

## Dispatch from Tuesday, 15 May 2007

Greetings from the RV *L.M. Gould*,

We are in the midst of a crew switch for the remainder of the crabeater seal tag deployments. The new crew consists of Dan Crocker, Tracy Goldstein, Sam Simmons, Stella Villegas, and Patrick Robinson. We all experienced interesting setbacks on our travels to Chile (including cancelled flights and storm delays), but we all arrived with time to spare. Our resident Antarctic expert, Gitte McDonald, opted to remain at Palmer station after the first cruise to get some work done. We are excited to meet up with her in a couple of days to begin the remainder of the tagging.

Right now we are making the crossing from Punta Arenas, Chile to Palmer station on the Antarctic Peninsula and the seas are a bit larger than those experienced on the first cruise, but still relatively calm for the notorious Drake Passage. Some of us are feeling the effects of the waves, but all are in good spirits. We are enjoying the down-time and helping out with the science operations whenever we can.

We have observed a good mix of wildlife including several species of albatross, shags, cape petrels, and dusky dolphins. We were particularly impressed with the number of albatross just before entering the Drake Passage: they seemed to be as abundant as gulls!

Wish us a smooth ride for the remainder of the crossing!

Team Seal

