



WildWings

THE SECOND WEST AFRICAN PELAGIC

Cape Verdes to Madeira 2013

In search of the Seabirds and Cetaceans of Macronesia

Client quote” The trip was indeed fantastic, perhaps even exceeding what could have been hoped for” A.H. May 2011

We are pleased to offer another new, very affordable itinerary, which will appeal to all seabird and cetacean buffs, to an area where some highly desired West Palearctic tubenoses can be seen, some of which are in the process of ongoing species ‘splitting’ at this time. This voyage potentially saves a lot of money compared to the series of multi-island visits currently required to see these species. The inaugural voyage took place in May 2011 with all our main targets seen by our pioneering group, and a full report and species list can be found on our website. Lots of lessons were learnt however and the second departure has been fine tuned to maximise the timings and for the first time will offer a real chance of seeing Zino’s Petrel at sea too. A WildWings evening log will be held nightly onboard followed by ID discussions and the day’s photo analysis after dinner for those interested. We will encourage the use of onboard walkie-talkie radios to try and maximise everyone’s personal sightings. Daylight hours will be from 0600 to 1900 increasing by an hour by the end of the voyage.

Our voyage will start in Praia, Cape Verdes and sail north, hugging the coast of West Africa and finally via the Canary Islands to Madeira (see itinerary below). There are no landings but we may Zodiac cruise close inshore to a few islands. Potential seabirds include Scopoli’s, Cape Verde, Cory’s, Boyd’s (Audubon’s), Barolo’s (Little), Sooty and Manx Shearwaters, Fea’s, Desertas and Zino’s Petrels, White-faced, Madeiran, Wilson’s, Leach’s and European Storm-Petrels, Bulwer’s Petrel, Magnificent Frigatebird, Red-billed Tropicbird and Brown Booby. Other species should include all four skuas plus various terns and gulls and of course with being out on the ocean the odd surprise or two! In 2011 we saw what may be the second record of White-tailed Tropicbird for the WP! We also enjoyed some non-seabird vagrants, Black Heron and Intermediate Egret on Cape Verde and a long staying Yellow-crowned Night Heron in Madeira. In late May 2011 a South Polar Skua was recorded in the waters around Madeira too. We may chum at certain points during the voyage to try and bring closer seabirds to us. We will also offer optional land birding on Cape Verde and Madeira subject to group demand.

The cetacean list in 2011 included Sperm, Bryde’s, Humpback and Short-finned Pilot Whales plus Orcas. WE encountered many dolphins including Bottlenose, both Pantropical and Atlantic Spotteds, both Long and Short-beaked Common, Rough-toothed, Risso’s and Striped. Many more species of whale and dolphin are likely too including various beaked whales. A few Mediterranean Monk Seals still exist around the Deserta Islands and are occasionally seen in Funchal harbour. Other marine life such as turtles, sharks, Ocean Sunfish plus flying fish and flying squid should also be encountered.

This voyage will be in effect a second extension of the 2013 Atlantic Odyssey but you may join the ship just for this 8 night sector. Our ship will be the recently converted *Plancius*, a very comfortable expedition cruise ship with

superb wildlife viewing in all directions and at all deck levels. She carries a maximum of 110 passengers in quadruple, twin and superior twin cabins, all with shower and wc, a window or port hole. She has a restaurant and a spacious observation lounge and bar with panoramic windows on deck 5.

Before sailing we will arrange a WildWings Birding Excursion by bus to seek the endemic Cape Verde Warbler and Iago Sparrow plus we expect to see Alexander's Swifts too. After disembarkation you may wish to join our two night Madeira extension with the top local bird guides. We shall seek both the endemic Trocaz Pigeon and Madeiran Firecrest plus a number of other Macronesian specialities such as Berthelot's Pipit, Canary, Rock Sparrow etc. We also plan to visit the Zino's Petrel colony after dark (not for the faint-hearted!).

Itinerary

Day 1: Embark by 1400 and sail mid-afternoon from Praia, Cape Verde.

Day 2: At sea in the waters of the Cape Verdes, early morning zodiac cruise off Raso planned, PM at sea.

Day 3: At sea heading north east towards the coast of Africa.

Day 4: Sailing north along the shelf-edge, off Mauritania.

Day 5: Continue sailing north along the shelf-edge off the coast of the Western Sahara

Day 6: Sailing in the waters of the Canary Islands, especially around Gomera.

Day 7: Morning at sea, evening circumnavigation of Grande Salvage Island for returning seabirds to their colonies.

Day 8: Morning at sea, afternoon sail by the Deserta Islands and east of Madeira.

Day 9: Morning at sea north of Madeira looking for Zino's Petrels. Arrive Funchal Madeira at approx 1200, disembark.

NB: As applies to all expedition cruises, the exact sea itinerary will be subject to weather, local conditions and government permissions.

Holiday Information

Leaders: Simon Cook plus the ship's staff.

Dates: 5th – 13th May 2013

Vessel: *Plancius*, all cabins with private facilities.

Quad berths (upper and lower) - porthole £1029

Triple berths(upper and lower)-porthole £1169

Twin share – (lower berths) - porthole £1309

Twin share – (lower berths) - window £1375

Twin share deluxe (lower berths) - window £1445

Double share superior (double bed) - window £1609

Single cabins x 1.7 of twin share price

All prices per person.

Deposit 10%

NB Continuing Atlantic Odyssey passengers qualify for a 5% discount for this voyage.

Price includes: Voyage with accommodation as booked, including all meals, infinite tea and coffee, Zodiac cruises if applicable, port taxes, services of ship's team, daily sea watching sessions and evening log (at sea), services of WildWings leader/s, pre-voyage information pack and day by day bird and mammal checklist.

Price excludes: Flights (UK – Praia, Funchal – UK from £599 including taxes), visa for Cape Verdes (Euros 25 per person) , pre-cruise night in Praia, vessel fuel surcharges if applicable, onboard crew gratuities (suggested Euros15 a day on board ship), travel insurance, other pre and/or post voyage hotels if required, other drinks and items of a personal nature.

Cape Verdes – Overnight accommodation including breakfast and transfers c£75pp sharing a twin room. Pre-voyage morning birding excursion for endemics c£20pp

Madeira – 2 night/3 day WildWings Birding extension , 13th – 15th May 2013, led by top local bird guides, ground transport including transfers from port to hotel and from hotel to the airport, accommodation in a 5* hotel in Funchal, rooms with private facilities, half board, three land birding excursions, one lunch, services of WildWings guides. c£320 per person sharing a twin room. Single room supplement c£85.

The 2011 voyage report and species list can be found on our website.