



**NOAA Teacher at Sea**  
**Kimberly Pratt**  
**Onboard NOAA Ship MCARTHUR II**  
**July 5 – 24, 2005**

**Log 4**

July 9, 2005

Latitude: 41.16.4' N

Longitude: 125.58.30W

Visibility: 10 miles

Wind Speed & Direction: Light and variable

Sea Wave Height: <1

Sea Swell Height: 5-6 ft.

Sea Level Pressure: 1016.0

Cloud Cover: 5/8 of sky cloudy, AS (Alto Stratus), CS (Cumulus Stratus), AC (Alto Cumulus), C (Cumulus)

Temperature: 21.8 Celsius

**Scientific Log:**

Yesterday was a very slow day. One of the scientists became ill the ship was diverted to Coos Bay, Oregon. After a medical evaluation, it was decided that he would return to the ship at a later time. We then left Coos Bay, and came into stormy weather, so operations were at a stand-still. We did still do bird observations, and we spotted Black footed Albatrosses, Sooty Shearwaters, Common Murres, Fulmars, and Leech's Storm Petrels. At 2100, I met with Oceanographers, Liz Zele, and Mindy Kelly and proceeded to help with the CTD and the Bongo Nets. The CTD gives scientists samples for conductivity, temperature, depth. Next, a bongo net is lowered to a specific depth (300 meters) and brought to the surface at a constant angle. In this way a variety of fish and plankton can be collected and later identified. The specimens collected are very special because many of them are species in larval stage. By looking at this microscopic view of the ocean you may easily identify it as the "nursery of the ocean", displaying the many larval forms. The tests were concluded at approx. 2300 hrs.

Today was a much busier day. Watch started at 0600 and as I was entering data for the bird observations we spotted some Blue whales. Dr. Forney decided to launch the smaller boat (the Zodiac) for a closer look at the whales. I boarded the boat with the other scientists and we were lowered into the ocean. After getting everyone secure, we took off in pursuit of the Blue whales. We spotted approximately 6 whales including a mother and calf. Biopsies were taken of these whales and we spent approximately 3 hours in pursuit to identify them. We also identified Dall's porpoise.



## Personal log

I must say climbing into a Zodiac in pursuit of whales has to be one of the most exhilarating experiences I've ever had. The Zodiac skims the water at about 35 mph. and



often we were airborne. The Blue whales that we found were unbelievably huge, as they can grow to 20-33 meters long. We were approximately 100 meters away from them; I could hear their blows and was amazed at their gracefulness. Besides the whales being exciting, all is going really well. I did have another bout of seasickness, but now that I'm wearing the patch, (medication for seasickness) I'm doing fine. The food here is very good, and there is down time to read, learn or watch movies. Ship life is like a great

big family and everyone gets along pretty well. Right now we are south/west of Crescent City, headed south to the Cordell Banks, Farallon Islands, and Monterey Bay Marine Sanctuaries. Soon, I'll be in closer waters. Hope all is doing well back at home. Thanks for responding to my logs, I welcome

comments, corrections or questions. It keeps me busy!

Till later...

Kim

P.S. In the Zodiac, I'm the one in the back with the orange "Mustang Suit" on, looking a little confused. If you look closely you can see the biopsy dart on the side of the Blue whale.