

Dispatch from Saturday, 21 April 2007

After leaving Palmer Station at 1 to Ma 1:30 we headed south to Matha Strait on the north end of Adelaide Island, which put us into an area known as Crystal Sound. We know from our previous tagging studies that crabeater seals use this area and we are likely to find seals here. However, we are a bit concerned as there is no sea ice to be seen. Captain Marty suggested we go south and follow along the coast looking for whatever ice we might find. Around 11:00 am we come across an area with lots of glacial ice and tons of fur seals. We also came upon a minke whale and humpback whales. Finally, in amongst all of the fur seals we found 5 crabeater seals. We mobilized and capture our first animal out on a floe with 2 other seals and about 15 male fur seals. Things went extremely well and we got our first seal on the first day of looking!!! We tried to do a second, but the floe was much higher and the seal was rather small.

This is a great start to our trip!!!!

Best from the seal team



