



**NOAA Teacher at Sea**  
**Margaret “Greta” Dykstra-Lyons**  
**Onboard NOAA Ship DAVID STARR JORDAN**  
**August 1 - 15, 2005**

**Log 8**

Day 16: August 16, 2005

Wind speed: 5 knots

Wind direction: 273

Sea temp: 17.2 C

Last night I was invited to attend an early morning session in the oceanography lab with oceanographer Candy Hall. Like most mornings on this cruise, she and colleague Liz Zele were collecting water samples from 1000 meters and up with a device known as the CDT (Conductivity, temperature with depth). These samples are used to test things like nutrient, salt and chlorophyll levels. Candy also runs a primary productivity test on the samples. This test will identify the rate at which phytoplankton grow.



After a short nap, I was off to the flying bridge. Due to the fact that the sun was shining (a first in over 2 wks) and the seas were calm, it felt like a promising day. There was the typical early morning fin whale sighting, followed by a lull. During this let-up it must have been decided that our time would be best spent fishing for albacore (as several trawlers were within sight). Almost as soon as the fishing lines were tossed over a blue whale appeared not far from the boat. The sun on the whale’s back made for a beautiful sight in and out of the water. It did not take long to get the small boat launched and on the trail of the whale for a biopsy and photographs. The time between mammal sightings was spent watching birds. My highlight today was observing a flock of arctic terns headed to Antarctica. This I am told is the longest migration of any animal. Today became more fruitful when four adorable Dall’s porpoises flirted with our bow for several minutes. To top it all off...as we were beginning to enjoy our first visible sunset and the rising of a nearly full moon, observers found spunky dolphins engaging in acrobatics worthy of gold medals near the horizon. It was not long before they graced us with their playful presence. Several of us took turns in the bow chamber and caught some underwater glances as well as auditory treats! Smiles all around.

Yesterday, Monday, a somewhat elusive whale species showed itself despite the horrid weather. Two Baird’s beaked whales appeared around the boat for several surfacings.



Luckily, the photographers were able to get a few good head shots. And, like most days, there was the morning fin whale sighting! Due to poor visibility, observers went off effort a bit early. Sunday also supplied us with less than perfect condition, but a fin whale was recorded before noon. The JORDAN picked up a worn-out, far from home hitchhiker in the afternoon. The deck of the ship hosted this cowbird for the evening. She hasn't been seen since.

Saturday's conditions were similar to Sundays, but it was even colder. The only sighting was...you guessed it, a morning fin whale.

When there are few sightings to report and animals to observe, the members of the JORDAN become curious about floating objects. During these "slow times" the ship has collected a few things, three buoys to be exact. Two of them are your standard orange plastic fishing buoys (probably headed for the dumpster). These buoys provided bonus entertainment because they had lines attached to them and thus "things" attached to the lines. The other buoy is a much more prized and sought after glass fishing buoy once used by Japanese fishermen. It was given to the captain.



Tomorrow is our last full day of the cruise. Currently we are about 60 miles from the coast. Due to our position and course, tomorrow has the potential to be an outstanding day for observing marine mammals and birds.