



THE SWEDISH JUBILEE EXPEDITION 2022

Retracing the footsteps of A. E. Nordenskiöld's
Polar Expedition 1872–1873

The 150-Year Jubilee

Invitation To Apply for a Full Stipend to
Join The Science Team

Background

Names like Roald Amundsen, Fridtjof Nansen, Robert Peary and Sir Ernest Shackleton and their achievements as the early explorers of the Polar Regions are well known. The history of polar exploration is filled with stories of courage and endurance, as well as triumph and tragedy. The Polar race - to be the first to reach the North and South Pole - was a race that captured the imagination of the world. First amongst the Swedish Polar explorers was, perhaps, Adolf Erik Nordenskiöld (1832-1901). In his career he led many expeditions to Svalbard (1864, 1868, 1872-1873) and Greenland (1870, 1883). Among these expeditions is the Swedish Polar Expedition of 1872-1873 – an expedition to reach the North Pole plagued by ill fortune from the start.

History

The original expedition was created with the ambition to reach the North Pole. The plan had been to establish a winter camp at Sjuøyane, the northernmost part of the Svalbard archipelago, or as far north as possible for the expedition to travel to in 1872. During the winter, the team would conduct scientific research and prepare for the expedition to reach the North Pole using sleds pulled by 40 reindeers in the spring of 1873.

In a first event of ill fortune, the expedition was unable to reach Sjuøyane due to thick sea ice and a decision was made to establish the winter camp in Mossel Bay, a bay situated in the North Western Spitsbergen, the largest and only permanently populated island of the Svalbard archipelago. On arrival, a second event of ill fortune struck the team, 39 of the 40 reindeers escaped and the attempt to be first to reach the North Pole would thus have to be abandoned. Soon thereafter, 57 frozen Norwegian fishermen appeared at the camp eager to save their lives and overwinter. And then the final ill fortune struck as the two ships that had brought the expedition team to Svalbard were frozen-in and unable to return to Gothenburg. This meant that the planned camp of 21 people turned into a small village of 124. The winter was harsh, and several people died from scurvy and other illnesses.

In spring 1873, the team was eager to embark on their journey to salvage what they could of the expedition and their honour as polar explorers. Nordenskiöld embarked on an expedition with the sleds that had been designed to be pulled by reindeers, now pulled by men. The team crossed the sea ice to Sjuøyane only to realise that it would not be possible for the team to attempt to reach the North Pole. Instead, they turned South to explore the yet unknown and uncharted Nordaustlandet (North East Land). The journey over Nordaustlandet was arduous and dangerous and the team risked death crossing the many crevasses on the glacier.

The team completed the crossing of the Nordaustlandet Ice Cap and returned to Mossel Bay in June 1873. The team had pulled the sleds by human effort for approx. 550km. The team returned to Gothenburg, Sweden on 29 August 1873 and the expedition was officially concluded. The expedition had then generated a wealth of research in meteorology, geomagnetism and marine biology as well as increased the knowledge of Nordaustlandet Ice Cap.



THE 2022 EXPEDITION – KEY FACTS

- A team of 7-8 adventurers, scientists and filmmakers will recreate history by following Nordenskiöld's original route as closely as possible
- The Expedition will start sometime in late May – August 2022 (depending on ice conditions)
- The team will be out in the polar region for 20-40 days and travel up to 550km (depending on route)
- The science team is intended to be made up by a climate researcher, a glaciologist, a biologist and an archaeologist
- During the expedition the scientists will conduct climate change and archeological research, including comparing the findings made by Nordenskiöld and his team 150 years ago with present conditions
- The team will travel on expedition skis and pull pulks. It will be self-supported and carry everything it requires for survival in the harsh polar environment
- The entire expedition will be filmed to produce a documentary about the expedition, climate change and the human spirit
- Arctic expeditions are strenuous and prior experience in winter travel is crucial. Therefore, the entire team will train in the Swedish UNESCO Cultural Heritage site Laponia in early 2022



We will be sleeping in tents on the ice.



Means of transportation on the expedition: skis and pulk. The pulk will weigh around 60kg at the start of the expedition.



We will eat only what we bring. Each participant will start with up to 40kg of food



We will melt snow for drinking water

ENVIRONMENTAL ADVOCACY - TOLD THROUGH THE LENS OF ADVENTURE

Project Goals

1. Tell the story of the warming polar regions through the lens of adventure to get through to a new younger audience
2. Tell the story of the human adventurous spirit on a self-supported journey across sea ice and glaciers
3. Create awareness about global warming in the polar regions
4. Conduct climate research that will allow for comparison with the research conducted 150 years ago by Nordenskiöld and Team
5. Conduct archaeological research to increase the knowledge of one of Sweden's most important historical polar expeditions

Key Outputs

1. Climate Research in the Polar Region – research topics at the discretion of the applicant (articles, lectures, etc.)
2. Adventure Documentary Film of the Expedition
3. Photography Exhibition
4. Book About the Expedition
5. Continuous traditional and interactive progress information and research updates from the team



CHALLENGES TO RECREATING THE EXPEDITION

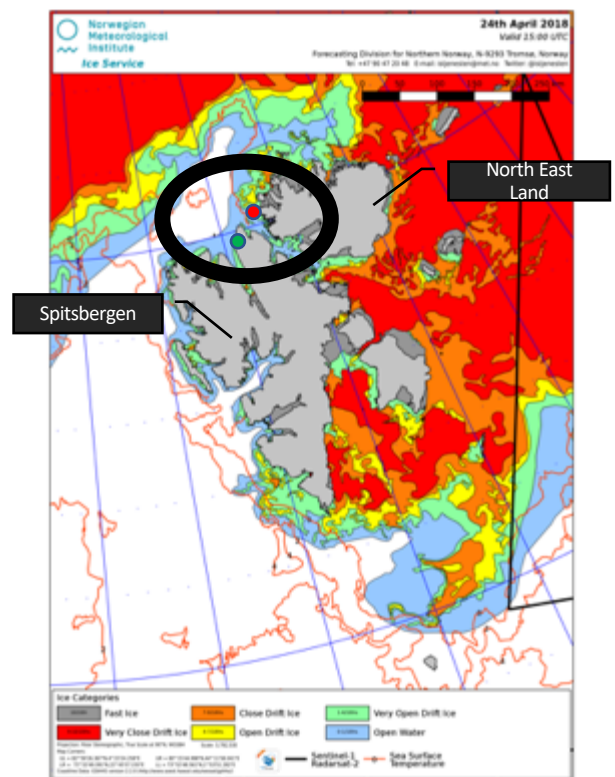
The main goal of this expedition is to tell the story of the warming polar regions through the lens of adventure.

Due to the warming of the polar regions, it is uncertain if the original route taken by Nordenskiöld can be recreated on the 150-year jubilee. In the last five years, the route has been possible only for a short time (estimated at around 10% of the time in late winter), compared with close to the entire late winter just 20 years ago. This forms part of the storytelling of the warming of the polar region.

On the right is an Ice Chart from the Norwegian Metrological Institute. On the very same date (24 April), Nordenskiöld set out across the hard sea ice from Mossel Bay (the green dot located in the black circle) over the sea ice towards North East Land (landing point on North East Land is indicated by the red dot). To safely cross the sea ice, one needs Fast Ice (indicated by dark grey shading on the chart) or Very Close Drift Ice (indicated by red shading), but as is evident on this ice chart, there is open water (blue shading) between the two islands, making the crossing by skis impossible on that date in 2018. These conditions are today typical for the majority of time in the winter.

Receding ice in the polar regions has major environmental impact as the sea ice and ice caps help regulate the earth's temperature by reflecting much of the sun's energy back into space. Without this ice, global warming will speed up.

The receding sea ice is an important topic, and it is crucial to this expedition. Due to the uncertainty of its availability, we have planned several alternative routes that caters to different ice conditions (overleaf).



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Our primary goal is to recreate the entire 550km route taken by Nordenskiöld (below left). However, this is close to impossible. In which case, there are two alternative routes, which eliminate the risk of critical failure due to ice conditions.

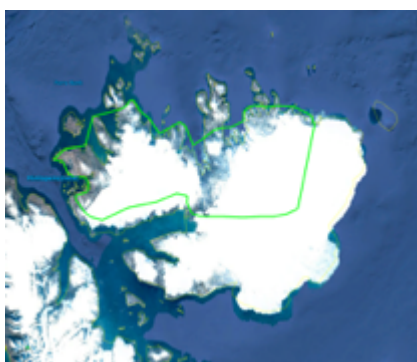
Alternative 1 – A route of 440km tracing the coast line of North East Land following Nordenskiöld's route as closely as possible. This route is possible if the sea ice north of the island is strong, something that has an approx. 50% chance of occurrence. The route is comparable in length to the Swedish Kungsleden (Eng: the King's Trail), but with added difficulties of polar climate, sea ice, glacier crossings and wildlife. This route is estimated to be achievable in approx. 35 days (including time for scientific research).

Alternative 2 – A route of 200km across the two glaciers on North East Land following Nordenskiöld's route as closely as possible. This route is possible if there is no sea ice at all and a boat can reach drop-off and pick-up points. This route is only across glacial terrain and has the risk of polar bears. This route is estimated to be achievable in approx. 20 days (including time for scientific research).

A decision about which route that is feasible can only be made in early spring 2022.



Original route by Nordenskiöld (550km)



2022 – Alternative 1 (440km)



2022 – Alternative 2 (200km)

REQUIREMENTS

Applicants to join the scientific team needs to observe the following:

Guided Expedition

You will be accompanied by several professional guides on this expedition. They will be tasked with your safety. This does not mean that the expedition is without risk.

Arctic Conditions

The expedition is set to start in June to August, which in the arctic means that we are in late spring / summer. We will have long days but also temperate nights. We can expect night time temperatures around -1c (down to -10c) and typical daytime temperatures at a few degrees Celsius.

Fitness

Arctic expeditions are strenuous and prior experience in snow travel and glacier crossing is recommended. Participants should be physically and mentally prepared for significant time out in a remote area where harsh weather and conditions can be expected. A high level of fitness is required.

You should train on a regular basis for at least 6 months prior to the expedition start. It is recommended that you focus on cardiovascular training as the cardiovascular system is constantly stressed whilst on the move pulling the pulk. Running, hiking and pulling tires combined with strength, core stability and flexibility training are the best types of exercise to incorporate into your programme. It is also important to ensure long duration aerobic exercise, gradually increasing your endurance to be able to maintain 8 hours of skiing a day. Core strength is important to make pulk hauling easier, as well as shovelling snow when the necessity for building protective walls for the tents arises.

The Right Spirit

It is also important to come with the right spirit and attitude. We will be a small team in a remote area where we will need to rely on each other for strength, endurance and spirit. These types of expeditions demand strong team cohesion and commitment.

Time

The expedition will take approx. one month. In addition to that there will be a few training events and meetings leading up to the expedition.

March 2022: 7-10 day training mission to arctic Sweden

June to August 2022: Expedition, 20 - 35 days on the ice, plus 10 travel days to get there by flight and boat and to return

Appearing in the Documentary

All expeditions participants will appear in the documentary film / series being made about the expedition. A full legal release for the documentary and other photographic material will have to be signed.

Finance

Joining the expedition is an unpaid endeavour. You will have to find grants or other means to fund your own scientific research. The cost of the expedition, equipment and insurance is covered by private donations.

Selection

The Expedition Director will decide whether or not to accept an application.

TEAM PROFILES

Science Team

Climatologist – Vacant

Glaciologist – Vacant

Biologist – Vacant

Archaeologist – Vacant

Other disciplines can be considered.

Application

Kindly send us the following information.

- CV
- Letter detailing
 - Why you wish to join the expedition
 - What you wish to study during the expedition and how this would benefit the world (note that we are not scientists so please explain it in layman terms)
 - Previous expedition / trekking / arctic experience
 - Describe your fitness and your ability to participate in the expedition

If shortlisted, you will be invited to a first video conference interview as a next step.

Please direct your application and any questions to the Expedition Director at jonas@jonaspaurell.com

Applications will be accepted until the team has been completed

CONTACTS

Expedition Leader and Project Director:

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