



Too Cold, Too Cold!

Sunday August 14th it was time to meet up with our friends Todd and Tami. They recently sold their boat but have a new one on the way being delivered via ship from Florida in September. But we were lucky, they were able to borrow Todd's parents boat to come up and spend some time with us.

We pulled anchor at Russell Island as our friends cleared customs at Bedwell. We settled on anchoring together a short distance away at Prevost islands James Bay. Todd anchored and we rafted to him. It was great getting together with good friends and boating buddies, and the kids always have a great time together too. After making sure the anchor was going to hold we decided to get off the boat for a hike. We tried to do this hike a couple years ago but Ava's little legs couldn't quite make it all the way to the end through the steep rocky terrain. This time she was a champ, even running half the time we all had to catch up with the kids.

It was finally hot! After getting back to the boat me and the boys decided it would be wise to cool off with a little swim. Well, actually they swam, I just jumped off the pilothouse, gasped for air as my body hit the 58-degree water then swam as fast as I could like a crazy person to the swim step ladder. After the cool off, we all had a nice dinner together.

We needed some fresh veggies, so the next morning we left the boats anchored in James Bay and made a dinghy run to Ganges Harbor on Salt Spring Island. It was a nice ride all the way into the government docks where we did a little shopping and checked out the town. The kids got ice cream and the adults found the liquor store. We stocked up on some groceries then piled everything in the dinghy for the run back to the big boats.

After pulling anchor from James Bay we made our way to Sidney Spit where we finally found a place to anchor. Sidney Spit looks really open but you have to watch the depth in areas that don't look like they should be shallow. Seeing 4' on your depth sounder is never good even if it is a mud bottom. We set some crab pots and hung out on the beach that evening while the kids ran all over playing in the water and sand.



Todd, Tami, Zach & Brianna
made it up!



Fun Times!



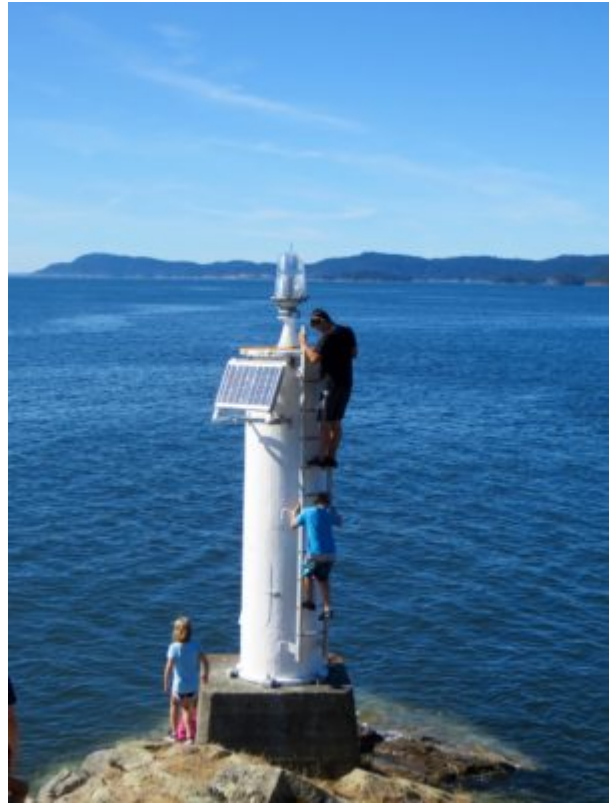


The view from our hike

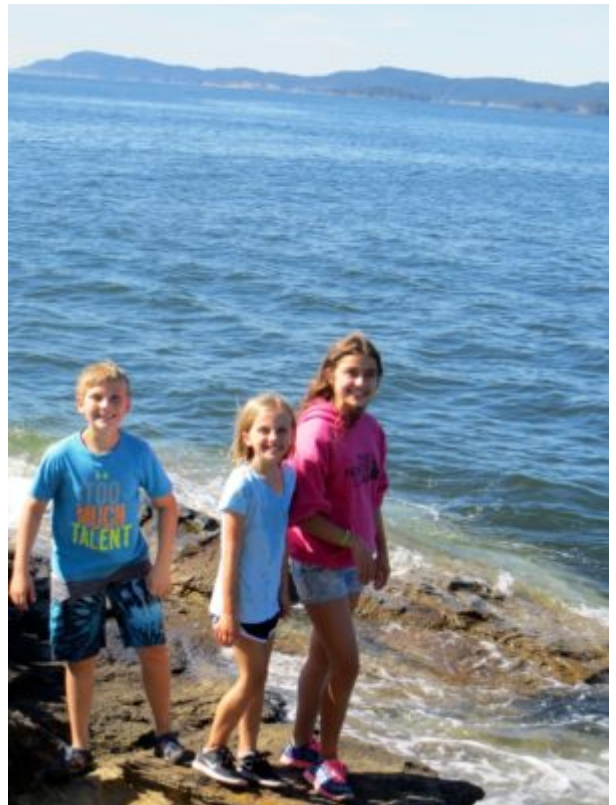




Lilly the dog, so proud!

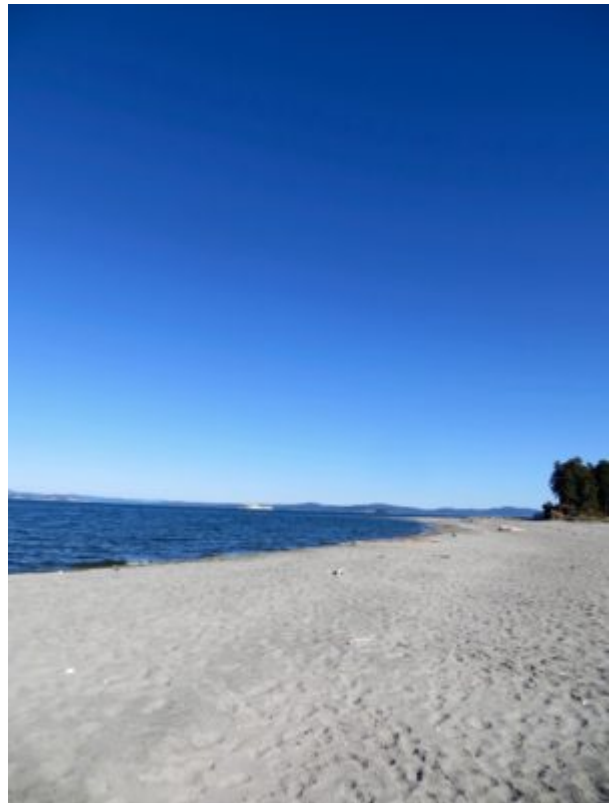


Light station at the end of our hike



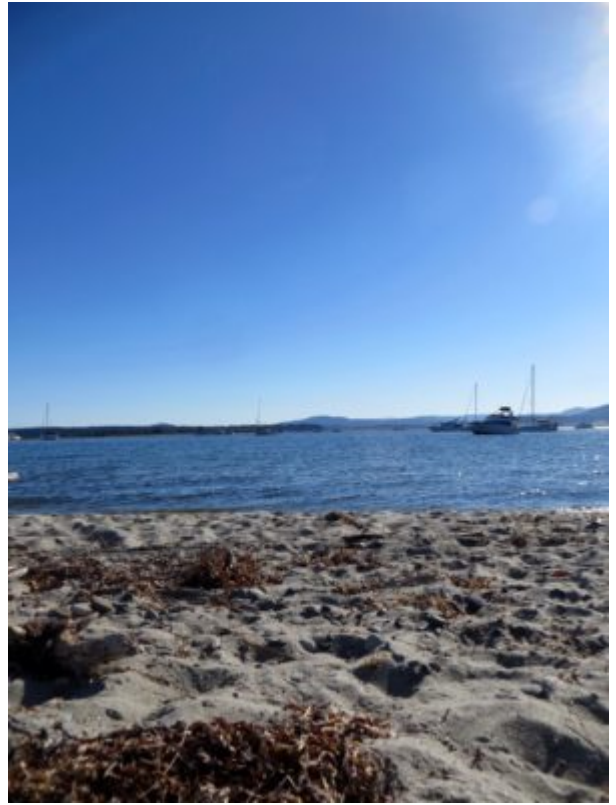


Todd is cruzin in the wind

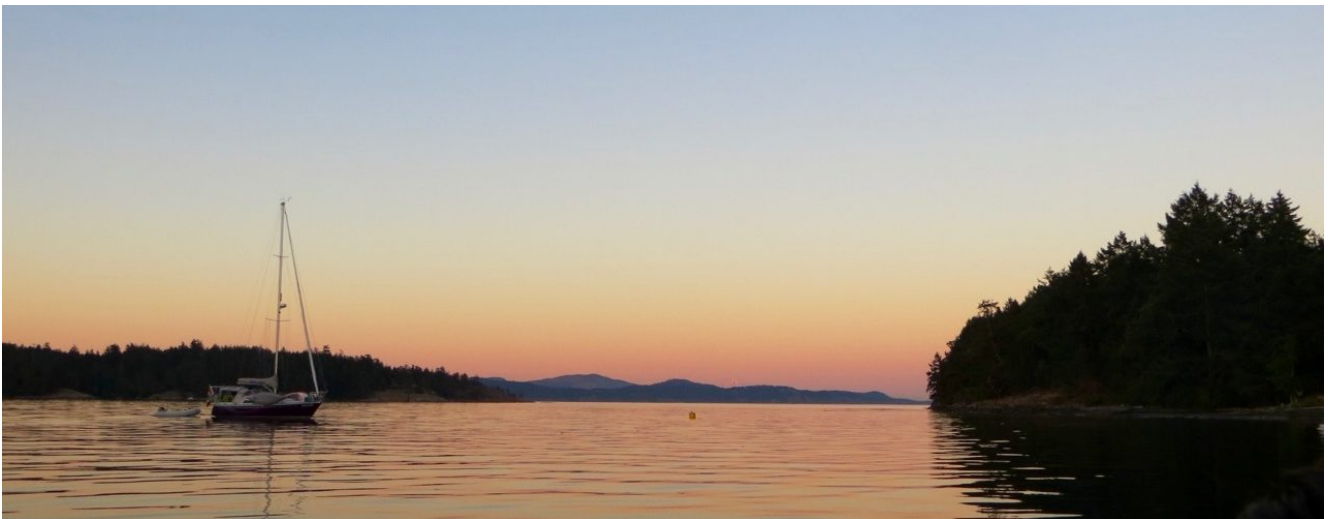




Beer on Sidney Spit



Ava and Brianna having fun on the beach



Koozie Kill

Thursday August 11th – After a lazy morning at Roche Harbor we performed the necessary engine room checks and readied the

boat to set a course for Bedwell Harbor in Canada. Bedwell is one of the places you can clear customs. In a boat, you can cross the boarder but your first stop must be a port of entry (a customs dock). You pull up to the dock, tie off, then only the captain is allowed to pick up a phone at the head of the dock. On the other end is a customs agent that asks you a series of questions. If they don't like your answers they may come down and board your boat but we've never had that happen. I've never really seen much consistency with the questions they ask but one thing is for sure, you must declare exactly how much alcohol you have on board! I'm not sure how much you can have, and I don't think they know either (you can't find much info on it). If the officer feels it too much, they will charge you a hefty tax. I declared our 38 cans of beer and 3.5 bottles of liquor without any pushback!

The wind really started whipping as we entered Bedwell. We clocked 22 knots all the way in at customs dock, a stressful but successful docking experience. After leaving the dock our plan was to anchor in the bay right next door so we motored over and set the hook. After a miserable hour or so in the wind we decided our initial plan to leave the boat and go hiking would not be wise given the severity of the wind and our limited time on anchor watch. It seemed like Bedwell might be its own little vortex of wind so we left to find calmer conditions in a new anchorage. Sure enough after we got out of there, the wind calmed down. We anchored in an old favorite spot, Russell Island's north bay.

Skylar was kayaking when he met a guy who told him where to find Lingcod. He quickly paddled back to our boat and shared the news. He was excited to go catch some fish but I told him we needed to wait until slack water. $\frac{1}{2}$ hour before slack, all 4 of us headed out in the dinghy to try and catch dinner. Sure enough, right at slack, Skylar hooked into a nice Greenling. No sooner did we get that one up and Julie had one on as well. As we brought them up to the surface we realized we forgot a

net, so our pliers made due, grabbing them by the mouth and yanking them in the boat. Ava jumped to the edge of the boat while the fish flopped around in the bottom of the boat. Now, how to kill this thing. Of course we forgot the fish whacker as well. I had an unopened beer in a steel Yeti koozie that will have to do. A few smacks on the head from that thing and we had a couple dead fish.

Greenling are interesting. They don't get quite as big as a regular Lingcod, they like to hang out around kelp and their flesh is a light green color. Not very appetizing except that when you cook it, it turns white like any other Cod fish. Skylar and I cleaned the fish and kept the carcass for crab bait. Nothing went to waste. We set one shrimp pot that night in some pretty strong current. Skylar and Julie told me the buoy and pot were going to wash away but I didn't think so. We left it for the night.

In the morning we rushed out to pull the shrimp pot. Searching, searching, searching I was confident we set it right here I told Julie and Skylar but nothing. "I told you so Dad! I told you so Chris" they said. Oops, maybe I was wrong, it was no where to be found. We spent about 15 minutes looking all over but no luck. Then I remembered I set a marker on the GPS when I set the pot. To the mark we went but no buoy. Then out of the corner of Julie's eye she spotted something just under the surface! It was our pot but the current was pulling it about a foot under the water. . We were so lucky to have seen it but our luck ran out when we pulled the pot with no shrimp. Later we took a dinghy ride to Fulford Harbor where we had lunch at a little restaurant and got some Panko for the Greenling dinner planned that night. The fish was delicious!

We spent one more night at Russell Island for a total of 3 watching the beautiful sunsets, hiking on the island, kayaking and relaxing on the boat.



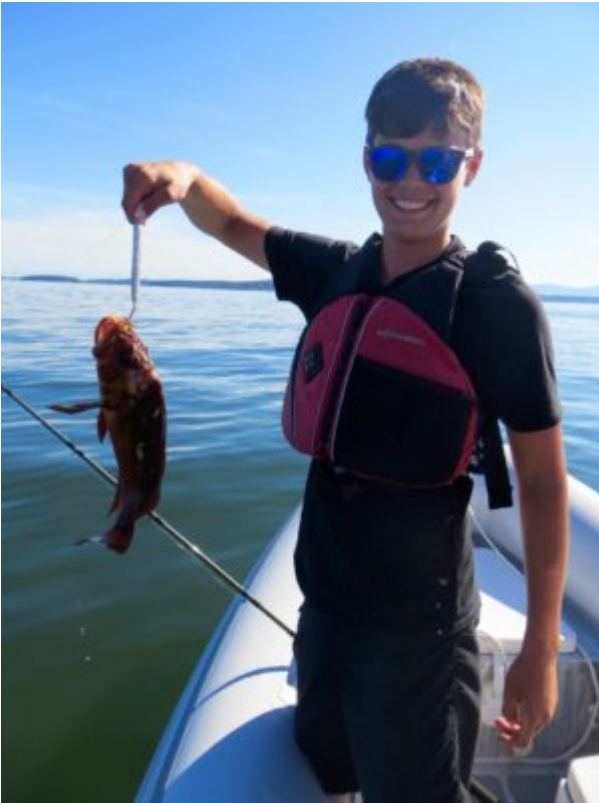
Turn Point Lighthouse on Stewart Isl just before you cross the boarder into Canada



When you enter Canada its customary to fly the flag.



Anchoring at Russell



Skylar nice little rockfish
was thrown back



This is the original cabin
on Russell Island. It was
settled by Hawaiians in the
early 1900's



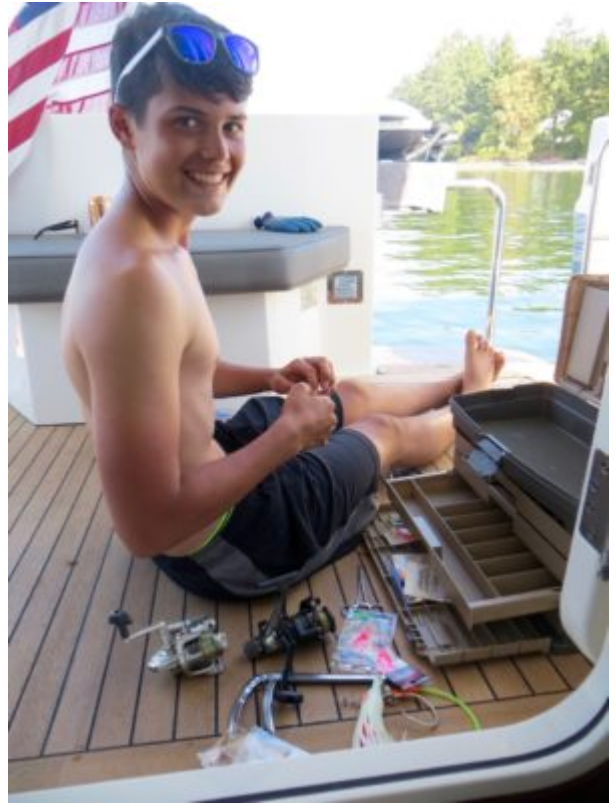




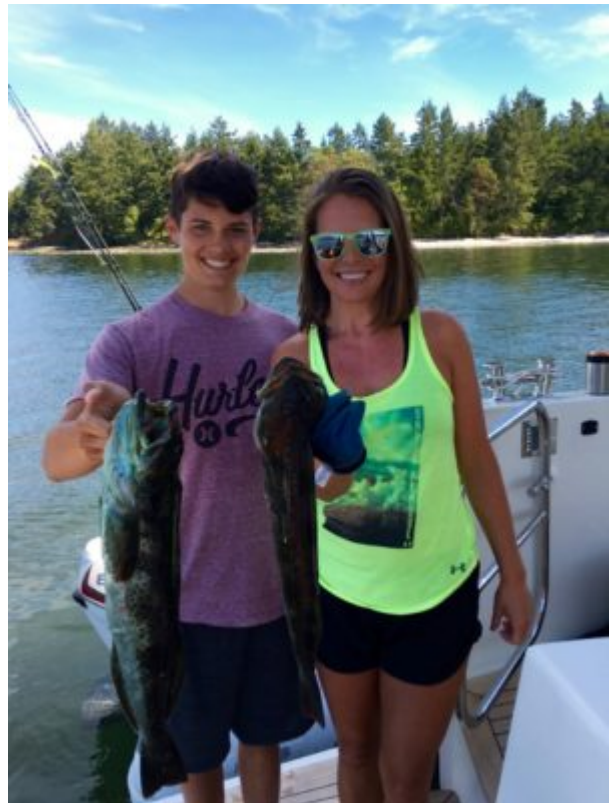
Beautiful Midden beaches on Russell



A whole herd of super fast offshore racing boats came flying into the bay. They were being chased by a helicopter taking pictures. Turns out they were on a poker run going from checkpoint to checkpoint.



Grenling!



Nice Fish!

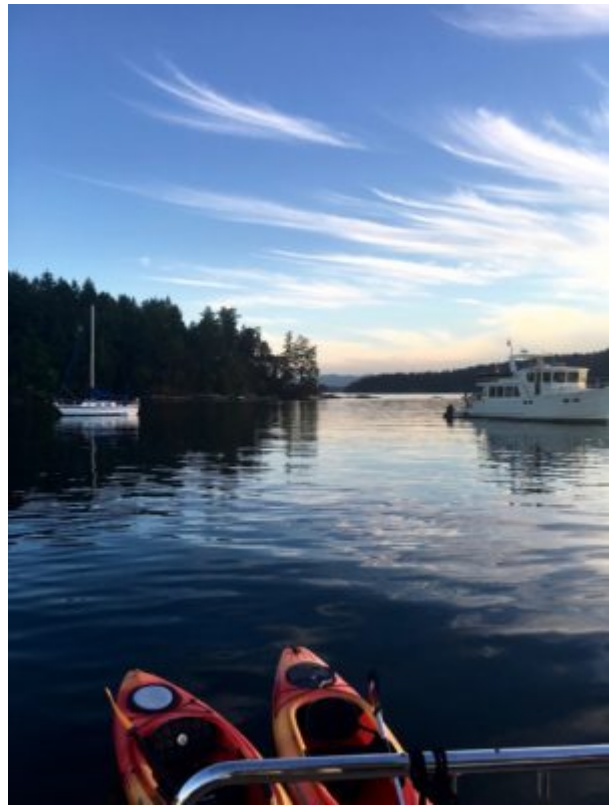




Shrimp buoy looks good now









Lunch in Fulford



Crab Crab Crab

Sunday August 7th – We pulled anchor from Fossil Bay and headed to Roche Harbor on San Juan Island for 4 nights. We had a nice cruise, got all tied up, then got everything ready to set the crab pots. Crabbing was only going to be open for one more day and we needed to stock up.

After setting the pots in our trusty spot we headed to the Madrona Grill for some dinner. The boys hung out on the docks that evening and we pulled both crab pots for a total of 5 keepers!

The next morning, we pulled the pots after an all night soak. Sometimes after soaking all night they do ok, but usually they don't have much in them. This time however we had 8 large keepers in one pot and 4 in the other! After the big score we put the pots back down and ran back to the boat. All the crab went in the crab jail (a bucket with holes and a lid that hangs off the boat in the water so the crabs stay alive until killing time) and we headed to the pool for swimming and relaxation time.

Skylar and Dylan went for a hike in the quarries above Roche Harbor and created this obstacle course out of rocks, hills and trees. They had a blast seeing how fast they could do

the course then came back to the boat totally exhausted. Skylar was a little beat up after apparently taking a few hard spills. That night the kids stayed on the boat while Julie and I had a nice dinner alone at the Madrona Grill. We love these kids but on a boat it can be 24/7 depending on your location, so taking this opportunity was a nice change of pace! One last pull of the crab posts before dark yielded 4 more keeps for a total of 21!!

Tuesday the 9th of August – It was time for Dylan to catch his 3pm floatplane back home and for my mom and her friend Phil to fly in for the day at 9am. We greeted my mom and Phil as they hopped off the plane on to the dock after having a great flight from Lake Union through the San Juan Islands. We all hung out on the boat for while the kids cleaned all the crab, then set off on a hike to see the Mausoleum. The Mausoleum is final resting place for the McMillin family. Roche Harbor was a company town and the family ran the Tacoma and Roche Harbor Lime Company started in 1886.

When I was a kid (from the time I was about 3 through 15) our family along with my uncle Karl and his family, would take a boat trip to Sucia Island in the San Juan's. We would pack up our 19' boat (no head, sleeping space or galley, just an open boat with some seats) for a 2 week boating/fishing/camping adventure on Sucia. We would leave either from Des Moines or Anacortes and make the run up to the island. This yearly trip was the the spark that created my obsession with boating today. It was a huge adventure and I loved it. At least once during our 2 week stay on Sucia we would take a day and make the aprox 15mi trek to Roche Harbor, sometimes in weather not fit for a 19' boat but we did it anyway. We would re-fuel the boat and re-provision our supplies but the trip was never complete without a hike to the Mausoleum.

We all had a great time reliving the Mausoleum hike we used to do almost 30 years ago. After we got back to the boat we

cooked all the crab and had a huge crab feast! At 3pm we sent Dylan off on the seaplane back home. It was great having him on the boat for a few days. We all hung out on the boat that afternoon talking and having lots of fun then went up to the Madrona Grill for an early dinner before my mom and Phil needed to catch their 6pm flight home. It was so nice to hang out with them for the day, we had a lot of fun together!

We spent the next couple days at the pool, going on hikes and getting the boat ready to cross over into Canada.









Patti and Phil just getting off the floatplane







Crab Feast!



Dylan on his way back home







