



HLY0802: March 29-May 6, 2008

Chief Scientist's Log

April 25: Logistics and Light

Post by Carin Ashjian

As we enter the last third of our cruise, the difficulties in scheduling our activities are increasing. I am spending increasing amounts of time deciding where to go, how long it will take, and what to do when. Sometimes it makes my head spin! Right now we are working in open water, still, documenting the distribution of elevated chlorophyll and conducting plankton process studies (grazing, reproduction, primary production) as well as sampling the benthos to determine the rates of nitrogen regeneration, benthic community structure, and what type of food the animals there are eating.

We did a process study this morning and are planning a second one in the area of elevated chlorophyll for early Sunday morning. Today, we deployed the sediment traps for a third time and will pick them up tomorrow. Thanks to modern technology, tracking them by satellite and finding them has been easy!

Occasionally we dip back into the ice, encountering an increasingly degraded ice edge with extensive fields of pancake ice. The pancakes roll with the swell. The constantly moving ice field creates havoc when we are working with equipment over the side, and long poles are necessary to push errant ice floes that aim to snag our wires and jeopardize our equipment. Although I love the ice, I hate it too when I have to sample in a moving ice field.

We are hoping to see tomorrow some elevated rates of copepod egg production, now that we are in a region of higher chlorophyll. We had seen elevated rates at one spot of high chlorophyll further to south before. These copepods (*Calanus marshallae*) will produce more eggs if they have more to eat.

Each evening the night comes later as spring arrives in the Bering Sea. Tonight full dark will not be here until after midnight. Although this makes it harder to sleep, it is also far more pleasant when one gets up in the middle of the "night" to sample.