



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE/NOAA FISHERIES
Pacific Islands Fisheries Science Center
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CRUISE REPORT¹

VESSEL: *Oscar Elton Sette*, Cruise 09-04 (SE-72)

CRUISE PERIOD: May 6–21, 2009

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

TYPE OF OPERATION: Protected Species Division established monk seal field camps in the Northwestern Hawaiian Islands in support of a Pacific Islands Fisheries Science Center research project.

ITINERARY:

- 6 May Embarked C. Yoshinaga, I. Nurzia-Humburg, J. Lopez, S. Farry, M. Sullivan, D. Lee, M. Bond, L. White, G. Dietrich, S. Chinn, A. Marie, J. Dale, A. Stankus, M. Burns, A. Merritt, B. Vanderlip, J. Fonseca, E. Tong, and S. Saari. Departed Ford Island, Honolulu at 1000 en route to Nihoa Island.
- 7 May Arrived at drop site for juvenile green turtle release at 0530. Released 16 turtles. Continued transit to Nihoa Island at 0700.
- 7 May Arrived Nihoa Island 1200. Launched Achilles inflatable boat. Deployed Lopez, Farry, and Dietrich to conduct census of island. Departed Nihoa Island 1630 en route to Necker Island.
- 8 May Arrived Necker Island 0800. Launched Achilles inflatable boat. Deployed Sullivan and Dietrich to conduct census of island. Departed Necker Island 1300 en route to French Frigate Shoals.
- 9 May Arrived French Frigate Shoals 0800. Disembarked Farry, Lee, Bond, Sullivan, Saari, Dale, Stankus, and Burns. Off-loaded equipment and supplies including two 17-ft Boston Whaler boats. Embarked C. Waddington and J. Waddington. Departed French Frigate Shoals 1600 en route to Laysan Island.

¹ PIFSC Cruise Report CR-09-013
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- 11 May Arrived Laysan Island 0800 hours. Disembarked Dietrich, Chinn, and Marie. Off-loaded equipment and supplies. Departed Laysan Island 1600 en route to Midway Atoll.
- 13 May Arrived Ladd Seamount HARP deployment site 0600. Deployed HARP. Began transit to Midway Atoll.
- 13 May Arrived Midway Atoll 1000. Off-loaded equipment and supplies. Disembarked Waddington and Waddington. Loaded 11 pallets of deep-cycle batteries (~ 36,000 lbs). Embarked C. Vanderlip, T. Wurth, K. Yeager, A. Kaufmann, C. Siudzinski, S. Guerin, and P. Leary.
- 14 May Departed Midway Atoll 0600 en route to Kure Atoll.
- 14 May Arrived Kure Atoll 1300. Off-loaded equipment and supplies. Disembarked Wurth, Yeager, Vanderlip, Vanderlip, Merritt, Fonseca, and Tong.
- 15 May Continued off-load at Kure Atoll. Embarked Wurth. Departed Kure Atoll 1600 en route to Pearl and Hermes Reef.
- 16 May Arrived Pearl and Hermes Reef 0900. Disembarked Lopez, White, and Guerin. Off-loaded equipment and supplies including one 18-ft Rigid Hull Inflatable Boat (RHIB), one 5 meter inflatable boat, and eight 55-gal drums of gasoline. Departed Pearl and Hermes Reef 1700 en route to Lisianski Island.
- 17 May Arrived Lisianski Island 0800. Disembarked Kaufman and Siudzinski. Off-loaded equipment and supplies. Departed Lisianski 1600 en route to French Frigate Shoals.
- 19 May Arrived French Frigate Shoals 0800. Disembarked Leary. Embarked M. Gibson. Due to battery acid leaking from Midway pallets, cruise was routed directly back to Honolulu.
- 21 May Arrived Honolulu 1900. Off-loaded all supplies, equipment, trash, and recyclables. U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and Chugach HAZMAT team arrived to assess HAZMAT spill. Disembarked Yoshinaga, Wurth, and Gibson. End of cruise.

MISSIONS AND RESULTS:

1. Establish field camps at Kure Atoll, Laysan Island, Lisianski Island, Pearl and Hermes Reef, and French Frigate Shoals. Transport all equipment, supplies, and personnel.

All Marine Mammal Research Program field camps were deployed successfully.
2. Release 16 juvenile green turtles.

All 16 turtles were released approximately 60 nmi southeast of Nihoa Island.
3. Transport personnel and equipment to French Frigate Shoals for the Hawaii Institute of Marine Biology (HIMB) shark project.

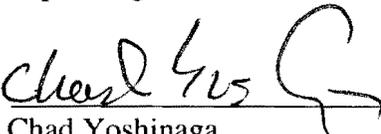
All equipment, supplies, and personnel were transported to French Frigate Shoals for the HIMB shark tagging project.
4. Resupply/support existing USFWS field camps at Midway Atoll, Laysan Island and French Frigate Shoals. Transport equipment, supplies, and personnel.
 - a. All supplies and equipment were transported to the FWS field stations.
 - b. Eleven pallets, approximately 36,000 lbs, of miscellaneous deep-cycle batteries were transported from Midway to Honolulu.
5. Establish Department of Fish and Wildlife (DOFAW) field camp at Kure Atoll.

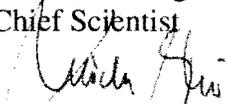
All DOFAW equipment, supplies, and personnel were transported to Kure and off-loaded on the island successfully.
6. Conduct beach census of Necker Island, Nihoa Island, and Niihau Island.
 - a. One census of Necker and Nihoa was conducted. A second planned census of Nihoa was cancelled due to the HAZMAT issues on the eastbound leg.
 - b. The boat census of Niihau was cancelled due to the HAZMAT issues on the eastbound leg.
7. Conduct conductivity-temperature-depth (CTD) casts.

Nine CTD casts were conducted at the previously determined sites associated with each NWHI and reef area.

**SCIENTIFIC
PERSONNEL:**

Chad Yoshinaga, Chief Scientist, Program Management Analyst, Pacific Islands
Fisheries Science Center (PIFSC), National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS)
Jessica Lopez, Field Research Supervisor, Joint Institute for Marine and Atmospheric
Research (JIMAR), University of Hawaii (UH)
Tracy Wurth, Cooperating Scientist, JIMAR, UH
Kirstie Yeager, Cooperating Scientist, JIMAR, UH
Shawn Farry, Cooperating Scientist, JIMAR, UH
Gretchen Dietrich, Cooperating Scientist, JIMAR, UH
Sarah Chinn, Cooperating Scientist, JIMAR, UH
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Sheri Saari, USFWS Turtle Tech, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS)
Jim Waddington, Cooperating Scientist, USFWS
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Mary Gibson, Cooperating Scientist, USFWS
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Austin Stankus, Cooperating Scientist, HIMB
Mike Burns, Cooperating Scientist, HIMB
Cynthia Vanderlip, Cooperating Scientist, Department of Fish and Wildlife (DOFAW)
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Bradley Vanderlip, Cooperating Scientist, DOFAW
John Fonseca, Cooperating Scientist, DOFAW
Eric J. Tong, Cooperating Scientist, DOFAW

Submitted by: 
Chad Yoshinaga
Chief Scientist

Approved by: 
Samuel G. Pooley
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Attachment

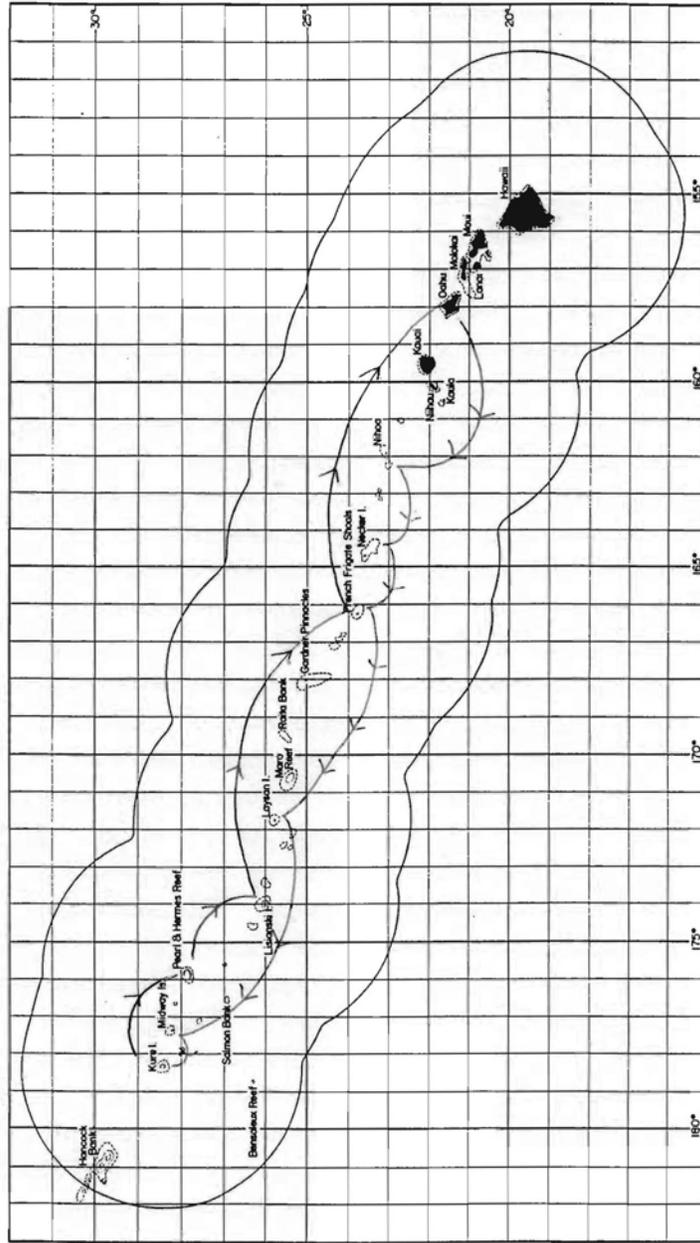


Figure 1.--Track of the NOAA Ship Oscar Elton Sette cruise SE-09-04 (SE-72), May 6-21, 2009.