



NOAA Teacher at Sea
Tanya Scott
Onboard NOAA Ship *Miller Freeman*
June 16 – 21, 2010

NOAA Teacher at Sea: Tanya Scott

NOAA Ship: *Miller Freeman*

Date: Thursday, June 17, 2010

Current Location: Oregon/Washington Coast 44 55 N 124 37 W off Siletz Bay

Traveling from Newport, North Carolina to Newport, Oregon has been quite an adventure. The most obvious difference has been the weather. When I left NC, the weather was typical for early June: hot and muggy!! Here in Oregon, it is a different story. When I arrived, the skies were clear and the temperature was a comfortable 81 F. It soon turned to overcast skies and cooler temperatures. While I have enjoyed the cooler temperatures, I must admit that I do miss the NC sunshine!

One of the most striking differences between Newport, NC and Newport, OR is the coastline. The coastline of Oregon is marked by cobblestone beaches made of breccia (a common igneous rock of the western coast), steep cliffs, and very unlike our sandy, quartz beaches of NC. The Oregon beaches are breathtaking. I have watched sea lions swim and rest on rocks jutting from the Pacific Ocean, seen thousands of nesting birds such as the Murre and Puffin, and collected many interesting pieces of driftwood to share with you when I return.

We made the drive north from Newport, OR to Astoria, OR yesterday morning after the captain determined that it was not safe to enter the harbor in Newport. The *Miller Freeman* was underway at 1200 yesterday and we have steamed ahead since. Currently, we are 26 miles off the coast of Oregon and are heading out to 50 miles offshore. Along the way, scientists from Oregon State University have been preparing their gear and running tests to ensure that all equipment is running properly. Just as we do in science class, they conduct trials so that the data collected is reliable. Remember, few things work correctly the first time around. That rule is true even at sea!

Today marks the beginning of my first duty rotation. This means that I am responsible for helping the scientists with any jobs they have such as deploying equipment overboard and collecting data from 12:00 pm until 12:00 am. I will be helping with one instrument called a "CTD". This device is lowered to 100 meters below the surface of the water and measures salinity, temperature, density, turbidity, dissolved oxygen, and fluorescence. Those of you who went with me to Hoop Pole Creek in Atlantic Beach measured some of these same parameters. Using the Secchi disk determines the turbidity or the cloudiness of the water. The CTD does the same thing except for the fact that everything is measured using a computer and sent directly to a monitor on the ship for all to see! The CTD is much more advanced than any equipment we have used in class, but offers the same data that you have already collected.

Tonight, I look forward to helping deploy a number of different nets or trawls that will be used to collect juvenile fish species. I am keeping my fingers crossed and hope to see some interesting organisms to share with everyone tomorrow. In the meantime, I am anxiously scanning the horizon in search of a whale. I did see a pod of Pacific Whiteside Dolphin this morning. They were bowriding, which is when they ride along the bow of the ship and jump from the wake. It seems that many species of dolphin do this purely for the fun of it. These dolphins are notably smaller than the Common Bottlenose Dolphin seen in NC. They are dark grey on the top half of their body and white on the bottom. I was close enough to them to see scars on their dorsal fins.

I look forward to sharing my adventures with you tomorrow. Wish me luck as I will be up until midnight tonight helping with large trawl nets and hopefully collecting many exciting marine organisms.