

Top Research Organization's Eco-Adventure to the North Pacific Gyre from Oahu to Vancouver, B.C. has a few spaces still open.

LONG BEACH, CA. Feb. 8, 2011--Environmentalists, researchers and adventure-seekers are being offered the rare opportunity to join one of the world's leading marine research organizations on its next high-seas expedition in search of plastic marine pollution, July 7 through 27, 2011.

Algalita Marine Research Foundation has partnered with Pangaea Explorations for a 21 day scientific voyage through the North Pacific Gyre. Pangaea's 72-foot racing sloop, *Sea Dragon*, accommodates 14 people, including 4 professional crew members. Net proceeds of the \$10,000 fare will help support Algalita's scientific research and educational outreach. The gyre, or vortex of ocean currents, gorges itself on marine debris, primarily plastic. This material can kill seabirds who die from starvation having mistaken plastics for food. Smaller plastic fragments, which can act as magnets for toxic pollutants, have been found in the bellies of fish. Are these toxins winding up on our dinner plates? This is part of Algalita's research quest.

"We'll be looking for changes in the accumulation of plastic in the North Pacific Gyre," says Marcus Eriksen, who will lead the expedition's research as Algalita's Director of Project Development. "We suspect there's greater accumulation, which means more harm to sea life and potentially to humans."

"On this voyage, you'll earn your sea legs and rough hands hauling in lines and hoisting sails, but you'll also be "doing the science" side-by-side with researchers," says Eriksen. "You'll need to be fit as you prepare to trawl the sea, sort plastic, preserve samples and catalog it all."

To add to this unique experience, factor in helping to sail and maintain the vessel; standing watches during the night; and even taking a turn as ship's cook. All of the foregoing requiring the spirit of teamwork.

Mary Maxwell, 33, gives a testimonial of her experience through the South Atlantic aboard the *Sea Dragon* in late 2010. To help pay for the trip, she raised \$5,000 on www.kickstarter.com, an online pledge system for funding creative projects.

"Spending thirty-one days at sea on a 72-foot sailboat with a dozen other passionate individuals was an amazing experience," says the Oakland, CA resident. "It was empowering, thrilling and changed my life forever. I now see the world from a different perspective and every day brings opportunities to spread awareness about these important issues."

An early-bird discount of \$1,000 for the voyage is available through February 28. For participation requirements and to register, visit <http://www.algalita.org/research/NorthPacificGyreVoyage.html>

For more information contact Jeanne Gallagher, Registration Coordinator: 562-598-4889 or email at info@algalita.org

