

# NOAA Ship JOHN N. COBB



electronic equipment, from a directional sonar to computers for navigation and data collection.

*John N. Cobb's* design is that of a West Coast purse-seiner with modifications to enhance its capabilities. In 1963, the ship was pictured in the Encyclopedia Americana fisheries research section. Even after one-half century of service, the ship is in excellent condition and still running on its original Fairbanks-Morse 1931-design engine.

For over 15 consecutive years, *Cobb* has participated in Seattle's SEAFAIR Special People's Christmas Cruise. The ship hosts special needs citizens of all ages and their companions during a decorated boat parade on Seattle's waterways.

John N. Cobb, a distinguished leader in the field of fisheries research, was the founder and first dean of the University of Washington's School of Fisheries. In the early 1900's, Mr. Cobb served in the Bureau of Fisheries (the predecessor to today's National Marine Fisheries Service) for 17 years. He is widely regarded for his untiring efforts in the development of the School of Fisheries and for his data gathering on the fisheries of Alaska.

The fisheries ship *John N. Cobb* is the oldest and the only wooden-hull ship in NOAA's fleet. In its 50 years of service, *Cobb* has conducted fisheries and oceanographic research throughout the Northern Pacific Ocean utilizing almost every type of fishing method, including seining, trawling, and long-lining. The ship has conducted operations for the Navy, the Army Corps of Engineers, and the Atomic Energy Commission as well as every West Coast university's fisheries or oceanographic programs.

Today, *Cobb* conducts its fisheries research in Southeast Alaska and the U.S. Pacific coastal waters in support of the National Marine Fisheries Service, Auke Bay (Alaska) Laboratory. The ship collects fish and crustacean specimens using trawls and benthic longlines. It also collects fish larvae, eggs, and plankton using plankton nets and both surface and midwater larval nets. Bottom trawls can also be conducted to depths of up to 600 meters. Additionally, the ship conducts marine mammal surveys of whales, porpoises, and seals. *John N. Cobb* carries a full suite of



Loading salmon smolts in Little Port Walter, Alaska



Night gill-netting operations

## Ship Specifications

Length : 93 ft.  
Breadth: 26 ft.  
Draft: 11 ft.  
Hull: Wood  
Displacement: 250 tons  
Gross Tonnage: 185 tons  
Cruising Speed: 10 knots  
Range: 2,850 nm  
Endurance: 13 days  
Hull Number: R 552  
Call Letters: WMVC  
Commissioned Officers: 2  
Licensed Engineers: 2  
Crew: 4  
Scientists: 4  
Launched: January 14, 1950  
Delivered: February 13, 1950  
Commissioned: February 18, 1950  
Builder: Western Boatbuilding Company, Tacoma, WA  
Designer: W.C. Nickum and Sons



In Glacier Bay, Alaska



Tagging sable fish

## Office of Marine and Aviation Operations

Since NOAA's beginning, NOAA ships and aircraft have played a critical role in the collection of its oceanographic, atmospheric, hydrographic, fisheries and coastal data. This fleet of platforms is managed and operated by NOAA's Office of Marine and Aviation Operations (OMAO), an office made up of civilians and officers of the NOAA Commissioned Officer Corps, the Nation's seventh service. In addition to research and monitoring activities critical to NOAA's mission, NOAA ships and aircraft provide immediate response capabilities for unpredictable events. NOAA survey ships found the wreckage of EgyptAir Flight 990, TWA Flight 800 and John F. Kennedy Jr.'s aircraft. Our ships, aircraft and personnel have also conducted damage assessments after hurricanes and major oil spills such as the Exxon Valdez, Persian Gulf War and New Carissa.

NOAA's fleet of research and survey ships is the largest fleet of federal research ships in the Nation. The fleet ranges from large oceanographic research vessels capable of exploring the world's deepest ocean, to smaller ships responsible for charting the shallow bays and inlets of the United States. The fleet supports a wide range of marine activities, including fisheries research, nautical charting and mapping, and ocean and climate studies. Many of NOAA's research vessels are unique in their ability to conduct scientific research.

NOAA's fleet of fixed-wing aircraft and helicopters operate throughout the world, providing a wide range of capabilities, including hurricane prediction research, marine mammal and fisheries assessment, and coastal mapping. NOAA aircraft are modified to carry scientists and specialized instrument packages to conduct research for NOAA's missions.

## NOAA Commissioned Officer Corps

The NOAA Corps is one of the seven uniformed services of the United States, composed of commissioned officers who provide NOAA with an important blend of operational, management, and technical skills that support the agency's science and surveying programs at sea, in the air, and ashore. NOAA Corps officers, in addition to managing and operating ships and aircraft, are also scientists and engineers. Corps officers serve in NOAA's research laboratories and program offices throughout the Nation and in remote locations around the world; for example, an officer serves as station chief at the South Pole, Antarctica.

## About NOAA

NOAA conducts research and gathers data about the global oceans, atmosphere, space, and sun, and applies this knowledge to science and service that touch the lives of all Americans.

NOAA warns of dangerous weather, charts our seas and skies, guides our use and protection of ocean and coastal resources, and conducts research to improve our understanding and stewardship of the environment which sustains us all.

A Commerce Department agency, NOAA provides these services through five major divisions: the National Weather Service, the National Ocean Service, the National Marine Fisheries Service, the National Environmental Satellite, Data and Information Service, and Office of Oceanic and Atmospheric Research; and numerous special program offices. More information about NOAA can be found at <[www.noaa.gov](http://www.noaa.gov)>

Visit the ship's web site at <[www.moc.noaa.gov/jc/](http://www.moc.noaa.gov/jc/)>  
For more information, contact OMAO at 301-713-1045  
or visit our web site at <[www.oma.noaa.gov](http://www.oma.noaa.gov)>