taxes).

The tour fee does not cover bar drinks on the ship that are charged to one's cabin. This includes soft drinks, juices separate from those served at meals, and alcoholic beverages. Coffee, tea, and hot chocolate are free of charge and available 24 hours in the lounge.

Single travelers who wish to share their cabin/hotel room should advise the tour manager at the time of booking. The published per person double occupancy fare for the cruise is guaranteed in this case, whether or not a cabinmate is available. Single travelers who require sole occupancy of cabins will be charged at 1.7 times the published fare.

TOUR REGISTRATION: : **To register for this tour, please contact us at fieldguides.com/contact-us/.** Our office will be in touch with you by email by the next business day (Mon-Fri) with instructions on how to complete our new electronic registration form and medical questionnaire. (We are no longer accepting the paper version.)

Please mail your **deposit of 20% of the cabin fee per person** (*please let your tour manager know your cabin category preference at time of registration; we will do our best to accommodate your request*), or see <https://fieldguides.com/payment-options/> for our Payment Options.

Full payment of the tour fee is due 180 days prior to departure, or **by January 4, 2024**. **We will bill you for the final payment at either 180 days or when the tour has reached sufficient subscription to operate, whichever date comes later.**

Since the cost of your trip insurance and airline tickets is generally non-refundable, please do not finalize these purchases until you have received final billing for the tour or have been advised that the tour is sufficiently subscribed to operate by your tour manager.

SMOKING: Please note that the *m/v Plancius* is generally smoke-free with designated smoking areas outside. Almost all of our clients prefer a smoke-free environment. If you smoke, please be sensitive to the group and refrain from smoking at meals, in vehicles, and in proximity to the group on trails and elsewhere.

CANCELLATION POLICY: Due to the cancellation policy of our supplier, Oceanwide Expeditions, we must amend our usual cancellation policy as follows: If cancellation is received up to 180 days before departure, Field Guides will refund 10% of your deposit (20% of the cabin fee). If cancellation occurs between 179 and 90 days before the departure date, 50% of the tour fee is refundable. Thereafter, all deposits and payments are not refundable.

This policy only applies to payments made to Field Guides for tour fees (and any services included in those fees). Airline tickets not included in the tour fee and purchased separately often carry penalties for cancellation or change, or are sometimes totally non-refundable. Additionally, if you take out trip insurance the cost of the insurance is not refundable so it is best to purchase the policy just prior to making full payment for the tour or at the time you purchase airline tickets, depending upon the airlines restrictions.

Field Guides reserves the right to cancel any tour prior to departure, in which case full refund will constitute full settlement to the passenger. The right is reserved to substitute in case of emergency another guide for the original one.

TRIP CANCELLATION & MEDICAL EMERGENCY INSURANCE: We strongly recommend you consider purchasing trip cancellation (including medical emergency) insurance to cover your investment in case of injury or illness to you or your family prior to or during a trip. Because we must remit early (and substantial) tour deposits to our suppliers, you acknowledge and agree that we will not issue a refund when cancellation occurs within 59 days of departure, and only a partial refund of 50% of the cabin fee from 89 to 60 days prior to departure (see CANCELLATION POLICY). In addition, the Department of State strongly urges Americans to consult with their medical insurance company prior to traveling abroad to confirm whether their policy applies overseas and if it will cover emergency expenses such as a medical evacuation. US medical insurance plans seldom cover health costs incurred outside the United States unless supplemental coverage is purchased. Furthermore, US Medicare and Medicaid programs do not provide payment for medical services outside the United States.

When making a decision regarding health insurance, Americans should consider that many foreign doctors and hospitals require payment in cash prior to providing service and that a medical evacuation to the United States may cost well in excess of \$50,000. Uninsured travelers who require medical care overseas often face extreme difficulties. When consulting with your insurer prior to your trip, please ascertain whether payment will be made to the overseas healthcare provider or whether you will be reimbursed later for expenses that you incur.

US citizens will receive information from us regarding optional tour cancellation/emergency medical insurance. Our agent, CSA, will insure for trip cancellation and interruption, medical coverage, travel delay, baggage loss and delay, and emergency medical transportation. If you purchase the insurance prior to, or within 24 hours of making final payment for the tour, and cover all non-refundable parts of the trip (including any non-refundable flights and in some cases, other arrangements), pre-existing conditions are covered. You may purchase your CSA policy on-line by visiting our website at <https://fieldguides.com/trip-cancellation-insurance/> and clicking the link to CSA. The CSA webpage also includes a contact number.

Currently we are unable to offer CSA insurance policies to residents of New York and Hawaii. We have had clients provide positive feedback after acquiring insurance thru InsureMyTrip (<https://www.insuremytrip.com/>) in the past, and would suggest that company as an alternative. When purchasing insurance with a company other than CSA, you will want to understand whether the timing of your purchase will affect coverage before paying your first deposit. Insurance purchase requirements can vary from company to company, and such requirements could limit your options if you do not look into this until making your final payment for your tour. Please let us know if you have any questions about this.

Please note, once the insurance is purchased it is non-refundable, so please check with your tour manager prior to making the purchase to assure the tour will operate as scheduled. Citizens of other countries are urged to consult their insurance broker.

RESPONSIBILITY: For and in consideration of the opportunity to participate in the tour, each tour participant and each parent or legal guardian of a tour participant who is under 18 agrees to release, indemnify, and hold harmless Field Guides Incorporated, its agents, servants, employees, shareholders, officers, directors, attorneys, and contractors as more fully set forth in the Release and Indemnity Agreement on the registration form. Field Guides Incorporated acts only as an agent for the passenger in regard to travel, whether by railroad, motorcar, motorcoach, boat, airplane, or other means, and assumes no liability for injury, damage, loss, accident, delay, or irregularity caused by defect in such vehicles or for any reason whatsoever, including the acts, defaults, or bankruptcies of any company or person engaged in conveying the passenger or in carrying out the arrangements of the tour. You acknowledge and agree that Field Guides Incorporated is not responsible for losses or additional expenses due to delay or changes in air or other services, sickness, weather, strike, war, quarantine, or other causes. The tour participant shall bear all such losses and expenses. Field Guides Incorporated reserves the right to substitute hotels of similar category for those indicated and to make any changes in the itinerary where deemed necessary or caused by changes in air schedules. Field Guides Incorporated reserves the right to decline to accept or to retain any person as a member of any tour. Baggage is at owner's risk entirely.

Participants should be in good health and should consult a physician before undertaking a tour. If you have questions about the physical requirements of a tour, please contact our office for further information. Participants should prepare for the tour by reading the detailed itinerary, the information bulletin, and other pertinent matter provided by Field Guides. Each participant is responsible for bringing appropriate clothing and equipment as recommended in our bulletins.

THE RECEIPT OF YOUR TOUR DEPOSIT SHALL BE DEEMED TO BE CONSENT TO THE ABOVE CONDITIONS. EACH TOUR PARTICIPANT AND EACH PARENT OR LEGAL GUARDIAN OF A TOUR PARTICIPANT WHO IS UNDER 18 SHALL SIGN AND DELIVER THE RELEASE AND INDEMNITY AGREEMENT AT THE TIME OF REGISTRATION.

8/23 JC; 12/23 peg