

Spitsbergen - Realm of the Polar Bear

Naturetrek Tour Report

23rd June – 3rd July 2025



Polar Bear by Sara Frost



Grey Phalarope by Su Gough



Walrus by Sara Frost



Ivory Gull by Su Gough

Tour report by Su Gough, Lizzie Cook and Sara Frost



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Day 1

Monday 23rd June

To Oslo

Mild with rain in Oslo

Our adventure began with the leaders and many of the group leaving from Heathrow, with others flying from Manchester, and arriving in Oslo in the late afternoon. We quickly transferred to our overnight hotel a very short walk from arrivals, where we met everyone else, including those who had made their own way to the Norwegian capital. In the evening, we all gathered in a conference room, allowing the leaders to introduce themselves and to discuss plans for the next twenty-four hours.

Day 2

Tuesday 24th June

Oslo to Longyearbyen to MS Quest

Sun and cloud, light breeze, 8°C

An early start meant baggage could be checked in for the flight to Longyearbyen before returning to the hotel for a delicious breakfast. Fully replete, we headed to the airport for our flight to the far north. Our first sight of Spitsbergen was of snow-covered mountain tops peeking through the cloud as we descended into Longyearbyen. Once through baggage reclaim, we were met by a coach, which took everyone into town for a few hours (passing some Reindeer lounging on the tundra near the runway). Meanwhile, Su and Lizzie accompanied the luggage to the harbour, where it was loaded onto the MS Quest, our home for the next nine days.

Rejoining the group in town, there was plenty of time to explore before a gentle walk down to the shore to find some of the birds of Svalbard. Snow Buntings flitted and sang all around us, and we were delighted to spot a male and female taking food into their nest under an engine cowling of a snowmobile! Barnacle Geese were numerous around the river, with some accompanying newly-hatched goslings, and we had our first encounter with summer plumaged Purple Sandpipers foraging around a pool. Approaching the shoreline, we spotted Common Eiders, Ringed Plovers and Glaucous Gulls; one of the latter was trying to take an Eider duckling, but its feisty mother bravely fought the gull off.

Returning to the town centre, some of the group picked up their hired wellies before we all got on the coach to take us to the harbour. Our ship, MS Quest, could not moor at the pier due to the presence of several larger ships, so we had our first introduction to the Zodiacs and life vests, making a very easy transfer. We had time to unpack and settle in before meeting up in the observation lounge for an introduction from the Polar Quest team. The expedition leader, Elke, explained how the ice was clearing from the eastern side of Spitsbergen, and so she was keen to attempt the first circumnavigation of Svalbard this year.

After our first evening meal aboard, many people returned to the observation deck to enjoy our progress down Isefjorden, and to experience the midnight sun. Fulmars, including many of the northern 'blue' colour form, kept pace with the ship, and the first Brünnich's Guillemots and Little Auks were spotted on the water. Those who stayed until midnight also had the joy of watching a Minke Whale surfacing numerous times before we turned left out of the fjord and headed towards the south-western corner of Spitsbergen overnight.

Day 3

Wednesday 25th June

Burgerbukta and Gnålodden

Overcast and still, with sun coming through later, 3°C

The ship made good progress and by breakfast time we had reached the Hornsund, where we anchored. The plan was to explore the front of the Hansbreen glacier by Zodiac in the morning, and then to make our first landing in the afternoon. We were about to experience our first sea ice, with the incredibly beautiful surroundings of Burgerbukta enticing everyone to take lots of photographs! We found freshly-calved blue ice, and listened to the characteristic popping sounds as it melted and released the tiny air bubbles contained within. Black Guillemots were our constant companions, and near the glacier front we found several bits of sea ice covered in loafing Kittiwakes. One or two Arctic Skuas also appeared and gave close views.

On a high, we returned to Quest for lunch before heading out again on the Zodiacs, this time with our waterproof wet-landing gear. We all found the landing straightforward, and found ourselves satnding on a gravel beach below the dramatic peak of Gnålodden (Moaning/Nagging Woman Mountain), so named because of the whistling that the wind often makes around its always cloud-topped peak. There was a small colony of Kittiwakes nesting on the cliffs of the mountain, and we soon discovered a couple of Arctic Foxes, one asleep with its nose covered by its tail, the other working its way along under the cliff. Our first flowers were found, including yellow-flowered Golden Whitlow Grass (*Draba alpina*) and white flowered Milky Whitlow-grass (*Draba lactea*), among carpets of Purple (*Saxifraga oppositifolia*) and Tufted Saxifrage (*Saxifraga cespitosa*).

Overnight, we set our sights on crossing the wide Storfjorden, which separates Spitsbergen from the eastern islands of the Svalbard archipelago.

Day 4

Thursday 26th June

Andréetangen and Habenichtbukta

Overcast at first, sun at times, still, 4°C

Morning saw us anchored off Andréetangen on the southern tip of EdgeØya, the largest island in the south-east. Today, the plan was to make two landings, but due to the new restrictions on the number of people at sensitive sites at any one time, in both cases we would have to do split landings. Half the group would land while the other half would do a Zodiac cruise, before swapping. Adept now at putting on our immersion suits, we were soon aboard the Zodiacs and ready to explore this site, with its striking black igneous rock.

Birds abounded with auks, Common Eiders, Arctic Terns and gulls ever-present, but we were delighted to add several species, including Long-tailed Ducks in their unfamiliar summer plumage, stunning Grey Phalaropes (perhaps in summer we should refer to them by their far more sensible American name of Red Phalarope!) and a pair of King Eider. Arctic Skuas menaced the Kittiwakes and we found a female Long-tailed Duck sitting resolutely on the rocks. The time came to swap with the land team and as we moved towards the landing site a most remarkable bird appeared: a very lost adult White-winged Tern! This temperate 'river tern' was foraging over the ice with Arctic Terns and looked healthy. Plentiful photographs were taken, and the record of this first for Svalbard has been submitted.



Arctic Fox



'Blue' Fulmar



Brünnich's Guillemot



Svalbard Poppy

The landing was near a Walrus haulout, and as we approached a number of them appeared in the water around the Zodiacs, allowing incredibly close views. Once on the beach, we carefully approached the haulout, keeping quiet and a respectful distance away. Unconcerned by us, the Walruses continued cleaning, stretching and going about their business. Fascinated, we spent some time quietly observing these huge beasts, but eventually our attention turned to the remains of a hunter's hut, alongside nearby grazing Reindeer and the numerous bones of Walrus left from the sad days of hunting.

After lunch, we headed out once more towards a beautiful bay, to explore a new area for the Polar Quest team, and one that is not accessible to larger ships. On land, we found the diminutive Polar Saxifrage (*Saxifraga hyperborea*) with pink streaked petals, nestled between boulders, and the bright yellow flowers of Sulphur Buttercup (*Ranunculus sulphureus*), which on closer examination revealed sepals covered in long brown hairs. The Zodiac cruise was productive, with good views of Pink-footed Geese and our only sighting of a pair of Common Scoter. When the time came to swap with the land team, however, we discovered that the tide had made the bay area too shallow to land, something which also caused a challenge for the pilots of the Zodiacs that were hauled up on the beach.

Thankfully we all made it back to Quest in good time for dinner, and those who stayed up into the sun-lit night were treated to a sighting of a Humpback Whale.

Day 5

Friday 27th June

Mohnbukta, Negribreen and Kapp Lee

Clear and sunny, with little breeze and mackerel skies, 5°C

We woke once more on the western side of the Storfjorden, and to our first significant sea ice at Mohnbukta, a glacial bay. We spent the first part of the morning cruising north along this stunning bit of coastline. As usual, auks, gulls, Fulmars and skuas kept us company as we scanned the ice edge, and then the shout went up: “Beluga!” We watched in delight as a group of around 100 slowly explored up and down the ice front. Their creamy-white backs and blows were obvious, and we saw a number of grey youngsters with them. We also spotted our first Ivory Gull along this ice front.

By mid-morning, we found ourselves off the Negribreen glacier, an extension of the ice cap: we were about to have a remarkable few hours. We were the first ship into this area of sea ice, and recently a vast piece of the ice cap had broken away, revealing an 11-km bay that had not existed before. Maps of the area suggested land under the ice, but we were sailing in! The Quest crew slowly, very slowly worked their way into the bay, where we enjoyed the incredible scenery that no human being had ever seen before, alongside the Bearded and Ringed Seals hauled out on the sea ice. Taking soundings continuously we proceeded to map this bay; our satellite tracking suggested we were sailing well inland! The crew, as well as the group, were delighted to be able to make a genuinely novel contribute to the navigation charts. Again, the size of Quest had worked in our favour, allowing us into this tight space between the icebergs.

Eventually, we had completed our circuit of the bay, and over lunch made tracks back across the Storfjorden to another Walrus haulout, and a landing site called Kapp Lee. After respectfully enjoying this much larger haulout, with around sixty animals, we walked up a nearby ridge, exploring the flowers, spotting more Reindeer and being able to gaze down on (and smell!) the Walruses below us. Flowers abounded, including our first Alpine Bistort (*Bistorta vivipara*) with its bulbils below the flowers, amazing black and red furry buds of Svalbard Poppy (*Oreomecon dabliana* syn. *Papaver dablianum*) and in the damper areas, Yellow Marsh Saxifrage (*Saxifraga hirculus*).

We made a short hop across to Sundbukta on the next island north, BarentsØya, to anchor overnight, to enable us to tackle the next stretch of the journey during daytime, when all eyes would be out on deck.

Day 6

Saturday 28th June

Freemansundet and sea ice in Olgstretet

Sunny, with a sea fret/haar along the coast and over the ice, very light winds, 2°C

Much of the morning was taken up with travelling through the narrow Freemansundet between EdgeØya and BarentsØya, with all eyes watching for Polar Bear: this is an excellent area for sightings. We spotted a number of

bear slides on land in the snow, and saw fresh prints on some of the sea ice, but sadly we made it through with no bears. We turned north into the Olgastretet on the eastern side of the Svalbard archipelago, and soon found ourselves amongst significant sea ice.

Puffins were particularly obvious here, and we had the very strange sight of Arctic Cod swimming in pools on the top of the ice (having been caught up as the bergs spin in the water), which proved irresistible for Kittiwakes. We were making our way slowly north through the ice after lunch, listening to a fascinating talk on whales by Sara, when the shout of “Polar Bear” went up!

And there it was, standing on a very large patch of pack ice, and evidently on a kill. We had incredible views of this bear, who could smell our lunch from the ship, but was otherwise not bothered by our presence; at one point lying down and cleaning its paws. The ice surrounding the bear had a number of Ivory Gulls in attendance. Emotions were high, and we all felt so privileged to have shared time with this magnificent animal.

Moving on through the ice, we entered a magical area, with the sea fret meaning we could not see land in any direction. We all set off in the Zodiacs for an other-worldly trip out into the ice at eye-level, with fogbows and the wide palette of colours proving that an ice world is far from white! It was an incredible experience and with the amazing bear sighting earlier for many the highlight of the trip so far, we thought it couldn't get better. We were wrong.

Day 7

Sunday 29th June

Faksevågen and Alkefjellet

Sunny and warm, a little windier later, 8°C

We were woken at 12.45am as another Polar Bear had wandered onto the ice in front of where we were anchored; it played for a short while before settling down to sleep. After a while we too returned to our beds; amazingly, the bear was still in the same spot, fast asleep, when we woke for breakfast.

Moving further north, we then spotted a large male Polar Bear on the fast ice, making his way slowly but steadily to a nearby land peninsula. With everyone on deck and maintaining our required distance from the bear, which was a challenge due to the very strong currents, we watched as a drama unfolded in front of our eyes. We realised that a female Polar Bear was nursing two well-grown cubs on the peninsula; the cubs, after suckling, set about exploring and playing. One walked up the ridge behind and then slid, front feet first, down the slope on the ice, before rolling and finally regaining his feet and decorum. As the three started ambling towards the shore, the male continued his inexorable approach, at times breaking through the ice and swimming towards them. Suddenly, the female smelt him on the wind, and her behaviour changed in an instant. She gathered her cubs to her and headed back onto the peninsula, climbing up the boulder fields and over the ridge before, eventually returning back along the beach: she was laying a false trail. And the male fell for it. As he reached the peninsula, he followed the scent trail up over the ridge and, when he disappeared over the other side, the female and cubs escaped at a run along the beach, onto the sea ice and away.

The group (and many of the crew!) were awestruck by this amazing behaviour revealed to us, and we felt we had truly experienced a 'David Attenborough documentary moment'! As the mother and cubs made their getaway and the male reappeared on the far end of the peninsula looking confused, we slowly left the area and headed north once more. With all this excitement some missed a pair of Pomarine Skuas on the ice.

We made a landing at Faksevangen in the afternoon, an area with lots of gravel moraine and braided streams, and with huge amounts of Siberian wood washed up on the shoreline, having been washed out to sea many hundreds of miles away. Several Sanderlings, in their amazing brick-red spangled breeding plumage, were seen along the shoreline, and another Arctic Fox was spotted carrying the remains of a Kittiwake. Flowers were rich here, the advancing season and superb habitat bringing more species into flower, with mounds of Moss Campion (*Silene acaulis*) and drifts of Mountain Avenas (*Dryas octopetala*) forming a backdrop for White Arctic Bell Heather (*Cassiope tetragona*) and the stunning, purple-flowered grass *Festuca baffinensis*. Close to the shore, we found the strange looking Spider Saxifrage (*Saxifraga flagellaris* ssp. *platysepala*) with its red 'legs', which are really vegetative stolons.

We had a late-night slot to visit the famous Alkefjellet seabird colony, but sadly when we arrived the sea was too rough to allow us to launch the Zodiacs, so we had to enjoy this amazing spectacle from the decks, or the comfort of the observation lounge of the ship. Some 120,000 Brünnich's Guillemots nest on these imposing cliffs, with the photogenic stack as its centrepiece. Birds were everywhere, with thousands on the water below us, thousands more in the air around us, and even more on the cliffs themselves, with Glaucous Gulls and others joining the throng. The activity really brought home to us how busy the Arctic is during the summer's twenty-four-hour daylight.

Day 8

Monday 30th June

Sorbreen, Kilneset and Fugelsangen

Sunny, still, 11°C

Overnight we had crossed the legendary 80° north line, (we reached 80°05'9" N) and were almost twice as far north of the Arctic Circle than we were south of the North Pole. The weather so far north was a bit of a surprise, however, reaching around 20°C in the sunshine. The rising temperature had brought the flowers on quickly, and when we made our landing at Sorbreen in the Wijdefjord we were able to enjoy them, with some excellent finds including Arctic Dandelion (*Taraxacum arcticum*), Arctic White Campion (*Silene involucreta*) and the tiny Pygmy Buttercup (*Ranunculus pygmaeus*). The Svalbard Poppies (*Oreomecon dabliana*) were putting on a good show on the lateral moraine. Purple Sandpipers were confiding and Snow Buntings made their presence known with their sweet songs.

Back on the ship, we headed along the northern shore of Spitsbergen, before an afternoon Zodiac exploration of the bird reserve at Kilneset. More King Eiders were seen, and a Great Skua showed well, appearing almost as large as the Glaucous Gulls. More Grey Phalaropes were spotted along the shoreline, and we spent some time watching these colourful and delicate waders spinning on the water in their search for food.

Back on Quest, we headed west along the coast again, enjoying multiple sightings of lunge feeding Minke Whales and at least one Fin Whale, before arriving at the Fugelsangen Little Auk colony. Late in the evening, we were able to board the Zodiacs and take a close-in cruise to experience the clouds of these tiny auks and to hear their strange

‘giggling’ calls. We were surrounded by them, and in the water below we could also see huge numbers of jellyfish and small comb jellies.

Day 9

Tuesday 1st July

Ny-London and BlomstrandØya

Breezy and overcast, with broken sunshine in the afternoon, 8°C

During the night we headed south along the west coast, turning into Kongsfjorden and sailing past the Ny-Ålesund research station (and the most northerly permanently inhabited town in the world), to Ny-London on the opposite shore. In front of our landing site were a number of Harbour Seals which allowed close approach; indeed, one came up right next to a Zodiac and examined us with apparent interest. Landing at the long-abandoned Camp Mansfield, we were immediately distracted by a pair of Long-tailed Skuas. We split into three groups to explore, and were soon watching Red-throated Divers on the nest, and summer-plumaged Turnstones on the boulders around us. A Ptarmigan was spotted perched on a rock above, allowing good ‘scope views, and a Ringed Plover joined the Purple Sandpipers around the lakes. A patch of Net-leaved Willow (*Salix reticulata*) was found, conveniently next to some Polar Willow (*Salix polaris*) so we could examine the differences between these two dwarf shrubs. A few individuals of the perfectly formed Smooth Northern-rockcress (*Braya purpurascens*) were seen, and a find of a single Polar Campion (*Silene uralensis*) with its very inflated calyxes proved popular.

In the afternoon there was a choice of excursions: either a Zodiac cruise or a landing. The afternoon Zodiac cruise explored the strange geology further up the fjord, with caves proving a popular breeding site for Black Guillemots, and many photogenic moments in the caves. The landing was to another fabulous location, where we investigated the sex differences in the dioecious/gynodioecious flowers of Polar Willow (*Salix reticulata*) and Moss Campion (*Silene acaulis*), and then took a moment to all sit in silence together and listen to the sounds around us.

With the weather deteriorating, it was decided to seek shelter in a fjord further down the coast for our last day, so overnight we headed towards St Jonsfjorden, glad of the shelter from the strengthening westerly winds afforded by Prins Karls Forland.

Day 10

Wednesday 2nd July

Osbornebreen and Valentinryggen

Overcast, breezy with light rain, windy overnight, 5°C

We began the day with a fabulous glacier Zodiac cruise in this little-known fjord, with Long-tailed Ducks, Red-throated Divers and more Harbour Seals, but it was the ice that had us enthralled. We were entranced by the colours and the sounds, with pieces calving off frequently, and ominous detonations from deep inside the glacier as it started to break apart.

Back on board Quest, we handed our immersion suits back, while some of the braver members of the group prepared themselves for an invigorating ‘polar plunge’ in water that was around -1°C!

After a warming lunch, we headed out to land for the final time, landing below a glacier-smoothed rocky outcrop, which we were able to climb for incredible views back down the fjord, with the ship on one side, and the glacier on the other. With a secure perimeter established, we were able to walk and explore freely, and we marvelled at the striations in the rocks where ice had recently passed over, and wondered how far it must have melted recently.

Returning to Quest for the last time, we enjoyed a final evening meal in the wonderful onboard restaurant, before settling down for a rough late night 'dash' around and into Isefjorden.

Day 11

Thursday 3rd July

Longyearbyen, Oslo and LHR

Windy, dry and overcast, 8°C

Docking at the floating pier, we had completed our circumnavigation of Svalbard, the first ship to successfully achieve it this year. We had travelled 1,789km, exploring this remarkable 'Realm of the Polar Bear', with six bears seen and having enjoyed many other wonderful sightings of mammals, birds and plants. And perhaps even more memorable than the wildlife was the place itself: almost untouched, and unbelievably beautiful and fragile.

We enjoyed a leisurely breakfast as our luggage was taken off the ship, with Su staying with it on land, before loading it on the waiting coach. Shortly afterwards we too made our way off Quest, boarded the coach, and were taken to the airport where our flight to Oslo was on time. Taxiing for take-off, we got good views of the Global Seed Bank on the hillside next to the airport, and our final sighting was of a Reindeer lying in the grass as we rose and headed towards Oslo, and from there on home.

Many, many thanks all of MS Quest's crew: to Noe and his hotel staff and caterers; Prince, the on-board doctor; the captain and other crew; and everyone else who worked tirelessly to look after us and make this expedition such an incredible and memorable success.

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Species lists

Birds

Common name	Scientific name	June-July 2025										
		23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	1	2	3
Pale-bellied Brent Goose	<i>Branta bernicla hrota</i>				✓	✓						
Barnacle Goose	<i>Branta leucopsis</i>		✓	✓	✓				✓	✓	✓	✓
Pink-footed Goose	<i>Anser brachyrhynchus</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
Tufted Duck	<i>Aythya fuligula</i>				1							
King Eider	<i>Somateria spectabilis</i>		✓		✓		✓	✓	✓			
Common Eider	<i>Somateria mollissima</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Common Scoter	<i>Melanitta nigra</i>				2		1					
Long-tailed Duck	<i>Clangula hyemalis</i>		✓		✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	
Rock Ptarmigan	<i>Lagopus muta</i>		✓					✓		✓		
Feral Pigeon	<i>Columba livia</i>	✓										✓
Common Ringed Plover	<i>Charadrius hiaticula</i>		✓					✓	✓	✓		
Grey Phalarope	<i>Phalaropus fulicarius</i>				✓				✓	✓		
Ruddy Turnstone	<i>Arenaria interpres</i>									✓		
Sanderling	<i>Calidris alba</i>							✓				
Dunlin	<i>Calidris alpina</i>		✓									
Purple Sandpiper	<i>Calidris maritima</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	
White-winged Tern	<i>Chlidonias leucopterus</i>			✓			✓		✓	✓		
Arctic Tern	<i>Sterna paradisaea</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Black-legged Kittiwake	<i>Rissa tridactyla</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Ivory Gull	<i>Pagophila eburnea</i>					✓	✓	✓				
Great Black-backed Gull	<i>Larus marinus</i>						✓		✓			
Glaucous Gull	<i>Larus hyperboreus</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
Long-tailed Skua	<i>Stercorarius longicaudus</i>									✓		
Arctic Skua	<i>Stercorarius parasiticus</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Pomarine Skua	<i>Stercorarius pomarinus</i>						✓					
Great Skua	<i>Stercorarius skua</i>						✓		✓	✓		

		June-July 2025										
Common name	Scientific name	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	1	2	3
Atlantic Puffin	<i>Fratercula arctica</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
Black Guillemot	<i>Cepphus grylle</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Little Auk	<i>Alle alle</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Brünnich's Guillemot	<i>Uria lomvia</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Red-throated Diver	<i>Gavia stellata</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	
Northern Fulmar	<i>Fulmarus glacialis</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Western Jackdaw	<i>Coloeus monedula</i>	✓										
Hooded Crow	<i>Corvus cornix</i>	✓										
White Wagtail	<i>Motacilla alba</i>	✓										
Snow Bunting	<i>Plectrophenax nivalis</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓

Mammals

		June-July 2025										
Common name	Scientific name	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	1	2	3
Humpback Whale	<i>Megaptera novaeangliae</i>				1							
Fin Whale	<i>Balaenoptera physalus</i>							1	1			
Common Minke Whale	<i>Balaenoptera acutorostrata</i>		2					1	12	2		
Beluga Whale	<i>Delphinapterus leucas</i>					120						
Reindeer	<i>Rangifer tarandus</i>		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Arctic Fox	<i>Vulpes lagopus</i>		1	2	1	1		1	1			
Polar Bear	<i>Ursus maritimus</i>						1	5				
Walrus	<i>Odobenus rosmarus</i>				✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			
Bearded Seal	<i>Erignathus barbatus</i>					✓	✓	✓			✓	
Harp Seal	<i>Pagophilus groenlandicus</i>					✓						
Harbour Seal	<i>Phoca vitulina</i>									✓	✓	
Ringed Seal	<i>Pusa hispida</i>			✓		✓	✓	✓				

Plants

Scientific Name	Common Name	June-July 2025										
		23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	1	2	3
Bryophytes	Mosses and liverworts											
Reindeer Moss	<i>Cladonia rangifera</i>											
Pteridophytes	Ferns and allies											
Equisetaceae	Horsetail Family											
<i>Equisetum arvense</i>	Arctic/Field Horsetail						✓			✓		
<i>Equisetum scirpoides</i>	Dwarf Horsetail										✓	
<i>Equisetum variegatum</i>	Variegated Horsetail										✓	
Angiosperms	Flowering Plants											
Eudicots	Eudicotyledons											
Asteraceae	Daisy Family											
<i>Taraxacum arcticum</i>	Arctic Dandelion									✓		
Boraginaceae	Borage Family											
<i>Mertensia maritima</i>	Oyster Plant									✓		
Brassicaceae	Cabbage Family											
<i>Braya purpurascens</i>	Smooth Northern-rockcress										✓	
<i>Cardamine polemonioides</i>	Polar Cress								✓		✓	
<i>Cochlearia groenlandica</i>	Polar Scurvygrass				✓				✓		✓	
<i>Draba alpina</i>	Golden Whitlow-grass			✓	✓							✓
<i>Draba arctica</i>	Arctic Whitlow-grass									✓		
<i>Draba corymbosa</i>	Flat-top Whitlow-grass								✓			
<i>Draba fladnizensis</i>	White Arctic Whitlow-grass								✓			
<i>Draba lactea</i>	Milky Whitlow-grass				✓							
<i>Draba norvegica</i>	Rock Whitlow-grass									✓		✓
<i>Draba oxycarpa</i>	Pale Whitlow-grass					✓						
Caryophyllaceae	Pink Family											
<i>Cerastium arcticum</i>	Arctic Mouse-ear				✓		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
<i>Cerastium regelii</i>	Polar Mouse-ear						✓		✓			
<i>Cherleria biflora</i>	Tufted Sandwort								✓		✓	
<i>Sagina nivalis</i>	Snow Pearlwort				✓	✓			✓			✓

		June-July 2025										
Scientific Name	Common Name	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	1	2	3
<i>Silene acaulis</i>	Moss Campion Common								✓	✓	✓	
<i>Silene involucrata</i>	Arctic White Campion									✓		
<i>Silene uralensis</i>	Polar Campion										✓	
<i>Stellaria longipes</i>	Tundra Chickweed					✓			✓	✓		
Ericaceae	Heather Family											
<i>Cassiope tetragona</i> ssp. <i>tetragon</i>	White Arctic Bell Heather			✓					✓		✓	
Orobanchaceae	Broomrape Family											
<i>Pedicularis hirsuta</i>	Hairy Lousewort			✓		✓			✓		✓	
Papaveraceae	Poppy Family											
<i>Oreomecon dahliana</i>	Svalbard Poppy			✓			✓		✓	✓		
Polygonaceae	Dock Family											
<i>Oxyria digyna</i>	Mountain Sorrel			✓		✓			✓	✓		
<i>Bistorta vivipara</i>	Alpine Bistort					✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	
Ranunculaceae	Buttercup Family											
<i>Ranunculus pygmaeus</i>	Pygmy Buttercup									✓		
<i>Ranunculus sulphureus</i>	Sulphur-coloured Buttercup			✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓		
Roseaceae	Rose Family											
<i>Dryas octopetala</i>	Mountain Avens			✓					✓	✓	✓	
<i>Potentilla hyparctica</i> ssp. <i>hyparctica</i>	Arctic Cinquefoil			✓						✓		
<i>Potentilla pulchella</i>	Tufted Cinquefoil					✓	✓		✓	✓		
Salicaceae	Willow Family											
<i>Salix polaris</i>	Polar Willow				✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	
<i>Salix reticulata</i>	Net-leaved Willow										✓	
Saxifragaceae	Saxifrage Family											
<i>Chrysosplenium tetrandrum</i>	Dwarf Golden-saxifrage										✓	
<i>Micranthes nivalis</i>	Alpine Saxifrage				✓		✓		✓	✓		
<i>Saxifraga aizoides</i>	Yellow Mountain Saxifrage										✓	
<i>Saxifraga cernua</i>	Drooping Saxifrage				✓		✓		✓	✓	✓	
<i>Saxifraga cespitosa</i> ssp. <i>cespitosa</i>	Tufted Saxifrage			✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	
<i>Saxifraga hirculus</i>	Yellow Marsh Saxifrage				✓	✓	✓					

		June-July 2025										
Scientific Name	Common Name	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	1	2	3
<i>Saxifraga hyperborea</i>	Polar Saxifrage					✓				✓		
<i>Saxifraga oppositifolia</i> ssp. <i>oppositifolia</i>	Purple Saxifrage			✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	
<i>Saxifraga flagellaris</i> ssp. <i>platysepala</i>	Polar Stoloniferous Saxifrage								✓			
Monocots	Monocotyledons											
Cyperaceae	Sedge Family											
<i>Carex fuliginosa</i>	Short-leaved Sedge								✓		✓	
<i>Carex rupestris</i>	Curly Sedge								✓		✓	
<i>Carex ursina</i>	Polar Bear Sedge								✓			
<i>Eriophorum scheuchzeri</i> ssp. <i>arcticum</i>	Polar Cotton-grass			✓							✓	
Juncaceae	Rush Family											
<i>Juncus biglumis</i>	Two-flowered Rush										✓	
<i>Luzula confusa</i>	Northern Wood-rush					✓						
<i>Luzula nivalis</i>	Arctic Wood-rush					✓	✓				✓	
Poaceae	Grass Family											
<i>Alopecurus magellanicus</i>	Polar Foxtail					✓	✓				✓	
<i>Festuca baffinensis</i>	Baffin Island Fescue								✓			
<i>Phippsia algida</i>	Ice Grass					✓						

Other species

Fishes	
Arctic Cod	<i>Boreogadus saida</i>
Jellies	
a jellyfish	<i>Aurelia</i> sp.
a ctenophore/Sea Gooseberry	<i>Mertensia ovum</i>
Lichens	
Sunburst Lichen	<i>Xanthoria elegans</i>
Fungi	
a Fairy Ring Champignon	<i>Marasmius</i> sp. (<i>oreades</i> ?)
a Grey Puffball	<i>Bovista</i> sp. (<i>tomentosa</i> or <i>limosa</i>)

Brown seaweeds	
Bladderwrack	<i>Fucus vesiculosus</i>
Sugar Kelp	<i>Saccharina latissima</i>
Arctic Suction-cup Kelp	<i>Laminaria solidungula</i>



Standing on the bow at Negribreen and Red-throated Diver by Sara Frost