



## Polarjazz 2011



MARK SABBATINI / ICEPEOPLE

Mari Tefre, center, and Hans-Gunnar Skreslett, far left, lead the Longyearbyen Storband during the *vorspiel* by local musicians at the Radisson Blu Polar Hotel at this year's Polarjazz festival.

# In the love for 'Mood'

Composer aims for different musical and visual portrait of Svalbard in premier Saturday

By MARK SABBATINI  
Editor

Making a familiar song sound fresh is the hallmark of a good jazz musician. Brynjar Rasmussen hopes he's brought that original feel to the oft-done musical/visual portrait of Svalbard.

The composer and clarinetist leads an ensemble in the premier of "Arctic Mood" at 6 p.m. Saturday as part of the 13th annual Po-

larjazz festival. The five-day festival that opened Wednesday (date reflects a one-day delayed press run) features 18 concerts and other events by artists in a range of genres.

Rasmussen is familiar with Polarjazz, first performing at the festival in 2006 and subsequently making "seven or eight" visits with a photographer to all areas of the archipelago to collect material for "Arctic

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# Arctic in hot water ... yawn

Report warning of warmest temperatures in 2,000 years not exactly swaying those reading it

By MARK SABBATINI  
Editor

Hottest year ever, catastrophic storms, towns sinking into seas and permafrost, all blamed on human-caused warming. The latest barrage of alarming headlines worldwide declare Arctic waters the warmest in 2,000 years and the reaction is ... the usual cool shrug.

"ENOUGH! This is claptrap, which just allows governments to tax us more, and keeps 'scientists' in work.," declares the highest-rated comment - by a fair margin - at London's *Daily Mail* website. "Leave nature alone. She will sort herself out."

The comment by someone identifying themselves as John from Southend, England, is typical of a majority of netizens at media sites around the world. The usual climate change skeptics are also out in force, including a column by Per Jan Langerud suggesting refuting the study isn't much more difficult than looking outside if you happen to live in Svalbard.

"Around Svalbard there is now, however, a large recorded amount of ice, especially along the west coast where there is a nearly 100-kilometer-wide belt of dense pack ice all the way, something I have not seen that I can

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## Svalbard bird a weight-gain wonder

Researchers hope ptarmigan behaviors unlock secrets to bigger poultry for consumption

By MARK SABBATINI  
Editor

One might say the lives of free-spirited Arctic grouse and chickens bred in tiny factory cages for mass consumption are polar opposites. But the vigorous, extreme-weather habits of the Svalbard rock ptarmigan may help poultry producers bulk up a bigger bird.

Observing the ptarmigans in their natural habitat and on treadmills in laboratories reveals

See POULTRY, page 2



JONATHAN CODD / BBSRC

A Svalbard rock ptarmigan's movement is observed on a laboratory treadmill as part of a study about the species' feeding habits and adaptation to extreme climate conditions.

## Who's to blame and how to express your wrath

### Editor

Mark Sabbatini

### Staff writer/photographer

Karla Paz

### Copy editor

Kristan Hutchison

### Psychiatrist

Irene Gallion

### Mailing address

*Icepeople*  
Vei 210 -2- 13  
Longyearbyen, Svalbard  
9170  
Norway

### Telephone

Norway: +47 41 51 46 38  
U.S. +1 (970) 673-4472

### E-mail

marksabbatini@yahoo.com

### Web site

www.icepeople.net

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## Corrections policy

When we screw up you'll know about it – on the front page. One of the big complaints about newspapers is they tend to bury corrections and clarifications deep inside where few people who read the original article see them. If we need to fix something, an alert box on the front page will state what story is in error and where the full correction is printed.

## Submitting material

Letters, columns, photos and other material are welcome, but we can't offer pay for published items since nobody here is getting paid at the moment. Submissions in electronic form (text, Word documents, JPEGs, etc.) are highly preferred, although typing and/or scanning of items will be considered on a per-case basis. We reserve the right to edit submissions for length, clarity, accuracy, libel and other reasons, but we will also make every reasonable effort to contact the author about any changes prior to publication.

## Captivating benefits from mothers' milk



NORWEGIAN POLAR INSTITUTE

Jon Aars of the Norwegian Polar Institute Polar Bear Research examines a Svalbard female polar bear, whose cub is feeding on milk researchers have determined provides superior nutrition to cubs in zoos. The study, seeking improvements on formula commonly given to cubs in captivity, states Svalbard bears' milk contains high levels of vitamins D3, A, E and the amino acid taurine. The study was published in January by the scientific journal *Zoo Biology*.

## Bulky birds may thwart food crisis

### POULTRY, from page 1

they have evolved to cope with extreme environments by moving efficiently at high speeds or when carrying winter weigh, according to the U.K.-based Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council. Understanding the physiology of a natural animal's model of ex-

trême weight gain may help improve the welfare and meat yield of domesticated poultry, where birds are bred to be heavier, helping contribute to the prevention of a future food shortages.

**There's more! Visit [www.icepeople.net](http://www.icepeople.net) for the complete story.**

## Icesheet

### Random bits of the week's weirdness:

"Arctic waters warmest in 2,000 years" scream the latest worldwide headlines with a Svalbard connection. But climate change skeptics will no doubt be warmed by a forecast of temperatures within shouting distance of Longyearbyen's all-time low of minus 46.3 Celsius, including minus 41 today. We're still trying to determine if that's a record low for today, or any of the surrounding days might set records ... One chilling reality is those with current-model iPhones probably won't be doing much chatting and apping outside, given an aversion to cold by the device that is seriously irking certain northern government consumer agencies. The current iPhone's "normal operating temperatures" are between zero and 35 degrees Celsius, although the phone can be stored in temperatures as low as minus 20. Apple says operating the phone in subfreezing conditions risks shortening battery life or causing the phone to stop working temporarily. To our knowledge, that means the phones have been useless outdoors in Svalbard since the onset of winter ... We're not ready to wear "Let 'em eat dolphin" t-shirts yet, but we gotta ask just how far people are willing to go to be PC after see-

ing one of the newest additions to the concessions at the Kulturhuset cafe. Rectangular single-serving tins of some brand of imported tuna in olive oil are selling for a mere 249 kroner, or 18 times that of the store-brand cans at Svalbardbutikken. The marketing hype is the expensive stuff is pure white tuna caught without ensnaring dolphins, but good ol' Norwegian sardines can say the same if the latter is a concern. Besides, regardless of which tuna you buy, it's a good bet you'll get dirty looks from everyone seated near you if you try eating it in the theater ... Here's a contest for those put off by the über-greenies intent on keeping development out of the Far North at all costs: A free sailing trip around Svalbard and a helicopter trip to the Troll oil platform, from which "you'll visit the bottom of the North Sea" is being offered by *New Scientist* magazine and Statoil. "All you have to do is to tell us in no more than 100 words which engineering project you think will have the greatest effect on human life in the next 30 years, and why," notes the website for the magazine, where current articles include "How to Make a Fake Beach Look Real" and "Paper Planes Dropped From Space." Deadline is March 1.



NICOLAS VAN NIEUWENHOVE / IFM-GEOMAR

The *Maria S. Merian*, a German research vessel, passes through sea ice northwest of Svalbard in August 2007. Researchers on the ship found waters warming at an unprecedented rate.

## Warm water has chilling impact

**SKEPTICS, from page 1**

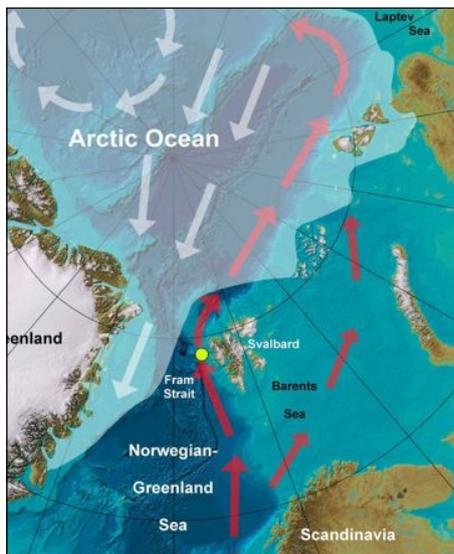
remember," Langerud wrote in one of his frequent commentaries for ABC news in Oslo. He asserts the warmer waters observed during the study are part of a normal 50- to 60-year warming and cooling cycle.

Then there's the government and industry officials in Norway, Russia and other countries with an interest in the Arctic stating that warming, if it is happening, isn't necessarily bad because it opens the area up to commercial shipping routes and natural resources such as oil.

Convincing the naysayers with a single study may not be likely – and isn't necessarily the goal of any given project. But researchers are hoping their findings add a spark to the debate now taking place widely about whether warming in the Arctic is triggering unorthodox weather around the globe, including winter storms causing mass disruptions in Europe and the United States.

The study finds the waters of the Fram Strait between Greenland and Svalbard have warmed roughly two degrees Celsius during the past 100 years. That's four times the historical fluctuation and more than 70 percent more than during the Medieval Warm Period, a time of elevated warmth from 900 to 1300 A.D.

"Such a warming of the Atlantic water in the Fram Strait significantly differs from all



ROBERT SPIELHAGEN / IFM-GEOMAR

This bathymetric map of the Norwegian-Greenland Sea and Arctic Ocean shows average summer sea ice cover (white arrows) and the path of warm Atlantic Water entering the Arctic where it submerges under the cold, ice-covered surface layer (red arrows).

climate variations in the past 2,000 years," said Dr. Robert Spielhagen, of The Leibniz Institute of Marine Sciences at the University of Kiel. He is the lead author of the study published in the recent issue of *Science*.

**There's more! Visit [www.icepeople.net](http://www.icepeople.net) for the complete story.**

### HEADLINES STOLEN FROM **SVALBARDPOSTEN** VERDENS NORDLIGSTE AVIS

#### **Board member acted illegally in complaint about contract**

Longyearbyen Board member Jon Sandmo acted illegally not consulting with the board before asking police to investigate two city employees about an agreement with the company operating the cafe at Kulturhuset, according to Mayor Kjell Mork. "I consider this detrimental to local government as an employer and the Longyearbyen Town Community Council's reputation," the mayor wrote in a letter to Sadmo. Local regulations do not allow individual members to report such matters related to municipal government, instead requiring the chief executive to do so. Sandmo, representing the Svalbardlista party, accused Cultural Supervisor Einar Buø, and Cultural Advisor Roger Zahl Ødegård of improperly agreeing to a contract for the cafe that may have cost the city 1 million kroner in lost revenue. "The matter was so serious I chose to do it this way," he said. "When I take up something with the local governor it has a tendency to boil away in the bowl. One must often use harder guns." An investigation determined there were no improprieties in the contract negotiations.

#### **Money stolen from dressing room at Svalbardhallen**

Three men had money stolen from jackets Thursday evening from a dressing room at Svalbardhallen. They said the amount was small, but there appear to be no witnesses to the theft. Police Lt. Arild Lyssand said thefts are rare – noting a longer period shoplifting by some boys in 2004 – but taking caution with valuables is still advisable.

#### **'Kebab Man' faces exile again**

Kazem Ariaiwand will be brought by car to the Finnish border when he completes a 30-day jail sentence in Tromsø jail for immigration violations, according to officials. He was arrested by customs authorities Jan. 6 while trying to send belongings to Switzerland, where he has citizenship, and trying to arrange for the return of his red kebab catering truck to Svalbard after it was repaired. He has a cleaning business in Switzerland, but said last October he still intends to live in Svalbard.

## Weather forecast for Longyearbyen

Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Fair. E winds at 18 km/h. High -24C (-35C wind chill), low -25C (-36C wind chill).	Fair. NE winds at 18 km/h. High -24C (-35C wind chill), low -33 (-46C wind chill).	Partly cloudy. E winds at 18 km/h. High -28C (-40C wind chill), low -32C (-45C wind chill).	Cloudy. E winds to 18 km/h. High -24C (-34C wind chill), low -28C (-40C wind chill).
Sunrise: 0:00 Sunset 0:00	Sunrise: 0:00 Sunset 0:00	Sunrise: 0:00 Sunset 0:00	Sunrise: 0:00 Sunset 0:00
<b>Extended forecast:</b> Sunday, cloudy, -23C (-33C), -23C (-33C), light 0:00h; Monday, p. cloudy -22C (-32C), -23C (-33C), light 0:00h; Tuesday, p. cloudy, -24C (-32C), -24C (-32C), light 0:00h; Wednesday, p. cloudy, -21C (-31C), -22C (-32C), light 0:00h.			
<b>Data provided by yr.no</b>			



WERNER ANDERSON / NORDNORSK JAZZCENTER

This image from inside a mine at Svea is part of the photography portion of "Arctic Mood" a music and visual showcase intended to reflect all aspects of life in the area. The photo exhibit opens at 5 p.m. Saturday at Kulturhuset, with the premier of the show at 6 p.m. as part of this year's Polarjazz.

## Musical portraits in all keys at Polarjazz

### MOOD, from page 1

Mood." He said the 60-minute performance, focuses on five elements of Svalbard: research, mines, tourism, historic hunters and "the different international persons who are spreading knowledge."

"The first time here I had a perspective of this island that all Norwegians have, the romantic view," he said, speaking through an interpreter. "Svalbard is a very exotic place for us. It's done so much I wanted something of my own."

"The difference is this is not only focusing on the nature, which is something that is very common here," he said.

The photography, capturing gritty reality as well as pristine beauty, is by Werner Anderson, who has worked in war and catastrophic areas, Rasmussen said. Also featured is the text from a diary of hunters who got lost and perished after 70 days on the ice, which is narrated by actor Bjørn Sundquist.

"When I was reading all of the diaries and was thinking about the text, I understood it must be Bjørn Sundquist or no one because of his voice," Rasmussen said.

The performance is also captured in a CD and book package available at the premier. A presentation of the exhibit is scheduled to precede the concert at 5 p.m.

The project is the largest ever sponsored by the Nordnorsk Jazzsenter, with about 60 national and international taking part at the premier said Ulla-Stina Wiland, director of the center. A tour of the mainland, Russia, Italy, Germany and elsewhere is scheduled starting in April.

Also featured at this year's Polarjazz are a range of new and returning musicians including jazz vocalist Solveig Slettahjell, a Spellemannprisen winner (Norwegian equivalent of a Grammy); acid jazz/electonica band Beady Belle; vocal sextet PUST; klezmer/rock orchestra Klezmofobia; children's band Lyriaka; electro-pop/ambient duo MALMØ; multi-in-

### Polarjazz schedule

**Wednesday**  
 – 9 p.m.: Polarjazz Vorspiel by local artists. 100 kr. Radisson.

**Thursday**  
 – 9 p.m.: Solveig Slettahjell; Cowabunga w/ Susanne Hansen. 400 kr. Radisson.

**Friday**  
 – Noon: Free concert at Lompensenteret.  
 – 7 p.m.: MALMØ concert for students. Longyearbyen Youth Club.  
 – 9 p.m.: Beady Belle; PUST; Klezmofobia. 400 kr. Radisson.

**Saturday**  
 – 1 p.m.: Free concert. Svalbardbutikken.  
 – 2 p.m.: Free family concert w/Lyriaka. Kulturhuset cafe.  
 – 5 p.m.: Exhibit opening for "Arctic Mood." Kulturhuset.  
 – 6 p.m.: "Arctic Mood," premier performance. 200 kr. Kulturhuset.  
 – 6 p.m.: Jazz buffet. Radisson. Reservations required by calling 7902 3457.  
 – 7:30 p.m.: MALMØ. Barentz Pub.  
 – 9 p.m.: Halvdan Sivertsen; Stian Carstensen; Hot Club de Norvège. Radisson.

**Sunday**  
 – 6 p.m.: Interactivo. 200 kr. adults, 100 kr. youths. Kulturhuset.

Festival passes (1,200 kr.) allow admission to all concerts at the Radisson, plus the premier of "Arctic Mood." Pass holders arriving less than one hour before showtime will be admitted on a space-available basis with single-night ticket holders.

Passes and individual tickets can be purchased at the Kulturhuset cafe or online via polarjazz.no.

strumentalist Stian Carstensen; gypsy jazz band Hot Club de Norvège; and Cuban funk band Interactivo.

Full artist profiles, audio samples, videos, information about past festivals and online ticket sales are available through the festival's website at [www.polarjazz.no](http://www.polarjazz.no).

**There's more! Visit [www.icepeople.net](http://www.icepeople.net) for the complete story.**

## What's up

### Feb. 2-6

Polarjazz festival. See schedule at left.

### Feb. 6

11 a.m.: Liturgy. Svalbard Church.

Noon: Tickets for concert by Hellbillies on March 12 available at Kulturhuset cafe and online via [www.lokalstyre.no](http://www.lokalstyre.no).

### Feb. 9

6 p.m.: Movie: "Nanny McPhee and the Big Bang," British fantasy/comedy, all ages. Kulturhuset.

8 p.m.: Movie: "The Green Hornet" (3D), U.S. action/thriller, ages 15 and up. Kulturhuset.

### Feb. 13

11 a.m.: Hilmar Nøis Trail sled dog race from the Northern Light Station to Passhytta. No entrance fee and dog teams can be of any size. Deadline to register at [trappers.trail@gmail.com](mailto:trappers.trail@gmail.com) is midnight Feb. 12.

6 p.m.: Movie: "Easy-A," U.S. comedy, ages 11 and up. Kulturhuset.

8 p.m.: Movie: "Tomme Tønner 2 – Det Brune Gullet," Norwegian gangster comedy, ages 15 and up. Kulturhuset.

### Feb. 14

7:30 p.m.: Concert by pianist Joanna MacGregor. First half features central European classical composers; the second half will highlight gospel, blues, jazz and tango music from the Americas. Kulturhuset.

### Feb. 15

7 p.m.: Local Board meeting. Næringsbygget 3, Newtontoppen room.

### Feb. 16

6 p.m.: Movie: "Yogi Bear" (3D), U.S. family film, all ages. Kulturhuset.

8 p.m.: Movie: "Another Year," British drama/comedy, all ages. Kulturhuset.

### Feb. 17

2 p.m.: Board of Culture and Leisure Business Authority meeting. Næringsbygget 1, Tundra room.

## What's online

**Icepeople.net** provides daily updates of news about Svalbard and the world's polar regions, plus extras for articles from the print edition. Among the latest news:

- *6.1 earthquake strikes near Jan Mayen*
- *Canada probes mass sled dog killing*
- *Winning Antarctic Marathon in 3h 16m*
- *Castration to save reindeer in Arctic?*