

Dispatch from Thursday, 24 May 2007

Hi Folks,

Well, we got a little taste of Antarctic weather in late May yesterday. We had winds that gusted up to 68 knots (!) and spent most of the day in the lee of Laird Island waiting for the weather to blow through. We took advantage of the opportunity to do several net tows for Krill to generate fatty acid profiles for comparison to the seal samples. Today the wind was still howling through Lallemand Fjord so we swung west around Laird Island and moved north closer to the coast where our tagged seals are currently positioned. Unfortunately, we saw few seals. The sea ice was starting to form and the 'grease ice' made it slow going for the ship. We tried a different strategy and part of the crew ran up the coast in a zodiac to try to cover ground more quickly in our search. As a tease, right at sunset we encountered a dozen crabeater seals on pieces of ice only slightly larger than they were. Since our time window is closing and we don't have time to move further south we have elected to reposition ourselves and try a new area for our last day of hunting tomorrow. We continue to take advantage of the opportunities to get CTD casts near the previously deployed seals.

Seal Crew

