



Sightings Record

Viking Sun World Cruise 2019

Sydney to Durban



As the Chair of Trustees of the Sea Watch Foundation it is my great pleasure to share with you the sightings from this sector of the Viking Sun World Cruise 2019, Sydney to Durban. The report also includes a few of the photographs Kris and I have taken. These sightings will be used to help us understand the distribution of marine wildlife around the world.

Sightings Records for each sector of the cruise, and my previous voyages, are available as free pdf downloads from my website – www.TheWhaleandDolphinMan.co.uk

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.

We were proud to be involved with the first part of the inaugural Round the World voyage in 2018, from Miami to Auckland, and we are delighted to be able to let you know that we will be onboard for a significant part of the next World Cruise too, all the way from Los Angeles to London! We look forward to seeing some of you again in 2020!

If you've enjoyed the photography from the voyage, as seen in my talks and as included in this report, I will be creating a DVD of my final "wildlife slideshow". This will include some added scenery shots to provide context and will be available for around £25 to UK customers and £30/\$40 to the US, including P&P and a donation to the Sea Watch Foundation.

A DVD of the 2018 voyage, and another of my Amazon cruises, are available from my website. A number of photopacks of whales, dolphins and seabirds, in 6x4" or 7x5", are also available, as well as images from the Sightings Reports on request. Order from **TheWhaleandDolphinMan.co.uk**, where you can also make donations to the charity.

Thank you again for your interest and I hope to sail again with you sometime, somewhere!

Best Wishes

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Wolfgang".

World Cruise Sightings Record

Sydney to Durban 2019

16 & 17 Mar 2019 – SYDNEY, New South Wales, Australia

Wildlife photographed in Sydney and New South Wales included the Noisy Miner, Masked Lapwing, Rainbow Lorikeet, Magpie Lark, Australian Wood Ducks and Laughing Kookaburra. For other sightings here, check out the Valparaiso to Sydney Sightings Report, 15th & 16th March.



18 Mar 2019 – AT SEA, Tasman Sea (Gale force winds and heavy swell)

Shearwaters and Petrels seen frequently but briefly in the heavy seas and once or twice, a glimpse of what appeared to be Albatross

1736-40 Mid-sized Albatross and then a Great Albatross across the bow, port to starboard

1806 Whale blowing then breaching 3 times, $\frac{3}{4}$ mile off the starboard bow

19 Mar 2019 – HOBART, Tasmania, Australia

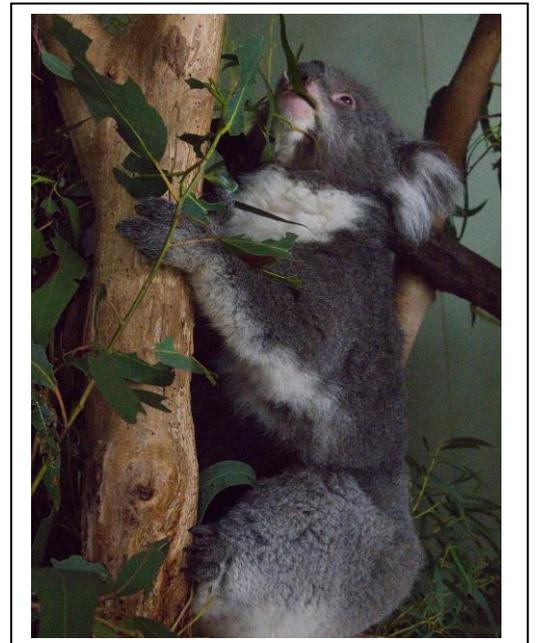
0655 Dolphins spotted by a guest, off the starboard quarter

Silver and Pacific Gulls seen around the port and Great Cormorants in the bay.

Galaha up at the War Memorial (*below, left*) and Tasmanian Devils, Forester (Eastern Grey) Kangaroos, Emus, Sulphur-crested Cockatoos, Eastern Rosellas and more at the Bonorong Wildlife Sanctuary (*see below*)



Other Bonorong wildlife included Koalas (right), Tawny Frogmouths (below), Echidna and a Wombat.



During sailaway, Great-crested Terns and Silver Gulls were seen and guests also reported Dolphins at the stern, at around 1925

20 Mar 2019 – AT SEA, Bass Strait

- 0950 40+ Common Dolphins to the bow and down both sides of the ship
- c1100 Fur Seal alongside
A few Albatross, some positively identified as Black-browed, 100s of Shearwaters and a good few Australasian Gannets during the morning
- 1315 30-40 Common Dolphins approached the bow and then passed down both sides
- 1435 40+ Common Dolphins to port, many approaching the bow and both sides in 4 or 5 groups
- 1450 20+ Common Dolphins directly ahead and leaping towards the bow
- 1515 8+ Common Dolphins directly ahead and leaping to the bow then passing mainly down the port side (others reported approaching the starboard side)
- c1600+ 25+ Great-crested Terns (*over, left*) began circling the ship, occasionally feeding. After an hour or so they began to disperse, with some still around until about 1830
- 1816, 1820, 1822, 1825 Multiple groups of 8-12 Common Dolphins leaping and surging to the ship from ahead and alongside
- 1833 10+ Common Dolphins racing in to the bow and port side



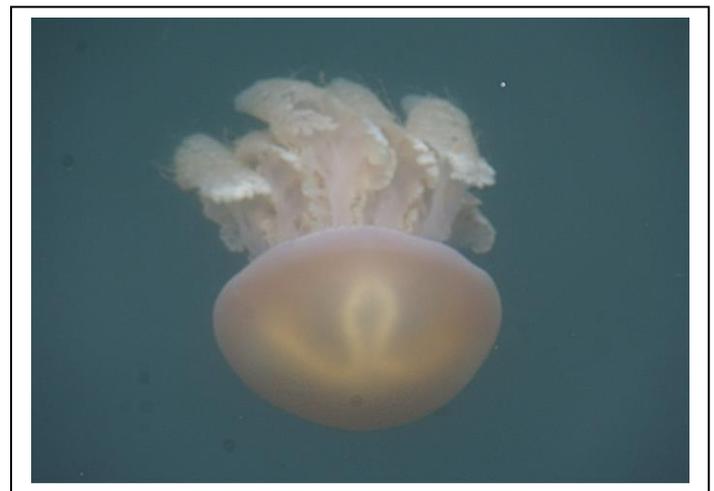
This is a total of probably around 250 Common Dolphins, a great tally for the day!

21 Mar 2019 – GEELONG, Victoria, Australia

Pied (*below left*) and Little Pied Cormorants (*right*) around the harbour, Silver Gulls



(of course), Welcome Swallows and lots of Jellyfish around the ship and the pier (*right*), as well as a Fur seal spotted by a guest catching one! As we sailed away in the dark, hundreds of Silver Gulls followed the ship to starboard and astern, fishing in the deck light.



22 Mar 2019 – AT SEA, South Australia

1008-16 50+ Common Dolphins surging and leaping to the port bow then both sides of the ship! Two Black-browed Albatross in association with the Dolphins. More Black-browed, and also Shy and other, Albatross later

1122-26 300+ Common Dolphins, probably many more, approached both sides of the ship from ahead in waves, many leaping and surging. Mothers with calves were seen, much socialising and possibly mating behaviour observed and surfing in our bow waves. Albatross and Gannets circling throughout. All quiet by 1130 but 2 or 3 Great-crested Terns frequently seen around the ship.



1205 10-15 Dolphins, almost certainly Common, seen leaping and surging to starboard from a guest's balcony

1320 8 Common Dolphins to port which we saw from the World Café!

1405 10 Common Dolphins to starboard, seen by other guests in the World Café.

1411-24 250+ Common Dolphins, again possibly many more, in continuous small groups to both sides of the bow and then alongside

1435 75+ Common Dolphins to the bow, leaping and surging, mainly from starboard

1440-45 2 groups, each of 10-12 Common Dolphins, approached the starboard bow

1448 8+ Common Dolphins surging to the bow from ahead

Black-browed Albatross (*right*), Shy Albatross (*below*), Bulwer's Albatross (*below, right*) and



possibly other species, Australasian Gannets, Great-crested Terns and occasional Silver Gulls (especially near two fishing boats) and regular sightings of Shearwaters, probably Short-tailed

1658-1710 15+15+6+10+8+12+5 Common

Dolphins approaching the bow from both sides and ahead, leaping and surging, bow and wake-riding, some socialising and possibly feeding – a total of at least 70!

- 1713 6+4 Common Dolphins from fine on the port bow to the bow and alongside
 - 1725 4+6+5 Common Dolphins leaping and surging to the starboard bow
 - 1736 4 Common dolphins to the starboard side
 - 1740 4 Common Dolphins bow-wave riding to port and then leaping towards the wake
 - 1852 20+8 Common Dolphins leaping from ahead to the port bow
 - 1854-1900 5+3 Common Dolphins surging to the starboard bow, with a few low leaps
3+4 Common Dolphins leaping and surging to the port bow
 - 1905 6 Common Dolphins, seen to port by guests in the Wintergarden
 - 1913 10+ Common Dolphins leaping to the bow from ahead, seen by guests in the Explorers' Lounge, Deck 8
- That's probably over 1000 Common Dolphins today and lots of seabirds too!

23 Mar 2019 – ADELAIDE, South Australia

Guests reported seeing Bottlenose Dolphins a few times during the day
 Numerous birds seen around the Botanical Gardens, including Little Cormorants, Australian Magpies, Eurasian Coots (*below left*) and Dusky Moorhens (*below right*)



- c1600 2 Bottlenose Dolphins seen aft of the ship, in the river, by a guest
- 1755 5 Bottlenose Dolphins, 2 miles offshore (a pair and 3 further away)

Before and during sailaway, Pied Cormorants were seen collecting nesting materials for nests on the piers, both sides of the entrance to Outer Harbour where Fur Seals could also be seen (*right*)

- 1830 2 Bottlenose Dolphins, 1 ½ miles to starboard
- 1850 3 Bottlenose Dolphins, ¾ mile to starboard
- 1905 3 Common Dolphins, ¾ mile to starboard



24 Mar 2019 – AT SEA, Great Australian Bight (Force 7, 30kt+ winds and up to 6m swell)

c0800 2-3 Common Dolphins riding the bow-wave to port, reported by guests
Lots of Shearwaters (probably mainly Short-tailed) and a few Albatross including at least one Indian Yellow-nosed photographed by Kris through the windows at 1030!

25 Mar 2019 – AT SEA, Great Australian Bight (Force 3-5 winds, declining, but still 5m swell)

Shearwaters with the ship most of the day, often 3 or 4 visible each side. Glimpses of other birds, including probably Gannets, further away

26 Mar 2019 – ALBANY, Western Australia

Australasian Gannets, including juveniles and rafts of Petrels seen during the sail-in. Bottlenose Dolphins seen by guests near the ship at intervals during the day, in groups of 2-5. Plenty of Silver Gulls of course and a few Great-crested Terns and Cormorants. At the old Whaling Station I took this photograph of the skeleton of the last whale ever killed in Australian waters, a young female.



27 Mar 2019 – AT SEA, Coast of Western Australia

A few Australasian Gannets and a couple of Black-browed Albatross as well as numerous Shearwaters, probably mainly Short-tailed.

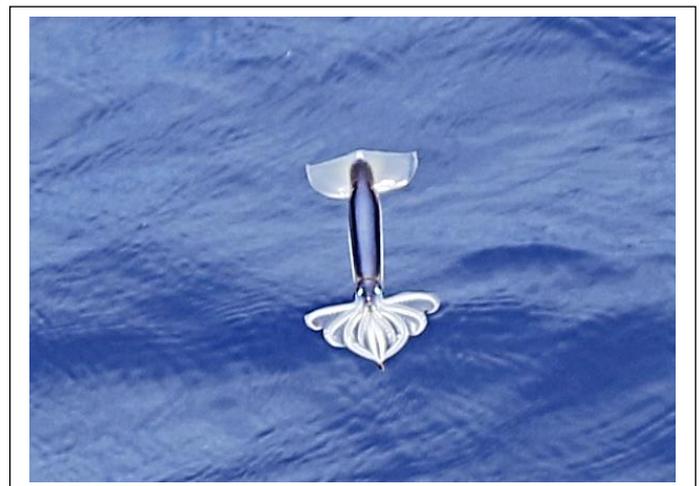
0805 Dolphins seen port and starboard, by guests walking Deck 2
More seabirds during the morning including up to 4 Greater Crested Terns around the ship

28 Mar 2019 – FREMANTLE, Western Australia

Plenty of Silver Gulls and Pied Cormorants around the port as well as occasionally, a couple of Indo-Pacific Bottlenose Dolphins. Birds spotted around the town included Magpies, Magpie Larks, Lorikeets and a Red Wattlebird

29 Mar 2019 – AT SEA, Indian Ocean (Sea State 7, over 12ft swell)

Lots of seabirds from early in the day, Petrels and Shearwaters (including many probable Short-tailed Shearwaters) and a few Black-naped Terns. Quieter late morning but a Great-winged Petrel and a few other birds were spotted as well as a school of Flying Squid! (right, Bruno)



30 Mar 2019 – AT SEA, Indian Ocean (Sea State 5, 6-10ft swell)

More birds, mainly Great-winged Petrels (right) and Shearwaters, possibly Wedge-tailed or Flesh-footed. A few Flying Fish were also seen.



31 Mar 2019 – AT SEA, Indian Ocean

Very occasional Flying Fish, one dark brown Shearwater or large Petrel and a couple of smaller brown birds during the morning.

1 April 2019 – AT SEA, Indian Ocean

To be clear, if you heard rumours that the Captain and I saw an early morning iceberg, carried on a cool ocean current, which melted in the morning sun... NO!
c0840 Whale sighted, about 1 mile from the ship
A Tropicbird was spotted a few hundred yards to port, taking off from the sea and quite a few Flying Fish from time to time.

2 April 2019 – AT SEA, Indian Ocean

Reasonable sea conditions but not good for spotting. Only a few Flying Fish seen, and a juvenile Gannet at 1512. A dark coloured Petrel was released from Deck 9 at c.2200 and it flew off into the dark.

3 April 2019 – AT SEA, Indian Ocean

Flying Fish again this morning as we dodged the many rain squalls. More during the afternoon, including quite a few of a larger species.



4 April 2019 – AT SEA, Indian Ocean

An absolutely stunning rainbow to start the day. Lots of Flying Fish, including some quite big ones again but nothing larger, despite a beautiful blue rolling ocean. Until:

1615 7-8 Pilot Whales, 2 miles to port on a reciprocal course

5 April 2019 – AT SEA, Indian Ocean

A couple of large birds far away to port at around 0800 and then a flock of perhaps 20 birds seen feeding by a guest. Lots of Flying Fish and a few Flying Squid as well as, sadly, increasing amounts of visible floating plastic floating by. Some larger fish were spotted below the surface from time to time.

6 April 2019 – PORT LOUIS, Mauritius

A small group of (probably) Spinner Dolphins heard then seen close to the ship by Bruno as we approached

Surprisingly little in the way of wildlife around the port, despite the presence of a number of Chinese and local fishing boats... or perhaps because of!

Some interesting wildlife at Ile aux Aigrettes including Aldabran Tortoises, brought in to replace the extinct natives, and Day Geckos (Kris).



7 April 2019 – AT SEA, Indian Ocean

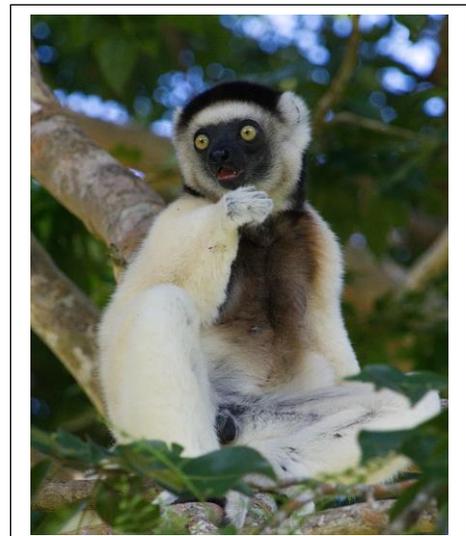
A Red-tailed Tropicbird was released from Balcony 3013 this morning by a crew member. A few Flying Fish were seen during the day and two more groups of Flying Squid during the afternoon. A White-tailed Tropicbird was seen to port, mid-afternoon, and just after 1700 a sighting close to the port bow was probably a large Ray. Marine mammal sightings were restricted to the sailors on the passing freighters and tankers!

8 April 2019 – FORT DAUPHIN, Madagascar

A couple of Myna were squawking on the gantry crane and one single large Gull was spotted on the beach near the fishing fleet. I released a dark coloured Tern from a Deck 5 balcony which had

arrived during the night. At the Nahampaona Nature

Reserve... White (Dancing) Lemurs (above), Ring-tailed Lemurs (right), Brown Lemurs, Bamboo Lemurs and a Tree Frog as well as Tortoises and Chameleons.



9 April 2019 – AT SEA, Indian Ocean

Flying Fish seen quite frequently, including a few larger species. A Red-footed Booby joined us later in the day, ultimately roosting on the foremast! We also released a Sooty Tern from Deck 2 starboard, forward, late in the evening.



10 April 2019 – AT SEA, Mozambique Channel

A good start to the day with a Sooty Tern released from a Deck 6 balcony and...

0940 4 Orca (right), passing 1 mile to port on reciprocal course
Lots of Flying Fish and at least two more birds on balconies released by crew

A Whale and calf, photographed underwater by Bruno in the late afternoon, were possibly False

Killer Whales but the distortion makes it difficult to be sure



11 April 2019 – MAPUTO, Mozambique

A few birds around the port, including Gulls, Crows and an Egret or Heron

12 April 2019 – AT SEA, Coast of South Africa, north of Durban

0952-0959 Large pod of Pantropical Spotted Dolphins ahead, feeding

75+ crossed ahead of us moving away to feed in an area 1 mile+ off the port bow

75+ continued feeding mainly quite close to starboard as we passed
Others could be seen feeding in smaller groups in the area for a total of 200+ including many calves and juveniles

1031 Shark seen by guests, close to the port side

1125 Guests reported something jumping a couple of miles to port, which may have been a Fur Seal, Dolphin or even a large Fish





Sightings Record

Viking Sun World Cruise 2019

Sydney to Durban

It was an amazing experience to be part of this fourth sector of the Viking Sun World Cruise 2019. I hope you have enjoyed it as much as we have and that you enjoy the voyage onwards to London. Hopefully we'll meet you again on a future cruise.

If you have enjoyed this report of the Sydney to Durban sector of the voyage, and the photographs I have included, please consider making a donation to www.seawatchfoundation.org.uk on the charity's website or via mine at www.TheWhaleandDolphinMan.co.uk

All these images, and many more, will be included in a 2019 World Cruise Wildlife DVD available for around £25 (UK, PAL) or £30/\$40 (US, NTSC) in May 2019 (when I get home!) Keep checking my website for the final price and availability.

Various photopacks, with 6x4" or 7x5" prints, as well as selected images from this report, are also available on request from:

Robin Petch, aka TheWhaleandDolphinMan.co.uk

All sales help to support my own work and also include a 20% donation to Sea Watch Foundation, the premier UK cetacean research charity, of which I am proud to serve as Chair of Trustees

Thank you for your interest in my work, and the wonderful wildlife of our ocean world

Best Wishes