



Family Favorite

Day 25 & 26 – We left Roche to time our arrival at Jones Island for 11:00 – 11:30. We figure this is about the best time to get a spot in those crowded anchorages. Jones Island isn't crowded so much as it's just super small. This is one of our favorite spots in the San Juan's but it's hard to find space. We wanted dock space but there's only room for about 4 boats on the dock. Pulling in we could see the dock was full, so we hovered around for a while hoping someone would leave or tell us they were leaving soon. No such luck, so we moved on through the rain squalls to Sucia Island, Shallow Bay.

There's no dock in Shallow Bay but we were able to snag the last mooring buoy. This bay has absolutely the best sunset view in all of the San Juan's. This island is our family favorite. We figured we'd spend 2 nights here then head south to LaConner for some repair on our boat. After lunch we cruised off in the dinghy to a little islet off Sucia called Little Sucia. Exploring the island we started walking along the beach getting further and further away from the dinghy. Soon we figured it would be faster to just keep going around the whole island than turn back but we were not sure if that was possible. It got a little dicey with the rising tide but we made it. It was a real adventure!

After dinner the weather really improved. We cruised the

dinghy all the way over to Fossil bay then slowly back during the incredible sunset.

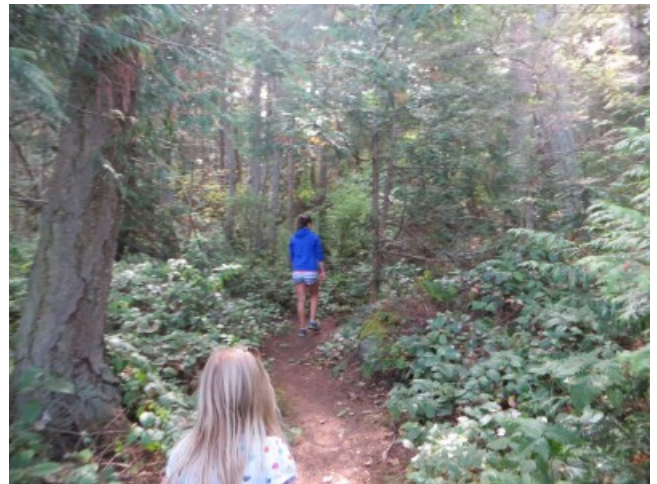
The next day it was time for long hike. We packed the backpack, anchored the dinghy in a rising tide and set off on a beautiful trail. It was about a 4 mile hike along the waters edge then through the mid island forest. We all had a great time getting some exercise.

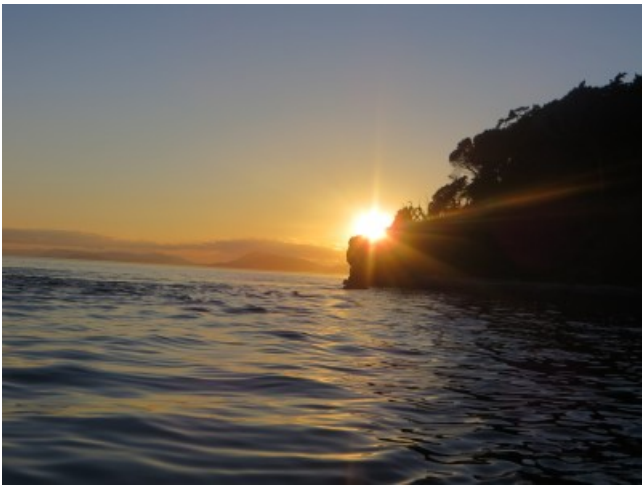
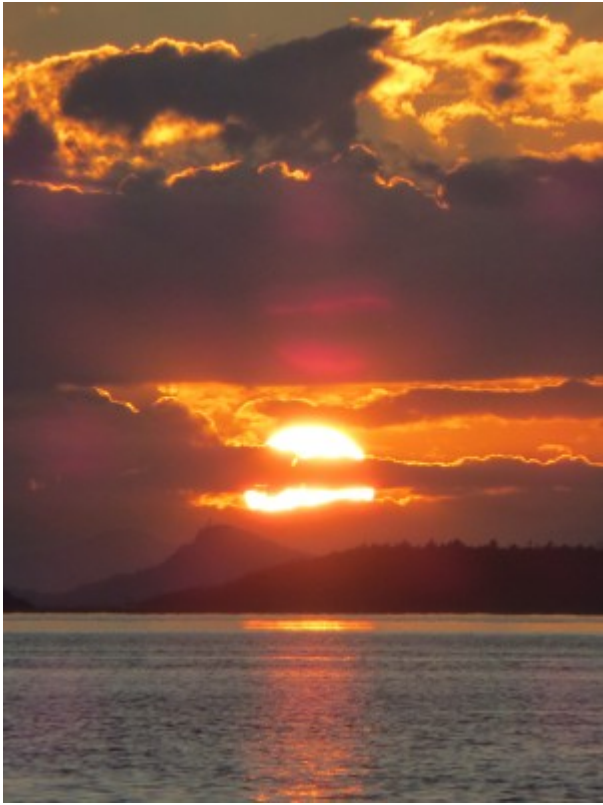
After dinner we packed up the dinghy with everything we needed to build a fire, roast marshmallows and cook the crab. The crab we caught at Roche have been in their jail for the last 2 days. The jail is a 5-gallon bucket with lots of holes drilled in it and a lid. You tie a rope to the handle and lower them down in the water to keep them alive.

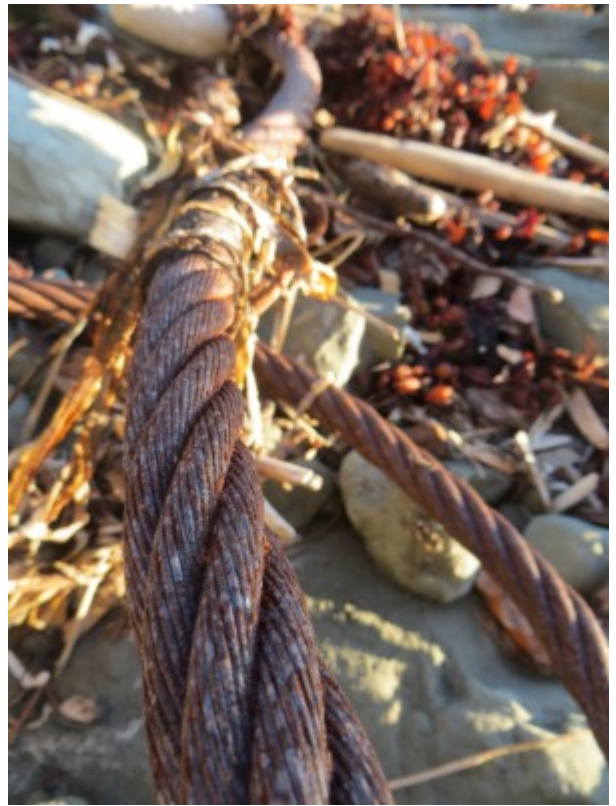
Skylar and I got to the beach and found a nice campsite to build the fire. We gathered and chopped some wood, got the crab cooking and got the fire going. After everything was rolling, Julie and Ava kayaked in to take advantage of our labor. As the sun went down the moon came up. It was the brightest, largest moon we have ever seen, it was absolutely incredible. The pictures do nothing for what it really looked like. The fire was great, crab awesome and fun to see the kids having so much fun in the outdoors. Ava was crazed for finding firewood. You would have thought she was in a survival situation with the way she searched all night for firewood. She loved the hunt!



















Roche Again

Day 23 & 24 – From Sidney we crossed back over the border into US territory. It was a little windy coming across Haro Strait but nothing too bad. You never know what you're going to get going through US customs. We've had super grumpy guys on a power trip and also really nice people. This time

was an extremely nice lady that made the process super simple.

It was Saturday at Roche Harbor and we didn't have reservations. They put us on a wait list while we floated around in the harbor for a while before they called us on the radio for a slip assignment. We were very lucky to get in, although they stuck us way out between two mega yachts making our 36' boat look like a toy. On one side we had a really nice family, and on the other we had Jersey Shore. There was a bunch of them ages about 21 – 30, they must have been renting the boat as their hotel or something because the boat never left. With the loud music playing we thought we were in for a crazy night. We found out they were in for a New York couples wedding that night. They ended up a little loud after the wedding reception but quieted down quickly, probably passing out.

We played some bocce ball, got candy for the kids then took off to set the crab pots. Julie went to the spa while the kids and I hung out on the boat for a while. We pulled the crab pots for a big fat nothing, then took a long dinghy ride all around the harbor. Ava is so funny when we go fast in the Dinghy. She stands in the very front, holding a rope, singing and dancing with joy. She loves it!

We decided to stay at Roche for another day but requested to move to the main guest docks. Luckily, they were able to get us in so we moved over. Roche Harbor breakfast was awesome as always but not for the parents dealing with children. Ava had way too much candy the day before then wanted pancakes for breakfast, bad decision on our part. She loved them, but the attitude that came in the hours that followed was terrible! We were able to give the boat a good wash then went on a hike to the lime quarries. In all the years we have come to Roche, we've never done this hike before. It was awesome, all except for Ava's crabby attitude. She pulled through though hiking at least a couple miles.

Back at the boat, with some real food in Ava, Skylar took Ava in the kayak over to the playground all alone. It was perfect, we could see them across the water but they felt so independent and free. They had a blast. Dinner out was crazy loud and we were looking forward to some relaxation on the boat. The kids played on the dock making there own aquarium (sea creatures and fish they put in a bucket of water) while Julie and I relaxed on the upper deck of the boat. It was a great evening!











Whiteout!

Day 22 we woke up to a complete white out. No, not snow, the fog was so thick we couldn't see anything but white! We waited until the fog started to lift then took off for Sidney just 6 miles away. At least we thought the fog had lifted. It was fine at our anchorage but as we motored toward Sidney it became apparent we were going right into it. While still in the clear, Julie went below to take a shower. I weaved my way through some tight passages trying to create a more direct route but that only added to the stress of the increasing fog. Thank God for chart plotters, radar and AIS! When Julie emerged from below we were in a complete whiteout situation, all you could see was white. What happened! She said, thinking everything was fine when she went below. It was nice to have some more eyes on the situation.

About 2 miles out from the entrance to Sidney harbor, we heard a distress call on the radio. A sailboat was on the radio with the Coast Guard explaining how smoke was coming from their engine room, electrical components had stopped working, and they could see sparks from below. No fire yet but the smoke was thick. As we approached a sailboat still in the

water, I was surprised to see it matched the description of the boat in distress. By this time they seemed to have it under control and another boat had come over to help them. It was kind of fun (not for them I'm sure) to hear the whole thing unfold on the radio then come upon the vessel in trouble.

30 minutes later, once inside Sidney harbor the fog completely lifted. What a difference a few minutes makes. Lunch at Rumrunners overlooking the harbor, then off to the Sidney aquarium. Ava has been talking about this extremely small aquarium at least once a week since we were here last year. We would be taking the boat for a cruise around Tacoma and she would get all excited and say, "lets go to that aquarium in Sidney!" Ava, its over 100 miles away in Canada and would take at least 2 days to get there. Sure will be nice when she has a concept of time and distance. She loved it! We stayed there for a couple hours going back to each display at least 4 times before Ava got her fill.

In town I was able to get a much-needed haircut then scan some documents at an office supply place I needed to send to the bank. We had a great dinner out then a long evening dock walk to look at all the boats.





