

# Historic Darwin200 Voyage Aboard Tall Ship Oosterschelde Falmouth Homecoming After Two-Year Global Conservation Mission

*Following in Darwin's Footsteps, the DARWIN200 Project Engaged Thousands Worldwide in Science, Conservation, and Education*

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/EINPresswire.com/ -- To cheers, applause and the sound of ships' horns, the historic Dutch tall ship [Oosterschelde](#) sailed into Falmouth Harbour on Saturday July 19th marking the triumphant conclusion of the [DARWIN200](#) Global Voyage, a modern odyssey inspired by Charles Darwin's legendary journey aboard HMS Beagle.

Gathered at Port Pendennis Marina, hundreds of well-wishers, families of the crew, and members of the international conservation community welcomed the ship home after 43,000 nautical miles, 31 ports of call, and two years at sea.

The choice of Falmouth as the homecoming port was deeply significant. It was here, in 1836, that a young Charles Darwin returned to British shores aboard HMS Beagle after his own voyage of discovery, a journey that would ultimately transform the way we understand the natural world. Darwin's experiences aboard the Beagle laid the foundation for his ground-



DARWIN200 Oosterschelde Falmouth Homecoming  
Photograph By Tom Dixon



DARWIN200 Oosterschelde Falmouth Cornwall  
Homecoming Photograph By Tom Dixon

breaking work, *On the Origin of Species*, which changed scientific thinking forever and continues to inspire generations of researchers and conservationists.

The DARWIN200 project, brainchild of British conservationist [Stewart McPherson](#), set out from Plymouth in 2023 with a bold mission: to train and empower the next generation of environmental leaders while shining a spotlight on urgent conservation challenges around the globe.

Speaking as the ship docked, McPherson said: "This voyage began as a bold vision to use the power of adventure, science and education to help shape the next generation of environmental leaders. Together, we've worked with incredible organisations across the globe and shown what's possible when young people are given the opportunity to learn, to lead and to act. Conservation isn't about what we've lost, it's about protecting what we still have. That's what this voyage has been about from the very beginning."

Throughout its two-year mission, the Dutch tall ship *Oosterschelde* - one of the world's most beautifully restored historic tall ships - became a floating classroom and catalyst for action. More than 600 guest crew from the general public sailed the ship between ports where over 105 young 'Darwin Leaders' from 45 countries were trained aboard and in the field, working alongside filmmakers, local NGO partners and scientists in each port to research, document and safeguard futures for more than 100 species and ecosystems - from sea turtles in Galápagos Islands to the fragile Atlantic rainforest of Brazil.

Dame Jane Goodall, Founder of the Jane Goodall Institute, UN Messenger of Peace and a Patron of DARWIN200, said: "My warmest congratulations to Stewart McPherson and everyone involved in the completion of this remarkable voyage. Stewart's vision in creating DARWIN200, and his ability to bring together so many talented individuals from across the world, is truly inspiring. It's wonderful to see how many young people have benefited from the opportunities this project has created. I'm especially delighted that members of my Roots & Shoots programme were able to take part, and that I've been able to follow the ship's adventures around the globe - even if only virtually."

As the ship returned to the very waters where Darwin himself once docked, the sense of history and purpose was keenly felt by all on board.



DARWIN200 Oosterschelde Falmouth  
Cornwall Homecoming July 19 Photograph  
By Tom Dixon

It's been an honour to captain this ship on a voyage of such meaning," said Gerben Nab, Captain of the Oosterschelde and Director of the ship's operations. "This was more than a sailing voyage, it was a bridge between generations, between science and the sea. We've sailed through some of the world's most challenging waters and to some of its most breathtaking places where nature remains much as Darwin would have seen it on his own voyage nearly two centuries ago. There was something profoundly special about experiencing those wild and remote places from the deck of this historic ship. This has been a truly unique journey, powered by wind, purpose, and a belief that adventure can still change the world."

The voyage reignited global interest in Darwin's legacy, revisiting key sites from the Beagle's itinerary and engaging schoolchildren around the world through weekly live broadcasts dubbed 'The World's Most Exciting Classroom', bringing frontline conservation stories into classrooms in a creative, exciting and interactive way.

Dr Sarah Darwin, botanist, researcher at the Berlin Natural History Museum and great-great-granddaughter of Charles Darwin, visited the voyage during its time in Brazil and the Galápagos Islands. Reflecting on the ship's return, she said "As my great-great-grandfather Charles Darwin wrote, '...love for all living creatures [is] the most noble attribute of man....' That spirit of curiosity, compassion and connection to the natural world is at the heart of DARWIN200. Seeing this project come to life, experiencing young people so inspired and determined to protect the natural world, has been deeply moving and energising. Their ripples have become waves, spreading far beyond the ports we've visited to inspire tens of millions worldwide. It has been a privilege to be part of this extraordinary voyage and the powerful sense of optimism and excitement that this community is creating. I am proud to serve as an ambassador for DARWIN200."

Among the Darwin Leaders was Josh Clarke, 24, from Falmouth, whose project in the Falkland Islands was to study threatened bird species. "This has been life-changing. Not only have I developed new skills and knowledge, but I'm also now part of a global network of people determined to protect our planet."

Following the weekend's celebrations, the Oosterschelde will set sail again on Monday 21st July, bound for Central London on a victory voyage up the Thames. The ship will dock at the iconic Tower Bridge Quay where a special Royal visit from HRH The Duke of Edinburgh is planned on Friday 25th July.

On Monday 28th July, members of the public are invited to visit aboard the Oosterschelde at Tower Bridge Quay to explore one of the world's most famous historic tall ships and learn more about the DARWIN200 project. Opening times are 10:00–13:00 and 14:00–16:00. Admission is free and no booking is required.

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