

Cordell Bank National Marine Sanctuaries
Transcribed Video from Education Curriculum: Bird and Marine Mammal Observation

Carol Keiper (black hat): OK, I've been the marine mammal observer on these trips and one of my most important jobs is to just constantly be looking out using binoculars and looking from the ship to the horizon. Looking for splashes, looking for body parts, like a dorsal fin or a back or head. And marine mammals are at the surface so infrequently that you pretty much have to be looking all the time so that you can catch the animals right when it's there. And then you sight it, you say "sighting", you tell the species, how many. It all gets recorded and then at the end of the day you get a nice summary of number of animals per kilometer traveled. Now Sophie wants to talk about birds.

Sophie Webb (blue hat): OK I census the seabirds. And the seabirds census is a little bit different than with marine mammals. We actually count the seabirds in a three hundred meter strip off of one side of the ship and we try and count every single seabird that we see and identify them, the species and in some cases we'll age them. Some seabirds have different plumages for different color morphs, so we might record that as well. And then all the data gets recorded in this computer. And the other thing that we also record is flight direction. That's important to any kind of behavior that the bird might be doing, whether it's feeding, whether it's sitting on the water and the flight direction is important because that helps up with our statistics so that we don't double count birds.