

Beaufort Gyre Exploration Project: Dispatch 3: Practice Makes Perfect

Kris Newhall
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Now that we've traversed the Amundsen Gulf and entered the Beaufort Sea, the temperature outside has dropped to the realistic temperatures that we expected. Almost on cue, once the first small ice floe was spotted by both the ship's crew and the science party, it seemed that now, finally, we were in the Arctic. It was exciting to see some of the science parties' reactions, specifically graduate students Kristina Brown and Helen Drost (Institute of Ocean Sciences, or IOS), when they laid eyes on their first piece of Arctic ice. Hugh Maclean (IOS), flanked by the two students, a veteran of sea ice conditions, just smiled and took it all in. It became evident though, based on ice observations and personal experiences had by some, that at some point throughout the night we would be without a doubt in the main ice pack.

The plan for the next few days consists of beginning the first of many CTD (Conductivity, Temperature, Depth) casts of the cruise and recovering our first mooring, the [Canadian Arctic Basin Observing System, or CABOS](#). Before the crew and WHOI mooring team begin any mooring operations aboard the *Louis*, extensive deck crew training was needed on how to use the mechanical Lebus winch system, which is used for the recovery and deployment of the ship based moorings. Will Ostrom and Kris Newhall both spent time in the cargo hold explaining and describing the specific information needed to both safely and effectively operate the winch. Once the crew understood the complexity of the winch, all went on deck to physically practice using it. Because we rely so heavily on the Lebus and the crew during the cruise, everyone had a chance to handle the controls and lines, especially boatswain Rico Amamio and Mike Dempsey (Oceanetic Measurement).

As the day bore on, it was brought to our attention that the *Louis* and another Canadian Ice Breaker, *Sir Wilfred Laurier*, would be conducting an at sea transfer using the *Laurier's* helicopter. As it turned out, the *Laurier* desired much needed fresh produce to feed their officers and crew members. It was fun for everyone aboard to see the operation take place and to remind ourselves that, believe it or not, there were others operating in the Arctic.

After dinner time, we were notified by the marine mammal observers, Joe Illasiak and Ian Green, that we had seen many marine mammals thus far on the trip, mostly during our transit in the gulf before getting into the pack ice. Not knowing that we had not seen more than two birds so far on the cruise, the two observers amusingly notified us that they had seen Finback, Beluga, and Bowhead whales, in addition to Seals and different Arctic fish species. It's interesting to note that Bowhead whales are the only completely native whales to the Arctic. With that in mind, it's important to pay attention at all times because even with or without a trained eye, you surely can miss many interesting sights.

Last updated: October 19, 2015



Helen Drost, Hugh Maclean, and Kristina Brown all point and click when the first ice had been spotted. *Photo by Kris Newhall, WHOI.*



Quicker than the first ice appeared, we found ourselves deep into the pack ice. *Photo by Kris Newhall, WHOI.*



Mike Dempsey, Rico Amamio, and Will Ostrom practice with the Lebus, trying to perfect the skills required to operate the winch effectively. *Photo by Rick Krishfield, WHOI.*



The Canadian Ice Breaker *Sir Wilfred Laurier* was spotted just long enough to take on fresh produce that was flown via helicopter from the *Louis*. Photo by Rick Krishfield, WHOI.

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