

The background features a deep blue gradient with two whales swimming upwards. A large, semi-transparent 'IHW' logo is overlaid on the left side. The text 'Science & Education Report' is centered in white, with 'MS FRAM' below it.

Science & Education Report

MS FRAM

MS Fram

1 – 11.5.2026

European Spring Explorer
from Lisbon to Hamburg



History & Culture

Portugal's second-largest city and a cradle of its early statehood, Porto stands at the heart of the nation's identity. It gave its name to the country itself and later to the world-renowned Port wine, first developed along the banks of the Douro. Today, Porto blends deep historical roots with dynamic growth, emerging as one of Europe's fastest-developing urban centres, where tradition and innovation meet against a striking Atlantic backdrop.



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History & Culture

Harlingen, one of the Netherlands' key historic seaports, has long served as a maritime gateway to the Wadden Sea. Rooted in a rich tradition of shipbuilding, fishing, and trade, it grew into Friesland's only true port city, linking the region to wider European networks. Its network of picturesque canals, lined with historic warehouses and gabled houses, offers a more intimate perspective of the city — best appreciated from the water. Today, Harlingen retains its nautical character while evolving into a lively hub for tourism and ferry traffic to the nearby islands, where heritage, working harbour life, and coastal charm converge.






















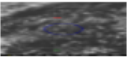
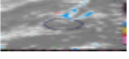
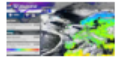




NASA Globe Cloud Observer

We collected two observations for NASA's GLOBE Cloud Observer during this voyage and obtained two matches for our observations.

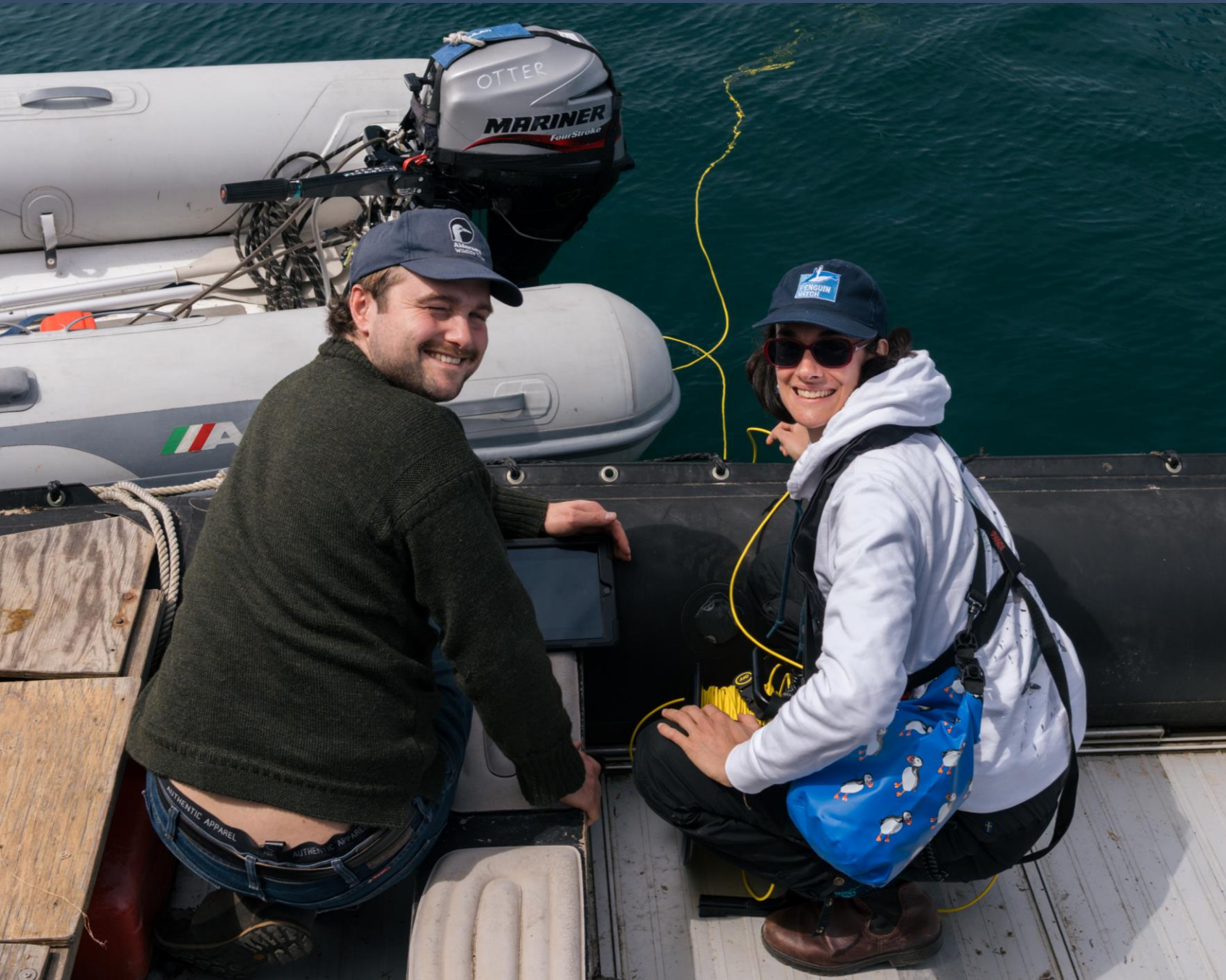
[View our data](#) on the global map

GLOBE	METEOSAT-10 Satellite	NOAA-20 Satellite
2026-05-04 12:41:00	2026-05-04 12:40	2026-05-04 12:30
7.26	46.94 to 47.58	46.85 to 47.65
7.75	-8.07 to -7.43	-8.28 to -7.48
Broken (50-90%) 	Broken 67.54% 	Broken 60.23% 
 Cirrus Cover: Few (<10%)  Opacity: Translucent	Cover: Isolated 10.39%  Altitude: 8.38 (km) Phase: Ice 242.92 (K) Opacity: Transparent	Cover: Isolated 13.91%  Altitude: 6.55 (km) Phase: Ice 239.53 (K) Opacity: Transparent
 Altostratus Cover: Isolated (10-25%)  Opacity: Opaque	Cover: Isolated 12.99%  Altitude: 3.62 (km) Phase: Ice/Water Mix 266.16 (K) Opacity: Transparent	Cover: Few (7.99%)  Altitude: 4.67 (km) Phase: Ice/Water Mix 253.35 (K) Opacity: Transparent
 Cumulus Cover: Scattered (25-50%)  Opacity: Opaque	Cover: Scattered 44.16%  Altitude: 1.2 (km) Phase: Water 280.17 (K) Opacity: Transparent	Cover: Scattered 38.33%  Altitude: 1.52 (km) Phase: Water 276.17 (K) Opacity: Transparent
GLOBE Photos North  East  South  West  Up  Down 	METEOSAT-10 Visible  Infrared  GEO Tutorial	VIIRS NOAA-20 Worldview  Worldview Tutorial

NASA Globe Cloud Observer

This table shows how our observation from the ground compared to the satellite's observation from above on 4 May, while crossing the Bay of Biscay.

[View our data](#) on the global map



UnderWater Drone

During our voyage, we conducted a targeted survey in the sheltered waters of Alderney harbour in the Channel Islands, graciously supported by Alex Purdie from the [Alderney Wildlife Trust](#).

Our findings revealed thriving eelgrass meadows (*Zostera marina*) and kelp forests (*Laminaria* spp. and *Saccharina* spp.). These habitats are vital pillars of the marine ecosystem, serving as essential nurseries for marine life and providing natural protection against coastal erosion.

We also observed various pollack and wrasse fish species, both adults and juveniles, alongside established invasive species like the red harpoon weed (*Asparagopsis armata*).

Thanks for your participation!



iNaturalist

Thanks to your efforts, we recorded over 130 opportunistic observations representing nearly 86 different species.

Reflecting the peak of the spring season, plants were our most-spotted organisms (accounting for over 85% of sightings), followed by birds and mammals. A true highlight of the voyage was our visit to Treco Abbey Gardens in the Isles of Scilly; it was fascinating to observe Southern Hemisphere species thriving in the unique, mild Atlantic oceanic climate.

By sharing your data on iNaturalist, you are contributing to a global, open-access database that fuels scientific research and conservation monitoring. These records are vital tools for researchers tracking species distribution and assessing ecosystem health.

You can view the project and also upload your observations from our voyage [by clicking here.](#)



e-Bird

Your onboard ornithologist Enzo completed 37 e-Bird checklists covering 70 different species during our 11-day voyage. The most abundant species were the common murre, observed on our way to the Isles of Scilly, followed by the southern fulmar and the yellow-legged gull — the most frequently observed species at sea or in coastal areas — alongside a wonderful black-browed albatross. If you want to check the complete records, please use the following link:

[View our data on our e-Bird trip report](#)

Happywhale

While we didn't spot any baleen whales on this voyage — meaning no submissions for the Happywhale project this time — we were still treated to some truly spectacular marine life encounters.

We enjoyed beautiful sightings of bottlenose and common dolphins joined by young calves, off the coast of Spain and throughout the Bay of Biscay. We were also lucky enough to see common and grey seals basking around the Isles of Scilly and Helgoland, Germany.

We hope you keep your eyes on the horizon for wildlife once you're back home. Who knows? We may see you on board again soon.

[View our submissions](#) to Happywhale





Wildlife

List — Marine Mammals

Wildlife List – Marine mammals



SCIENTIFIC NAME	ENGLISH	DEUTSCH
<i>Delphinus delphis</i>	common dolphin	Gemeiner Delfin
<i>Tursiops truncatus</i>	common bottlenose dolphin	Großer Tümmler
<i>Grampus griseus</i>	Risso's dolphin	Risso-Delfin
<i>Halichoerus grypus</i>	gray seal	Kegelrobbe
<i>Phoca vitulina</i>	harbour seal, common seal	Seehund
	unidentified seal	Nicht identifizierte Robbe



Wildlife List — Birds



Wildlife List – Seabirds

SCIENTIFIC NAME	ENGLISH	DEUTSCH
<i>Morus bassanus</i>	northern gannet	Basstölpel
<i>Fulmarus glacialis</i>	northern fulmar	Eissturmvogel
<i>Chroicocephalus ridibundus</i>	black-headed gull	Lachmöwe
<i>Larus argentatus</i>	European herring gull	Silbermöwe
<i>Larus fuscus</i>	lesser black-backed gull	Heringsmöwe
<i>Larus marinus</i>	great black-backed gull	Mantelmöwe
<i>Rissa tridactyla</i>	black-legged kittiwake	Dreizehenmöwe
<i>Sterna hirundo</i>	common tern	Flusseeschwalbe
<i>Alca torda</i>	razorbill	Tordalk
<i>Fratercula arctica</i>	Atlantic puffin	Papageitaucher
<i>Uria aalge</i>	common murre / guillemot	Trottellumme
<i>Larus michaelis</i>	yellow-legged gull	Mittelmeermöwe
<i>Thalasseus sandvicensis</i>	sandwich tern	Brandseeschwalbe

Wildlife List – Waterbirds

SCIENTIFIC NAME	ENGLISH	DEUTSCH
<i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>	mallard	Stockente
<i>Mareca strepera</i>	gadwall	Schnatterente
<i>Somateria mollissima</i>	common eider	Eiderente
<i>Spatula clypeata</i>	northern shoveler	Löffelente
<i>Anser anser</i>	greylag goose	Graugans
<i>Branta canadensis</i>	Canada goose	Kanadagans
<i>Tadorna tadorna</i>	common shelduck	Brandgans
<i>Cygnus olor</i>	mute swan	Höckerschwan
<i>Charadrius hiaticula</i>	common ringed plover	Sandregenpfeifer
<i>Haematopus ostralegus</i>	Eurasian oystercatcher	Austernfischer
<i>Numenius phaeopus</i>	whimbrel	Regenbrachvogel
<i>Tringa ochropus</i>	green sandpiper	Waldwasserläufer
<i>Fulica atra</i>	Eurasian coot	Blässhuhn
<i>Gallinula chloropus</i>	Eurasian moorhen	Teichhuhn

Wildlife List – Waterbirds

SCIENTIFIC NAME	ENGLISH	DEUTSCH
<i>Rallus aquaticus</i>	water rail	Wasserralle
<i>Ardea cinerea</i>	gray heron	Graureiher
<i>Gulosus aristotelis</i>	European shag	Krähenscharbe
<i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i>	great cormorant	Kormoran
<i>Ciconia nigra</i>	black stork	Schwarzstorch
<i>Ciconia ciconia</i>	white stork	Weißstorch



Wildlife List – Landbirds

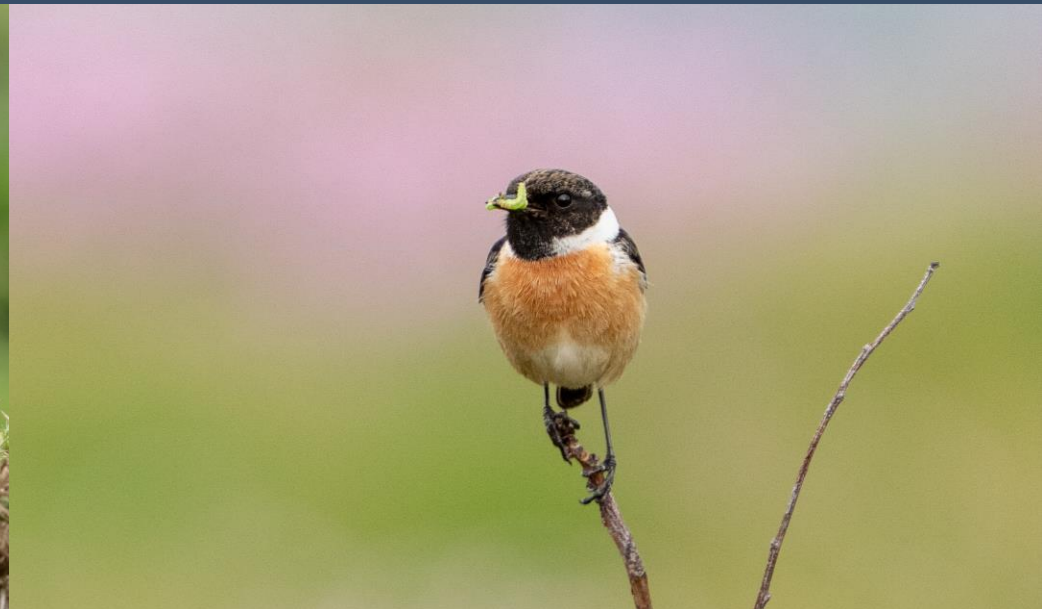
SCIENTIFIC NAME	ENGLISH	DEUTSCH
<i>Circus aeruginosus</i>	western marsh harrier	Rohrweihe
<i>Corvus corax</i>	northern raven	Kolkrabe
<i>Corvus corone</i>	carrion crow	Rabenkrähe
<i>Pica pica</i>	Eurasian magpie	Elster
<i>Columba palumbus</i>	common wood pigeon	Ringeltaube
<i>Columba livia</i>	rock dove	Felsentaube
<i>Streptopelia decaocto</i>	Eurasian collared dove	Türkentaube
<i>Apus apus</i>	common swift	Mauersegler
<i>Alauda arvensis</i>	Eurasian skylark	Feldlerche
<i>Hirundo rustica</i>	barn swallow	Rauchschwalbe
<i>Delichon urbicum</i>	common house martin	Mehlschwalbe
<i>Riparia riparia</i>	sand martin / bank swallow	Uferschwalbe
<i>Anthus pratensis</i>	meadow pipit	Wiesenpieper
<i>Anthus trivialis</i>	tree pipit	Baumpieper
<i>Motacilla alba</i>	white wagtail	Bachstelze
<i>Prunella modularis</i>	dunnock	Heckenbraunelle
<i>Turdus merula</i>	common blackbird	Amsel

Wildlife List – Landbirds

SCIENTIFIC NAME	ENGLISH	DEUTSCH
<i>Turdus philomelos</i>	song thrush	Singdrossel
<i>Sylvia atricapilla</i>	Eurasian blackcap	Mönchsgrasmücke
<i>Regulus regulus</i>	goldcrest	Wintergoldhähnchen
<i>Troglodytes troglodytes</i>	Eurasian wren	Zaunkönig
<i>Erithacus rubecula</i>	European robin	Rotkehlchen
<i>Oenanthe oenanthe</i>	northern wheatear	Steinschmätzer
<i>Saxicola rubicola</i>	European stonechat	Schwarzkehlchen
<i>Cyanistes caeruleus</i>	Eurasian blue tit	Blaumeise
<i>Lophophanes cristatus</i>	European crested tit	Haubenmeise
<i>Parus major</i>	great tit	Kohlmeise
<i>Sturnus vulgaris</i>	common starling	Star
<i>Passer domesticus</i>	house sparrow	Hausperling
<i>Carduelis carduelis</i>	European goldfinch	Stieglitz
<i>Chloris chloris</i>	European greenfinch	Grünfink
<i>Fringilla coelebs</i>	common chaffinch	Buchfink
<i>Linaria cannabina</i>	common linnet	Bluthänfling
<i>Phylloscopus trochilus</i>	willow warbler	Fitis

Wildlife List – Landbirds

SCIENTIFIC NAME	ENGLISH	DEUTSCH
<i>Phylloscopus collybita</i>	chiffchaff	Zilpzalp
<i>Phoenicurus ochruros</i>	black redstart	Hausrotschwanz
<i>Certhia brachydactyla</i>	short-toed treecreeper	Gartenbaumläufer
<i>Phasianus colchicus</i>	ring-necked pheasant	Jagdfasan
<i>Chrysolophus pictus</i>	golden pheasant	Goldfasan
<i>Coloeus monedula</i>	jackdaw	Dohle
<i>Curruca communis</i>	greater whitethroat	Dorngrasmücke
<i>Curruca curruca</i>	lesser whitethroat	Klappergrasmücke





Credit: Yuri Choufour/HX

In summary

Our springtime European voyage was a magnificent journey that took us to the most remote corners of the Atlantic coast. Much like the season itself, our Citizen Science initiatives flourished; we successfully gathered vital data for our species reports, contributing directly to global biodiversity monitoring.

Scientific highlights included breathtaking sightings of common dolphins in Spain and across the Bay of Biscay, visits to several bustling gannet colonies, and an exploration of the Tresco Abbey Gardens, a unique sanctuary for Southern Hemisphere flora.

What data?	How much data?
Nasa Cloud Globe Observer	2 observations, 2 matches
iNaturalist	130+ observations
e-Bird	37 checklists, 70 species
Happywhale	0 submissions

Thank you!

The MS Fram Science and Education Team extends its thanks for choosing HX Expeditions to explore the European coast during springtime. Your participation not only supports the ongoing work of researchers but also enables them to join our voyages, carry out meaningful studies, and access essential logistical resources that are often difficult to secure.

We are deeply appreciative of your genuine curiosity and shared enthusiasm for the natural world — from birds and marine mammals to flowers, lichens, mosses, and even the microscopic life found in a drop of water.

It was a true joy to exchange ideas, reflect on history over coffee, and marvel together at the diverse ecosystems we encountered. We hope this journey will remain among your most treasured memories.





THX

**Thank you for
your participation**