



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

Log 7

Day #13
July 14, 2005
South of Pt. Sierra

Latitude: 3544.108 N
Longitude: 12151.852 W
Visibility: <1 mile
Wind Direction: 330
Wind Speed: 5 knots
Sea Wave Height: 1-2 feet
Sea Level Pressure: 1013.2
Cloud Cover: Foggy, Drizzle
Temperature: 15.0



Scientific Log

Again, it's been very foggy or windy, limiting our time out observing mammals and birds. We are however, seeing many Humpback Whales. During two of the sightings Humpbacks came up to the boat - 300 meters away. Humpbacks are named because their dorsal fin is on a hump. Also Humpbacks surface and blow for a couple of minutes, allowing the scientists to get a good look at them. After surfacing and blowing, they then dive, showing off their impressive flukes. Scientist ID Humpbacks by their flukes, dorsal and bumps or knobs on their rostrum (or beak). An interesting fact is that the underside of a humpback's fluke is different for each animal, (like their fingerprint) so getting good photo ID is imperative. Along with the Humpbacks, we've seen Pacific Whiteside Dolphins who ride the bow of the Humpbacks. As far as birds go, we've seen a migration, 15-20 Red necked Phalaropes, South Polar Skuas who breed in the Antarctica, Pink-footed Shearwaters, Albatrosses, Gulls, and many Sooty Shearwaters.



Personal Log:

It's quite impressive to actually hear the whale's breath. In fact being on the "fantail" rear of the boat, we located them by their breathing. Being so close to the Humpbacks was really a great experience. I was able to get video, so I look forward to sharing it with you all. The cruise is still going well, when we're slow, I've been e-mailing, reading and doing interviews.

Yesterday the swells were as high as 10-12 ft. with 5-6 foot wind waves, so unfortunately, my sea sickness flared up again. After speaking with the Medical Officer and resting, I feel much better. I didn't know that your body has to acclimate to different sea states so my sea legs are still growing. Maybe after the cruise I'll be taller! Hope all is well. Thanks for all of the e-mails.

Until later..

Kim

The pictures are of: 3 flukes, 1 head, and 1 dorsal photo. Thanks to Cornelia Oedekoven for the photos.