



Sightings Record

Panama and Central America

As the Chair of Trustees of the Sea Watch Foundation it is my great pleasure to share with you the sightings throughout this Viking Sky cruise, from Miami to Miami, along with a few of the photographs I have taken, with thanks to the passengers who also submitted reports. These sightings will be used to contribute to marine conservation work around the world.

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.

26/11/17 Miami, Florida, USA

Numerous Laughing Gulls and also Turkey Vultures and a few Terns as well as a Manatee spotted by one lady just alongside the ship!

27/11/17 Key West, Florida, USA

Brown Pelicans, various Gulls and Royal Terns around the anchorage as well as a few Turkey Vultures. Also schools of small fish breaking the surface. A Manatee was seen and photographed by Phyllis near the marina tender jetty.

- 1115 "Feeding Frenzy" of Pelicans, Gulls and Terns with fish seen jumping, starboard aft. Other smaller but similar activity at times throughout the day. Magnificent Frigatebirds were seen in the afternoon, one harassing a Royal Tern for its fish!
- 1655 Cormorants, Brown Boobies and Royal Terns were sitting on the last green channel buoy on departure.

28/11/17 Sea Day

A couple of Dolphins and a large bird, probably a Brown Booby, were seen by guests early in the day, perhaps 0800. After the rain, only Flying Fish and a few patches of Sargassum Weed were seen.

29/11/17 Belize City, Belize

A Magnificent Frigatebird was circling over the entrance to the channel and an immature one was sitting on a red channel buoy half way in. Royal Terns were also seen, and Brown Pelicans later as well as another Frigatebird over the anchorage.

1645-1700 3 Bottlenose Dolphins circled the ship once and foraged to starboard. At least one more was a short distance away. Fish were scared to the surface a few times.

30/11/17 Coxen Hole, Roatán (briefly) and Sea Day

0845 2+ Dolphins to port, with more further away, reported by guests. Sadly, heavy flooding ashore led to the port being cancelled for our safety. When leaving the port, a large bird was seen circling, probably a Frigatebird. Very few Flying Fish were seen today but there were lots of moths, butterflies, bugs and damselflies around the deck which must have joined us in the morning.

01/12/17 Sea Day

A few Flying Fish and a Sea Turtle to port. A large fish, perhaps a small shark or dogfish was seen to starboard and a large bird, possibly a Brown Booby, during the morning. More Flying Fish and a Masked Booby seen in the afternoon.

02/12/17 Puerto Limón, Costa Rica

A few Laughing Gulls, Turkey Vultures and a Magnificent Frigatebird were seen above Limón and numerous smaller birds were seen in the nearby park including Grackles, Woodpeckers, Flycatchers and others, as well as 2-toed Sloths. In the Tortuguero Canals, our sightings included Green Basilisk Lizards, a Caiman, a large male Green Iguana, Howler Monkeys, 2- and 3-toed Sloths, Bats, Snowy Egrets, a Cattle Egret, Night Heron, Blue Heron and more

1707 2-3 Dolphins were seen in the harbour, near to the bow by the Johnsons in 4095. They may possibly have been the coastal Tucuxi Dolphin.

03/12/17 Colón, Panama

A Magnificent Frigatebird and a few Laughing Gulls around the port and what I think were Wilson's Plovers on the shore in the old part of Panama City. I'm sure guests on the rainforest tours will have seen much more!

04/12/17 Panama Canal (partial transit)

Three Crocodiles before lunch and lots of Frigatebirds, Brown Pelicans, Turkey Vultures, Black Vultures, a pair of American Kestrels and a pair of Southern Lapwings were amongst the more interesting birds seen. More of the same during the afternoon as well as a Peregrine on a light in the locks and some Coati in a clearing beyond the security area to starboard. Two Toucans perched and then flew from a nearby tree while we were in the final lock.

05/12/17 At Sea (AM), Cartagena, Columbia (PM)

0920+ Brown Booby alongside and chasing Flying Fish for a while. Brown Pelicans, Royal Terns, Laughing Gulls and a Frigatebird in the harbour. Many different birds in the cruiseport aviary including various Toucans, Flamingoes, Parrots, Macaws and others.

06/12/17 At Sea

- 0841 3+ Dolphins, filmed leaping towards the port bow by Charles & Joanne Sutton
- 1152 10+ Dolphins (probably Pantropical Spotted) leaping towards the starboard bow
- 1720 Our first Red-footed Booby to finish the day!

07/12/17 Montego Bay, Jamaica

- 0841 Lots of Egrets and Frigatebirds gathered in the trees near the bay, beyond the terminal building. A few were always flying around, along with Brown Pelicans.

08/12/17 George Town, Grand Cayman

- 3 Magnificent Frigatebirds over the anchorage, just before we sailed
- 1707 Small, quite indistinct blow, 1 mile off the port bow. Possibly a Beaked Whale but we'll never know!

09/12/17 Sea Day

- 0950 20-30 Small Dolphins, starboard side aft, seen by Judy & Lee Loewy. These were possibly Spinner Dolphins but we'll never know for sure!
- 1205 3+ Spinner Dolphins leaping to port bow, one leaped vertically and spun back into the sea close alongside port midships
- 1350 Dark body and vertical blow seen port side aft by Gavin & Linda Roser
- 1529 Magnificent Frigatebird circling overhead



On the following pages are a selection of photographs taken during the cruise to illustrate some of the encounters above. A Wildlife DVD and a gallery of photographs will eventually appear 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 on their website or via mine at www.TheWhaleandDolphinMan.co.uk

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

Viking Sky, Panama & Central America

Magnificent Frigatebird (f), Key West



Bottlenose Dolphin, Belize





Masked Booby, 01/12/17



Woodpecker, Puerto Limón



Two-toed Sloth, Puerto Limón



Cattle Egret, Tortuguero Canals



Snowy Egrets, Tortuguero Canals



Blue Heron, 02/12/17



Night Heron, Tortuguero Canals



Caiman, Tortuguero Canals

There are more photographs from the identical cruise on 12/11/17 – 26/11/17 and this report can also be downloaded from www.TheWhaleandDolphinMan.co.uk DVDs, prints and large files can also be ordered

Three-toed Sloth, Tortuguero Canals



Bats, Tortuguero Canals



Howler Monkey, Tortuguero Canals



Wilson's Plover? Panama City



Southern Lapwings, Panama Canal



Brown Pelican, Panama Canal



Brown Booby, 05/12/17



Keel-billed Toucan, Cartagena



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