

= SMS Sperber =

SMS Sperber (" His Majesty 's Ship Sperber ? Sparrowhawk ") was an unprotected cruiser built for the German Kaiserliche Marine (Imperial Navy) , the second member of the Schwalbe class . She had one sister ship , Schwalbe . Sperber was built at the Kaiserliche Werft (Imperial Dockyard) in Danzig ; her keel was laid down in September 1887 and her completed hull was launched in August 1888 . She was commissioned for service in April 1889 . Designed for colonial service , Sperber was armed with a main battery of eight 10 @. @ 5 @- @ centimeter (4 @. @ 1 in) guns and had a cruising radius of over 3 @, @ 000 nautical miles (5 @, @ 600 km ; 3 @, @ 500 mi) ; she also had an auxiliary sailing rig to supplement her steam engines .

Sperber spent the majority of her career overseas . She briefly served in German East Africa in late 1889 and early 1890 , before being transferred to the South Seas Station in German New Guinea . She remained there for three years before being transferred to German Southwest Africa from early 1894 to late 1896 . She was decommissioned in Germany in December 1896 and overhauled before recommissioning for another tour abroad in December 1902 . She briefly spent time in the East @- @ American Station off Venezuela in early 1903 and East Africa from July to October of that year , before being assigned to the East Asia Squadron by the end of the year . After spending 1904 in Chinese waters , Sperber was reassigned to Southwest Africa , where she remained until 1911 . She returned to Germany at the end of the year and was decommissioned a second time , but was thereafter used as a target ship until 1918 . She was later sold for scrap in 1920 and broken up in Hamburg .

= = Design = =

Sperber was 66 @. @ 9 meters (219 ft) long overall and had a beam of 9 @. @ 36 m (30 @. @ 7 ft) and a draft of 4 @. @ 4 m (14 ft) forward . She displaced 1 @, @ 359 t (1 @, @ 338 long tons ; 1 @, @ 498 short tons) at full combat load . Her propulsion system consisted of two horizontal 2 @- @ cylinder double @- @ expansion steam engines powered by four coal @- @ fired cylindrical water @- @ tube boilers . These provided a top speed of 13 @. @ 5 knots (25 @. @ 0 km / h ; 15 @. @ 5 mph) and a range of approximately 3 @, @ 290 nautical miles (6 @, @ 090 km ; 3 @, @ 790 mi) at 10 knots (19 km / h ; 12 mph) . To supplement the steam engines , she was fitted with a barquentine rig . Sperber had a crew of 9 officers and 108 enlisted men .

The ship was armed with eight 10 @. @ 5 cm K L / 35 guns in single pedestal mounts , supplied with 765 rounds of ammunition in total . They had a range of 8 @, @ 200 m (26 @, @ 900 ft) . Four guns were mounted on each broadside . The gun armament was rounded out by five 37 mm (1 @. @ 5 in) revolver cannons .

= = Service history = =

Sperber was laid down at the Kaiserliche Werft (Imperial Shipyard) in Danzig in September 1887 . She was launched on 23 August 1888 , and then @- @ Kapitän zur See (Captain at Sea) Franz Mensing gave the launching speech . She began her sea trials on 2 April 1889 , which lasted until 7 June ; after completion of the trials , she was temporarily decommissioned . She was thereafter assigned to the South Seas Station in German New Guinea to replace the gunboats Adler and Eber , which had been destroyed by the 1889 Apia cyclone . On 20 August , Sperber was recommissioned for her new assignment , and she departed Kiel on 4 September , bound for the Pacific . While coaling in Aden on 13 October , the cruiser received orders to head to German East Africa , which was gripped by the Abushiri Revolt . There , she was to replace the old sail corvette Leipzig and the aviso Pfeil .

= = = First deployment abroad = = =

Sperber arrived in Zanzibar on 26 October ; four days earlier , the protectorate of Wituland had

been granted to Germany . Sperber 's first assignment upon reaching East Africa was to conduct a formal survey of the border between Wituland and British Kenya . Sperber was also to conduct the formal flag raising in the new protectorate . Starting on 1 November , Sperber joined the fight against the rebels . In early December , Sperber and her sister ship Schwalbe were present at ceremonial reception of the Emin Pasha Relief Expedition at Bagamoyo . Both ships were also involved with settling the border of Wituland on 27 ? 29 December . In mid @-@ January 1890 , Pfeil , Leipzig , and Sophie left East Africa , leaving Schwalbe , Sperber , and Carola on the station .

On 22 April , Sperber was finally released to resume her original assignment to the South Seas Station . She met Alexandrine in Australia and visited the ports of Melbourne and Sydney , where she underwent an overhaul . Sperber finally arrived in Apia in German Samoa on 30 July . She thereafter took Friedrich Biermann , the Imperial Commissioner for the Marshall Islands , on a tour of the islands . The cruiser returned to Apia on 5 October . In January 1891 , Sperber 's commander presided over the unveiling of a monument to the German sailors who had been killed at the Battle of Vailele in December 1888 . The cruiser then departed for Sydney for another overhaul , which lasted from 24 January to 21 March . After the repair work was completed , Sperber went on a tour of Germany 's colonies in the Pacific , including the Bismarck Archipelago , the Marshalls , and Butaritari . She was back in Apia by 6 June , where she remained stationed until 15 December . The new unprotected cruiser Bussard joined her there on 13 December .

In February 1892 , Sperber left for another overhaul in Sydney . While en route , she had to stop at Tabiteuea in the Gilbert Islands and send a landing party ashore to punish locals who had attacked German businessmen there . The overhaul lasted from 3 March to 3 May , after which Sperber went on another tour of the islands , including the Marshalls , Butaritari , and Matupit Island . At Matupit the Deputy Chancellor , Georg Schmiele , came aboard the ship . Sperber was back in Apia by 17 May , and she remained there until 1 November , when she left for another tour , which included stops at Nukufetau , Herbertshöhe ? the capital of German New Guinea ? and Friedrich Wilhelmshafen . Another period of dockyard work at Sydney followed from 6 February 1893 to 18 April . In the meanwhile , unrest in Samoa broke out , under the leadership of King Mata 'afa Iosefo . He was arrested , however , which caused the movement to disperse ; after she returned from Sydney , Sperber was tasked with taking Mata 'afa into exile on Jaluit Atoll .

The unprotected cruiser Falke , which had been assigned to German Southwest Africa , was ordered to replace Sperber in November 1893 . Sperber was in turn ordered to return to Germany , and she departed the South Seas Station on 6 November . While en route , however , her orders were changed and she was instead sent to Southwest Africa . She stopped in Cape Town , South Africa for an overhaul , and finally arrived in Kamerun on 28 May 1894 . Her shallower draft , compared to her predecessor Falke , permitted her to routinely cross the sandbar in the mouth of the Kamerun River . At this time , the only other German warship on the station was the gunboat Hyäne , though the government steamer Nachtigal and the hulked gunboat Cyclop were also available in the colony . Sperber was thereafter responsible for conducting patrols of the colony .

She visited Cape Town on 10 November 1895 , and while on her way there , she carried a granite copy of the padrao that had been placed there by the Portuguese explorer Diogo Cão in the late 15th century . The original stone monument had been transported back to Berlin for preservation in 1893 by Falke . A short period of dockyard maintenance lasted from 17 to 29 February 1896 . On 6 March , she was sent to Swakopmund in response to an uprising by the local population . She send a landing party ashore to help the Schutztruppen (Protection force) secure the city . From 23 March to 9 April , Sperber went to Mossamedes for a period of rest for her crew . On 22 September , she departed Southwest Africa and headed for Germany ; she arrived in Kiel on 18 November and was decommissioned on 7 December . Starting in early 1898 , Sperber was taken into drydock for a major overhaul . The work lasted until August , and she was placed back in reserve once it was completed .

= = = Second deployment abroad = = =

On 16 December 1902 , the ship was again commissioned for service abroad , this time to reinforce the East @-@ American Station in Central and South America . She left Kiel on 5 January 1903 and arrived in Willemstad in Curaçao . The Venezuela Crisis of 1902 ? 03 was by that time winding down , and so apart from visits to a few Venezuelan ports , her presence was unnecessary . Instead , she was ordered to German East Africa in late February . Sperber left the East @-@ American Station on 22 March and steamed through the Mediterranean Sea , arriving in Dar es Salaam on 1 July . She was there only briefly , before she was again transferred , this time to the East Asia Squadron on 9 October . She arrived in Singapore on 23 November and continued on to the mouth of the Yangtze in China , where she was stationed at the time . From there , she went to Shanghai on 15 May 1904 , and visited several Chinese ports , followed by an overhaul from August to December in Germany 's concession at Tsingtao . In early 1905 , Sperber visited ports in southern China , where she received orders to return to Southwest Africa . She went Tsingtao on 24 April before departing for Africa , arriving in Douala on 26 July . There , she met the gunboat Habicht .

On 27 January 1907 , Sperber was present in Lomé for the opening of the first railroad line in German Togoland . Between 1908 and 1909 , she conducted an extensive survey of the west @-@ African coast . In February 1909 , she visited the ruins of Groß Friedrichsburg , the old capital of the Brandenburger Gold Coast , a colony founded by Frederick William I of Prussia in the 17th century . She thereafter returned to survey work in Kamerun and Southwest Africa . On 6 March 1910 , she was transferred to German East Africa to replace Bussard . While en route , her crew helped to put out a major fire in Lüderitz Bay on 15 April . After arriving in East Africa , Sperber conducted the normal routine of visiting ports in the colony . She went to Cape Town for an overhaul from 26 October to 3 December . On 6 March 1911 , she received orders to return to Germany for a second time . She arrived in Wilhelmshaven on 29 June , and was decommissioned again on 6 July . She was stricken from the naval register on 16 March 1912 and was thereafter used as a target ship until 1918 . She was sold on 7 August 1920 and broken up for scrap in Hamburg in 1922 .