



**NOAA Teacher at Sea  
Amy Pearson  
Onboard NOAA Ship DELAWARE II  
August 13-30, 2007**

**NOAA Teacher at Sea: Amy Pearson**  
NOAA Ship: DELAWARE II  
Mission: Ecosystems Monitoring Survey  
Date: Sunday, August 19, 2007  
Location: North Atlantic

**Weather Data from the Bridge**

Time: 1000  
Air temp: 24.8  
Water temp: 24.3  
Wind direction: 200  
Wind speed: 11 kts.  
Sea wave height: 1-2 ft.  
Visibility: 10+



**Amy Pearson hosing down plankton net**

**Science and Technology Log**

Woke at 8 a.m., had some breakfast, and then went back to my cabin to read and sleep more. Lunch was wonderful, including smoked salmon Sunday and some great butternut squash soup. I visited the bridge to collect some data and learned that the ship receives XM satellite radio to gain weather data. As I was shown the Nobeltec software system along with a map that showed the currents in different locations, LT Monty



**Opening the cod end of net to release plankton**

Spencer remarked that sometimes he felt like he was “driving the ship with a mouse”....so much important computer-based navigation. It was a busy sampling shift, with collections at about 6 p.m., 8:30 p.m., 11 p.m., 1:10 a.m., and 2:45 a.m., though the other shift workers came early and told us to go to sleep. Our first sample occurred off Delaware Bay and was loaded with lots of heavy jellies and brownish green phytoplankton. As we moved north the plankton changed. The 8:30 p.m. sample was still high in jellies and phytoplankton but had some amphipods. The 11 p.m. sample had

a small puffer fish puffed out, several worms, and amphipods. The 1:10 a.m. sample had

a worm and lots of amphipods. The photos in this log show me hosing down the plankton within the nets, and then hosing it into a sieve which will be taken into the wet lab where the plankton will be preserved with formalin. I saw the glow of Atlantic City from the sea—it was a long white light with a red light near the middle.

### **Life on a Research Vessel**

Working on a scientific research vessel requires adjusting to some changes from life/work on land. Basics like smaller living space, meals at designated hours, a limited area to live, are changes I have observed. Working 24 hours means shifts for all. The scientists work from 3 a.m. to 3 p.m. and another group works from 3 p.m. to 3 a.m. The NOAA officers on the bridge work 4 hours on, 8 hours off, then 4 hours on again. At night a crewmember joins the officer on the bridge, to provide a second set of eyes. I was



**A phytoplankton sample with small pufferfish**



**Amy takes a spin on the stationary bike aboard the DELAWARE!**

amazed to find the bridge dark at night with the exception of the instruments. This allows them to see what's on the water clearly. The engineers work similar hours: 4 hours on, 8 hours off. The crew works 12 hours on, 12 hours off, from 12 to 12. The wiper works a day shift beginning about 6 a.m., for about 8 hours. The chief steward (head chef) and second cook work over 12 hours, as breakfast begins at 6 a.m. and dinner ends at 6:20 p.m. Then there is clean up. Because someone is always off shift, one must be quiet so as not to wake up those sleeping. If you share a room with someone who is sleeping, you are not supposed to go into the room when they are sleeping. Free time can be spent sending email, on deck (there are some chairs), in the galley, or in your room if no one is sleeping. The galley has satellite TV at one end and a big screen at the other where movies can be watched. The ship receives about 20 new movies per month that rotate among ships. ENS Claire Surrey has the responsibility of updating a movie list.

There are also many other movies that stay on the ship. There is also an exercise bike and some free weights for those interested in this form of exercise.