

Day 3: July 19, 2010

I am not promising to write every day, but enough expressed interest and I am sure day 1 left you hanging about what was next. I am assured that many days will be filled with eager searching for whales but no luck. Indeed, today we saw no whales but that was part no whales, part weather and part location. Today we travelled from Massachusetts to NY. Iain will get off in NY as the training sessions are now complete. Early on we ran the watches from 5:30 until 10:30 but then a fast moving thunderstorm approached and I pulled Johnny down from the mast to avoid the approaching storm. For the rest of the day we were beset by one storm or another until we reached well into Long Island sound where there aren't any whales.

So the day was spent preparing the lab for when we do see whales and adjusting the lab to the rocky waves. The waves were quite large and Captain Bob assures us that we have seen nothing yet. The North Atlantic Ocean is known to be an angry ocean and tomorrow after we say goodbye to Iain and sail past Lady Liberty we will head into the Atlantic and look for sperm whales. The sperm whales will be 50-100 miles offshore and we will track them both visually and acoustically. We likely will not see them until North Carolina, leaving plenty of time for practice.

We are also acquiring new skills as Captain Bob will be teaching us to run the helm during some day shifts. Cathy has already talked to Bob about training to be a Captain and she will be officially logging hours as one needs to have 365 sea days to qualify. I am sure others will seek the same possibility. There is little seasickness now and everyone is close to having sea legs. About the only interesting biology we saw were little jellyfish littering Long Island sound. That and marveling at the lightning. Iain was also live on NPR from the boat. So an ordinary day preparing for whales and riding through thunderstorms.

We will see what the Atlantic brings. We think we have everything strapped down, but it will be weird to see no land for days. Target is Fort Lauderdale arriving about July 30.

We have no idea if we will have a 3G connection so no idea if we will be able to communicate between now and then. But Sandy has Iain's number and he will be in daily contact via satellite phone. We certainly hope he finds the funds for the monthly satellite service so we can be in daily contact with all of you. It's expensive (\$6,000 a month) but I have confidence in Iain's fundraising ability and I know it is something he is eager to achieve.

I must say even though it lacks the excitement of yesterday, today was no less exhausting.

John