

SAYA DE MALHA DAILY

A Newsletter by Dominique and François

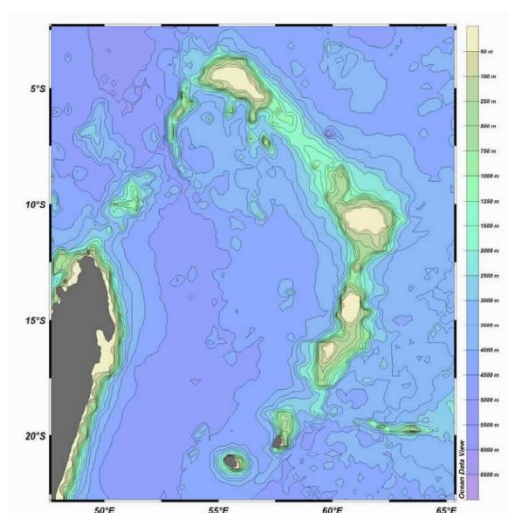


N°4, 3rd november 2022

Where are we ?

Ritchie Bank south
7.37 south, 58.57 East
Overcast, swells, wind 17.11 knots
Air temperature 27.3, Water temperature 26.8

Today, we reached the South point of the Ritchie Bank, on the Mascarene Plateau, North of the Saya de Malha



The Mascarene Plateau, also known as the Mascarene Ridge, is a submarine plateau in the Indian Ocean, north-east of Madagascar. The plateau extends approximately 2,000 km from the North Seychelles Bank and the Ritchie Bank to the north, to Réunion to the south. The plateau covers an area of over 115,000 km² of shallow water, with depths ranging from 8–150 m, plunging to 4,000 m to the abyssal plain at its edges. The Saya de Malha Bank is the largest of the banks of the Mascarene Plateau with an area of approximately 40,000 km².

What happened ?

The “rosette” and the Bongos

The first water sample operation started on reaching the Ritchie Bank at night, using the CTD (Conductivity Temperature, Depth) or “rosette” because of its shape. The CTD is an instrument made of tubes which can be closed remotely from the pilot station on the ship. It allows water sampling at a range of depth. The CTD was launched 3 times at depth of 700, and twice at 1000.

The “Bongos” are plankton nets which are dragged behind the ship at a given speed and depth, in this case 200 m depth. The samples collected are immediately labelled and placed in a solution of formaldehyde for further analysis at the laboratory in Villefranche-sur-Mer.



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The Portrait



Celine, engineer at the CNRS Sea Institute-Villefranche-Sur Mer

Celine was born in 1977 in Nantes. On the expedition, she oversees the samples brought in by the “Rosette” a sampling instrument essential for developing water profiles, first to describe an area poorly known and second to standardize other instruments such as the floaters Argo. She is part of the team led by Herve Claustre. For her it is important that the instrument she is responsible for are in good order so that researchers can obtain reliable data for future research.

In the Corridors

Artists on board

Remi, Artist in residence, came to drawing and illustration a little bit by chance. Trained as an engineer but naturally interested in the arts, he learnt sketching to accompany his partner, an anthropologist, to Tanzania. He ended up doing 23 illustrations for her doctoral work. On his role in the expedition: “The expedition is a scientific experience as much as a human experience. Art talks to everyone, a sketch is an emotional gateway to the scientific world, it is an invitation to storytelling.”



Chloe is from Brittany. She trained as a fashion designer for kids. She is doing a children visual diary for the expedition MADCap project based on sketches and illustrations of the team, the work, the boat, the ambiance on board and the islands. “Drawing for kids needs to appeal to the imagination and the dream. Associating imagination and science is powerful. I love the boat; it has such a great personality”.

