



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
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CRUISE REPORT¹

VESSEL: *Oscar Elton Sette*, Cruise SE-08-09 (SE-66)

CRUISE PERIOD: September 9 to September 30, 2008

AREA OF OPERATION: Northwestern Hawaiian Islands (Fig. 1)

TYPE OF OPERATION: Recover personnel, equipment, and supplies from field camps at Pearl and Hermes Reef, Lisianski Island, and Nihoa Island. Conduct population assessment work on the Hawaiian monk seal populations on French Frigate Shoals, Laysan Island and Midway Atoll.

ITINERARY:

- 09 Sept Embarked C. Yoshinaga, C. Littnan, T. Norris, R. Braun, E. Moreland, M. Sullivan, C. King, M. Henschen, M. Mudge, L. Dlugolecki, C. Rehkemper, and J. Breeden. Departed Ford Island, Honolulu at 1000 en route to Nihoa Island.
- 10 Sept Arrived Nihoa Island at 1000. Launched Achilles inflatable boat. Deployed Nihoa field team to deploy satellite tags, flipper tag seals, and collect morphological data on the resident population of Hawaiian monk seals.
- 11 Sept Continued with Nihoa field operations. Deployed Nihoa field team at 0800. Recovered field team at 1700. Departed Nihoa Island 1730 en route to Kauai.
- 12 Sept Arrived Port Allen, Kauai at 0800. Disembarked Braun, Norris, and Littnan. Departed Kauai 1000 en route to French Frigate Shoals.
- 14 Sept Arrived French Frigate Shoals at 0800. Disembarked Moreland, King, and Sullivan. Off-loaded equipment and supplies. Departed French Frigate Shoals 1600 en route to Laysan Island.

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- 16 Sept Arrived Laysan Island at 0800. Disembarked Henschen, Mudge, Dlugolecki, Rehkemper, and Breeden. Off-loaded all equipment and supplies. Departed Laysan Island 1600 en route to Lisianski Island.
- 17 Sept Arrived Lisianski Island at 0800. Embarked T. Wurth and B. Becker. Loaded all equipment and supplies. Departed Lisianski Island 1600 en route to Pearl and Hermes Reef (PHR).
- 18 Sept Arrived PHR. Embarked J. Lopez, M. Chapla, J. Baker, and K. Gobush. Loaded all equipment and supplies including one 5.5-meter Zodiac and one 14-ft Boston Whaler boat. Departed Pearl and Hermes Reef 1600 en route to Midway Atoll.
- 19 Sept Arrived Midway Atoll at 0800. Disembarked Lopez, Chapla, Wurth, and Baker. Embarked Chastant. Launched PHR Zodiac boat. Conducted Hawaiian monk seal population assessment work.
- 20 Sept Continued population assessment research on Midway Atoll, including pup tagging.
- 21 Sept Continued population assessment research on Midway Atoll. Departed Midway Atoll at 1600 en route to Laysan Island.
- 23 Sept Arrived Laysan Island at 0800. Launched SAFE boat and Achilles and deployed seal team to tag weaned monk seals pups. Loaded all field camp supplies and marine debris. Disembarked Chastant.
- 24 Sept At 0800, launched SAFE boat and Achilles boat to transport personnel to island. Continued population assessment research. Loaded USFWS supplies and equipment. Embarked O'Bryan, Leopold, Rehkemper, Breeden, and Cornett. Departed Laysan Island 1600 en route to French Frigate Shoals.
- 25 Sept Launched the Achilles boat and deployed Becker to conduct a monk seal boat survey of Gardner Pinnacles.
- 26Sept Arrived French Frigate Shoals. Deployed Gobush and Becker to survey islands. Embarked Moreland, King, and Sullivan. Loaded all equipment and supplies including a 17-ft Boston Whaler Boat. Recovered Becker and Gobush. Departed French Frigate Shoals at 1600 en route to Necker Island.
- 27 Sept Arrived Necker Island 0800. Launched Achilles boat and deploy Becker and Gobush to conduct monk seal survey of island and tag weaned pups. Recovered scientific party and boat at 1600. Departed Necker Island en route to Nihoa Island.

- 28 Sept Arrived Nihoa Island at 0800. Launched Achilles boat and deployed Becker and Gobush to conduct monk seal survey of island. Recovered scientific party and boat at 1600. Departed Nihoa Island en route to Ni'ihau Island.
- 29 Sept Arrived Ni'ihau Island at 0700. Conducted boat survey of island from the SAFE boat. Recovered scientific party and SAFE boat at 1200. Began transit to Honolulu.
- 30 Sept Arrived Honolulu at 0800. Off-loaded all supplies, equipment, trash, and recyclables. Disembarked all scientific personnel. End of cruise.

MISSIONS AND RESULTS:

Objectives of the cruise are:

1. Recover field camps at Lisianski, and Pearl and Hermes Reef. Transport all equipment, supplies, and personnel.

All field camp personnel and equipment were recovered.

2. Deploy satellite telemetry gear on monk seals at Nihoa Island.

A total of eight satellite tags were deployed on seals at Nihoa Island from Sept. 10 to Sept. 11. In addition, 10 weaned pups and 5 older seals were tagged with temple and PIT tags between Sept. 10 and Sept. 28.

3. Conduct population assessment study of Hawaiian monk seals on French Frigate Shoals, Midway and Laysan Islands.
 - a. Six weaned pups were tagged on French Frigate Shoals between Sept. 13 and Sept. 26.
 - b. Two atoll counts were conducted on Midway Atoll. In addition, one weaned monk seal pup was tagged during incidental patrols.
 - c. Two incidental patrols were conducted on Laysan Island. One weaned pup was tagged during the patrols.
4. Resupply existing USFWS field camps at Midway Atoll, Laysan Island and French Frigate Shoals. Transport equipment, supplies, and personnel.

All personnel, equipment, and supplies were transported successfully.

5. Conduct beach survey of Nihoa and boat surveys of Gardner Pinnacles, Necker Island, and Ni'ihau.
 - a. Three seals were recorded during the survey of Gardner Pinnacles.
 - b. Twenty-one seals were recorded during the survey of Necker Island.
 - c. Thirty-nine seals were recorded during the survey of Nihoa Island.
 - d. Twenty-six seals were recorded during the boat survey of the west side of Ni'ihau.

**SCIENTIFIC
PERSONNEL:**

Chad Yoshinaga, Program Management Analyst, Pacific Islands Fisheries Science Center (PIFSC), National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS)

Charles Littnan, Ecologist, PIFSC, NMFS

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Robert Braun, Contract Veterinarian, Contractor

Brenda Becker, Biologist, PIFSC, NMFS

Tracy Wurth, Cooperating Scientist, JIMAR, UH

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(/s/Chad Yoshinaga)

Submitted by: _____

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Attachment

