

## **Marine Mammal Survey (MMS) Cruise**

Thursday 24 – Sunday 27 June 2010  
Thursday 26 – Sunday 29 August 2010

***In partnership with ORCA (Organisation Cetacea) onboard the *Pride of Bilbao* for a minicruise between Portsmouth and Bilbao, crossing the English Channel and Bay of Biscay.***

**Price: £245 (based on sharing a standard inside twin cabin). A single supplement of £50 is required for those requiring sole occupancy of a cabin. Upgrades to outside cabins are available at a one-off cost of £40 per cabin.**

Thanks to their guides and guests, *The Company of Whales* has collected research data on cetaceans in the Bay of Biscay since 1996 as part of a long-term monitoring programme. This information has formed the basis of a number of important studies on whales and dolphins in the region, illustrating that the public can play an important role in improving our understanding of these little studied animals and the threats that they face.

But how is the data collected and what has it revealed? On this cruise you will find out how to conduct systematic watches in order to make your 'cetacean journeys' of scientific value. With expert ORCA and *Company of Whales* personnel you will learn these survey techniques – skills that can then be used to conduct your own surveys on other vessels or assist ORCA by joining one of its network of survey teams. Each cruise will also include an illustrated talk describing what our long-term monitoring programme has revealed, and how the data collected on this cruise has helped to further our understanding.

### **Itinerary**

<b>Day 1</b>	Meet at Portsmouth at 1800 hrs for 2115 sailing.
<b>Day 2</b>	
9.00:	Lecture introducing the cruise, followed by a talk entitled 'How to conduct a whale and dolphin survey.'
11.00 – 19.30:	We will spend the rest of the day whale-watching from our exclusive viewing platform. Working as a team we will practice using the equipment, including the angle board, reticle binoculars and Global Positioning System (GPS). The teams will then take it in turns to go on watch and record environmental parameters and sightings data. Each team will work in shifts so there will be plenty of time for everybody to relax and enjoy the cruise.

### **Day 3**

Morning: We take a stroll through the Spanish foothills and enjoy the birds, butterflies and wildflowers in this part of Green Spain.

Afternoon: Returning to our whale-watching platform we continue to survey as we head north. By now you will have grasped the basic survey techniques, so we will focus on another important aspect of accurate recording: interpreting the behaviour of cetaceans. It's amazing how much information can be gleaned during even the briefest of encounters!

### **Day 4**

Morning: Our final day in the English Channel provides us with new challenges as we seek out elusive Harbour Porpoises and basking sharks. No problem! By now you will be a Marine Mammal Survey expert with the skills to take on any challenge!

Afternoon: We meet for a final summarising of our sightings and what we have learnt, as well as the presentation of certificates for completing the course. Arrive back in Portsmouth at 1715 hrs.

### **About ORCA**

ORCA – *Organisation Cetacea* is one of the UK's leading charities conducting offshore whale and dolphin surveys in the eastern North Atlantic. To do so, ORCA works alongside a network of research vessels, ferries, cruise ships, cargo ships and yachts that kindly donate spaces to our volunteers to conduct targeted research. The data collected is utilised by the charity and made available to outside sources in order to assess the long-term impacts of human activities on marine mammals and their ocean habitats.

### **Reservations**

To reserve your place on either of the course dates please contact:

The Company of Whales, Longhill, Maywick, Shetland, ZE2 9JF, UK.

Tel: 01950 422483. Fax 01950 422430

[info@companyofwhales.co.uk](mailto:info@companyofwhales.co.uk) [www.companyofwhales.co.uk](http://www.companyofwhales.co.uk)



# Whale and Dolphin Expert (WDE) Cruise

Friday 30 July – Monday 2 August 2010

Friday 10 – Monday 13 September 2010

*In partnership with ORCA (Organisation Cetacea) onboard the Pride of Bilbao for a minicruise between Portsmouth and Bilbao, crossing the English Channel and Bay of Biscay.*

**Price: £245 (based on sharing a standard inside twin cabin). A single supplement of £50 is required for those requiring sole occupancy of a cabin. Upgrades to outside cabins are available at a one-off cost of £40 per cabin.**

On this cruise expert guides from ORCA and *The Company of Whales* will show you how to identify cetaceans and interpret their surfacing behaviours as we pass through some of the richest waters in Europe for cetacean diversity and abundance at a peak time! Following initial training on how to search for, identify and interpret the behaviours of cetaceans, we will spend three days on our exclusive whale-watching platform searching for cetaceans and other marine life. During this time, guests will be asked to use their newly acquired skills to interpret each encounter independently, before our experts give their views and assist with the interpretation process. It is our aim that all participants will feel they have significantly improved their field techniques during this cruise in order to get the most out of each encounter.

## Itinerary

**Day 1**                        Meet at Portsmouth at 1800 hrs for 2115 sailing.

### Day 2

9.00:                         Lecture introducing the cruise, followed by a talk entitled 'How to find and identify cetaceans.'

11.00 – 19.30:            There is no better way to learn the skills required to find and identify cetaceans than with the animals themselves! Working as part of a team, you will discover that a combination of features is required to identify these mysterious mammals. Once you know what to look for, it's amazing how much easier the process becomes, as we practice our field craft on Pilot, Minke and Fin Whales plus Common, Striped and Bottlenose Dolphins, with the chance of several other species.

### Day 3

Morning:                  We take a stroll through the Spanish foothills and enjoy an abundance of wildlife. Looking across the bay, we take time to discuss the amazing history of the Northern Right Whale, a species once common along this coast

Afternoon: As we head back out into the Bay, we will spend the afternoon focusing on cetacean behaviours. Having learnt how to identify cetaceans, interpreting their behaviours at the surface is another fascinating challenge. With expert advice and interpretation on hand, you will be amazed at how much more you can get out of each encounter!

#### Day 4

Morning: Our final day in the English Channel provides us with new challenges as we seek out elusive Harbour Porpoises and Basking Sharks. No problem! By now you will be a whale and dolphin expert with the skills to take on any challenge!

Afternoon: We meet for a final summarising of our sightings and what we have learnt, as well as the presentation of certificates for completing the course. Arrive back in Portsmouth at 1715 hrs.

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