



Heritage News

Austral Spring Edition

September 2012

www.heritage-expeditions.com

Sea of Okhotsk Voyage Report



© K Ovsyanikova

For some time, our founder Rodney Russ has dreamt of leading an expedition into the heart of the Sea of Okhotsk and after many years of planning, our inaugural voyage sailed in June. To some extent this was a journey into the unknown, covering new ground even for our highly experienced expedition team. What would we encounter? This is what Expedition Cruising is all about! There were many highlights, but one of the most remarkable was tiny lony Island, a mere dot on the map, which teemed with life. Here we discovered hundreds of inquisitive Steller Sea Lions that had rarely encountered boats, so were happy to

swim right up to us. Hundreds of thousands of birds made use of every available space on the rocks and cliffs and their wings beat a constant rhythm in the air. Further north we encountered ice and were delighted to see and photograph many beautiful and very rare Ribbon Seals. We joined the locals in the historic town of Okhotsk and were treated to traditional caribou soup as well as a concert. Later we encountered several Kamchatka Brown Bears and watched in awe as a young male climbed a steep ice wall. In 2013 we will return to this wonderful region – Rodney and the expedition team can't wait!



© M Kelly

Website – What's New?



The Heritage Expeditions website has recently received great reviews, but the reviews we need most are from you! Please go online and submit your expedition photos, videos, comments and thoughts so that we can share them with others. It is really easy. Just go to www.heritage-expeditions.com and click on 'Submit your photos and comments here' at the right hand side of the front page. This will take you to the Testimonials page where you click on the 'Submit your Own' tab above

the latest comment. From there you simply complete the boxes and upload your photos, videos etc. It is very easy, and if you need an added incentive, there is a monthly prize of Rodney Russ's wonderful book 'Galapagos of the Antarctic' as well as a voucher for all past passenger comments for US \$250 off your next Heritage Expeditions or Wild Earth voyage booking. So share your experiences, display your photography skills and help us tell the world what we do!

Captain's Blog & Ship Locator

Track the Spirit of Enderby as she sails around the Pacific Ocean and read regular updates from the Captain and expedition team. Visit our website www.heritage-expeditions.com/captains-blog/ for information and on occasion photographs from the latest destination. This is a great place for family and friends to follow your expedition and gain insight into

what you have been experiencing. With many new and exciting voyages it is also a great way to decide if a particular itinerary appeals. Take a look back over the past few months and enjoy the continuing view from the Bridge.



Desktop Despatches

Despatch: From our General Manager

Kia Ora,

We have just completed another successful season exploring the coast of the Russian Far East including the inaugural 'Sea of Okhotsk' voyage. Sadly, we did not discover any new Spoon-billed Sandpiper breeding pairs but our two 'Across the Top of the World' expeditions successfully crossed the Arctic circle and reached Wrangel Island despite fighting the most Russian Arctic summer sea ice since the 1970's.

I was lucky enough to be on board the first of these voyages and was impressed by the skill of our Captain and crew whose experience showed as they navigated north in very trying ice conditions. The up side of the extensive sea ice meant most of the walrus and Polar Bear encounters were on ice, where both species are happiest.

The *Spirit of Enderby* is now headed south to Australia and the busy southern season has almost arrived! There are still a few berths remaining on the Heard Island expedition but the remainder of the season is fully booked. If you missed out on your preferred voyage this year I urge you to go to the website or speak to us soon, as the 2013/14 summer dates and prices have just been released and several voyages have already begun to fill.

Our 2013 Russian Far East brochure is hot off the press and included with this edition of Heritage News. For those looking for rewarding maritime adventures in other parts of the world we have also included the just released Wild Earth small ship cruises brochure. Here you will find the perfect small ship experience in an additional 600 destinations worldwide.

Despatch: From our Sales and Reservations Manager

Cassia Jackson, Sales and Reservations Manager says "Christchurch is abuzz with excitement about the polar regions. The inaugural month-long New Zealand IceFest is currently being held in the city and Heritage Expeditions staff members will be manning the Antarctic bookshop, guiding visitors through exhibitions and featuring in presentations throughout the festival. www.nzicefest.co.nz

My recommendation for Russia 2013 will be the Jewel of the Russian Far East itinerary. Having experienced the autumn colours on the 2011 Jewel, I am personally excited to see it make a return to our schedule."

 Heritage Expeditions

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2012 Voyage - Wake of Bering



© B Scampion

After the euphoria of our successful collection of Spoon-billed Sandpiper eggs and their transfer to the nurturing environment of the Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust in Slimbridge, we were excited to return to their breeding grounds this season. Our search for Spoonies along the Chukotka coast this year began in earnest at Tigil Lagoon with Russian Ornithologists Evgeny Syroechkovskiy and Elena Lappo supervising six teams in a formal grid search. This area was considered ideal habitat for the birds, but none were found that day. The following day Bukhtas Petra, Pavla and Natalii also yielded no Spoonies despite more diligent searching by the group and this was followed by further searches of Opuka and Maliuivem Lagoons. We were beginning to realise just how

critical captive breeding programmes will become for this special little bird. The group was finally rewarded with some sightings when we reached Meinyopil' gyno, and elated to hear that four eggs had hatched at the breeding programme there the following day. There was more good news from Debbie Pain, the director of the Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust who was also on board for this expedition, who announced that a further four chicks had hatched in Slimbridge. It was a good step forward and we all felt somewhat heartened that another of the battles had been won to preserve this species. Heritage Expeditions look forward to working with Birdlife International and the Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust in the Russian Far East in 2013.

Spoon-billed Sandpiper Update

This year, the Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust (WWT) made two expeditions to Far East Russia to bring back eggs to a purpose-built aviary in Slimbridge, UK. A team of experts scoured Eastern Russia's wild tundra for nests. Once found, specialist knowledge was used to safely remove and transport the eggs.

WWT have raised 12 birds from the first trip and have successfully hatched 17 new chicks from the latest eggs flown in from Russia. The team is providing the chicks

with 24-hour specialist care to ensure their best chance of survival. Once the flock is large enough, they hope to have enough breeding pairs to return eggs to Russia, hatch them and release birds into the wild.

A 60-minute nature documentary has been released detailing highs and lows of the mission. More at www.WWT.org.uk.



© R Schuckard

Heard and McDonald Islands Expedition

We are delighted to be working with the Australian Geographic Society on this rare voyage to Australia's far flung Subantarctic territory. On board will be two stalwarts of the society who will share their passion for the region.

Grahame Budd AM, is a retired (and now honorary) Associate Professor with the University of Sydney. He has visited Heard Island six times and was awarded the Queen's Polar Medal. His published

work mainly concerns human responses to heat and cold, the population ecology of Antarctic birds and seals, and Heard Island glaciers and history.

Michael Dillon AM, is a documentary and film producer and cinematographer. His film credits include projects with Sir Edmund Hillary and the internationally awarded adventure film Everest - Sea to Summit about Tim Macartney-Snape's Australian Geographic sponsored

climb of Everest from sea level. As cinematographer he has shot over 100 documentaries worldwide.

Besides meeting these illustrious characters, participants will be contributing to the society's work. Heritage Expeditions will donate a proportion of the voyage proceeds to support young adventurers who will carry the torch of exploration into the future. A limited number of berths are still available.



© A Russ



© G Riehle

New Voyages to Melanesia in 2013

October '13 will see the launch of two exciting new itineraries exploring Melanesia. For birders these itineraries offer once in a lifetime species on remote islands where few have been before. The birding potential is exceptional and to allow birders to maximise the opportunities there will be an optional specialised birding programme with customised excursions. These waters also offer some of the greatest diving in the world and while everybody will have the opportunity to snorkel and appreciate the beauty beneath the waves, we also offer an optional scuba diving programme for those wishing to maximise their underwater experiences.



Melanesia Discoverer

11 Oct 2013 14 days. Uncover the hidden gems of Papua New Guinea and the Solomon Islands. From the culturally rich arterial of the Sepik River we sail north across the Bismarck Sea to the remote shores of Manus and Mussau Islands. Next delve into the history, culture and wildlife of New Ireland and New Britain before we cross the Buka Channel and enter a long isolated world as we are amongst the first travellers to return to Bougainville in over two decades.

Secrets of Melanesia

24 Oct 2013 11 days. Journey into a world few have ever experienced; idyllic islands and isolated villages where unique time-honoured traditions and elaborately costumed dancers welcome us into their world. Sail from Honiara, the capital of the Solomon Islands and relax as our ship takes us to remote oceanic islands where the art of traditional navigation lives today. In Vanuatu, search for endemic bird species or dive one of the world's most famous wrecks and discover hidden worlds, islands picture postcard beautiful but yet to be discovered.

Western Pacific Odyssey

NEW ZEALAND
GEOGRAPHIC

The winner of the prestigious New Zealand Geographic Photographer of the Year competition will be aboard the Spirit of Enderby when she departs from Christchurch for our amended Western Pacific Odyssey voyage on 25 March 2013.

The new shortened itinerary will still include the rich waters off the north-east coast of New Zealand's South Island, Norfolk Island, New Caledonia and the Solomon Islands, but the expedition will now end in Kavieng, on the northern tip of New Ireland, Papua New Guinea. We feel past participants would commend

the change to the itinerary as they said they preferred spending time amongst the islands making landings, interacting with the locals and Zodiac cruising to spending long days at sea on the route north to Japan.

Our expert birder Chris Collins will once again be on board for the Western Pacific Odyssey. He will no doubt be keeping a sharp lookout for the rare 'New Caledonian Storm Petrel' which he photographed on the 2012 voyage.

The lush tropical jungles of the Solomon Islands and the wetlands of Papua New

Guinea offer much for observers of the natural world. Amongst their many uninhabited islands we will seek to uncover some of their unique botanical and ornithological treasures.

At the end of the voyage, participants can join the expedition staff on a flight to Port Moresby which arrives in good time to connect the same day with international flight departures to Brisbane, Singapore or Tokyo. A portion of the proceeds from this expedition will be donated to the New Zealand Geographical Society to further their excellent work.



Expedition Calendar

View this calendar online @ www.heritage-expeditions.com/expedition-calendar/ for up-to-date information on our expeditions in one easy to read format with live availability.

Voyages	Region	Start date	End date	Price From	Availability
South Indian Ocean (Heard Island)	South Indian Ocean	08-11-2012	02-12-2012	\$16000.00 USD pp	Available
Birding the Australian Bight	Australia	02-12-2012	10-12-2012	\$2000.00 USD pp	Available
Galapagos of the Southern Ocean	Subantarctic Islands	09-12-2012	21-12-2012	\$5050.00 USD pp	Waitlisted
Birding Down Under	Subantarctic Islands	21-12-2012	08-01-2013	\$9500.00 USD pp	Waitlisted
In the Wake of Scott and Shackleton	Antarctica	08-01-2013	06-02-2013	\$17000.00 USD pp	Waitlisted
In the Wake of Scott and Shackleton	Antarctica	06-02-2013	07-03-2013	\$17000.00 USD pp	Waitlisted
Western Pacific Odyssey	Pacific	25-03-2013	13-04-2013	\$6500.00 USD pp	Available
Russia's Ring of Fire	Russian Far East	24-05-2013	05-06-2013	\$7100.00 USD pp	Available
Sea of Okhotsk	Russian Far East	05-06-2013	21-06-2013	\$8300.00 USD pp	Available
In the Wake of Bering	Russian Far East	21-06-2013	04-07-2013	\$7700.00 USD pp	Available
Across the Top of the World	Russian Far East	07-08-2013	21-08-2013	\$9800.00 USD pp	Limited
Across the Top of the World	Russian Far East	21-08-2013	04-09-2013	\$9800.00 USD pp	Limited
Jewel of the Russian Far East	Russian Far East	04-09-2013	15-09-2013	\$7600.00 USD pp	Available
Melanesia Discoverer	Pacific	11-10-2013	24-10-2013	\$6995.00 USD pp	Available
Secrets of Melanesia	Pacific	24-10-2013	03-11-2013	\$5995.00 USD pp	Available
Birding Down Under	Subantarctic Islands	14-11-2013	02-12-2013	\$10500.00 USD pp	Available
Galapagos of the Southern Ocean	Subantarctic Islands	02-12-2013	14-12-2013	\$5600.00 USD pp	Available
Forgotten Islands of the South Pacific	Subantarctic Islands	15-12-2013	22-12-2013	\$3800.00 USD pp	Available
Forgotten Islands of the South Pacific	Subantarctic Islands	23-12-2013	30-12-2013	\$3800.00 USD pp	Available
Galapagos of the Southern Ocean	Subantarctic Islands	30-12-2013	11-01-2014	\$5600.00 USD pp	Available
In the Wake of Scott & Shackleton	Antarctica	11-01-2014	08-02-2014	\$18700.00 USD pp	Limited
In the Wake of Scott & Shackleton	Antarctica	08-02-2014	08-03-2014	\$18700.00 USD pp	Limited

Introducing Wild Earth

Wild Earth Travel are as passionate about expedition and small ship travel as you are. We work alongside Heritage Expeditions here in Christchurch and are proud to have the credentials and experience which lets us hand-pick the very best operators who run expeditions and voyages to far flung reaches of the globe and all the beautiful places in between.

Wild Earth Website

Our website is a wonderful portal of information and a perfect place to start your voyage planning. With clear, user-friendly search functions you will be able to browse and compare destination regions, voyage itineraries, ships, dates and prices. We are constantly updating our website for you with exciting new locations. Featured Rosemary in our office - she is ready to help you find the voyage in the right place, at the right time for you, meaning you won't need to use a computer!

If the internet isn't your chosen mode of browsing, then please contact Rosemary in our office - she is ready to help you find the voyage in the right place, at the right time for you, meaning you won't need to use a computer!

Wild Earth 'Hot' Destination

Scottish Isles

If you enjoy expedition islands, the Scottish Islands could be the destination for you. It often surprises as an accessible voyage, close to the United Kingdom mainland. A wealth of culture, heritage and wildlife opportunities, where you can enjoy the sense of adventure which expedition travel provides. Aaron has led a number of expeditions through the Scottish Isles and is looking forward to once again exploring the islands in June next year on two expeditions - Scotland Slowly and Scotland to Greenland aboard the MV Clipper Adventurer. These voyages are filling quickly so call today to secure your place.

You will have received our new 2013 brochure along with this newsletter and we call us to discuss your travel requirements. As many of you have already experienced, we have the knowledge and expertise to offer around the globe for the coming year. Enjoy exploring the new-look brochure to find trips to what your travel appetite. We are here to help you find the perfect voyage from the Polar Regions to the Mediterranean, so please do not hesitate to

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Rosemary's Baltic Odyssey

I have just returned from two weeks sailing around the Baltic on the small ship MS Island Sky. From the warm welcome on board to my spacious suite, first impressions were excellent and I was thoroughly impressed by the ship and destination. Riga was an absolute feast for the eyes with its stunning Art Nouveau architecture - one beautiful building after the other - all in shades of yellow, blue, pink and cream with the most ornate decorations and architraves, friezes, columns and window frames. Tallinn, a favourite for many of the passengers, is a wonderful medieval city with steep cobbled streets, towers and church spires at every turn. St Petersburg was the high point of the cruise, with a luxurious three full days, including a visit to Pushkin to see Catherine's Palace - each room literally dripping with gold, marble and crystal. An optional excursion to and natural wonders of the area with other like-minded people.

The 143 foot 'Admiralty Dream, remodelled in 2012, holds 66 passengers in 33 comfortable cabins. Knowledgeable staff share your passion for adventure and learning and the atmosphere onboard is warm and friendly. The ship's shallow draft and nimble manoeuvrability allows for up-close glacier viewing and the best opportunities to mingle with and photograph wildlife. This voyage gives you the opportunity to be an active participant. In Hobart Bay at the exclusive 'adventure basecamp' there are sea kayaks, runabouts and all terrain vehicles on offer, giving you personal access to water and wilderness. Stand next to an ancient glacier, observe a grizzly hunt for salmon in Alaskan rivers and watch whales breaching in the fjords. Zodiacs are onboard for shore cruising and wildlife encounters. We are sure this is experiential travel at its best!

The ballet in the evening at the Hermitage Theatre was a must-do. Our special 'early' entry into the Hermitage Museum allowed us a good chance to view the incredible collections of art before the larger cruise ship passengers arrived. Helsinki was another highlight, where we were docked right in the heart of downtown, where usually only the private yachts are moored. With a whole day to explore, after our included sightseeing we had the freedom to come and go from the ship as we pleased. It would be hard to beat the views sailing into stunning Stockholm

The beauty of travelling to these places by small ship is being able to dock right in the heart of each city to simply walk out and explore - a luxury unique to small vessels like the island Sky. There are no cabaret shows, endless queues or large crowds on this ship. Instead, perhaps a post-dinner drink in the Club listening to the piano, a chance to chat to like-minded travelers, and a high level of comfort throughout.

Join the M/S Island Sky on a Baltic Voyage in 2013 from £4595pp with departures on 21 June; 3 & 27 July. Enquire for details today.



Alaska's Glacier Bay and Island Adventure

is intriguing with a melting pot of global influence. The Russian-influenced town of Sitka; Petersburg founded by a Norwegian in the late 1800's; the traditional Tlingit Indian village of Kake; Juneau with its mix of old and new - the scenic state capital and only reached by plane or boat. A highlight of the voyage is Glacier Bay National Park. A Ranger and a native Tlingit naturalist provide insights to this UNESCO World Heritage Site. Tidewater glaciers spill out of the mountains and fill the sea with icebergs. Watch glaciers as they 'calve', see sheer granite cliff faces that rise 4000 feet above the sea and cascading waterfalls. The Park is habitat for a variety of wildlife including whales, seals, porpoises, orca and sea otter. Bear, moose, goats, wolves and over 200 species of birds also call this home. The opportunities for sighting a wide range of animals is second to none. Your ultimate Alaskan experience starts here. If it has been calling you, now is the time!



wildearth-travel.com

Wild Earth Travel

Small Ships, Big Adventures

Second traveler 50% off on all bookings before December 31st 2012. Departs Athens aboard Harmony V.

CLASSICAL GREECE

Second traveler 50% off on all bookings before December 31st 2012. Departs Nice aboard Variety Voyager.

ROMANTIC RIVERAS

Save £500 on bookings before 30th September 2012. Departs 12th March 2013 aboard Caledonian Sky

FROM THE CORAL SEA TO THE SPICE ISLANDS

Save 15% on Watfall Season (April 2013) departures aboard Oceanic Discoverer

KIMBERLEY COAST

Save 30% on the February 4th 2013 departure aboard the Oceanic Discoverer

NEW ZEALAND COASTAL EXPERIENCE

Save 30% on 3 & 23 December 2012 departures plus enjoy free activities including camping, kayaking and photo workshop on the December 3 departure.

ANTARCTIC PENINSULA EXPERIENCE

20% Early Booking Discount for 2013 Voyages. Offer expires 31st October 2012

ALASKA'S GLACIER BAY & ISLAND ADVENTURE

Small Ships, Big Adventures

WILD EARTH SPECIALS