

Day 53, Voyage 2, July 31, 2011

Happy 22nd Birthday Johnny!

Oh what a difference a day makes. It started early today with whales called at 6:40 am. The team rolled out of bed and on deck just in time to see a whale fluke. But, these whales were not like yesterday's and they seemed to want to be biopsied. They'd hold their position until we had just the right shot. By 9 am, we had three biopsies. By 11 am, we had 6. We ended the day with 7, which means we had a long, hot stretch of time with no whales. We did find another group of whales where some had been tagged. Same outcome as yesterday. No desire for us to get close. So lots of pictures, but no biopsies of them.

The afternoon found us pulling in a large tangle of rope. Not exactly sure what its purpose had been, but it had a conch shell anchor and a collection of fish and invertebrates including brittle stars and crabs. Pictures of some, including the anchor, are attached.

The day ended with a homemade birthday cake and a rousing chorus of Happy Birthday sung to Johnny. A bit unconventional way to spend one's 22nd birthday, not too many can claim to have biopsied whales and caught fish and swam in 3,000 feet of water as part of the day. Presents will have to come later, when James is with us.

Picture of an unusual sunset attached. I particularly like the reflection of the sun on the water in the early one. The later one shows how calm the water is becoming and it looks like molten glass. Truly beautiful tonight- one of my favorites of both trips.

John

P.S. We are headed in towards Pensacola, Florida. Our current location is 28 degrees 20.6 minutes North and 89 degrees 24.0 minutes West, for those who want to track us as we go. For Google maps (not Google Earth - but maps) or Bing maps use (include letters and comma): 28.206 N, 89.240 W

For those of you who are new to this email diary - the previous days can be found at: <https://cms.usm.maine.edu/toxicology/dr-wises-voyage-leg-summaries-2011>









