

Bob Schmieder

So we spent many hours that day surveying – that’s a nice technical term – we were wandering about hoping to find Cordell Bank. And we kept saying to ourselves, “Holy cow, this place is huge, it’s four miles wide and nine miles long.” We can’t even find Cordell Bank much less find this quarter mile diameter that we thought divable area where it says 20 fathoms. We couldn’t find anything. It was all way too deep for us to dive.

And we were even speculating about having to go back. And so I was saying, “Well, at least we got here. We think we’re on Cordell Bank,” and so on. And then I remembered how Edward Cordell had found Cordell Bank. He looked around and he saw a whole bunch of seabirds over on the water *over there*, and he went *over there*. And after hours of frustrating unproductive searching right where the birds were was where the shallow water was.

So I said, “Mike, look there are a bunch of birds over there. Why don’t we go over there and look?” And sure enough that’s – bingo, we got 20 fathoms, pulled up that 20 fathom mark just like that.

So when we got that we scrambled and dropped the descent line, not as precisely as we later learned to do it, but we dropped it somewhere in the vicinity of that 20 fathom mark, and from that point on we knew we were able or probably going to be able to carry out what would be the very first dive on Cordell Bank.