

Friday, April 28 – Day 18 by Dr. Wise

Dear All,

Carlos tells me I made the right choice coming for 3 weeks as their last expedition was 2 weeks long and they only got 6 days of good weather. Actually, most of our days have been nice, but this last set has been hard. Not too surprising, as that's how it is with whale research, but frustrating nonetheless.

Tomorrow, we will arrive in La Paz. Weather reports show it will be consistently bad weather for the weekend so we will stay in port, and I will not write further until we resume on Monday. All told we have 62 whales in total with 1 sampled today.

I often think about doing outtakes on days like this one – you know the blooper reel at the end of the movies. Things like people yelling “whale 1 o'clock. I mean 2 o'clock, I mean three o'clock. What? Oh yeah – 5 o'clock.” Then there are the mis-sightings, birds, sea lions, even a wave on a beach have all been shouted out as “whales” – unavoidable happens to all of us. Oh, and then there is the new classic – our data clipboard accidentally snagged on a buoy as the buoy is tossed over the side. How lucky that the clipboard floats and the paper is resilient enough to handle quite a while in sea water.

Oh, everyone learns to laugh at themselves here at sea. Laughter is indeed, abundant especially with four different primary languages: English, Spanish, French and Portuguese on board. Dancing, reading, singing and laughing keep us going when weather gets in the way. You know somewhere, anytime you do something, someone is there with a camera. Outside or inside, up on the mast or down, you are a candidate for an embarrassing moment. Ultimately, the moments catch us all – even the Captain.

I have attached pictures of some crazy morning clouds, the team laughing in the pilothouse, and a whale being biopsied.

All is well with us in the Sea of Cortez.

I will write again on Monday.

You can see all the emails from Day 0 through today's (Day 18) on www.WiseLaboratory.org

Good night from here until then.

John











