

# Spitsbergen

## Triplog



# s/v Antigua

September 24 - October 2. 2016

The s/v *Antigua* was built in 1957 in Thorne (UK) and served for many years as a fishing vessels, until it was completely re-built in the early 1990s in the Netherlands as a barkentine and equipped as a passenger ship. A barkentine has three masts with square sails on the foremast.

*With*

Captain – Joachim Schiel  
First Mate – Daniel Bencz  
Second Mate – Uta Schulz  
Chef – Sasha Huhn  
Chief Service – Jana Maxowa  
Service – Sarolta Simon  
Service – Christel van den Reek  
Expedition leader – Michelle van Dijk  
Guide – Jelle Abma  
Photography-guide: Alexander Lemke

September 24.

## Longyearbyen

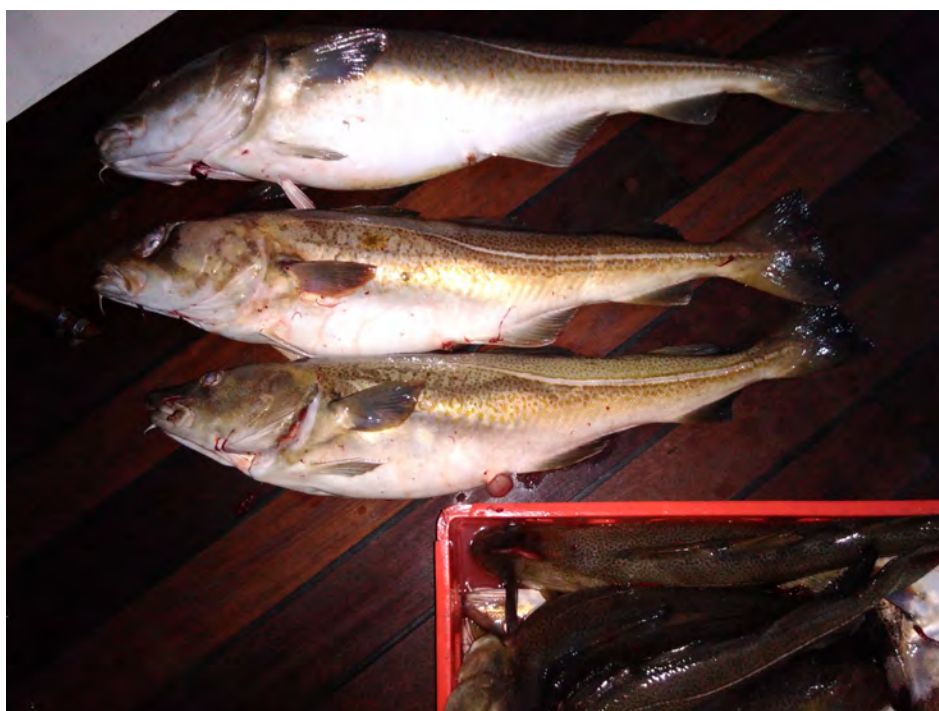
Position at 14 o'clock: 78°14' N 15°36' E

Temperature: 6,5 °C



Around 2 pm most of the passengers arrive at s/v *Antigua*, a blue sailing vessel that was going to be our home for the upcoming ten days. The first thing we saw when we came on deck, was the cod which was freshly caught by chef Sasha. We all had to visit our the wheel house to sign in. After that we were welcomed inside with coffee or tea and cake. Captain Joachim gave us a board-safety briefing, telling us that we are not allowed to fall overboard or make bonfires on the ship.

He ended by telling us that we use a ships time that's different from local time. Therefore he asked us to set our clock one hour forward. After a short break our guides introduced themselves and expedition leader Michelle took over and told us told about the do's and don'ts on land. Our chef Sasha served dinner as the ship left the quay.



September 25.

## Daudmannsodden, Dynekilen & Dahlbreen

Position at 8 o'clock: 78°13,4' N 013°07,' E

Temperature: 4 °C



We woke up being anchored in Wilkinsbukta and had breakfast at 8 o'clock with or without rough stomach from the swell in Isfjord the evening before. We were briefed by Michelle about the plan for the morning to go ashore for a short or a long walk on the tundra of Daudemannsødden. After a brief introduction by captain Joachim on how to board and leave a Zodiac, we would go ashore for the first time. Indeed everybody made it safely to the shore, where people divided themselves in two groups. The first group went with Alex and Jelle on an easy walk with a focus on photography and the second group went with Michelle on a longer hike over a small hill. Soon an Arctic fox was spotted and later on both groups encountered reindeer, ancient whale bones and several species of birds, among which a group of long-tailed ducks.





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The Zodiacs picked us up again to deliver us to the ship just in time for lunch at 13.00. After a nice meal we were informed again about the plan to go northward for some hours.



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But, since plans are just plans and a dead Sperm-whale was spotted immediately around the corner on shore, a second Zodiac trip to see the whale from close by seemed a much better option. Besides, a suspicious white dot on shore proved to be our first spotted Polar bear (yay!). Even more lucky it turned out to be a mother with a second-year cub. As if all these surprises were not enough yet, while checking out the Sperm-whale and the Polar bears, a Beluga showed up close to the shore as well. After these pleasant intermezzos the plan was changed to continue further north towards Smeerenburg fjord passing the glacier Dahlbreen.



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But first we accidentally came across some Minky whales, happily hunting for fish along the coast. Observing these whales from the deck was followed by a short introduction to photographing polar light (it might be handy this evening) from Alex. When all photographers' hands were frozen, the seven o' clock dinner bell called everybody in. We enjoyed a delicious meal of Sasha's self-caught cod, after which everybody went outside to enjoy (and/or photograph) the beautiful sunset on the glaciers. The *Antigua* approached the ice to a distance of 600 m from where we could hear the ice crack and see the calving ice dropping into the sea. The crown on a spectacular second day with more surprises than we could have hoped for.



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September 26.

## Smeerenburg & Virgohamna

Position at 8 o'clock: 79°43,8' N 010°58' E

Temperature: 4 °C



After a quiet night sailing up North we woke up because our guide Jelle made a wake up call, telling that there were dolphins around the ship. Our first mate Daniel was driving our ship slowly and a group of about 40 White-beaked dolphins were curious and came to check us out. Besides these animals also some Minke whales were sighted. We continued to sail up north and again White-beaked dolphins were surrounding us. This time, it was an even bigger group, and some start to play and swum with our bow wave.





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Lunch was half an hour earlier, to be able to do two landings in the afternoon. Our first goal was Smeerenburg (Blubber town) at Amsterdamøya, the most famous whaling station. When we arrived, there lay a heap of walrus, just at our landing beach. Some young animals were a bit nervous, but the majority was lazy.



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Around 400 years ago about 200 men lived in Smeerenburg, not only the whalers but also merchants and traders. In its heyday, the whaling station consisted of around 19 buildings. Most of the houses had floors as well as fireplaces, so the living conditions must have been quite good. The area between the houses was paved, and there were ditches to get rid of rain- and melt water. Fresh water supply came from the lagoon and Smeerenburg was accessible from three sides, East,



South & West. Whales were harpooned and dragged to the shore, then processed. Whale oil was used as lamp-oil, to produce soap, for tanning leather and to refine sulphur. Also the baleens were commonly used. When you heat it, you can bend and shape it in any form.

The winter of 1633/34, seven Dutch men overwintered and survived, but the next winter the second attempt was less successful, all died with the horrible pains of scurvy.

In the second half of the 17th century, Smeerenburg's days as a whaling station drew to an end. The whales deserted the fjords and the station fell into disuse. The ovens were dismantled and whatever useful material this produced was taken away. In 1906 the Dutch navy ship HMS Friesland excavated the old whalers graves and constructed a mass grave as a memorial here, for this new grave and the deceased, which says: "HMS Friesland repaired these graves in 1906 on order of the queen of the Netherlands" ("Hr. Ms. Friesland herstellde deze graven in 1906 op last van de Koningin der Nederlanden").



After tea time with delicious 'Apfel Strudel' we landed at the other site of Danskegattet in Virgohamna. The place was named after Andrée's steamship and transport vessel, the *Virgo*. All the areas with cultural remains in Virgohamna are protected. To disembark here, one must have written permission from the Governor of Svalbard. Per ship, only three groups of twelve people can apply for a permission. Virgohamna is only a small place but full of history. It started in 1636 when the 'Harlinger kokerij' was founded, due to lack of space in Smeerenburg. It contained two warehouses and three dwellings each with a living room, bedroom and attic. 260 years later Virgohamna became the first stop for Nansen after he got the *FRAM* out of the ice.

At the same time and location the Swede Salomon August Andréé waited for 'favourable winds' to fly to the North Pole with his balloon *Örnen* (the eagle). But a few years earlier in 1888 the Englishman Arnold Pike had a house prefabricated in Norway because he wanted to spend the winter in Spitsbergen. (His house was moved to Barentsburg in 1925.) This house was also used by Andrée & Wellman. The American journalist Wellman established a base for his expedition furthest west in the bay in 1906.



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He constructed a gigantic hangar to house his airship *America*, a dwelling for himself and a hydrogen plant. Wellman also used the base in 1907 and 1909, and attempted several unsuccessful flights. He no doubt had plans to return, but with the news that Cook had conquered the North Pole, he gave up the plan for good.

With the Dinghy we also went to visit the Northernmost colony of harbour seals. There were about 40 seals at home. As the dinner bell rang, the sky coloured pink and orange.

After dinner, Alex gave a lecture on photography.



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September 27.

## Smeerenburgfjord & Magdalenefjord

Position at 8 o'clock: 79°43,3' N 010°54,5' E

Temperature: 7 °C



After the 8 o'clock breakfast we departed for Smeerenburgfjord. On the way to Smeerenburgreen a suspicious white dot was spotted on a mountain slope, which appeared to be a Polar bear. The ship could get quite close to the shore to get a closer look at the Polar bear sleeping higher up. On the shore, we discovered a dead Sperm-whale, which surely had served as a good meal for lady Polar bear. Hoping that the polar bear would wake up to eat some more soon, we dropped the anchor. In the meanwhile Michelle gave a lecture on everything we needed to know about Polar bears and we found out why 'our' Polar bear was female.





After lunch the Polar bear was still fast asleep, so we moved on to the famous Magdalenafjord.



Upon arrival at around 16.00, we anchored in Trinitybukta (bay), where we land on Gravnaset. Here, the English used to whale. The whole group walked past the 110 whaler graves on to the shore of Gullybukta.



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Michelle took part of the group for a walk towards the glacier of Gullybreen, while Alex stayed with his group on the shore to photograph some nice pieces of ice. When dinnertime came, the groups reunited to be picked up from the shore by the Zodiacs. We had some delicious salmon with spinach and later some drinks that ended with singing English (wo)men. At midnight we departed for Krossfjord through the open sea. It was a bumpy ride indeed.



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September 28.

## Fjortende Julibukta, Blomstrandbreen & Ny Ålesund

Position at 8 o'clock: 79°07,3' N 011°51' E

Temperature: 3 °C



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We awoke sailing through Krossfjord, towards the 14.Julibukta.

The *Antigua* anchored in front of it. Again we split up in two groups. Port side was the first group to do a zodiac cruise. Those, who lived at starboard site could choose between a photography workshop on shore, or staying on board and enjoy the glacier view with a warm cup of tea in the hand.



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After one and a half hour, it was time to swap.

It was a great experience to be in between the ice, looking at the sculptures created by nature and listening to the sounds of the escaping air bubbles. While we were cruising along the bergy bits, we saw big pieces coming down from the glacier, creating big waves at shallow places.

During lunch, we sailed South into the Kongsfjord. On our way towards Ny Ålesund, we made a detour around the back of Blomstrandhalvøya. Blomstrandhalvøya means Blomstrand-peninsula, but since the Blomstrandglacier retreated, it became an island, and therefore we were able to circumnavigate it. We were rewarded with a great view at Blomstrandbreen and its reflections in the still water.

Because of the active glacier, the water was full of ice, and captain plus both of the mates had to work hard to navigate the ship through ice and poorly chartered waters.





We moored up at the pier and walked together through this international research village to the souvenir shop, but it was still closed. Alex went back to the *Antigua*, where they called the harbour master once again. Shortly after, a lady came by bike and opened the shop for us, so we were able to buy stamps and send postcards from the world's northernmost settlement. Many of us also paid the entrance fee for the museum, because after dinner there would be the whole evening time to stroll around the town with Alex and to visit the renewed museum.





September 29.

## Forlandsundet

Position at 8 o'clock: 78°55,7' N 011°56,1' E

Temperature: 4°C



We woke up at the dock in Ny Ålesund and after breakfast we departed westward. The wind was finally coming from the north so it was possible to put up the sails. Daniel as first mate gave an introduction on setting the sails. Pulling and letting go were the main topics that we had to learn and remember.





With the beneficial northeaster winds we were able to set eight sails in total. We started with the lower topsail, the upper topsail and the topgallant, three of the in total four sails on the Yard. Teamwork was the main ingredient for this task. Next we could set the outer jib and inner jib and since later the wind was still picking up we could even set the main stay sail. Up to 4.5 knots we sailed south-westward between the mainland of Spitsbergen and the island Prins Charles Foreland. Here, we were offered the opportunity to go around the *Antigua* in a zodiac, one group after another to take pictures of the ship in full glory. After this great pick-up we set the last two sails: the mainsail and the mizzen. The speed record of the day was 6.6 knots and sailing through the 4 meter deep shallow parts of the Sund (sound) was quite a challenge. On the way a bearded seal swam by with his head peeping out of the water.

During tea time we got the signal to lower the sails because of a lack of wind. The sails and ropes were cleaned up while we kept on moving southward.

At half past four, Michelle gave a lecture on 'The discovery of Spitsbergen & the geopolitical status today'. We found out that it is an interesting topic, although it would never be the thing we would read first in the guide book.





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Close to the place where we had seen a dead Sperm-whale some days earlier, we now encountered a Polar bear sleeping on the ridge of a cliff around Dynekilen. When we moved closer up to the bear, he (or she?) became more and more nervous. The bear seemed to smell us in the air and tried to walk away from the ship. Since we had a good look already and noticed that the bear was stressed, we decided to leave it and continue towards Isfjorden. With a fantastic sunset we had a delicious dinner before the weather and sea went rougher entering Isfjorden. Finally we prepared for a swell night sailing through Isfjorden towards Ekmanfjorden.



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September 30.

## Coraholmen, sailing & Svenskehuset

Position at 8 o'clock: 78°41,6' N 14°40,1' E

Temperature: 3 °C



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After a bumpy night, we woke up in the more sheltered Ekmanfjord. West of us we saw the Kolosseum, east the Kapitol. These two magnificent mountains were a great backdrop for our landing site on the island Coraholmen. Until 1896, this was just an ordinary island, but then the Sefström-glacier surged and deposited old red sediments from the sea floor upon the island.



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Now half Coraholmen has a very surrealistic landscape, almost as if it is another planet. Red hills with lakes and puddles. As the red sediment comes from the sea floor, it is full with sea shells. Along the coast, where the sediments erode away, the beach is full with shells. We made a loop, over the tundra direction Kapitól and back we walked up and down the hills, and searched our way around the lakes.



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After we came back to the *Antigua* we could set sail, as we had northerly winds and, we had to go south. The wind speed was about 30 knots, our ship broke a new speed record this trip, as we did 9 knots. By the time we came around Kap Thordsen, the wind had dropped, so we could pull the sails away. Shortly after, it was tea time. Steve, who celebrated his 50. birthday today, already found a surprise at the breakfast table, and now he got a special birthday cake with three masts on it.



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Then our expedition leader Michelle said that we were in the vicinity of Svenskehuset, the haunted house. She had never been there, and neither had anyone on the ship. But we had some time until dinner, so this would be the moment to explore. While Michelle caught the boats on a small beach, Jelle went looking for a way up, as the house was on 20 metres of elevation. He found a steep path, but we all made it up to the higher elevated plain. The first thing we saw was a railroad track, all the way towards the house. It was in bad condition, but it was over 100 years old, and never used since the year it was build.

The Svenskehuset was built in 1872 by the Swedish company AB Isfjorden on the initiative of Adolf E. Nordenskiöld. Here he found traces of the phosphorus mineral coprolite. The house was prefabricated in Gothenburg and was erected close to the mineral deposits together with other installations essential for the operation and refining. However, like many other places on Svalbard, the mining installations were never put into use.

The house is also the scene of one of the most well-known and tragic stories. The same year as the house was erected, 17 Norwegian seamen were forced to pass the winter in the house. The seamen were seal hunters who had become trapped in the ice on the northern coast of Spitsbergen. From there, they walked over to Isfjorden where they took shelter in Svenskehuset. Tragically, they died of scurvy in a house full of food, but not of the right kind. All of the ingredients they needed in order to prevent scurvy were just outside the front door. The wooden cross of the common grave from the unfortunate winter still stands. The inscription says, "Under this lay the remains of 15 men, who died here on Mitterhuk in the spring of 1873. May they rest in peace".

In the diary that was found from that winter it was noted that two men were buried in January. Ten years later, in 1882-83, the house was put into use as a winter shelter for a Swedish scientific expedition that was staying through the winter on Spitsbergen in connection with the first International Polar Year. The leader of the expedition was once again A. E. Nordenskiöld who was thus the first person to combine scientific research and business ventures on Spitsbergen. Several scientists participated in this winter expedition, but the person who would later become most well known of all the participants was Salomon August Andrée.



Oktober 1.

## Pyramiden, Nordenskiöldbreen & Skansbukta

Position at 8 o'clock: 78°39,3' N 016°23,1' E

Temperature: 0 °C – Snow – Wind force 8



Over night we sailed towards Pyramiden. We had quite a bit of wind coming from the north, approximately 7 bft. Therefore, mooring at the pier was a challenge, especially with such a strange pier as in Pyramiden. Michelle gave a short briefing while we had a good breakfast. At 9:15 am we went ashore to go a step back in time. In 1998 the Russians living in Pyramiden left the city due to a big crisis in de Soviet Union and a tragic plane crash involving inhabitants of Pyramiden. The Russians ordered to immediately abandon the city, leaving everything behind as it was. During our walk around the city, the functions of all buildings in the good old days were pointed out by Michelle and Alex. We had a look at the stature of Lenin, the primary school, the farm and ended with a visit of the Tulip hotel, where we could warm ourselves with coffee and/or vodka.







Back at the ship we had lunch, while departing for Skansbukta. First we passed by Nordenkiöldbreen, to have a closer look at the last glacier of our week and take some more scenic pictures.

We continued to Skansbukta with a breeze in the sails we just set. At a maximum speed of 9,3 knots we had to pull the sails away before entering Skansbukta, where we anchored and went ashore by Zodiac. On land we were allowed to start making our own decisions again, so instead of following the guide we all had our own time off. Each of us explored the coast to find a shipwreck and an old house and a gypsum mine from 1918. Some even climbed the mountain for a nice view on the *Antigua* in the bay.

Arriving back to the ship, Captains dinner started with a drink and speech of captain Joachim, then we got to know the best side of the service crew. No complains about the food and service we had before on this trip, but this was absolutely superb!



The day ended with selected pictures from everybody expressing the 'Arctic feeling' and a little later a slide show from Alex – of the pictures used in this triplog.

October 2.

## Longyearbyen

Position at 8 o'clock: 78°13,8' N 15°36,1' E

Temperature: 3 °C – Overcast – No wind

After a final, good *Antigua*-style breakfast it was finally time to say goodbye. In the morning we had some time to explore Longyearbyen, but we could leave our luggage on deck. At 1.15 pm a bus picked us up at the ship, to bring us to the airport. Hard to believe that the trip had come to an end and that so much beautiful Arctic experience could fit into our photographs! Many of us knew already now that this was not our last visit to the Arctic.



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Amount of Nautical miles: 448  
Amount of pictures: more then steps



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Triplog is written by Michelle van Dijk and Jelle Abma.

Photographs by Alexander Lembke.

This triplog can be found on <http://www.spitsbergen-svalbard.nl>

The s/v *Antigua* will continue to sail in Spitsbergen's waters in the years to come; the other sailing ships of the Tallship Company fleet, *Artemis*, *Elisabeth* and *Atlantis*, sail the North Sea, the Baltic Sea, Mediterranean Sea and the IJsselmeer.

More information:

*Tallship Company*

*Zevenhuizen 52*

*NL-8801 AW Franeker*

*Tel +31 (0)517 – 342 810*

*info@tallship-company.com*

*http://www.tallship-company.com*



## BIRDS SVALBARD

LATIN	DUTCH	ENGLISH	GERMAN	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	1
<i>Alle alle</i>	Kleine alk	Little Auk	Krabbentaucher								
<i>Anser brachyrhynchus</i>	Kleine rietgans	Pink-footed Goose	Kurzschnabelgans								
<i>Arenaria interpres</i>	Steenloper	Turnstone	Steinwalzer								
<i>Branta bernicla</i>	Rotgans	Brent Goose	Ringelgans								
<i>Branta leucopsis</i>	Brandgans	Barnacle Goose	Weisswangengans	x							
<i>Calidris alba</i>	Drieteenstrandloper	Sanderling	Sanderling								
<i>Calidris alpina</i>	Bonte strandloper	Dunlin	Alpenstrandlauer								
<i>Calidris maritima</i>	Paarse strandloper	Purple Sandpiper	Meerstrandlauer		x	x				x	x
<i>Cephus grylle</i>	Zwarte zeekoet	Black Guillemot	Gryllteiste	x			x	x			x
<i>Charadrius hiaticula</i>	Bontbekplevier	Ringed Plover	Sandregenpfeifer								
<i>Clangula hyemalis</i>	IJseend	Long-tailed duck	Eisente		x			x			
<i>Fratercula arctica</i>	Papegaaiduiker	Puffin	Papageitaucher								
<i>Fulmarus glacialis</i>	Noordse stormvogel	Fulmar	Eissturmvogel	x		x	x		x	x	x
<i>Gavia immer</i>	IJsduiker	Great Northern Diver	Eistaucher								
<i>Gavia stellata</i>	Roodkeelduiker	Red-throated diver	Sterntaucher	x							
<i>Lagopus mutus hyperboreus</i>	Sneeuwhoen	Svalbard Ptarmigan	Alpensneehuhn								
<i>Larus hyperboreus</i>	Grote burgemeester	Glaucous Gull	Eismowe		x	x	x	x	x	x	
<i>Larus marinus</i>	Grote mantelmeeuw	Great Black-backed gull	Groe Mantelmowe		x						
<i>Larus sabini</i>	Vorkstaartmeeuw	Sabine's gull	Schwalbenmowe								
<i>Pagophila eburnea</i>	Ivoormeeuw	Ivory Gull	Elfenbeinmowe								
<i>Phalaropus fulicarius</i>	Rosse franjepoot	Grey Phalarope	Thorshuhnchen								
<i>Plectrophenax nivalis</i>	Sneeuwgor	Snow Bunting	Schneeammer		x						x
<i>Rhodostethia rosea</i>	Rossmeeuw	Ross' Gull	Rosenmowe								
<i>Rissa tridactyla</i>	Drieteenmeeuw	Kittiwake	Dreizehenmowe	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
<i>Somateria mollissima</i>	Eider eend	Commen Eider	Eiderente	x	x		x	x			x
<i>Somateria spectabilis</i>	Koningseider	King Eider	Prachteiderente								
<i>Stercorarius longicaudus</i>	Kleinste jager	Long-tailed skua	Falkenraubmowe								
<i>Stercorarius parasiticus</i>	Kleine jager	Arctic skua	Schmarotzer-raubmowe		x		x	x			
<i>Stercorarius pomarinus</i>	Middelste jager	Pomarine skua	Spatelraubmowe						x		
<i>Stercorarius skua</i>	Grote jager	Great Skua	Skua				x		x		
<i>Sterna paradisaea</i>	Noordse stern	Arctic Tern	Kustenseeschwalbe		x			x			
<i>Uria aalge</i>	Zeekoet	Common Guillemot	Trottellumme								
<i>Uria lomvia</i>	Dikbekzeekoet	Brunich's Guillemot	Dickschnabellumme				x		x		

## SEA- AND LANDMAMMALS SVALBARD

LATIN	ENGLISH	DUTCH	GERMAN	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	1
<i>Alopex lagopus</i>	Arctic Fox	Poolvos	Polarfuchs / Eisfuchs		x	x					†
<i>Erignathus barbatus</i>	Bearded Seal	Baardrob	Bartrobbe						x		
<i>Dephinapterus leucas</i>	Beluga	Beloega	Weisswal		x						
<i>Balaenoptera musculus</i>	Blue Whale	Blauwe vinvs	Blauwal								
<i>Balaena mysticetus</i>	Bowhead Whale	Groenlandse walvis	Grönlandwal								
<i>Phoca vitulina</i>	Common/Harbour Seal	Gewone zeehond	Seehund			x	x	x			
<i>Balaenoptera physalus</i>	Fin Whale	Gewone vinvis	Finnwal								
<i>Pagophilus groenlandicus</i>	Harp Seal	Zadelrob	Sattelrobbe								
<i>Megaptera novaeangliae</i>	Humpback Whale	Bultrug	Buckelwal								
<i>Globicephala melaena</i>	Long-finned Pilot Whale	Griend	Grindwal								
<i>Balaenoptera acutorostrata</i>	Mink Whale	Dwergvinvis	Zwergwal		x				x		
<i>Monodon monoceros</i>	Narwhal	Narwal	Narwal								
<i>Hyperoodon ampullatus</i>	Northern Bottlenose Whale	Butskop	Entenwal (Dögling)								
<i>Orcinus orca</i>	Orca (Killer Whale)	Zwaardwalvis	Schwertwal (Orca)								
<i>Ursus maritimus</i>	Polar Bear	IJsbeer	Eisbär		x		x		x		
<i>Phoca hispida</i>	Ringed Seal	Ringelrob	Ringelrobbe								x
<i>Balaenoptera borealis</i>	Sei Whale	Noordse vinvis	Seiwal								
<i>Physeter macrocephalus</i>	Sperm Whale	Potvis	Pottwal		†		†				
<i>Rangifer tarandus platyrhynchus</i>	Spitsbergen Reindeer	Spitsbergen Rendier	Spitzbergen-Rentier		x				x	x	x
<i>Odobenus rosmarus</i>	Walrus	Walrus	Walross			x					
<i>Lagenorhynchus albirostris</i>	White-beaked Dolphin	Witsnuitdolfijn	Weisschnauzendelphin			x					