



Cruising

www.theca.org.uk

- Plotting on a digital chart
- Innovation may discourage orca
- Favourite spots in Greece & on the Thames





Not staying in France

The CA's President, **Derek Lumb**, spent most of the summer in the Biscay area, but left it too late to apply for a visa, so is returning to UK waters... for now

Looking back on my report last September I described how we were enjoying our first post-Brexit cruise in Atlantic France. Having spent the bulk of the summer there in 2023, we are returning to the UK. This is not a final decision, but events and our circumstances have tipped the decision in that direction.

French visas take time

The first issue we faced was that I somewhat foolishly left applying for a visitor's visa in France until after Judy Evans' excellent Zoom presentation on the process (available on the CA website under **Member Services > Videos**). The presentation was very informative, but when I applied the following day the earliest that I could get an interview was the day we were due to leave. Given that the estimated time to get the visa was one to three weeks later it all started to get a bit too difficult, and we again opted to limit our cruising in the EU to less than 90 days.

The first half of the cruise started in early May at Arzal. The weather was remarkably good and to begin with we saw very few other red or blue ensigns but as the summer progressed we started to see more and more CA members, most flying the CA burgee. I talked to as many as I could, and as usual it was an enriching experience,

with lots of first-hand tips on where to go and where to avoid.

We attended the Biscay section rally in Pornic and met a whole new set of friends. Thanks to Rex and Sue Frost for organising such an enjoyable three days.

Meeting like-minded people

I think that there is a tendency for those of us in the centre to view the CA as solely an organisation providing service and facilitating the provision of information, but it is so much more than that. Jean and I get at least as much out of meeting new like-minded people as we do from the more tangible aspects of the CA.

I have in the past emphasised how important our volunteers are – they are the heart of the CA – but we should not forget our excellent staff, who were a key asset in manning our Stand at September's Southampton International Boat Show. It was a great opportunity to showcase the CA's expertise and the many benefits of belonging to the Association. We recruited more than 110 new members. Our CAptain's Mate app remained as popular as ever, and our talks on *Channel Crossing Procedures*, *In conversation with Jeanne Socrates* and *Orca and Yachts* on the main Foredeck Stage gave a taste of the CA's technical know-how and expertise.



Selected autumn events

View all CA events on the website at www.theca.org.uk/events/all

Wednesday, 25 October The Port of London Authority, John Dillon-Leetch CA London The PLA supports safe access and navigation for all mariners on the Thames. CA House. *For the full list of London lectures, see page 11*

Wednesday, 25 October WW1 Torpedo Boat – David Griffiths Thames Valley A team at Portsmouth Historic Dockyard have built a working replica of these small, fast torpedo boats. Colston Hall, Gerrards Cross

Thursday, 2 November, Marine Watercolour Painting in Retirement – Surinder Beerh Suffolk Surinder had never painted until 10 years ago and is now producing wonderful paintings of boats and seascapes. Royal Harwich YC, Woolverstone

Thursday, 2 November Crewing Service meeting Come along to the Crewing Service meeting to find a skipper or crew for next season. We will also hold meetings on Sundays and via Zoom. CA House

Saturday, 4 November, Essex Section Laying Up Supper Essex Join us for a convivial evening to mark the end of the season. White Hart, Coggeshall

Thursday, 9 November To Spain and Back by Roger Lloyd Kent Roger visited large and small harbours along the scenic north coast of Spain, but sailing back home posed a problem. Dog and Bear Hotel, Lenham

Wednesday, 15 November Cruising Association AGM 2023 CA House

Thursday, 16 November Club supper and talk Solent Location & details TBA

Saturday, 18 November Sweden Information Day Baltic Presentations cover preparations before you leave and what to expect in Sweden. CA House

Tuesday, 21 November Harbour Master Sailing Challenge, Mark Ashley Miller Wessex Mark attempted to visit every Harbour Master in the UK 34ft boat *Good Dog*. Lilliput SC, Poole

Thursday, 23 November How to Read Water: Clues and Patterns from Puddles to the Sea Mediterranean Natural navigation expert Tristan Gooley shares knowledge, skills and tips. Online via Zoom.

Sunday, 3 December Sydney Christmas Lunch Antipodean Royal Sydney Yacht Squadron.

Wednesday, 13 December CA carol service and supper Enjoy a festive evening with the CA. St Anne's Limehouse and CA House.

Arzal-Camoël, on the Vilaine, where Derek started his summer cruise



Winning ways

Liz Campbell won the £2000 AquaMarine prize in last summer's CA Big Draw

I have won a couple of village fete raffle prizes but never anything significant, so when I took the call to tell me I had won the CA summer draw I thought I was being scammed and refused to give any personal details! Much to my surprise, however, it was a genuine call and I was the recipient of a very generous £2000-worth of kit from AquaMarine.

My point of contact with the company was their sales manager, Boris Webber, who set up an account for me to access the comprehensive and easy-to-follow online catalogue. Boris not only knows the catalogue inside out but is also an experienced sailor and was able to give me much-needed advice on the best items to buy. Not only that, but once I had made my choices he delivered the parcels to our home in Cumbria!

My husband and I are new to sailing and bought our first yacht (also new) last year, so we had already sorted the essentials and were not due for any major refits; however, we still had a long list of winter jobs and a "wish list" of things to buy if we could afford them.

After discussing our wish list with Boris I decided to spend much of the money on a new stainless steel anchor chain. Added to our existing set-up, this would give us a scope of 80 metres, which I felt would give us more flexibility for cruising in the Hebrides. We also needed a powder fire extinguisher for the engine compartment and a long list of smaller items to improve our sailing set up, safety kit and tool kit. We now have a bosun's chair, a smart radar reflector, a full set of flares, a long throw line, plus a Bainbridge sailcloth bag and AquaMarine waterproof backpack.

I feel very fortunate to have had this windfall and we are delighted with our new equipment. I have had to go up the mast a couple of times and am amazed at how much more comfortable the bosun's chair is than my own, lightweight performance climbing harness. In fact we have already made good use of most of the items although thankfully we have not had to use the flares or throw line yet!



I would like to take this opportunity to thank the CA for organising the annual summer draw and of course AquaMarine for their sponsorship. AquaMarine stock a wide range of products at competitive prices and I found them an easy and helpful company to deal with.

■ **AquaMarine offers CA members a 10% discount** across the whole AquaMarine product range via its parent company Bainbridge International – see the discounts listing, page 82.

Liz's shopping list

AQM027554	grey soft shackle x2 (55x 4mm)
AQM027755	grey soft shackle x2 (75x 5mm)
AQM027906	grey soft shackle x2 (90x 6mm)
Q007863	Man Overboard throwline 23m
AQM010122	Radar reflector
F100006	automatic fire extinguisher
AQM003005	Professional Bosun's Chair
PWHFR	Red Handflare MK8
PWRPR	Red Parachute rocket
PWPIR	Parachute illuminating rocket
PWB03	Poly bottle for flares
AQM080305	8mm Stainless Steel anchor chain 30m
AQM010403	Marine Multi-Function Tool
BMZ5203	Sailcloth Crew Bag Large Orange - 65L
AQMB230OR	Waterproof Backpack 30L Storm Orange

New almanac goes on sale

The 2024 edition of the Cruising Almanac is finalised and goes on sale during September. The new edition as usual covers UK and Ireland and NW Europe from Bergen to Gibraltar. With hundreds of Imray chartlets and detailed information for almost every harbour and many anchorages, the Almanac could be a great starting point for your plans for next year. You can buy your copy online via the CA shop; save postage costs by picking up your copy at the Southampton Boat Show or a CA event.

New entries

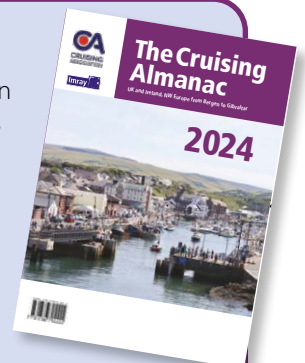
- Folkestone, England South Coast
- Rossaveal, Ireland
- Er Toul Bras Passage, W. France
- Marans, Western France
- Ferrol, NW Spain
- Sesimbra, Portugal
- Ria Guadalquivir and Seville, Spain

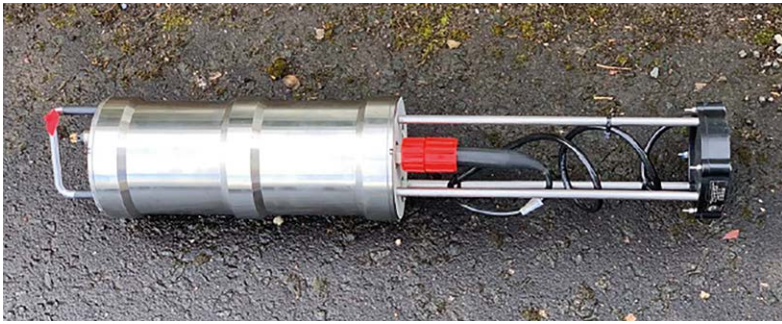
New or revised plans

- Dover
- Rossaveal
- La Turballe
- Le Baule/ Le Pouliguen
- A Coruña and Ria de Corcubión

Plus...

- Additional anchorages for Fisterra/Finisterre, Spain
- Revised Port of Entry information for Spain and Gibraltar





Left, a prototype TAST deterrent. A similar device has already been supplied to fishermen in the Aleutian Islands, but in Europe it awaits approval by the Portuguese authorities as the orca is a protected species. Right, pingers like this have not proved successful so far



Orca audio deterrent awaits approval

John Burbeck describes how research into the startle reflexes of marine animals could provide a safe and successful way to deter orca interaction

As yacht crews suffer ever more interactions with orcas off Iberia, it seems that the most likely solution for stopping interactions is some form of audio deterrent. A working group has been set up by the Portuguese Government's ICNF (Institute for Conservation of Nature and Forests) to identify a safe and effective device.

Deterrent methods currently being used include making loud noises to drive the orca away, such as fog horns, banging pans, oikomi pipes, firecrackers and pingers. None has been proved to work on every occasion and it is not known how the noise they produce affects orcas' hearing. The legal position around noise-making during interactions is complex.

If an orca's hearing is damaged it could lose its ability to hunt tuna, and it seems likely that some devices could indeed cause

hearing damage. Pingers create noise over a wide area, and it has been observed that orcas dive for less time and at shallower depths when hunting in an area affected by noise pollution such as that created by pingers.

The CA Orca Project Team was approached by a company called GenusWave that has developed a very different audio solution: it triggers the instinctive startle reflex most animals have when they hear a particular sound. The autonomic nervous system is not under the conscious control of the animal, so the reflex results in an uncontrollable response to flee the immediate area. Many of us will have seen a film of meerkats reacting when the sentry calls the alarm, and this is a similar reflex.

GenusWave's marine scientists developed their device several years ago to keep seals away from fishing nets. They

GenusWave outlines its proposed solution

This is an extract from information provided to us by GenusWave. The CA has not conducted any tests of this equipment and is not warranting its effectiveness; however we are encouraged by what we have seen to date.

GenusWave.com has developed a promising solution called Targeted Acoustic Startle Technology (TAST) for orcas.

TAST is not like pingers and conventional acoustic deterrent devices because it works on entirely different principles. It creates an *Acoustic Safe Zone* by producing a specific sound that elicits a startle reflex in the target species. Repeated use of the startle reflex activates an animal's innate flight response. TAST works like a dog whistle that drives the animal away. The non-lethal technology uses sound frequencies specifically designed to trigger an animal's instinctive flight response, encouraging them to move away from the sound.

TAST is the result of over 15 years of research by a team of world-class marine biologists from the Scottish Oceans Institute at the University of St Andrews, one of the world's foremost institutions for marine mammal research.

Peer-reviewed research

TAST has been extensively studied and documented in multiple peer-reviewed and published research papers. These



Orca in a herring net. Photo: Audun Rikardsen

studies demonstrate the following key findings:

- **Effectiveness and lack of habituation:** Research indicates that TAST is effective in deterring orcas from engaging with boats, and there is no evidence of habituation over time. The technology remains effective in preventing orca-boat interactions without losing its effectiveness due to repeated exposure.
- **Species specific:** The signal has no impact on non-target species.
- **Harmless to marine life with limited deterrent range:** TAST is designed to be non-invasive and avoid any negative impact on the well-being of marine animals. The deterrent range focuses on a specific radius around the sound source to minimise any unintended disturbances to the surrounding ecosystem.

then adapted it to work on sea lions and over the past two years to keep orcas away from fishing vessels.

They refer to their solution as “Targeted Acoustic Startle Technology” (TAST), and their research trials have demonstrated that:

1. The device operates over a short range (50m) and so will not impact orcas hunting nearby;
2. The orcas will return to the area shortly after the device is turned off;
3. The orcas do not “habituate” to the sound (unlike with pingers, which can eventually become a “dinner bell”).
4. The signal is at a level that will not cause hearing damage;
5. The device only affects the target species.

After extensive discussions we have introduced GenusWave to our partner scientists at GTOA (Grupo Trabajo Orca Atlantica)



and as a result the device has been offered to ICNF to be tested.

During testing the CA will continue to work with GenusWave to consider how the device might be adapted for use in leisure craft. Many reports received by CA demonstrate that a yacht’s rudder can be damaged by the orca before the crew are aware of their presence. At our request, as suggested by GTOA, GenusWave is also investigating how the device could be made to react automatically to orca calls or clicks.

- See panel for an outline of the proposed solution.



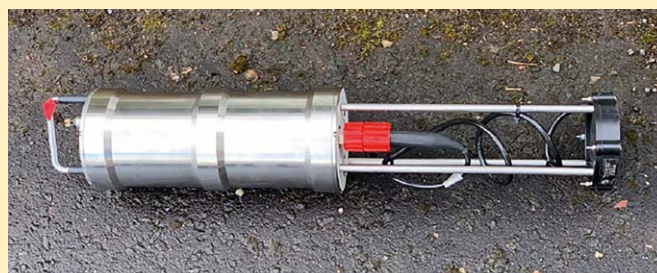
GenusWave outlines its proposed solution – continued

TAST trials

In-depth trials were conducted by the Institute of Marine Research and the University of St Andrews on fishing grounds in Troms, Norway, in November 2022 and 2021.

The trials revealed the following:

- *Fewer orcas sighted:* The implementation of TAST resulted in an 85% reduction in orca sightings near the fishing nets. This significant reduction indicates the effectiveness of TAST in deterring orcas from specific areas.
- *Deterrent range of approximately 50m:* The research trials established that the predominant deterrent range of TAST was approximately 50 metres from the sound source. This range ensures that the technology focuses on the immediate vicinity, minimizing unnecessary impact on the surrounding marine environment.
- *No harm to orcas and no lasting exclusion:* Importantly, the research trials confirmed that TAST did not cause any harm to orcas. Furthermore, once the sound was turned off, there was no lasting exclusion of orcas from the area, suggesting that the technology does not disrupt their natural behaviour patterns in the long term.



Conclusion

The rise in orca-yacht interactions necessitates innovative solutions that prioritise the safety of both humans and marine animals. TAST shows promise as a non-lethal and environmentally friendly approach to deterring orcas. The extensive peer-reviewed research papers on TAST confirm its effectiveness, lack of habituation, species specificity, and non-harmful nature to marine life. Additionally, research trials in Troms, Norway, demonstrated significant reductions in orca sightings, a limited deterrent range, and no harm or lasting exclusion of the orca.

By harnessing TAST’s potential, we can strive for a harmonious coexistence between humans and orcas, ensuring the preservation of our oceans’ ecological balance.

For more info go to www.GenusWave.com.

Making it easier to find RATS articles online

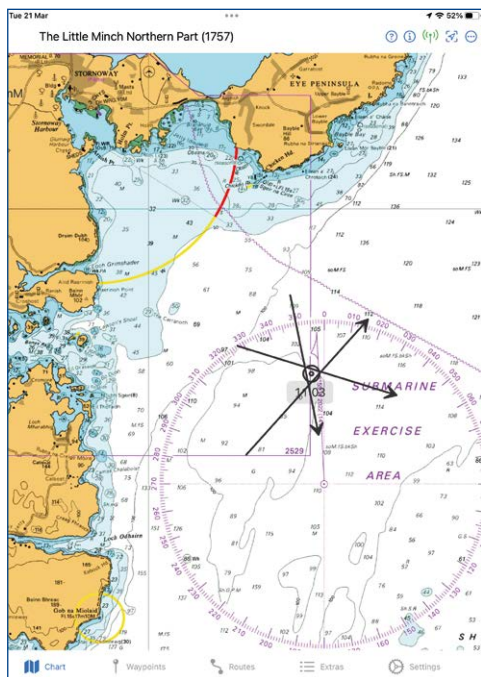
Members have sometimes found it difficult to locate technical info from RATS and information relating to the UK’s departure from the EU. As an interim solution, some changes have been made to the CA’s website.

The General Info menu item and page has been replaced by a **Reg & Tech** (Regulatory & Technical) section. Pages under the old General Info tab have been moved, some under **Member**

Services and others, as relevant, to the new Regulatory & Tech menu item/page.

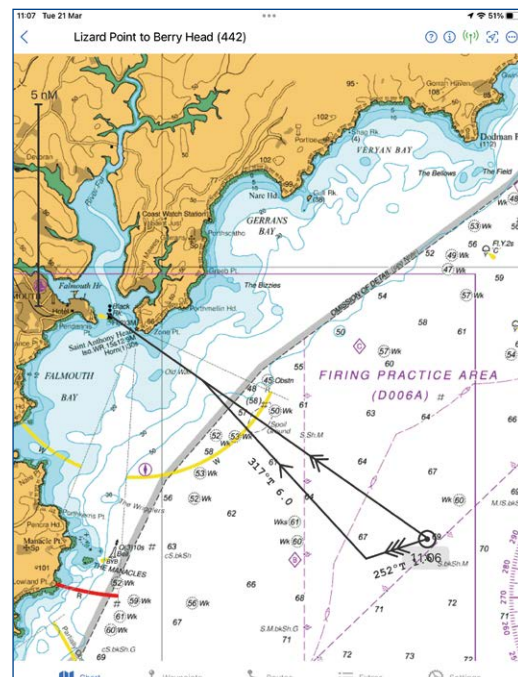
The new Reg & Tech page contains links to pages under two categories: **Regulatory** and **Technical**. The initial changes were made during June. Articles by RATS published in *Cruising*, previously available only via a link to the complete PDF of the magazine, are being published as individual pages.





Plotting on a digital chart

We talk to **Tom Cunliffe** about **AngelNav**, a new development in electronic charting



When the UKHO announced its decision to discontinue paper charts by 2026, it set off a minor earthquake. The negative response from the CA and other navigational authorities was so overwhelming that the date was stretched to 2030, and maybe beyond.

Not content to sit back and wait for better digital options, Tom Cunliffe and his colleague Bill Aylward have produced AngelNav, an iPad-based chart plotter using UKHO data for raster charts.

Tom told us: "There's nothing out there like it because, after decades of being denied traditional plotting skills on a screen, you can now physically lay out position lines and courses."

AngelNav's raster charts look like paper charts, and include some shoreside features, notes and warnings that have disappeared from their vector equivalents.

"Leisure vector charts have well-known shortfalls," says Tom. "For example, they can 'layer out' dangers at lower zoom

AngelNav www.angelnav.co.uk, developed by Sailtrack Ltd, is free from the App store for iPhones/iPads running iOS 15.0 and above. UK & Ireland chart folios are divided into sections: for example, the English side of the Channel, with harbour charts from Scilly to Dover, can be bought in-app at £24.99. The app is developing fast, with tides coming soon and an Android version in the pipeline.

levels. That's not an issue with raster charts. Navigating with AngelNav is like having a plotter that uses the charts in your drawer, with two differences: there are no gaps in coverage of an area, and they update automatically."

At the moment the app offers eight folios covering UK waters and Ireland, with more areas – including French SHOM charts – coming online as Tom and Bill negotiate with national and private charting authorities. AngelNav can also use existing raster charts from many other sources, including the US, and will offer alternatives if and when UKHO scraps all raster charts.

Within the app it can create accurate, geo-referenced satellite charts for anywhere in the world. Navigators in remote areas where conventional charting is patchy already do this, but with AngelNav, the process is simplified. Although no depth information is offered, it can be helpful for anchorages with multiple hazards (rocks, coral heads) which are otherwise not clearly marked.

"Bill and I wrote the in-app manual and the 'instant help' files," Tom says. "We are both serious navigators and native English speakers – we think that makes a difference."

So AngelNav may compare well with some other apps, but how does the capability to plot traditional chartwork on the screen work?

"This is where we think that AngelNav is different," Tom tells us. "The usual waypoints and routes you'd expect are a 'given', but now you can plot three-point fixes from bearings off a handbearing

compass as you would on a paper chart. And when your fix is plotted and in the log book, vector diagrams for course to steer or estimated position are easy to create."

This capability could be particularly useful if there is a GPS failure. In the Royal Institute of Navigation proposal on electronic navigation, one of the key recommendations is: "All chart Display Systems (both mobile and fixed systems) must have the ability to plot visual (and radar if installed) bearings (at least four lines) easily on charted features in order to create position fixes as a backup/check or in case of loss of GNSS fix."

Tom concludes: "For us, AngelNav means we can keep in touch with traditional methods of navigation – even if GPS takes a break and our paper backup isn't all it might be. AngelNav's charts will work equally well using electronic navigation-based GPS or old-fashioned, reliable, analogue inputs. Our aim was to put thinking navigators in charge of their own destiny."

Tom Cunliffe is a CA member, recently retired Yachtmaster Instructor Examiner and a Fellow of the Royal Institute of Navigation. He presents the YouTube channel *Yachts and Yarns*, and is the author of many top-selling text books on navigation and seamanship. See www.tomcunliffe.com.

Bill Aylward is an ocean sailor, a retired eye surgeon and a software developer.



Seafood special

Bjørn Riis-Johannessen with varied crew cruised the Norwegian coast from Lofoten to Ålesund in his Aphrodite 37, *Adélie*, while fishing for crabs and other seabed dwellers

"This is the worst summer weather we have had for as long as I can remember", one of the old salts I was chatting to in the Ålesund harbour told me. And they do have their fair share of bad weather there, at the north-west corner of the Norwegian coast. There was a lot more of it to come, but first rewind...

We were on our return journey from Lofoten back to Sweden on an amazing spring cruise up and down the Norwegian coast. The coast line of Nordland county, Helgelandskysten, roughly from Brønnøysund to Lofoten beats any part of the Norwegian coast, at least that's what I think!

We set off from Reine at the southern end of Lofoten on a wet and foggy day. We had timed the crossing of Moskstraumen for slack water. This is a system of tidal eddies and whirlpools, one of the strongest in the world, out in wide open waters and should definitely be passed with some caution. Even at slack water, we got a clear impression of the forces at play here, but got safely across to Værøy, our last stop at Lofoten.

First stop on the mainland was Helligvær, the archipelago west of Bodø and we met up with Hans Jakob Valderhaug on "Anna", well known to many CA members cruising the northern waters.

Do not try to retrieve a crab pot from a yacht in 30kt gusts with an ugly lee shore 50m away

This was also to be our first try to set our newly acquired crab pot. Overboard it went, pot, line and float. Well, we were clearly not quite up to speed on crab pot procedures and when we came to retrieve it the next morning, we could just see the float about a meter under water. You could blame the tide or the length of the line, but either way, it didn't make much difference. After much ado and launching a kayak, we got the pot back onboard, - empty.

Next stop was Bliksvær, some 15 Nm further south. It is not very crowded there. The pilot information boasts a permanent inhabitation of 1! Still, facilities

include shore power and a pit loo by the visitors pontoon that takes about three yachts. But what Bliksvær lacks in conveniences, it makes up many fold with its nature, birdlife and wild flowers galore. Another empty crab pot.

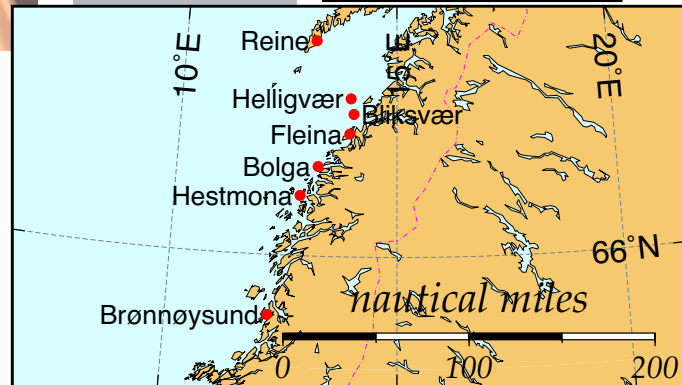
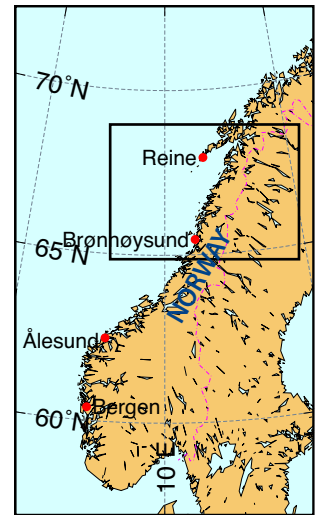
After an enjoyable nature walk the next morning, we set off for Selvågen anchorage at the island of Fleina, some 20 Nm south. Crab pot set, under the beady eyes of a white tail eagle, we entered the well sheltered anchorage and found good holding ground. A great place for kayaking and a scramble up the nearby mountain.

Up until this point the weather had been pretty good, but change was clearly in the air. YR.no (the Norwegian weather service) was definitely right about that and we woke up to 30 knot gusts. We raised the anchor and were ready to leave, with only the small issue of retrieving the crab pot outside the lagoon before we could get on our way. Here's a piece of advice: do not try to retrieve a crab pot, lines and all from a yacht in 30kt gusts with an ugly lee

Adélie and Anna at Helligvær



Curlew at Bliksvær



shore about 50m away. After one hairy attempt, we quickly decided this was a no go. So, back into the lagoon and we drifted around there for a hour or so until the wind had dropped a bit. Successful retrieval, 51 starfish, but no crabs. Noises from the crew about whether this crab effort was really worth it.

We stayed the night at Bolga harbour. A modern setup catering for sports fishermen, with nice facilities and a good restaurant and bar with friendly staff. Next morning we set off south in good spirits and nice weather, although not much wind. There is one amazing stop after another as you head on south, - Nordfjorden under the Svartisen glacier, Hestmona with Hestmannen mountain and a slightly airy 600m climb to the top. There is also Sleneset, where we set the crab pot and finally got something – three crabs! We talked to one of the guys hanging around the harbour and told him we didn't have much luck with the crab pot, full of lovely, rotten fish. Oh no, he said. You mustn't use rotten fish. Crabs don't like that. Use fresh fish. Well, that certainly made a difference. After that, we got crabs every time we put the pot out. Another lesson learned!

We had a crew change in Brønnøysund and we stayed there a couple of days.

Ann and Susanne left, and Kielan and Paula embarked. Paula is from Patagonia and travels the world working as a chef in fine dining establishments. Paula will harvest and prepare anything that lives in the sea and got right down to it. The next two weeks was a non-stop feast.

Heading on south there are endless great stops you can make along the way. Sør-Gjæslingan a bit south of Rørvik and the island of Villa. We had heard great things about the island of Villa and the surrounding archipelago and decided we would stop there. It was agreed we should have fresh fish for supper and made a quick stop underway. It is not easy to bottom jig, which proved to be our most productive way to fish, from a yacht. With a bit of wind and current, it is pretty difficult to keep your line more or less vertical to the bottom.

So, the procedure was: Do we want fresh fish for supper? Yess! OK, you have five minutes, while I hold the boat on the engine. Go! There is so much fish. We had fresh fish for supper most days for six weeks, following this procedure.

Arriving at Villa, we tried to anchor, but the holding was not very good so we tied up to the guest pontoon instead, which has room for exactly one yacht. There is a pit loo there, but that's it. But who needs anything else in such surroundings. Another nature walk and a long paddle in the kayaks, winding our ways among the skerries. A kayakers' paradise! And the weather had picked up again.

We wanted to stop at Halten, a remote lighthouse/fishing community of old, but these days only inhabited during the summer. It has lots of birds and lots of fish. We got talking to a fisherman who had just come in, and was gutting a 30kg ling. We both agreed ling is one of the best fish around and he said I could have one of the little ones. I was happy to accept, so he threw me a 10kg fish that kept us well fed for a while in Paula's expert hands.

Helgelandskysten



Bliksvær





Ann with the first (modest) crab catch



Heading on south with a number of stops on the way, we got to Kristiansund – in driving rain. The weather had now definitely taken a long-term turn for the worse, with rain and strong wind on the nose. We had to refuel, which is not great in a continuous downpour, but I thought we could just about handle it without getting water down the filling pipe. It was not to be! Within seconds the skies opened and a good slug of water found its way down into the fuel tank. A peculiarity, or should I say, a really bad design, of *Adélie's* fuel tank means I cannot get into the tank to insert a drain to pump out the dregs until the top 40 litres of fuel has been consumed. Otherwise it will just flood into the bilges.

I had a good supply of primary fuel filters with water drain onboard, so I reckoned we could deal with it under way. The weather was now getting really nasty. Driving rain, air temperature 8° and wind gusting 30+ knots. We were soon due to cross Hustavika, an exposed bit of sea that can be a bit nasty on a lee shore. Just south of Kristiansund there is a short inshore passage that keeps you sheltered part of the way. It is well marked, but there is not a lot of room and depth.

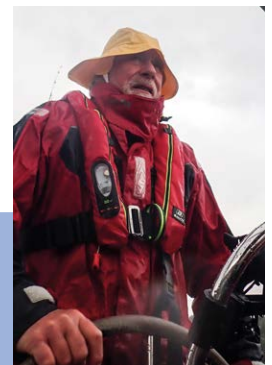
Just as we entered the narrows, the alarm went – there was water in the fuel. There were 30kt gusts, rocks and skerries everywhere and not much water. I thought I might be able to drain the water from the filter with the engine running, but no way; it stopped dead. A quick rush up front and we had the anchor down in record time. It took a bit of time to set, but finally got there, uncomfortably close to the rocks. We seemed to have very good holding so got on with the fuel filter. I had no idea how much water was in the tank, but by running the engine and emptying the filter drain several times, we seemed to be getting to the bottom of the water.

Just as we entered the narrows in 30kt gusts, the alarm went – there was water in the fuel

We got the engine up and running again and after a while felt it was safe to get going. We started hauling in the anchor, which was pretty heavy going. Then we saw why! The power cable for one of the outlying islands was well and truly hooked. Slight panic. This could be expensive!

Luckily the cable wasn't stuck in the anchor, just hanging over it, so I thought a crash drop might sort it out. It did, and we motored on, pretending we didn't know anything about it. There were no references later in the local papers to islands in the dark, so we got away with it. There was a cable warning way off on the shore and I'm sure also in the charts, but when you're drifting at speed towards the rocks with no engine, you tend to not worry about details like that. But, another lesson learned, I suppose.

The weather had now definitely settled into the "worst summer I can remember" mode: strong wind on the nose up the fjords, cold and driving rain and currents that always seemed to run against us. It was slow, wet progress, but that's sailing and spirits remained high, helped by Paula's magic with assorted seafood catches in the galley. We made it to Ålesund for Paula's departure and preparations for the remaining leg back to Sweden.



Bjørn & Jackie Riis-Johannessen live in Geneva and keep their boat, an Aphrodite 37 acquired in 2018, on the Swedish west coast. They have sailed extensively in the Baltic region on several sailing expeditions in the Antarctic where Bjørn has organised and led sailing/ski mountaineering adventures. In 2022 Bjørn took *Adélie* from Sweden to Lofoten and back and in 2023 to the northern isles, Hebrides and Scottish west coast.



Kayakers' paradise



The one-boat pontoon

Iggy Creek

Would you be willing to share a favourite harbour, anywhere in the world? If you can write 500-1500 words about it and have high-res photos, please contact editor@theca.org.uk

Tony Montgomery-Smith generously shares one of his favourite Ionian anchorages

Iggy Creek lies just north of the main channel into Igoumenitsa – one of the main ferry harbours of Western Greece. Its proper name is Ormos Valtou, meaning “swampy bay”, of which there are dozens, mostly like this one no longer swampy. So we call it Iggy Creek, which gives a clue to its location and current nature.

It's a favourite for several reasons:

- It's wild and beautiful
- There are lots of jumping fish and other wildlife
- It never seems to get crowded even in high season
- It's safe in a storm, with calm seas and good holding
- There are great beaches nearby
- There are nice cycle rides to Igoumenitsa and through orange groves further inland.

To approach, you follow the ferries heading into Igoumenitsa towards Ak Vatatsa. They leave the headland to port, but you leave it to starboard. The creek has three bays. The first is full of

fish farms to starboard, with a recreation centre for charterers to port. The second is lovely, but rather deep and only partly sheltered. The third is most sheltered with depths from around 4 to 6 metres. The pictures show the wooded hillsides almost surrounding the anchorage, with a gap for the entrance and another to the east towards the distant mountains. The only building is a fisherman's hut by the landing place in the south west corner.

Iggy Creek is our go-to destination if serious bad weather is forecast. We have sat there comfortably with 40kt gusts blowing across the deck. The water is too murky to see your anchor, but seems to be fairly soft mud with no weed. When we raise the anchor it (and the chain) comes up covered in mud, which washes off easily enough, and no weed. We have never dragged there with our Rocna, and most yachts seem secure. However, I have seen two yachts drag. One was a professionally skippered charter cat in a force 2 with only about 10m of chain out. The other a round-the-world American yacht in a storm – I have no idea why they had a problem. I guess a plough type anchor might do just that, and leave a

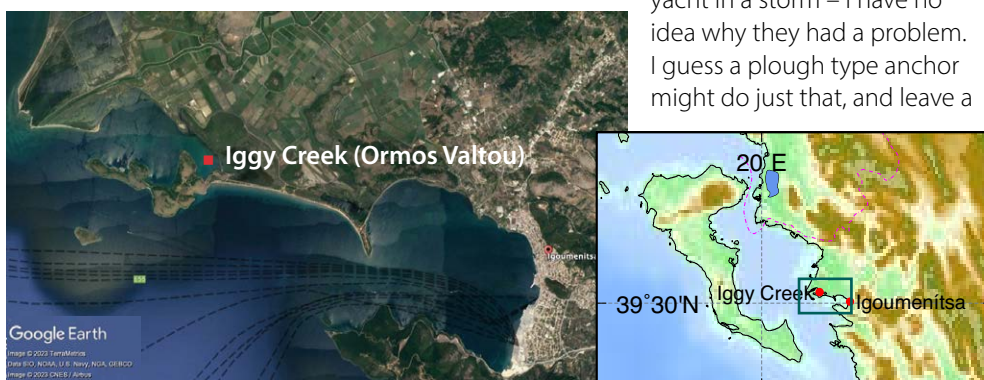
long furrow in the mud.

The main beach looks south from the shore facing the main channel into Igoumenitsa. It is about 3km long and, all too rare in Greece, is lovely soft sand and shelves gently away from the shore. There are several beach bars, and, at the west end, rocks with lots of fish to delight snorkellers. If you head west along the unpaved road from the landing place, you reach a beautiful but stony beach overlooking the island that marks the other side of the ferry channel.

Last season the fisherman who operates from the landing place sometimes locked the gate when he was away, and there was no way to climb over or round without causing damage. We took to landing on the south shore of the inlet and hacking our way through the undergrowth. Secateurs are advised.

If you have bikes and can get them ashore, the 11km ride into Igoumenitsa is delightful, first along an almost traffic-free road by the beach, then on a cycle track. Igoumenitsa itself is no tourist town, but it has every shop you might want (except a chandlery), a central square to sit over a coffee and a shoreside park just north of the ferry port. Best to cycle back before the afternoon wind picks up!

After retirement, Tony and Anne spent 10 years getting their catamaran *Razzmatazz* to Greece... and are still loving it.



CA London lectures, autumn 2023

From sketching in the Antarctic to photography in the English Channel, learn something new from each one of our talks

All events are open to any member, subject only to restrictions on numbers. Members of CA London section will receive weekly reminders, as usual, with the booking links. If you are not on the section mailing list, please check the events listings on the CA website.

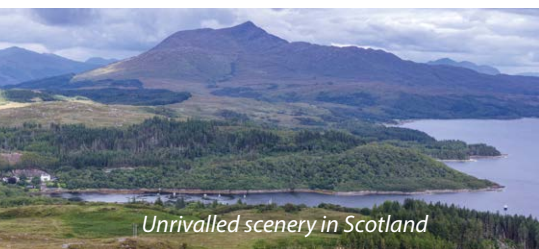


Jimmy on Aventura Zero

Wednesday 4 October

Planning a safe voyage in these changing times, Jimmy Cornell

In recent years, global weather conditions have seen major changes. Sailors planning to leave on an offshore voyage are rightly concerned about how this may affect their plans. The focus of this talk is a framework for planning, preparing, and bringing a voyage to a safe conclusion, even in these changing times, by taking into account all relevant factors. Accomplished sailor, public speaker and author, Jimmy has sailed over 200,000 miles in all oceans of the world with three circumnavigations and voyages to Antarctica and through the North West Passage. He was recently presented with the Duchess of Kent Trophy for his contribution to cruising in small boats.



Unrivalled scenery in Scotland

Wednesday 11 October

Whimbrel's Cruise to Scotland, Nick and Alison Boxall

Nick and Alison invite you: "The weather's

rubbish or so they say, the scenery is outstanding, if you can see it, the midges are hellish, if they are out. However, banish all those thoughts from your mind. All our photos are blue sky days, the scenery is unrivalled anywhere in Europe and you can see it. The people are incredibly helpful and friendly and the hidden anchorages and off-the-beaten-track lochs make this a magical cruising ground for as many years as you can spare. We have been visited by dolphins, seen minke whales, orcas and humpbacked whales, been serenaded by seals and divebombed by puffins. Please join us as we recall, through photographs and videos our unorthodox log for 2022-23."



John Paul-Jones & the battle of Flamborough Head. Image: Wikimedia/Kalki

Wednesday 18 October

The Battle of Flamborough Head, James Hodgson

In August 1779, more than four years after the start of the American War of Independence, a squadron of seven ships, under the command of John Paul Jones on the *Bonhomme Richard*, left the French port of Lorient to cruise for "prizes" off the British coast. Its task was to bring the Revolutionary War to Europe.

In September 1779, a convoy of 77 merchant ships carrying supplies for the Royal Navy departed the Danish port of Elsinor, escorted by HMS *Serapis*, a brand new frigate, under the command of Captain Richard Pearson, and the *Countess of Scarborough*, an armed escort, under Captain Richard Piercy.

The two fleets came head-to-head off the Yorkshire Coast and the ensuing Battle of Flamborough Head became

Lone penguin, from Claudia Myatt's Antarctic sketchbooks



one of the most celebrated battles in US Naval History. This talk will provide a full historical context, looking at the political and social background and key protagonists as well as the tactics of the battle itself. As we approach its 250th Anniversary, James asks the question: who actually won the Battle of Flamborough Head?



Wednesday 25 October

The Port of London Authority, John Dillon-Leetch

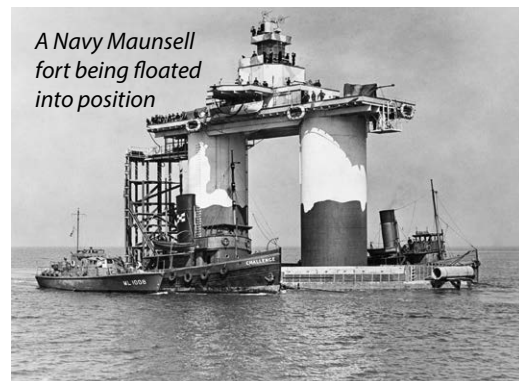
Details to come.

Wednesday 1 November

Platforms, pirates and pornography, Andy Beharrell

What connects Screaming Lord Sutch, Gianni Versace, the actor Ralf Little (*Death in Paradise*) and Doctor Who? While this sounds like a question from *Only Connect*, the answer actually lies

A Navy Maunsell fort being floated into position

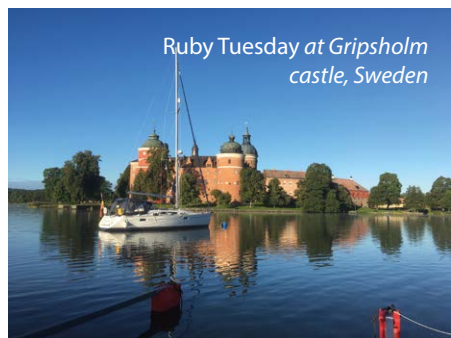




Left, *The moon over Culatra in the Algarve*, by James Kenning. Right, *Viv & Linda Fox's atmospheric shot of St Peter Port, Guernsey*



in England's east coast waters – the Maunsell Forts. These are a series of army and navy forts which were built in the second world war offshore in the North Sea to protect us from enemy air-force and naval incursions. They played a crucial role in early warning for air and sea raids. Abandoned after the war their history was then varied and, as you can see from the characters mentioned, at times unexpected. Some were occupied by pirate radio stations while others were used as film locations. One even became a micronation. This talk looks at this unique history and the mixed cast of characters involved with these platforms. The talk examines what is left of them and the unique legacy which they have left behind.



Ruby Tuesday at Gripsholm castle, Sweden

Wednesday 8 November Exploring the ancient seaways of the Hanseatic League and Vikings, Robin and Brigitte Matthews

The winners of the Lacey Trophy will describe voyages they made in 2021 in southern Denmark, in 2022 along the Baltic Coast of Germany and eastern Sweden, and in 2023 to the Åland Islands and the Gulf of Bothnia. En route, they explored the old Hanseatic League cities of Lübeck, Wismar, Rostok, Stralsund and Greifswald, which were part of a vast trading network stretching from Britain to Russia back in medieval times, and many Viking sites, including the former Viking trading centre at Birka in Lake Mälaren. The talk will focus on the trips themselves and the fascinating history and geography of the Baltic.

Wednesday 15 November Cruising Association AGM

Wednesday 22 November The Algarve & Orca Alley, James Kenning

In June 2022, our most recent Hanson Cup winner, James and his wife Jenny joined the ARC Portugal rally to sail their Regina 43 *Arkyla* from the UK south to the sun, to base the boat for a season in Lagos, Portugal. James will briefly talk about the advantages of joining the rally for crossing Biscay and making passage down the Atlantic Portugal coast. He will then discuss in more detail cruising the Algarve, and the pros and cons of basing a boat in Lagos in terms of both sailing and maintenance.

To complete the talk, James will discuss the current issue of orca attacks on sailboats in this cruising area, highlight some of the divergent thinking, and relate the strategies that he used to mitigate the risks of attack when moving *Arkyla*, in May 23, along the Algarve and through the Straits to the safety of Gibraltar and the gateway to the Med.

Wednesday 29 November River Blackwater to both sides of the Channel, Viv and Linda Fox

After several years cruising the Baltic in their sailing yacht, Viv and Linda bought a motor boat and spent their first full season on *Ruby* in 2022 doing an English channel loop during the hottest summer ever, then spending October's unprecedented warmth and

sun on the Thames. As cautious boaters, Viv will describe the challenges and joys (mostly joys!) of cruising the Normandy coast, Guernsey and the southwest of England. The Thames in October too is fabulous, and especially so long after the summer crowds have left and the leaves are starting to reveal their best autumn colours. Viv and Linda won the Dolphin Cup for their log.

Wednesday 6 December Southern Ocean Sketchbook, Claudia Myatt

Claudia Myatt is a marine illustrator and cartoonist with a passion for sketchbook voyaging. In 2019 she sailed round Cape Horn on a traditional Dutch sailing ship, taking sketchbooks but no camera on her two-month voyage. Two years later she was back in the Southern Ocean as an Artist in Residence and guest of the Royal Navy on board icebreaker, HMS *Protector*, on a tour of duty to South Georgia and Antarctica. She returned with tales to tell of life on board two very different ships and the challenges of sketching at sea. This is our annual joint event with the Royal Institute of Navigation.

Wednesday 13 December CA carol service and supper

Traditional carol service at St Anne's Limehouse, followed by an informal Christmas supper at CA House. Details and times will be published later along with a booking link.

Bookings

Events start promptly at 7pm unless otherwise stated. To book to attend any lecture at CA House, and to indicate whether you'll be ordering food, go to **News & Events > Events > BOOK VENUE** on the CA website. Please pay in advance on the website, or by contactless on the door. Individual lecture tickets Members £4, Non-Members £7. Season tickets available to Members at £32.

Webinar links will be published before each event. Any problems with the booking system, call or email Samantha on 020 7537 2828 / office@theca.org.uk. There is no charge for viewing online.

Chertsey lock, with self-service sign visible on the right

Going upriver

Cathy Brown ventured into England's inland waters, for a substantial fee, and found not much in the way of information or services



Our main cruising adventure this year was a venture up the non-tidal Thames – back in May.

This was a complete change of scene for us – something you can only do in a boat without a mast – and we thoroughly enjoyed it. But we felt it could have been even better, with a little more care from the Environment Agency.

You have to pay the EA for a licence to venture upriver beyond Teddington Locks: £330 for a month for *Attitude* (the fee is related to boat size).

With our 13 metres LOA, 4m beam and air draft of just over 3m, theoretically we could have got as far as Oxford, but we did not want to hurry, taking time to explore ashore as well as afloat. We reached Wallingford (71 miles above Teddington) before it was time to turn round and head homeward.

We enjoyed a surreally calm passage through the Thames Estuary to reach London, and going through the capital past all those landmarks was a huge thrill – for me, busy taking photographs, anyway. The skipper found the water-taxis and all those bridges (30 from Tower Bridge to Teddington) quite stressful.

We were surprised, when we paid our dues at Teddington (disappointingly, you cannot buy a visitors' licence online in advance) not to receive any form of printed guide. A lot of information is provided in phone apps, but they are a poor substitute for the extremely helpful leaflet we were provided with when we transited the Caledonian Canal (for a similar fee) last year.

We would have liked a guide to the whereabouts of EA moorings, and the facilities available at each lock – some have water hoses, a few have black water pump-out, surprisingly many do not even have gash bins.

The licence fee is clearly needed to pay for the manning and operation of the locks. But at least once a day we came upon a lock in "self-service" mode, and some pointers on how to do it yourself would have been particularly welcome.

When we came across a lock in 'self-service' mode we were stumped... and had no instructions

Because it was early season we were mostly on our own (which was delightful except when we needed advice) and the first self-service experience stumped us. The locks operate hydraulically, from push-button control panels, which lack clear instructions. It's easy enough once you have had it properly explained.

Like most water-users we appreciate the need to pump black water ashore and dispose of litter responsibly. But shouldn't the EA be making that as easy as possible? Too many of their pump out facilities weren't working – and they were expensive when they were. It's almost an encouragement to break the rules.

Live-aboard boats, some of which obviously never move, are increasingly taking up visitors' mooring places. What happens to their waste? Permanent

parkers are becoming so prevalent that we were often struggling to find mooring spaces in early season with few boats on the move. We wondered what it would be like in mid-summer when the hire fleets were out in force. And where we did find visitors' moorings, whether provided by the EA or local authorities, too many were lacking mooring rings or bollards, never mind electricity plug-in, which we only saw once.

Because of the low speed limit (8 km/h or 4.3 knots) our batteries were not charging as we motored, and we were forced to run the generator every day to keep the boat systems running. This isn't ideal for the environment, either.

Cruising the Thames is a wonderful experience, with amazing waterside property to ogle, delightful historic towns to visit, beautiful scenery, rich birdlife and plantlife, and pubs and restaurants to suit every budget.

But it could be even better if the EA took its environmental responsibilities a bit more seriously.

Cathy, a former editor of *Cruising*, is exploring new options with her husband Richard on their motor boat, *Attitude*. In their Arcona 410 *Brave* and her sailing predecessors they raced and cruised from Spain to Sweden and sailed around the UK and Ireland.

