



Nothing in Sight

Thursday Aug 14th – we woke up to some serious fog. After waiting a couple hours for it to clear we finally gave up and took off at 10:30am in the fog. The biggest hurdle was right outside the bay trying to navigate the narrow passage through the Chatham Islands.

With the radar and chartplotter providing a bit of reassurance, we inch our way through the islands then north up Haro Strait. In the calm of the fog its always eerie to see boats show up on radar but not actually be able to see them until you're right on them. I suppose it would be kind of like flying an airplane at night – you're almost totally navigating by electronics. You get a little used to it the more you do it but its never really comfortable.

As we make it up to Sidney the fog broke and became a beautiful day. Our destination today is Russell Island for a 2 night stay. We arrive at 2:20pm, traveling 19.07nm having bucked a strong ebbing current the whole way.

We anchored off Russell and took the dinghy out to set the shrimp pot. Some friends of ours with an American Tug 49 – who we happened to meet here last year – were also out setting their shrimp pot – funny to meet them again at the same place. A relaxing evening kayaking, paddleboarding and we

took the dinghy around the island. Unfortunately no luck in the shrimp pot.

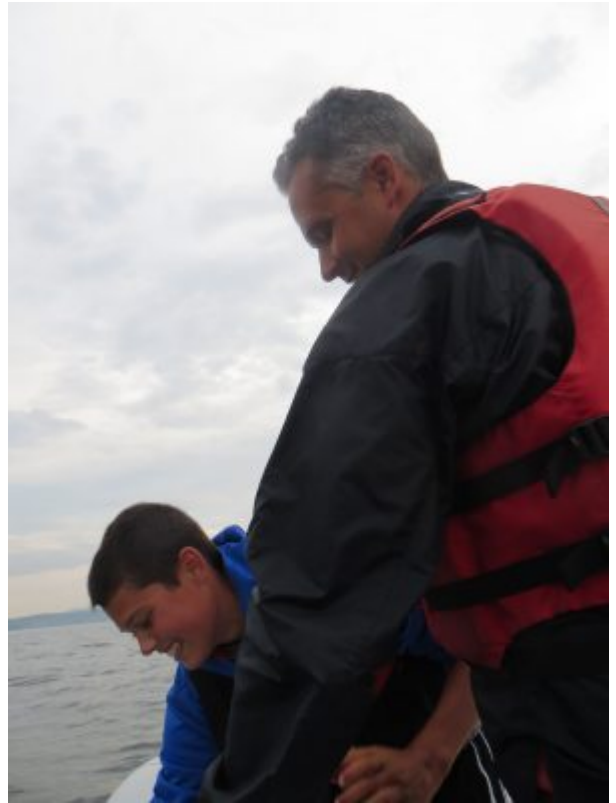
The next day was spent at anchor, hiking the island trails and pulling the heavy shrimp pot – by hand – 200’ – for absolutely nothing each time! We took a nice dinghy ride to Fulford – a little town just up the inlet. Hiked to a church and picked up a few things at their tiny grocery store. Our friends invited us for drinks on their boat and we had a great time with them for the evening.



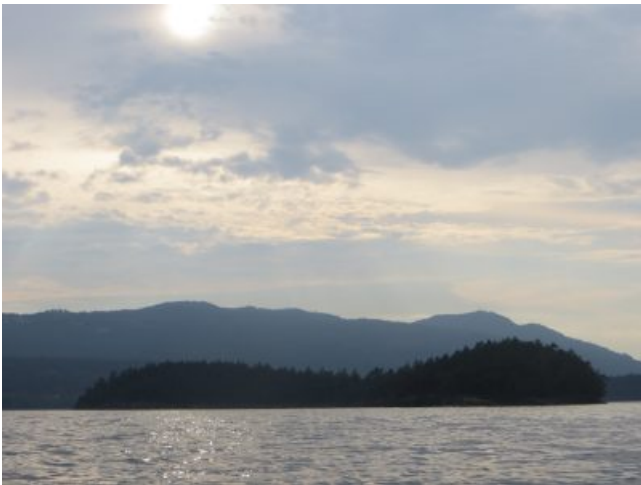
Foggy!



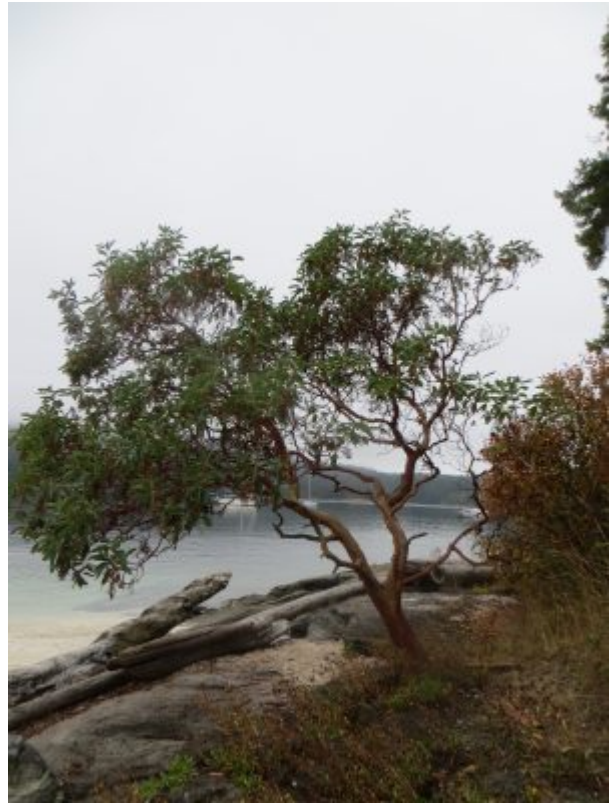
Anchorage at Russell



It took two to pull shrimp
pot



Blackberries on the trail



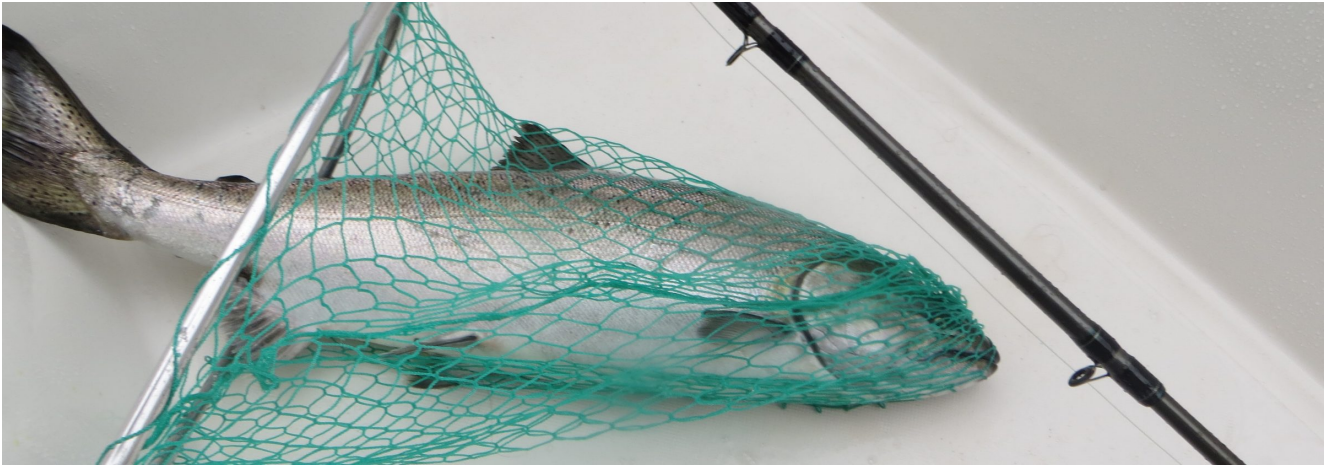
Midden beaches at Russell Island





Bike shop in Fulford





Raining Fish

Wednesday Aug 13th – It poured down rain all night sitting at the docks in Victoria. We woke up to cloudy skies and the rain continuing. A lazy morning hoping it would let up. Realizing it wasn't going to, I prepared the fishing gear to try and catch a salmon in the Strait of Juan de Fuca just outside Victoria harbor.

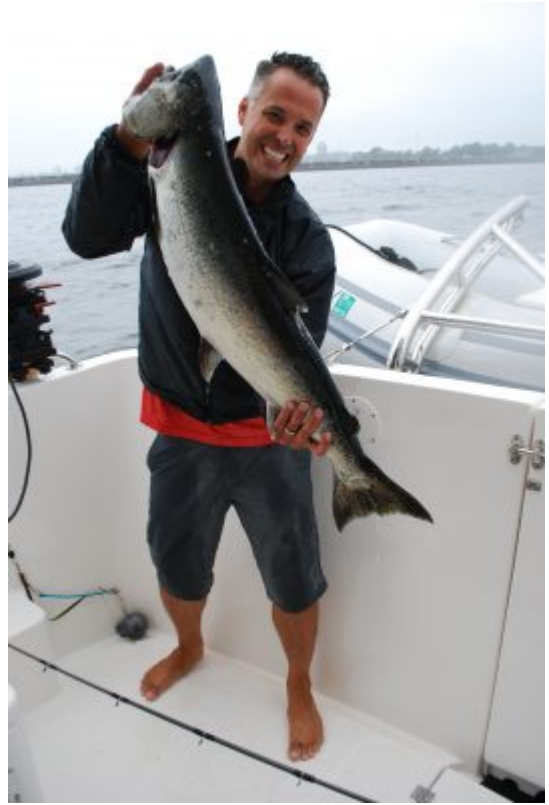
Still pouring rain we left the Victoria docks at 9:50am – no set destination in mind – just the determination to catch a fish. Just outside the harbor – rain still coming down hard – we lowered the downrigger.

5 minutes in – Julie driving the boat, me and Skylar watching for a bite, I see the rod go crazy! I grab the rod – Julie goes to neutral and grabs the net – up with the downrigger, all is ready to land the fish. He wasn't coming in easy though. Just as I get him 20' from the boat he would take off time and time again. Finally I got a good glimpse as he rolled on the surface just 10' from the boat. Then he made another run out to sea. He looked huge! Julie started freaking out saying she can't believe how big he is and she has no idea how to net him. Finally he comes within a couple feet of the boat, lays sideways on the surface and heads right under the swim step. I knew that if he got under the swim

step he had a good chance of getting tangled in the boat, so I gently pulled him away from the swim step closer to the net. Luckily his head goes right in the net but Julie can't get him up in the boat. I set the pole down while the two of us lift him in the boat. We couldn't believe our eyes – he didn't even fit in the net. For the next 10 minutes we all celebrated like crazy people!

We fished a little more with no luck then decided to take our winnings and get out of there. The Royal Victoria Yacht Club was just 10.44nm away down the coast so we decided to use our reciprocal moorage privileges. A great place to clean the fish and stay the night. Once docked Skylar and I cleaned the fish – the fillets were huge! We didn't have a scale but the fish was 38" long – a really nice King Salmon.







Afternoon Tea

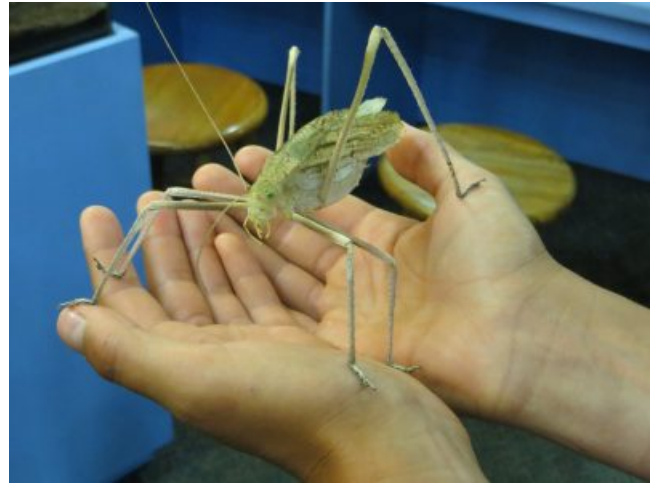
7:50am Monday Aug 11th – With a beautiful day ahead we decided to backtrack south down Vancouver Island to Victoria. Another place we have never been in our own boat and it was fun navigating new grounds for the 20.43nm trip.

We will spend 2 nights here exploring the city. We were lucky enough to get dock space right in front of the Empress Hotel – A great setting right downtown.

The bug zoo was awesome and all the restaurants we went to were really good. After an hour of indecision on what backpack to get for school, Skylar finally picked one out at MEC (REI like store) happy with his decision.

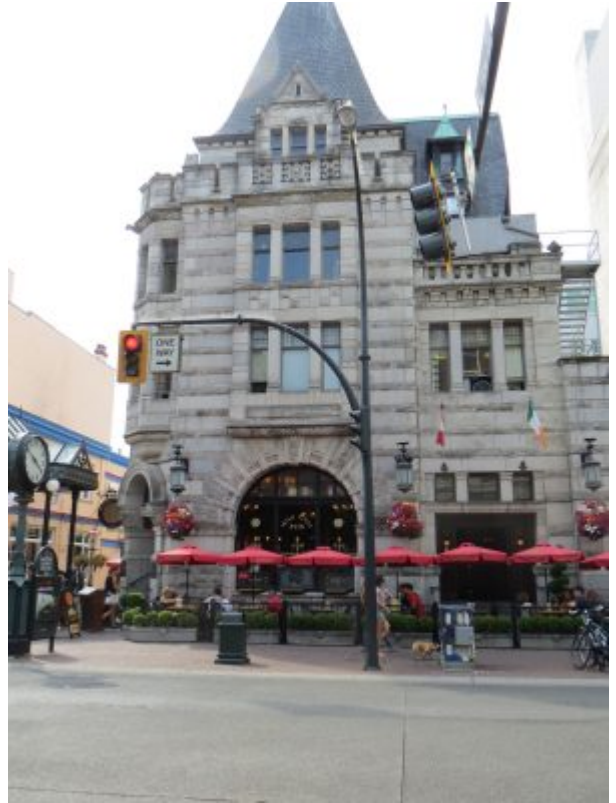
We decided to splurge and do the afternoon tea at the Empress. At \$60 per person (\$30 for Ava) it seemed extremely overpriced and probably not the best quality food – but we still wanted the experience. Skylar thought it was absolutely stupid – “really, tea and crumpets” – and Ava had to be convinced by explaining she was going to be a little princess. She finally said, “Ok but I am NOT drinking the tea!”

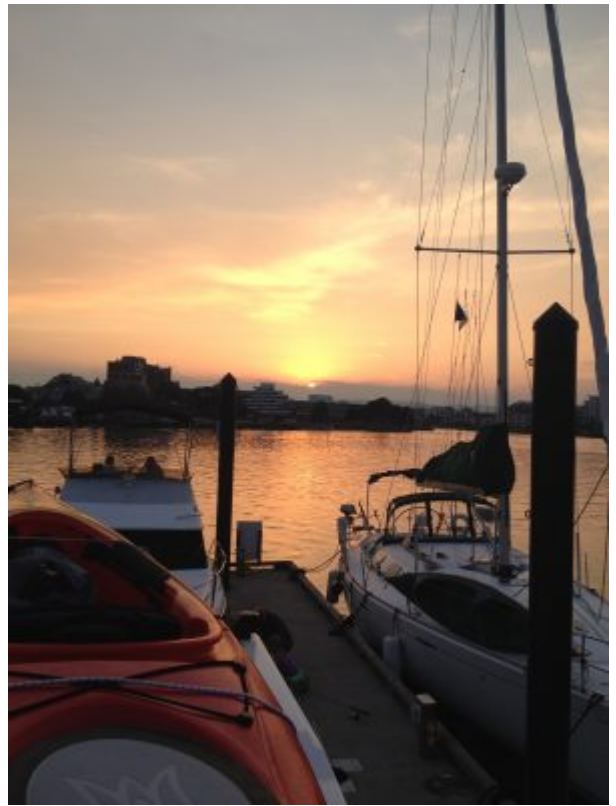
Surprisingly it was really great food. A whole lunch actually – more than we could eat. The kids absolutely loved it and it was an awesome experience for all of us.



The millipede unbrow









Tea Time!



The spread



Ava had her own special princess tower



Our boat with the Empress Hotel in the background