

NOAA Ship *Pisces*



The ship was named *Pisces* by a team of five seventh grade students from Sacred Heart School in Southaven, Mississippi. The team won a regional NOAA contest to name the ship by submitting a winning essay that supported their name selection. The contest was an educational initiative to help students learn more about their region's marine and coastal environment as well as to generate a greater interest in scientific studies.

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Ship *Pisces* is the third of four newly constructed fisheries survey ships built for NOAA, representing a significant achievement in NOAA's efforts to modernize its fleet of fisheries, oceanographic, and hydrographic survey ships.

This 40-day endurance ship was designed and built to modern commercial construction and safety standards by VT Halter Marine, Inc. under contract to NOAA. *Pisces* and her sister ships comply with all U.S. Coast Guard and American Bureau of Shipping criteria.

Pisces will carry a crew of 21 and up to 15 scientists on any given mission. The ship will support NOAA's mission to protect, restore, and manage the use of living marine, coastal, and ocean resources through ecosystem-based management.

Pisces' primary objective will be to study, monitor, and collect data on a wide range of sea life and ocean conditions, primarily in U.S. waters from the Gulf of Mexico, Caribbean, and South Atlantic to North Carolina. The region includes important commercial and recreational

fisheries, and is one of the world's best known and most productive marine areas.

The data collected by the ship will be used by scientists who study variations in ocean conditions and sea life to better inform the nation's decision makers about such issues as sustainable fisheries, ecosystem structure and function, fish habitats and habitat restoration, coral reefs, and protected species status.

Pisces will also observe weather, sea state, and other environmental conditions, conduct habitat assessments, and survey marine mammal and marine bird populations.

Pisces is a state-of-the-art research ship with multiple science mission capabilities. Foremost among these capabilities is the ship's "quiet" hull, a design feature that minimizes sound made by the ship underwater. This allows scientists to use hydroacoustic methods for surveying marine life, and significantly reduces changes in the natural behavior of animals caused by ship noise. In addition, the vessel can collect a variety of oceanographic data while marine life surveys are underway, resulting in both richer and more efficiently collected data.



The fast rescue boat conducting man overboard drills



The ship was launched at VT Halter Marine shipyard on December 19, 2007.

Ship Specifications

Length (LOA): 208.6 ft
Breadth: 49.2 ft
Draft:
Centerboard Retracted - 19.4ft
Centerboard Extended - 29.7ft
Full Load Displacement: 2479mt
Speed, Sustained: 14.0 knots
Speed, Hydroacoustic Survey:
0-11 knots
Range: 12,000 nm @ 12knots
Endurance: 40 days
Hull Number: R226
Call Letters: WTDL
Commissioned Officers: 6
Licensed Engineers: 4
Crew: 11
Scientists: 15
Launched: December 19, 2007
Accepted: June 4, 2009
Commissioned: November 6,
2009
Builder: VT Halter Marine, Inc.
Moss Point, Mississippi

Office of Marine and Aviation Operations

Since NOAA's beginning, NOAA ships and aircraft have played a critical role in the collection of its oceanographic, atmospheric, hydrographic, fisheries and coastal data. This fleet of platforms is managed and operated by NOAA's Office of Marine and Aviation Operations (OMAO), an office composed of civilians and officers of the NOAA Commissioned Officer Corps, one of the Nation's seven uniformed services.

NOAA's fleet of research and survey ships is the largest fleet of federal research ships in the Nation. The fleet ranges from large oceanographic research vessels capable of exploring the world's deepest ocean, to smaller ships responsible for charting the shallow bays and inlets of the United States. The fleet supports a wide range of marine activities, including fisheries research, nautical charting and mapping, and ocean and climate studies. Many of NOAA's research vessels are unique in their ability to conduct scientific research.

NOAA's fleet of aircraft operates throughout the world providing a wide range of capabilities including hurricane prediction research, marine mammal and fisheries assessment, and coastal mapping. NOAA aircraft are modified to carry scientists and specialized instrument packages to conduct research for NOAA's missions.

In addition to research and monitoring activities critical to NOAA's mission, NOAA ships and aircraft provide immediate response capabilities for unpredictable events. NOAA survey ships found the wreckage of EgyptAir Flight 990, TWA Flight 800 and John F. Kennedy Jr.'s aircraft. Our ships, aircraft and personnel have also conducted damage assessments after major oil spills, such as the *Exxon Valdez* and Persian Gulf War, and after land-falling hurricanes. Following Hurricanes Katrina and Rita, NOAA ships conducted emergency surveys for navigation hazards that helped Gulf ports reopen quickly, and tested the waters for contamination to ensure seafood safety. Aerial images of disaster-torn areas taken by a NOAA aircraft were posted on the Web, enabling residents and emergency workers to see if houses, bridges and roads were still standing.

NOAA Commissioned Officer Corps

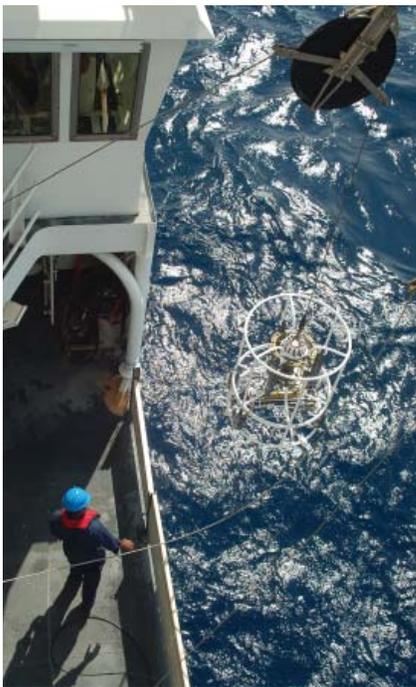
The NOAA Corps is one of the seven uniformed services of the United States. It is composed of commissioned officers who provide NOAA with an important blend of operational, management, and technical skills that support the agency's science and surveying programs at sea, in the air, and ashore. NOAA Corps officers, in addition to managing and operating ships and aircraft, are also scientists and engineers. Corps officers serve in NOAA's research laboratories and program offices throughout the Nation and in remote locations around the world. For example, an officer serves as station chief at the South Pole, Antarctica.

About NOAA

NOAA conducts research and gathers data about the global oceans, atmosphere, space, and sun, and applies this knowledge to science and service that touch the lives of all Americans.

NOAA warns of dangerous weather, charts our seas and skies, guides our use and protection of ocean and coastal resources, and conducts research to improve our understanding and stewardship of the environment that sustains us all.

A Commerce Department agency, NOAA provides these services through five major divisions: the National Weather Service, the National Ocean Service, the National Marine Fisheries Service, the National Environmental Satellite, Data and Information Service, and Office of Oceanic and Atmospheric Research; and numerous special program offices. More information about NOAA can be found at <http://www.noaa.gov>.



A CTD cast is made to measure conductivity and temperature at different water depths.

Visit the ship's Web site at www.moc.noaa.gov
For more information, contact OMAO at 301-713-1045
or visit our Web site at www.oma.noaa.gov