

Thursday, April 20 - Day 10 by Dr. Wise

Dear All,

So, we stayed near the whales last night, which means we are further from San Felipe, so we have less time to sample today, and then we have to head directly to San Felipe. One wonders if the whales somehow knew, as we had our first whale at the crack of dawn.

My morning routine is to have a couple of pieces of toast and watch the sunrise. Up the sun comes as first a tiny dot, out of the sea, until it is a fiery ball in the sky. Crimson, orange and yellow colors form, just before it rises in the early morning sky. However, today, as I was watching it rise – poof- a whale blow! Literally, right at the crack of dawn – we spotted our first whale and the work was on again.

Over the next five or so hours we worked our process and this pod of whales, despite still being worn out from the whales the day before. Very efficiently the team spotted, sampled, collected and processed each whale biopsy. Eventually Captain Fanch said it was time to stop, and head north to avoid the weather. For today we managed to collect biopsies from another 8 whales, bringing our total for the leg to 44.

Of course, at the same time, we are sad to see this leg end for Johnny and Rachel will have to leave us to get back to school. Rachel has an exam on Monday and Johnny has to complete his Ph.D within a year, so much for him to do. Yes, it also means more work for the rest of us, but we will miss them for their hard and careful work, and their fun spirits. Outstanding effort, careful thought, and consistently pleasant moods are essential at sea, and they provided us with an abundance of both. Ultimately, we will press on, but we will miss them immensely.

I have found it a bit surreal to write and send these emails in this indirect manner as I have no idea if they are even received. In a way, it's like putting a message in a bottle and throwing it over the side (an ebottle that is). You hope one day it reaches shore and finds someone who finds it interesting. I hope you are finding the 'bottle' and enjoying the messages. Writing them helps to mark the days. Without them, I would have no idea what day or date it is!

All is well with us in the Sea of Cortez. We are will anchor in San Felipe, see Johnny and Rachel off and welcome Sean onto the next leg.

You can see all the emails from Day 0 through today's (Day 10) on

www.WiseLaboratory.org

Good night from here until tomorrow.

John







