



**NOAA Teacher at Sea
Rebecca Himschoot
Onboard NOAA Ship OSCAR DYSON
June 21 – July 10, 2007**

NOAA Teacher at Sea: Rebecca Himschoot

NOAA ship OSCAR DYSON

Mission: Summer Pollock Survey

Day 1: June 21, 2007

Weather Data from Bridge

Visibility: 10 nm (nautical miles)

Wind direction: 195° (SW)

Wind speed: 11 knots

Sea wave height: 1 foot

Swell wave height: 0 feet

Seawater temperature: 8.1°C

Sea level pressure: 1025.0 mb (millibars)

Cloud cover: high overcast with breaks

Science and Technology Log

After leaving the dock the OSCAR DYSON is now anchored in calm waters where the science team is working to calibrate the acoustic equipment. At the beginning of each leg of the survey, this equipment is checked to ensure accuracy in the data collected at sea. After completing this task the ship will make way for the Bering Sea.



Dutch Harbor/Unalaska is located on an island in the Aleutian Islands of western Alaska. It is a major fishing port, and its human history stretches back more than 9,000 years.

Dutch

Harbor/Unalaska is gearing up for the height of the summer fishing season, when the year-round population (4500) of this remote community can more than double with the arrival of

fisherpeople and

processors. The winter fishing season is said to be just as busy, and is becoming well-

known for the television show “Deadliest Catch.” The departing science crew tell me summer in the Bering Sea is nothing like what they show on TV, and my fingers are crossed they are correct about this. Just in case, I’m prepared with anti-seasickness medication.

Although the OSCAR DYSON is home ported in Kodiak, the summer Pollock survey takes place out of Dutch Harbor/Unalaska. Unalaska is the name of the community, and Dutch Harbor is the industrial section of the town, which includes the airport. Unalaska’s prehistory dates to at least 9,000 years ago, and the Unangan (formerly called “Aleut”) people are known as seafarers. Today the processors employ workers from all over the globe, including Asia, North and South America, and Africa. Who would have guessed tiny, remote Dutch Harbor/Unalaska would be such a melting pot?

A brief tour of the OSCAR DYSON has revealed a spacious bridge area with all the modern navigational equipment, several labs that include a chemistry lab, a wet lab, and an acoustics lab, and my favorite spot so far, the galley. The cabins are comfortable, with two bunks and a bathroom in each room.

Personal Log

Before leaving the dock this morning I enjoyed a hike up a local hillside with views of Unalaska and numerous wildflowers. The crew and science team have been very patiently explaining my duties and telling me about what they do. I am eager to begin fishing tomorrow, although I will be on the “night shift,” which runs 1600 (4 p.m.) until 0400 (4 a.m.). I’ll be helping out a little with identifying birds during the fishing segments of the trip, and am looking forward to spending more time with the US Fish and Wildlife Service bird observers who are on board with us.

Question of the Day

Today is the summer solstice. What does “solstice” mean, and what is special about today?