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Circulation in the Bering Sea, 1982–83, Based on Satellite-Tracked Drifter **Observations**

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ABSTRACT

A satellite-tracked drifting buoy, deployed unintentionally in the Bering Sea in 1982, completed a circuit of that basin in about one year. During its cyclonic passage around the Bering Sea, it experienced many different flow regimes ranging from steady alongshelf motion at the shelf break to highly variable tidal flow on the shelf itself. The buoy trajectory differs from previous descriptions of the deep Bering Sea circulation, because it moved southwestward in the central Bering Sea rather than along the western boundary, as other depictions have suggested. Many of the Bering Sea mesoscale eddies reported earlier were evident, indicating that possibly these eddies are permanent features. The forces which caused the buoy to move between the various flow regimes are unclear, but the data suggest an annual period for the deep Bering Sea circulation.

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