

## Day 6 It's getting colder

- Posted by [Kristy](#) on August 17, 2008 at 10:30pm

Today was a quiet one for me, but again, there's always something happening, and the crew is always busy. It's been a grey, cold day, and this morning, while crew were out checking navigational aids and hydrographers were out placing equipment for collecting data, a cold front started to move in – Jenny Lind Island disappeared right before my eyes as fog enveloped it. The helicopter had to come back in, bringing the crew with it, so that beacon will have to be finished on the way back. The hydrographers were out on one of their boats so were able to stay out longer, but they looked mighty cold when they got back. The weather cleared for a bit, then rolled back in tonight. It actually seems quite dark out right now – the Laurier set anchor for the night, and has an at anchor light on that's throwing off a warm glow in the middle of the Arctic fog. Jean Christophe tells me I might see a bit of ice...forming...by Gjoa Haven, where we'll arrive on Tuesday.

I spent some time on the fos'cle deck tonight – I think it's my new favourite place. I haven't spent much time out there because it's usually a beehive of activity and I don't want to get in the way. All was quiet tonight though, so I put on my woolies and stood looking out at the nonexistent horizon, trying to imagine this huge expanse of water iced over, and in only weeks. I also tried to imagine being an Inuit hunter out on the land. Or an explorer in the 1800's. It all defies my imagination.

Tomorrow King William Island will come into sight and we will be in the area that the archaeologists searching for Franklin's ships will be able to start collecting data. We've gone through the wide waters of Queen Maud Gulf today, where at times I couldn't see land, and tomorrow we'll be going through the narrow Simpson Strait, which I understand is quite tricky to navigate. Looking at the map, I think it's the narrowest channel we'll go through while I'm on this trip. Having spent quite a bit of time in the wheelhouse over the last few days, I have no doubt that I'm on the safest ship on the ocean.

I'm wondering if, with land close on either side, I'll see any wildlife? I'm almost hoping that I'll see arctic hares as much as polar bears. The captain told me that arctic hares (which are white in the winter, and turn a light brown when the snow and ice melt) are actually very large, perhaps the size of a small or medium sized dog. When there's a large group of arctic hares, they'll run really fast, following a leader in a straight line. The leader will suddenly stop, often for no apparent reason, and definitely without warning....and all the other hares end up in a big pile-up behind. Then they get up, another leader takes off, in a different direction, and the whole thing happens again! It kind of creates a vision, doesn't it?

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