

## Monday April 4, 2016 – Day 3 at Sea by Dr. Wise

It was a quiet day at sea today. Brilliant sunshine. Cool breeze created by the movement of the boat. Calm water. Rocky cliffs and desolate island surrounding us. No signs of life beyond the birds passing by, the occasional cactus on shore and the crew on the boat. It was peaceful and serene and had a gentle hum to the day as we motored through the sea.

There were no whales to be found. It was not entirely surprising as the whales in this area are seasonal and their season is May to October, and well... it's early April. Nevertheless, we have to pass through this area to get to the next one so while we searched hard and used both the array and the directional hydrophone – we found no whales.

We reached our anchor point a bit early as there were no whales to sample and so the time we budgeted for sampling was not needed. There wasn't another anchor point to choose as tomorrow night we will travel through the night. So, we decided to stop early and give the team a break. The fin whales had really worn us out and a couple of hours of recuperation seemed in order.

Fortunately, there was a small beach near the anchor point. A few of us (Mark, Johnny, Sean and me) took the opportunity to snorkel to shore. At first the visibility was remarkably terrible until near shore it cleared up. There was a bunch of rays about 4-5 inches in diameter nestled in the sand and a variety of fish also disguised in the sand. Made me wonder if there was a predator issue that made the various species want to hide or a prey issue that they needed to ambush. I hoped for the latter as I really didn't want to bump into any ocean predators!

The rest of the day was passed peacefully sitting on the beach and reflecting on trip. Tomorrow, we hope to find sperm whales.

I have attached pictures of today's sunrise, two images of the coastline as we passed on the boat, and two images of our evening anchor point including its small beach.

John







