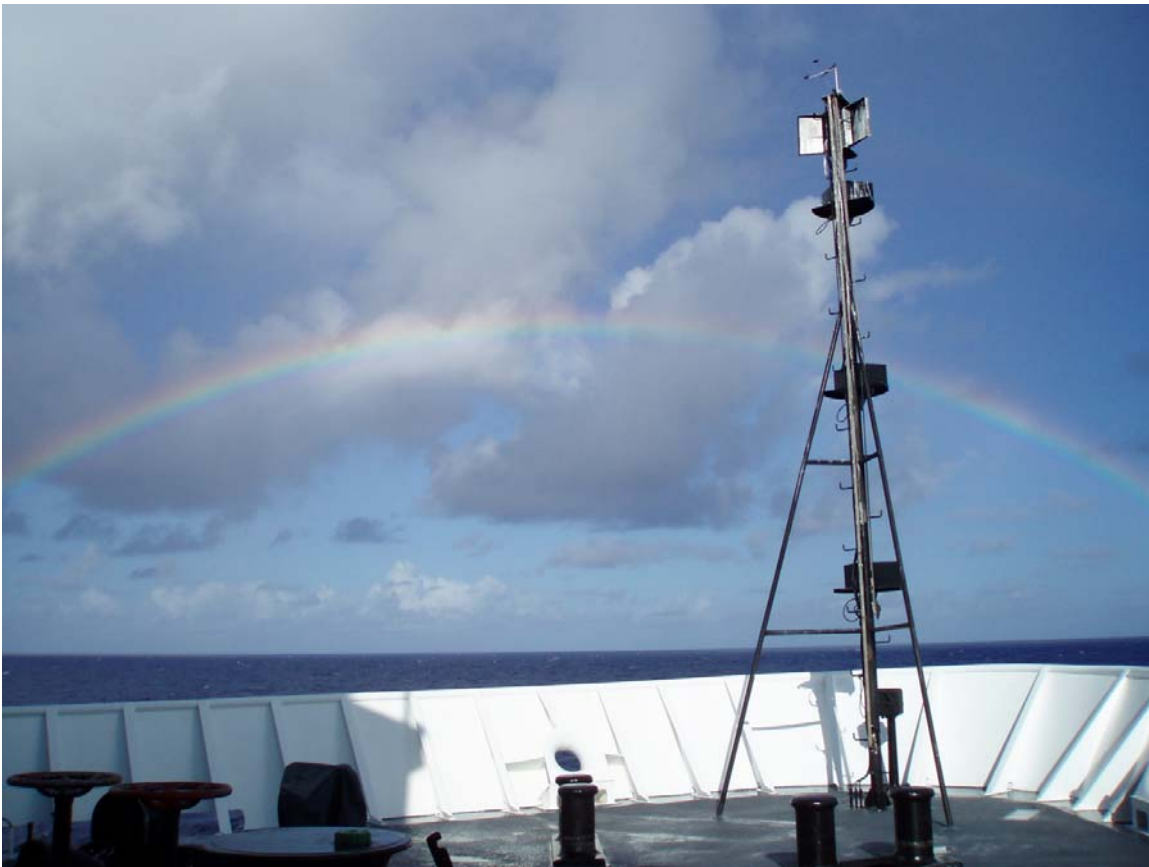




**NOAA Teacher at Sea**  
**Margaret Flanagan**  
**Onboard NOAA Ship OSCAR ELTON SETTE**  
**June 12 – July 12, 2007**

**NOAA Teacher at Sea: Maggie Flanagan**  
NOAA Ship OSCAR ELTON SETTE  
Mission: Lobster Survey  
Day 3, 15 June 2007  
Approaching French Frigate Shoals



**An anuenue (Hawaiian for rainbow) at sea**

**Project Log**

NOAA Ship OSCAR ELTON SETTE  
Call Sign: WTEE  
Length: 224 ft.  
Beam (width): 43 ft.  
Draft (hull depth beneath the water line): 15 ft.

Cruising speed: 10.5 kts.  
Displacement tonnage: 2,301 tons

From the ship's web site -

“Dr. Oscar Elton Sette (is regarded) as the father of modern fisheries oceanography in the U.S. He formulated the concept that the "changing ocean" rather than "average ocean conditions" plays key roles in the natural fluctuations of fish stocks and their vulnerability to harvesting. He originated the importance of multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary approaches, including the interrelationships between fisheries, oceanography, and meteorology, to understanding and solving marine fisheries problems.

Although he was a man with big ideas and many strengths and capabilities to implement them, Elton was a relatively small-built man who spoke softly. Whatever Elton sought out to do, he did so with vigor, dedication, and determination. Yet, he was notably inclusive, rather than exclusive, and was a firm believer of the power of teamwork to accomplish goals. Dr. Sette was a gifted oral and written communicator. He possessed the wonderful ability to explain complex ideas, concepts, and scientific findings in a pragmatic, concise, straightforward, understandable, and clear manner.”

What a great model for our work!

Our ship was originally designed for another kind of ocean monitoring. She was built for the Navy in Gulfport, MS as a submarine hunter and launched in 1987 as USNS ADVENTUROUS. In 2002 she was transferred to NOAA and commissioned as NOAA Ship OSCAR ELTON SETTE the following year. The vessel was recently homeported at historic Ford Island at the Pearl Harbor Naval Station.

Our mission - marine research by permit in one of our country's newest preserves, the Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument. This area incorporates the North West Hawaiian Islands (NWHI) sanctuary, and is a state/federal partnership. Our activities are part of a yearly effort by NOAA scientists and their University of Hawaii colleagues to record data on spiny and slipper lobster populations. These creatures don't have the famous claws of the New England lobsters I'm used to, but I understand their tails make for great surf and turf. As other stocks dwindled, lobster taking in the NWHI increased. Around 1989 lobster populations collapsed, and despite restrictions on that fishery, have not recovered well. The scientists aboard are trying to understand and improve this situation.

We're steaming northwest on our way to our first research area at Maro Reef. Coils of yellow line and stacks of black traps fill the fantail or aft deck. Inside the wet lab, a freezer full of whole mackerel wait to be prepared as bait. Original plans were to collect data from Necker Island first, but this changed as the crew is also delivering fuel and supplies to the Fish and Wildlife Service on Tern Island at French Frigate Shoals. When the time does come, it will be exciting to get the gear wet!