



# Sightings Record

## In the Wake of the Vikings

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Thank you for joining me in the Explorers' Lounge and on deck throughout the cruise and helping to spot and record whales, dolphins, porpoises and other marine life.

As the Chair of Trustees of the Sea Watch Foundation it is my great pleasure to share with you the sightings throughout this Viking Star cruise, from Bergen to Montreal, along with a few of the photographs I have taken.

Sea Watch Foundation is the leading UK cetacean research charity and has been collecting sightings data since the 1970s to create Europe's biggest whale, dolphin and porpoise sightings database. This is used to inform EU and national governments, scientific and environmental agencies and NGOs, as well as independent research scientists who have an interest in studying and protecting cetaceans and the marine environment.

### **19/09/16 Sailing from Bergen, Norway**

1810 - 1950      Two passengers reported whales as we left the fjord, possibly Minke.

### **20/09/16 Sailing from Lerwick, Shetland Islands**

1700 - 1830      30+ Gannets and Fulmars following the ship and feeding in the area and a Black Guillemot in winter plumage photographed

### **21/09/16 Approaching, and then leaving, Torshavn, Faroe Islands**

0740 – 0825      No significant sightings but a nice welcome from the port tugboat!  
1515 – 1820      Very stormy, 10+ Fulmars and occasional Gannets and Shearwaters

### **22/09/16 Challenging conditions still, but improving. This is the Viking "Whale Road"**

1457      Amongst 100+ Fulmars, a very brief sighting of 2 dolphins rushing to the bow  
1607      Definitely 1, probably 2 Sperm Whales, c.0.5miles off port bow  
A passenger reported seeing a whale blowing at lunchtime, from the description of the blow, possibly a Fin Whale

## **23/09/16 Reykjavik**

Harbour Porpoises and White-beaked Dolphins were seen on the ship's whale watching tour in Faxafloi Bay and Minke Whales were reported in the area. The late sailing time prevented any sightings in the evening.

## **24/09/16 At Sea**

Fulmars with us all day, but no other sightings

## **25/09/16 Prins Christian Sund and At Sea**

- 0641 Minke Whale at the entrance to Prins Christian Sund, a few seals later
- 1025 Humpback Whale close inshore, near the village
- 1149 2 Minke Whales to starboard, shortly after leaving the Sound
- 1152 Another whale to port, probably a Humpback
- 1203 2 or 3 Harbour (Common) Porpoises to starboard
- 1207 Large whale, probably Humpback, astern (starboard side)
- 1237 Minke Whale, 300yards off starboard bow
- 1247 At least 3 more Minke Whales to starboard, between 400-750 yards away
- 1257 3 Minke Whale to port, ahead and close on the starboard bow
- 1306 1 large whale ahead, unidentified, as we approached Nanortalik, and 5+ seals  
That's at least 10 Minke Whales, probably 3 Humpbacks and another whale today, as well as 2 or 3 Harbour Porpoises and at least 7 seals! A few photographs of a Glaucus Gull in Nanortalik as well. Pretty Good!

## **26/09/16 An amazing sail-away from Qaqortoq**

- 1505 1 whale, probably a Humpback seen ahead, then to starboard, near the islands. It dived, showing a tail at 1510 when another was also seen ahead
- 1515 5 whales seen blowing well ahead, (c.11 o'clock) at least one breaching. Two had bushy blows and may have been Humpbacks, at least one was probably a Fin. The other two were probably either Fin or Sei.
- 1537 3 whales to port, probably Sei or Fin, and 4 to starboard, probably Fin
- 1550 2 Fin Whales ahead
- 1612 2 whales blowing c.2miles+ off starboard bow, 1 Fin, 1 probably Sei or Humpback
- 1640 2 Fin Whales, 2-3miles ahead
- 1650 1 Fin Whale passed right to left, very close to the bow
- 1707 Whale to port, probably Humpback or Sei  
That's 18-20 whales seen today, of 2 or 3 species, as well as Iceland Gulls. A great day!

## **27/09/16 At Sea**

- 1457 12+ Long-finned Pilot Whales passed down port side, including at least 2 calves, one with fetal folds still visible! Photographs of these and immature Kittiwakes (not Sabine's Gulls!) and Pomarine Skuas amongst the Fulmars today

## **28/09/16 L'Anse aux Meadows**

Passengers reported whales seen blowing as we approached the anchorage. Humpback Whales and bow-riding White-beaked Dolphins seen on the ship's tour to St Anthony but nothing spotted on the sail-away.

## **29/09/16 At Sea, Gulf of St Lawrence**

- 0645 Minke Whale surfaced ahead
- 0649 Minke Whale passed under the bow and surfaced again to starboard
- 0717 Minke Whale surfaced to starboard
- 0810 Minke Whale travelling LtoR across the bow, a short distance ahead
- 0827 At least 1 White-beaked Dolphin just off the starboard bow
- 0908 Lots of Guillemots on the surface
- 0910 1 Dolphin, close to port bow, possibly Atlantic White-sided
- 0930 Whale blowing 3 times ahead before diving, species unidentified
- 0959 2-3 Dolphins to the port side, probably White-beaked or White-sided
- 1004 4+ Pilot Whales and Dolphins
- 1105 Large group of Dolphins
- 1415 2 Fin Whales ahead and to starboard
- 1423 Whale blowing ahead, species unidentified
- 1433 2-3 Whales, species unidentified, blowing c.1mile to port
- 1435 Probable Humpback Whale to port and 2 large blows ahead, possibly a Fin Whale
- 1447 2 Fin Whales ahead then one more to starboard
- 1517 1 large blow and one smaller one spotted ahead
- 1522 1 Fin Whale and one other unidentified whale to port
- 1527 2 bushy blows ahead, possibly Humpback or Sei Whale
- 1533 1 strong blow ahead, possibly Fin Whale
- 1542 2-3 whales, unidentified species down the starboard side
- 1546 2 Northern Right Whales, 1mile off the port bow
- 1559 1 strong blow, c.0.5mile ahead
- 1650 2 blows and a possible breach 2-3miles ahead
- 1704 1 large tall, possible Fin Whale, blow and 3 bushy, possible Humpback or Northern Right Whale, blows 2miles ahead
- 1713 Humpback Whale close to starboard, Fin Whale further off to starboard
- 1721 Low bushy blow off port bow, possibly a Humpback Whale
- 1809 Tall, possibly Fin Whale, blow 2miles ahead, bushy, possibly Humpback blow 1mile ahead
- 1830 It's pretty dark now so watch ended. What a phenomenal day for whale sightings!

## **30/09/16 Saguenay, Quebec, Canada**

The ship's tour to Tadoussac was a great success with good sightings of Fin and Minke Whales, lots of Atlantic Grey Seals and glimpses of Beluga Whales.

**01/10/16 – 02/10/16 Quebec and Montreal, Canada – no more sightings, goodbye!**

# Photographs – In the Wake of the Vikings



On the following pages are a selection of photographs taken during the cruise (and one just after) to illustrate some of the encounters above. It is my intention ultimately to create a gallery of photographs on my website for sale but until then, I would be happy to discuss any interest by email.

Please consider making a donation to [www.seawatchfoundation.org.uk](http://www.seawatchfoundation.org.uk) on their website or via mine at [www.TheWhaleandDolphinMan.co.uk](http://www.TheWhaleandDolphinMan.co.uk)

I hope we meet again on a future cruise, Best Wishes, *Robin*



Northern Gannet



Black Guillemot (winter plumage)



Torshavn – the welcome to the “port that never was”



White-beaked Dolphin (Reykjavik)



Northern Fulmar



Glaucus Gull

# Photographs – In the Wake of the Vikings



Iceland Gull



Long-finned Pilot Whales (note calf with fetal folds)



Pomarine Skua



Immature Kittiwake



Fin Whale



Atlantic Grey Seal



Minke Whale



Beluga Whales (off Tadoussac, after the cruise)