

A photograph of the Aurora Borealis (Northern Lights) in a dark night sky, with a faint reflection on the water below. The aurora appears as a soft, greenish glow in the upper right quadrant of the frame. The water in the foreground is dark, with a vertical reflection of light on the left side.

Iceland and Greenland

September 2023

Part 2



DAILY PROGRAM

East Greenland & Scoresbysund

Date: Wednesday 13th September

Day 5: Bjørneøer & Sydkap / Ingmikertikajik

Sunrise 06:29 - Sunset 20:15

- 0630 Wake-up call.
0700-0800 Breakfast buffet in the Restaurant.

This morning we hope to offer a Zodiac cruise, landing, & kayaking at Bjørneøer

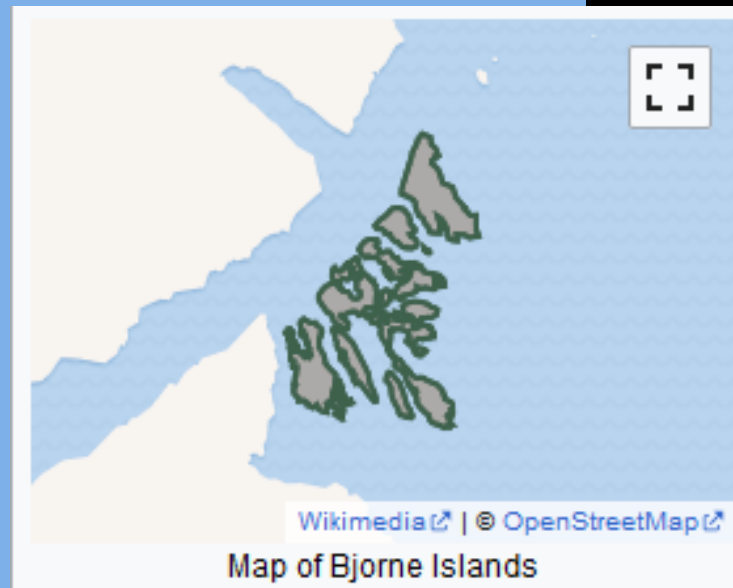
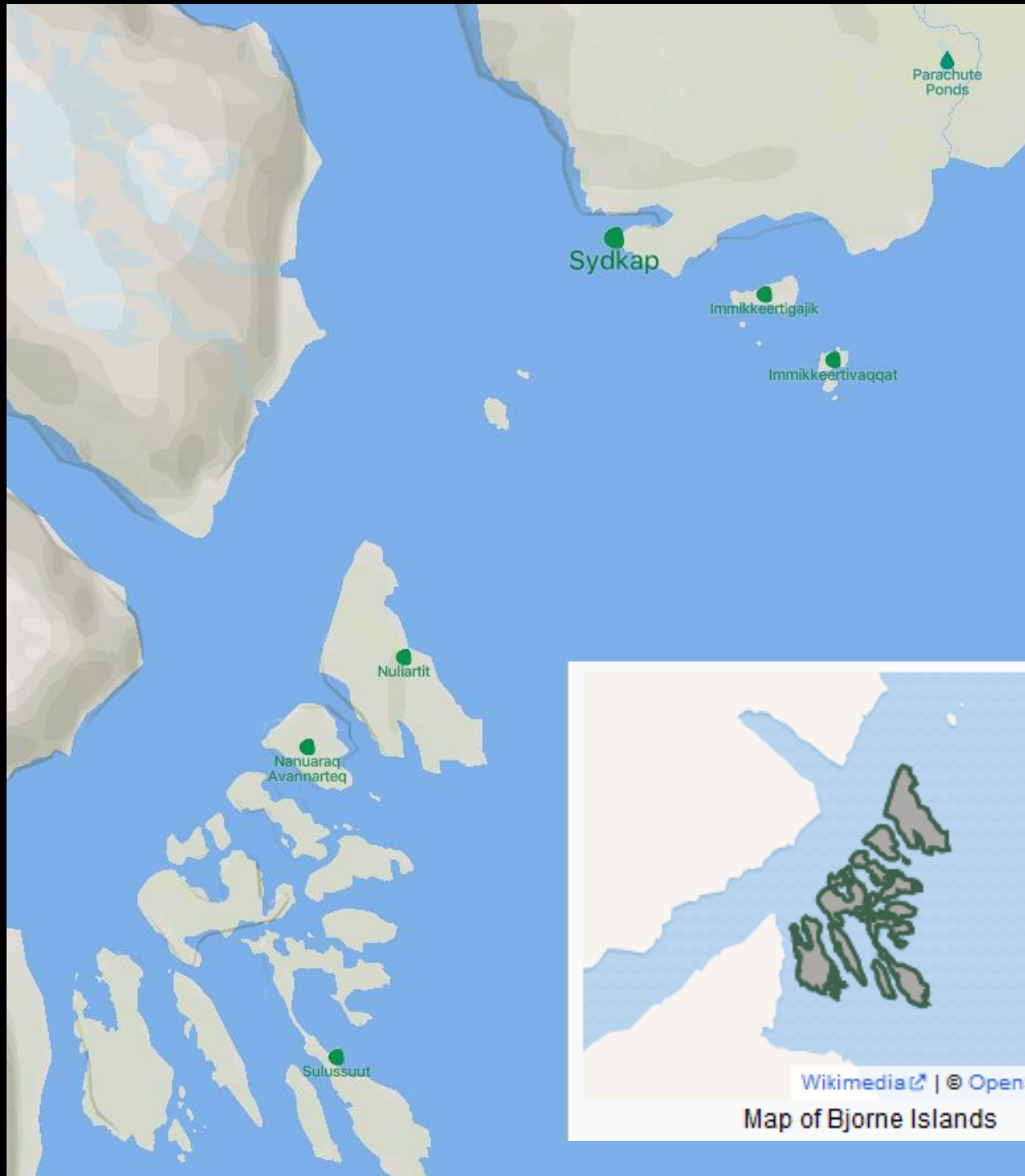
- 0800 Please can the **Blue** Group be ready at the shell doors on Deck 3 for a landing at Bjørneøer. Please listen for announcements.
0820 Please can the **Red** Group be ready at the shell doors on Deck 3 for a Zodiac cruise at Bjørneøer. Please listen for announcements.
0845 All kayakers please be ready for boarding the Zodiacs at Deck 3, forward shell door.

The **Blue** and **Red** groups will swap halfway through the morning.

- 1230-1330 Buffet lunch will be served in the Restaurant.

This afternoon we hope to offer a landing & kayaking at Sydkap / Ingmikertikajik

- 1400 Please can all long hikers be ready for boarding the Zodiacs at the shell doors at Deck 3.
1415 Please can all guests for medium/short hikers be ready for boarding the Zodiacs at the shell doors at Deck 3.
1430 All kayakers please be ready for boarding the Zodiacs at Deck 3, forward shell door.
1830 Please join the expedition team in the Lounge for daily recap.
1900 A special Arctic dinner will be served...



Map of Bjørne Islands



Sydkap

Bjorne Islands

Danmark Island

Vikingebukt

Rolige Brae Glacier

Rode Island

Bjørneøen - Bjorne Islands – Bear Islands

This is an island group in the Scoresby Sound. The islands are uninhabited.

This island group was named by Carl Ryder in the course of his 1891–92 East Greenland Expedition, because a bear was shot while the islands were being surveyed on 4 September 1891.

Individual islands were not assigned names, but in 1934 they were numbered I to XI following the first survey carried out by Eduard Wenk and Helge Backlund. Members of the 1934 surveying group climbed parts of the spectacular ridges of islands VI and IX (*Första Nålbrevet* and *Sista Nålbrevet*). Further climbs were reported in 1978 by an expedition of the British Army.¹



Preparing to land from the zodiacs





The ship's Exploration Leader Hans is piloting our zodiac



Impressive scenery ashore but sadly more receding glaciers



More flora



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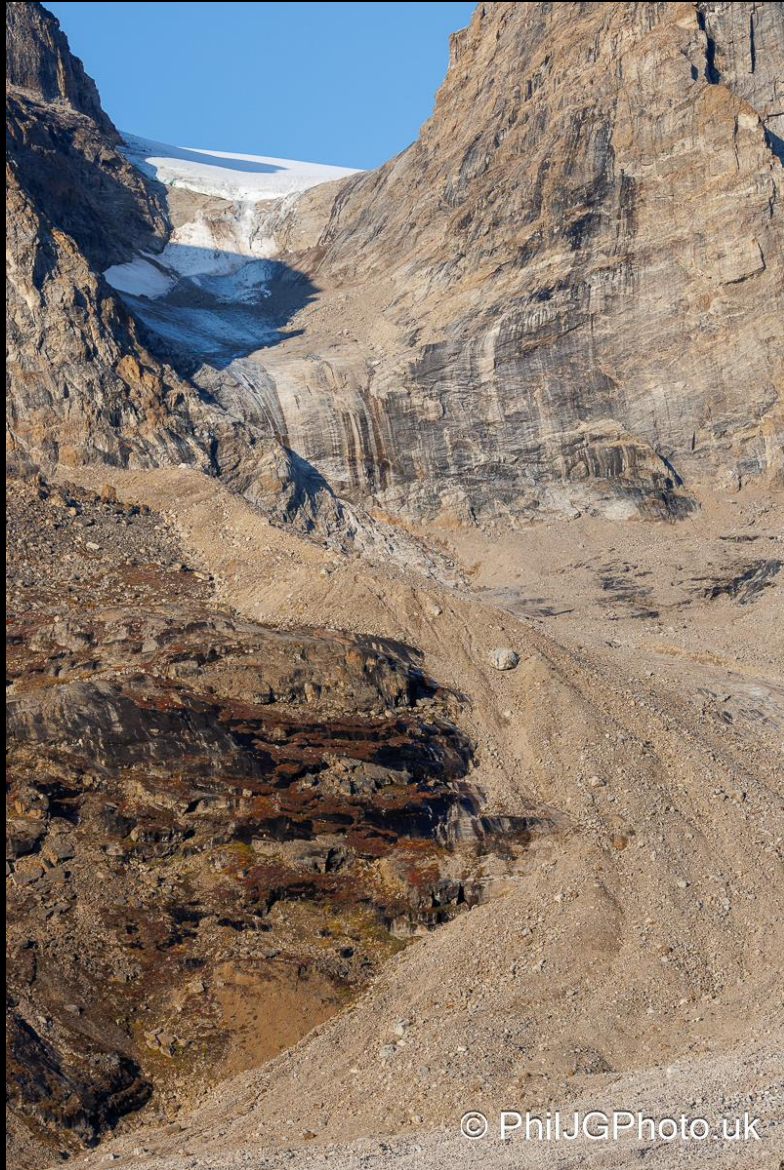
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Ice and patterns





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Glacier almost disappeared
and mammoth icebergs



© PhilJGPhoto.uk

Patterns in the sand / mud



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Interesting flora



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Side away from the sun is frozen

Fungi



Returning to the zodiacs





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Birds photographed from the zodiac on the way back to the ship



More receding glaciers





The afternoon landing at Sydkap had high numbers of people on the medium walk but many fell away and were escorted back to the landing site. I ended up walking about five miles and the ground conditions made the walk very strenuous.

The difficult walking conditions – eyes down needed continually





Ravens – we think that they had found the remains of a musk ox





Icy pools



More flora



And now it's time for the Arctic Plunge



Then back to the ship



Barbecue on the back deck followed by a disco



Bill – a member of the explorer staff
He celebrated his 79th birthday during the cruise



I think that these were the most spectacular Northern Lights of the trip



DAILY PROGRAM

East Greenland & Scoresbysund

Date: Thursday 14th September

Day 6: Ittoqqortoormiit

Sunrise 06:33 - Sunset 20:10

0730 Wake-up call.
0800-0900 Breakfast buffet in the Restaurant.

This morning we hope to offer a landing at Ittoqqortoormiit.

+/-0900 Please can the **Blue** Group be ready at the shell doors on deck 3 for a landing at Ittoqqortoormiit. **Please listen for announcements.**
+/-0915 Please can the **Red** Group be ready at the shell doors on deck 3 for a landing at Ittoqqortoormiit. **Please listen for announcements.**

1230-1330 Buffet lunch will be served in the Restaurant.

1330-1400 Photo submission for photograph competition: if you wish to submit photos for the competition please meet Misha in the Lecture Room during this time

This afternoon we hope to offer a landing at Nøkkedal, Hurry Fjord. We would like to offer a long hike for those who wish to walk long and fast. If you would like to take more photographs, and inspect the plant life please join the medium or short hiking groups.

+/-1500 Please can the **long hikers** be ready at the shell doors on deck 3 for a landing at Nøkkedal, Hurry Fjord. **Please listen for announcements.**

+/-1515 Please can the **medium & short hikers** be ready at the shell doors on deck 3 for a landing at Nøkkedal, Hurry Fjord. **Please listen for announcements.**

1430 Please can the kayakers be ready at the shell doors on deck 3

1815 Please join the expedition team in the lounge for daily recap.

1900 Dinner will be served in the Restaurant.

2100 Please join Simone in the Lecture Room for a workshop about the sound recordings made during this trip

Places to go

1. Tourist office
2. Weather station
3. Pilersuisoq Store
4. Art Shop
5. Guesthouse
6. Police
7. Local administration
8. Hospital
9. Church
10. Museum
11. School
12. Memorial: Ejnar Mikkelsen
13. Memorial Pourquai-Pas
14. Old graveyards
15. Sporthall
16. Heliport
17. Cemetery
18. Football Field
19. Public service building
20. Ngiiu Kiosk
21. Sled dogs
22. Gas station
23. Elderly house

ITTOQQORTOORMIIT



© PhilJGPhoto.uk



Sydkap

Bjorne Islands

Nokkedal

Rolige Brae Glacier

Danmark Island

Vikingebukt

Ittoqqortoormiit

Rode Island

Ittoqqortoormiit

ittoqqortoormiit formerly known as **Scoresbysund**, is a settlement in the Sermersooq municipality in eastern Greenland. Its population was 345 as of 2020, and it has been described as one of the most remote settlements on earth.

The former name Scoresbysund derives from the English Arctic explorer and whaler William Scoresby, who was the first European to map the area in 1822. The name "Ittoqqortoormiit" means "Big-House Dwellers" in the Eastern Greenlandic dialect. The region is known for its wildlife, including polar bears, muskoxen, and seals.

Ittoqqortoormiit was founded in 1925 by Ejnar Mikkelsen and some 80 Inuit settlers (70 persons from Tasiilaq and four families from western Greenland). They were brought on the ship *Gustav Holm* and settled 400 kilometres (249 miles) south of the last known Inuit settlement in northeastern Greenland.

The settlement was encouraged by the colonial power Denmark which at the time had a growing interest in Northeast Greenland. At the same time, the colonization was intended to improve declining living conditions in Tasiilaq, from where the settlers were more or less voluntarily transferred. The settlers soon prospered on the good hunting conditions of the new area, which was rich in seals, walruses, narwhals, polar bears and Arctic foxes.

Before that, the area itself had been home to a dense population of Inuit in the past, as testified by ruins and other archeological remains.

Ittoqqortoormiit is one of the most remote towns in Greenland. It is served by Ittoqqortoormiit Heliport, with Air Greenland helicopters shuttling passengers between the settlement and Nerlerit Inaat Airport (38 km (24 mi) distance), with boat transfer also possible for a few months a year. There are two Norlandair weekly departures from Reykjavík Domestic Airport and Akureyri to Nerlerit Inaat as of 2022.

Feeding the sledge dogs



Typically, this sort of “kit” was left lying around



The housing and buildings



More houses



The tourists arrive



View of the town from the satellite dish hilltop



Not short of internet access and all the cultural effects thereof

They have more streetlights than I have in my village



Kiddies' toys left out

Post box and the supermarket



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Afternoon landing at Nokkedal









Distant Ringed Plovers

Taken at focal length
1000 mm



Very distant Artic Hares Taken at Focal Length 1000 mm





My German cabin mate, Manfred always went on the long hikes. I was jealous that he managed to photo Ptarmigan close up with his mobile. These photos were taken of his mobile 'phone display.

The long hikers were also able to take close ups of Arctic Hares soon after this. The unknowing were calling them "white bunnies".



DAILY PROGRAM

Noordoost-Groenland en Scoresbysund

Date: Friday 14th September

Day 7: Rømer Fjord & Turner Sund

- 0730 Wake - up call.
- 0800-0900 Breakfast buffet in the Restaurant.
- +/-0900 Please can the **Red** Group be ready at the shell doors on deck 3 for a landing at Rømerfjord. Please listen for announcements.
- +/-0915 Please can the **Blue** Group be ready at the shell doors on deck 3 for a landing at Rømerfjord. Please listen for announcements.
- 0930 Please can the kayakers be ready at the shell doors on deck 3.
- 1230-1330 Buffet lunch will be served in the Restaurant.
- +/-1400 Please can the **Blue** Group be ready at the shell doors on deck 3 for a zodiac cruise at Turner Sund. Please listen for announcements.
- +/-1415 Please can the **Red** Group be ready at the shell doors on deck 3 for a zodiac cruise at Turner Sund. Please listen for announcements.
- 1815 Please join the expedition team in the lounge for daily recap.
- 1900 Dinner will be served in the Restaurant.
- 2100 Photo competition – Please join Misha in the Observation Lounge for the results of the photo competition



Rømer Fjord

Dawn photos





Glaucos Gull



© PhiJGPhoto.uk

Peregrine Falcon



© PhiJGPhoto.uk

Frozen water



Landed – so what shall we look at first?



Narwhal skull



At last, a close-up photo of an Arctic Hare



© PhilJGPhot

And a muskox



© PhilJGPh

A Chinese fashion statement

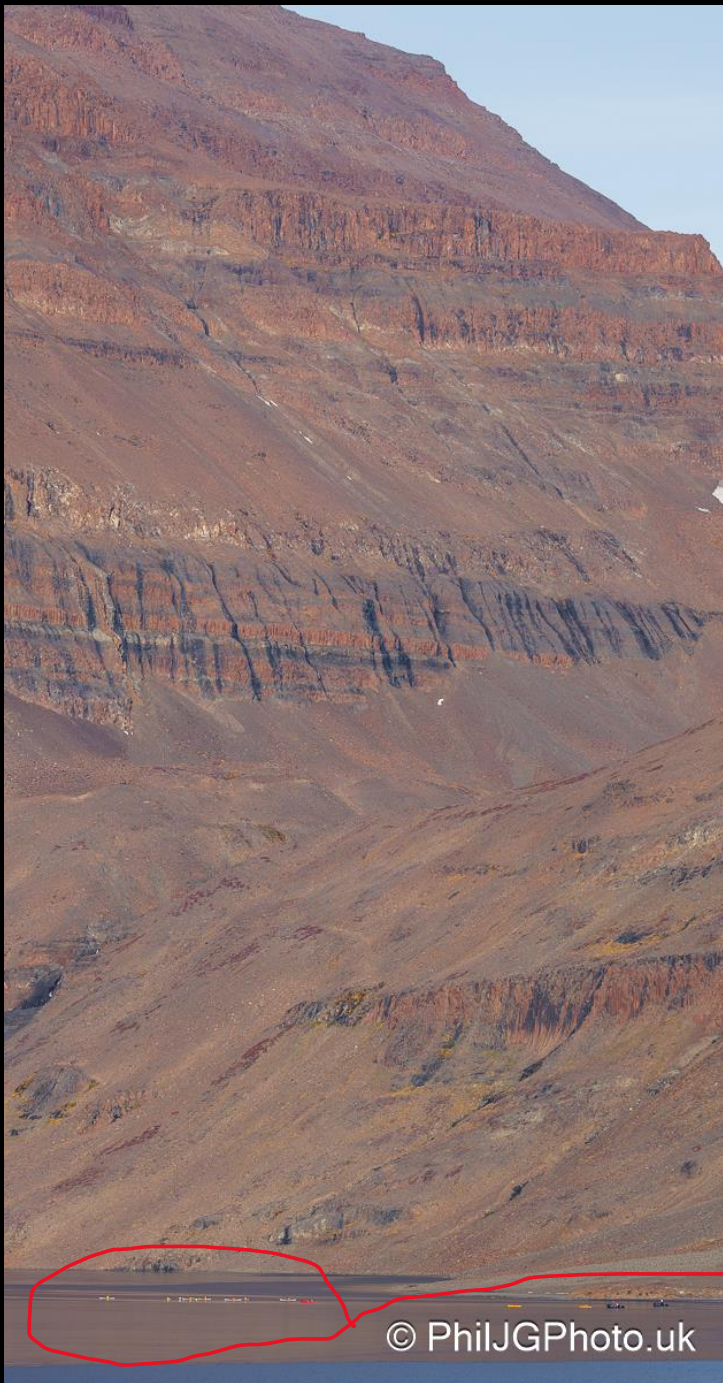


The hot spring and run off



Our Chinese fellow travellers testing the temperatures





© PhilJGPhoto.uk



Kayakers give you a sense of scale

Interesting low cloud formation caused by the proximity of the colder ocean

Afternoon

Zodiac cruising



Panorama shot of the cloud formation



Waterfalls rather than glaciers



More basaltic rock formations



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Female Eider Duck

© PhilJGPhoto.uk

Barnacle Geese



© PhilJGPhoto.uk

Great Northern Diver



© PhilJGPhoto.uk



© PhilJC



© PhilJC

A raft of eider ducks
An eiderdown?





© PhilJGPhoto.uk



DAILY PROGRAM

Northeast Greenland & Scoresbysund

Date: Saturday 16th September

Day 8: At sea: Denmark Strait

- 0730 Wake-up call.
- 0800-0900 Breakfast buffet in the Restaurant.
- 0915 Please join Regis in the Observation Lounge for his presentation 'An endless day', about undertaking scientific field work on birds and Arctic foxes in northeast Greenland.
- 1100 Please join Hazel in the Observation Lounge for her presentation 'Polar bear: icon of the Arctic'.
- 1200 We will collect your muck boots; please rinse them in your shower beforehand and bring them to Deck 3. We will call you deck-by-deck.
- 1200 ***The onboard souvenir shop will close. Please purchase anything you wish before this time.***
- 1230-1330 Buffet lunch will be served in the Restaurant.
- 1400 Please join Bill in the Observation Lounge for his presentation 'Paintings of the Sea'.
- 1600-1700 Grimsey Island; wildlife watching. Please join the Expedition Team on the outside decks to look for whales and birds, while we cross the Arctic Circle.
- 1800 We welcome you to the Lounge for the Captains farewell and to view the trip slideshow (this will be available after dinner).
- 1900 A farewell dinner will be served in the Restaurant.



Crossing back to Iceland

A visit to the bridge



Fulmars in the Denmark Strait

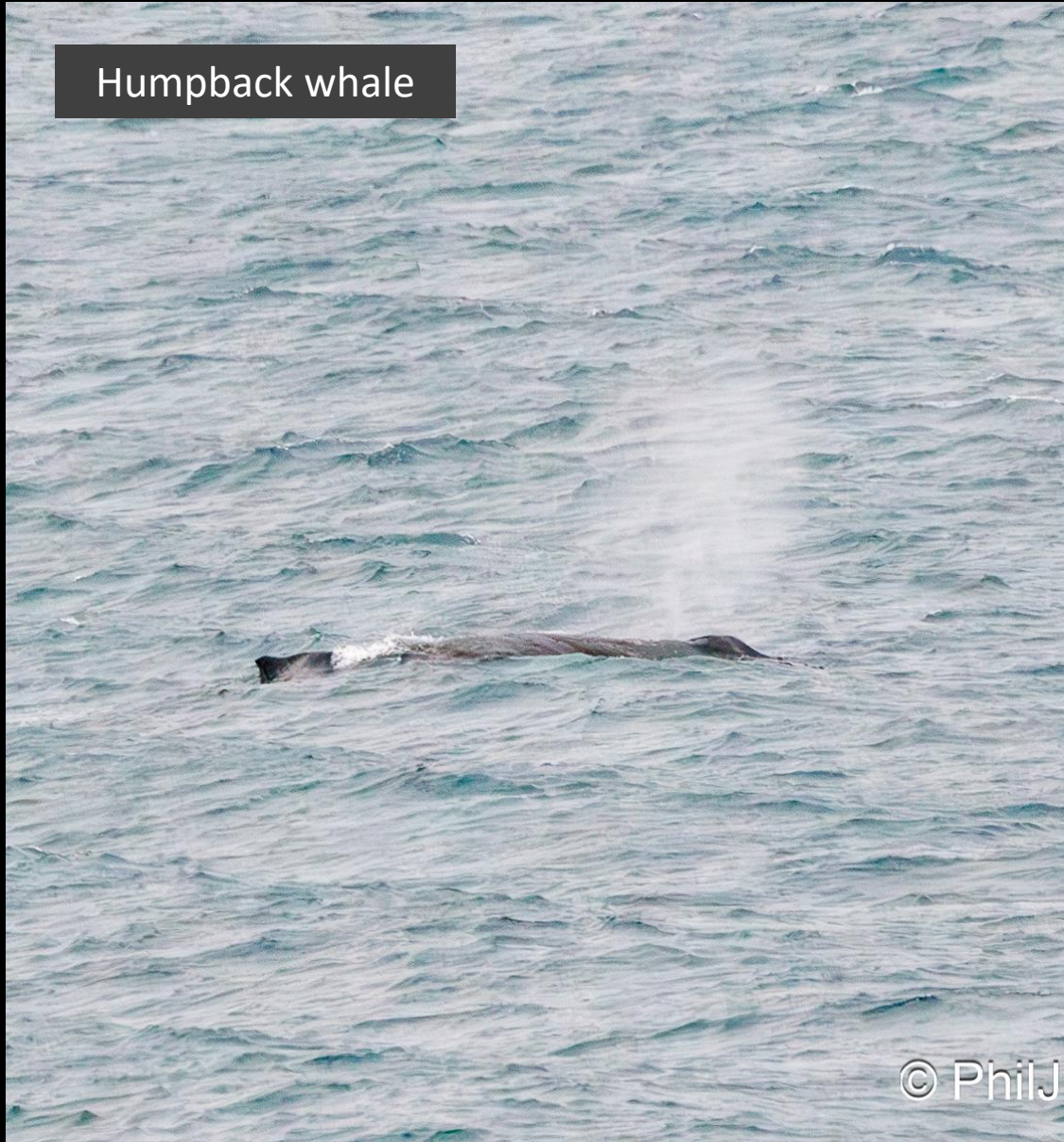


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© Phi

Humpback whale



© PhilJ



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Evening return to Akureyri before





DAILY PROGRAM

Northeast Greenland & Scoresbysund

Date: Sunday 17th September 2023

Day 9: Disembarkation - Akureyri

- 0700 Wake up call.
- 0730 Please leave your large luggage in the corridor outside your room for the staff to collect no later than 0730.
- Crew and staff will bring it to the pier, where you will need to personally identify it and bring it to the bus/take on your onward travel.
- You can leave your hand luggage in your room to take yourself.
- 0730-0830 A breakfast buffet is served in the Restaurant on Deck 4.
- 0900 +/- Please be ready for disembarkation via the gangway at deck 4. please listen for announcements before gathering at reception.

Thank you for a wonderful voyage, for your company, good humour, and enthusiasm. We hope to see you again in the future and share more polar adventures with you.

Safe Travels from all staff & crew aboard Hondius.

..... next morning disembarkation after breakfast

On the coach for the drive to Reykjavik



Interesting landscapes



..... and farmsteads



Playing with my iPhone features during the journey



Stop at the services



Some strange wooden characters in my Reykjavik hotel



An afternoon stroll along the Reykjavik shoreline for some birding



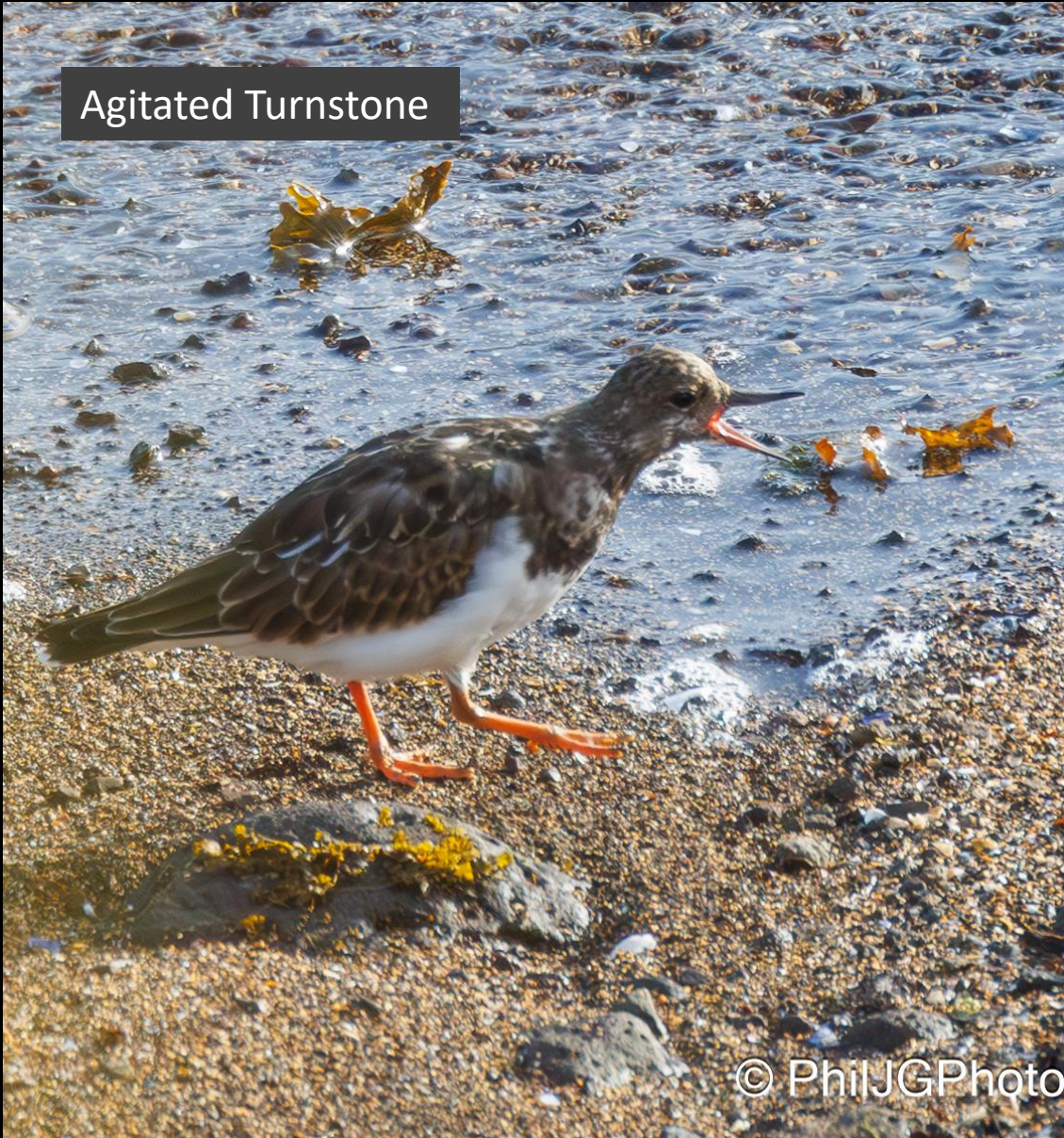
The beach at Reykjavik with imported sand



Raven

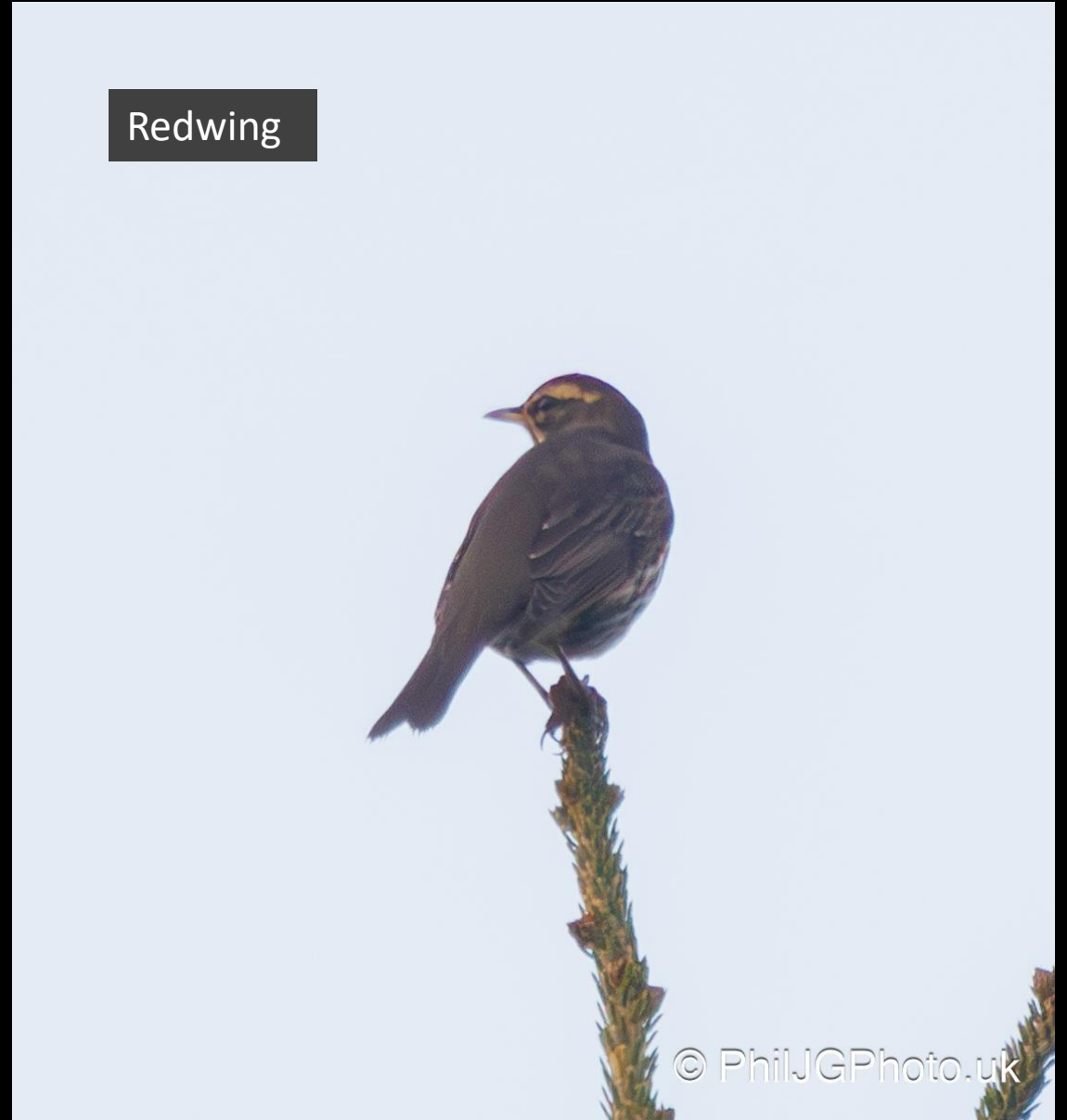


Agitated Turnstone



© PhilJGPhoto

Redwing



© PhilJGPhoto.uk

Some architecture from afar – A church?



© PhilJGPhoto.uk

View of Reykjavik
domestic airport
from my hotel
window



Return to the UK from
Keflavik by Icelandair
early the following
morning



Thank you for watching and
listening.

Phil Gravett

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End of Part Two