

Day 109: November 2, 2010

I am going to be brief tonight because I find myself a bit stunned and the waves are really beating us up tonight making writing difficult.

We found no whales today and I pulled out all of the stops. We tried watches but saw nothing. We tried the array but heard nothing. We tried sonobuoys, which are equipped to go to 400 feet underwater and transmit sounds back over the radio and again heard nothing. I contacted a colleague who had tagged sperm whales with GPS transmitters. He said only one lone male whale had been tracked east of the spill and that one was off of Florida as we are. The rest remained west of the spill. I still think it was the clean-up ships that sent the whales away. But it is stunning that we cannot find any in this area that usually has a bunch. Informative, but disappointing.

Iain Kerr and I discussed circling back and making another pass to see if we were just missing the whales. But, alas, the weather is getting really bad and there is a forecast of 30 mile per hour winds headed our way. Already, we are getting tossed about quite a bit. We have to go to port and Key West is the closest and Key West is our stopping point. So I find myself really stunned tonight in realizing that we have reached the stopping point of this particular voyage. The end is truly in sight.

I have become so accustomed to this boat and life at sea that stopping while always the plan seems so sudden now. So I am going to hide behind the wavy seas this night and ask you to bear with me while I allow myself an evening of quiet reflection on all that we have seen and done and found. More tomorrow for sure.

I have attached pictures of Johnny holding and releasing a sonobuoy and of course another brilliant sunset.

John





