



Laptev Linkages

A journey to the heart of Siberia



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SCHEDULE

AUGUST 13, 2013

The group will depart from the settlement of Khatanga in the Krasnoyarsk Territory and from there will travel to the Laptev sea shore (560 km). The crew will set up camp in the ecological hotspot of Maria Prontchistcheva Bay. This location will provide a fixed base from which to survey the surrounding coastline.

MID-AUGUST

The group may relocate to Cape Tsvetkova, a geologically significant site that will provide a second survey base.

AUGUST 25

Group returns to Khatanga

AUGUST 26

Group returns to Moscow

During the brief Arctic summer, join WWF as we journey to the heart of Siberia. In this little-known and remote region, a WWF-led team will try to solve a scientific riddle. The Canon-Europe funded expedition set up camp on the Taimyr Peninsula for two weeks and will report daily on the sights and events of the expedition.

The Laptev Sea remains one of the least explored areas of the Russian Arctic. It is home to many mysteries, one of which WWF intends to unravel through this expedition. The mystery is whether or not walrus and polar bear populations in the Laptev

are genetically related to populations to the east and west, or whether they are a distinct sub-population. The answer to this mystery may have implications for the management of the entire region.

[FOLLOW THE JOURNEY AT PANDA.ORG/LAPTEV](http://PANDA.ORG/LAPTEV)

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FOLLOW THE JOURNEY:

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WWF staff and other researchers plan to use a variety of scientific techniques to get the required genetic samples, including tissue samples (for the walrus) and hair snags (for the polar bears). WWF subject matter experts will be supplemented by the local expertise and knowledge of staff from the Taimyr nature reserve.

While the Laptev Sea has been relatively inaccessible for thousands to years, that is changing rapidly. There has been a ten-fold increase in ships using the northern sea route sailing through Arctic Russia in the last two years. Last year, more than one and a quarter millions tons of cargo was shipped through the Laptev. Meanwhile, oil and gas interest in the region is increasing. Seismic surveys have been conducted over the past two years, and Russia's largest oil company says there is a "good possibility" of finding commercial deposits of oil or gas in the region.

The expedition will also give our team the chance to document the rapid climate-driven changes coming to the Arctic. This documentation will be helped out by the presence of a Canon-sponsored photographer, who will bring photographic expertise to the expedition. A camera crew from BBC will also be joining the expedition, to help in bringing this story to the world. Our own communications staff will be using satellite communications to file regular stories in English and Russian that will be available through our website at panda.org/laptev.

PARTICIPANTS

WWF leads on polar bear and walrus, other WWF researchers, WWF communications staff, sea mammals expert from Russian research institute, Taimyr nature reserve staff, Canon-sponsored photographer, BBC TV crew.

ABOUT THE WWF/CANON EUROPE PARTNERSHIP

The "Laptev Linkages" expedition is the second of three Arctic expeditions to be funded by Canon Europe. Last year, the partners mounted the "Sailing to Siku" expedition (www.lasticearea.org) between Greenland and Canada, and next year, they plan an expedition in the Bering Strait between Alaska and Russia. Canon also funds the WWF-Canon photo library, helping WWF tell conservation stories worldwide through photography.



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