



Flooded Kayak

Monday July 31st – Bruce and Gloria headed to Campbell River for a couple nights to get some fuel and restock some essentials while our boat and the Steel's went back to Desolation Sound for some warm water. But first Todd had to do a phone conference out on the water where he could get cell service and then take his cousin and family back to Lund. We departed a couple hours before the Steel's and took their daughter Briana with us cruising at a moderate 9 knots all the way to Grace Harbor where we anchored and stern tied.

Grace Harbor is off Malispena inlet and provides great protection along with endless small islands and coves to explore. After settling in we blew up the "green thing" (that's what we call the green raft like thing in the pictures) and all went swimming.

We took the dinghy for a spin around the harbor and met the Steel's coming. We circled them in the dinghy just for fun then got them tied up along side our boat. Skylar and Zach went strait for the rope swing for a while then they convinced us to let them run out of the bay in the dinghy alone to fish. We agreed with strict instructions and handed them a VHF radio so we could communicate. Their diligence paid off! A while

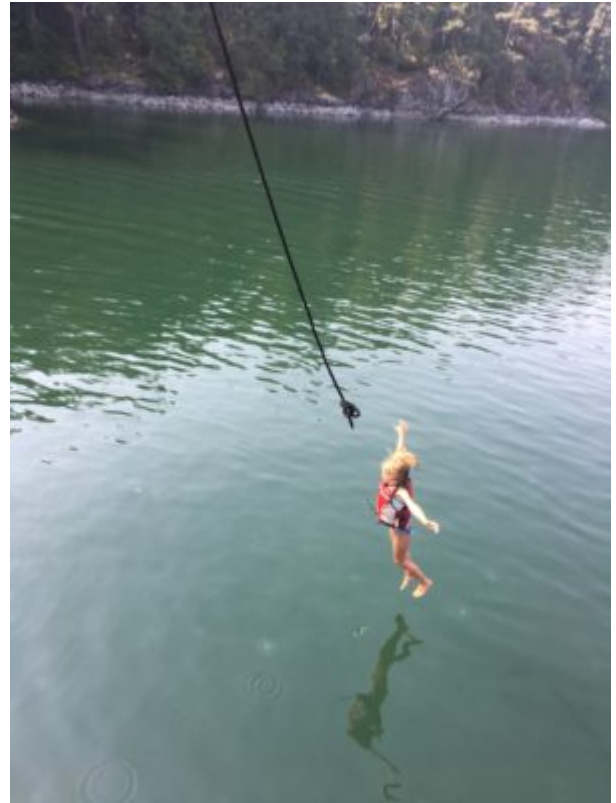
later they brought home dinner in the form of a nice Lingcod!
Nice job boys!

The next day, Todd was still hurting and confined to the boat so Tami, Julie, Briana and I took the dinghy out for a cruise. We decided to make our way to the lagoon for some swimming. Zach and Skylar were paddling in the kayaks so rather than make them paddle all the way to the lagoon we tied them to the dinghy and towed them all the way there. They couldn't help themselves but to be silly, rocking their boats, splashing each other, and trying to get the kayak to run down the dinghy wake. Of course Skylar took it too far, got the kayak sideways and flipped it over spilling him in the sea and filling the kayak with water. Working together we managed to pull the kayak up enough on the dinghy to empty most of the water while Skylar tread water waiting for his dry ride. But the funniest thing was watching him try and get back up in the kayak from the water. It was hilarious, we all just laughed, providing no help at all but he finally made it back in. We all swam in a beautiful lagoon then headed back to the boat.

The boys took off fishing again trying to find the same spot that provided the Ling yesterday. They found it and caught an even bigger Lingcod this time. They were proud of their catch and best of all they did it all on their own.



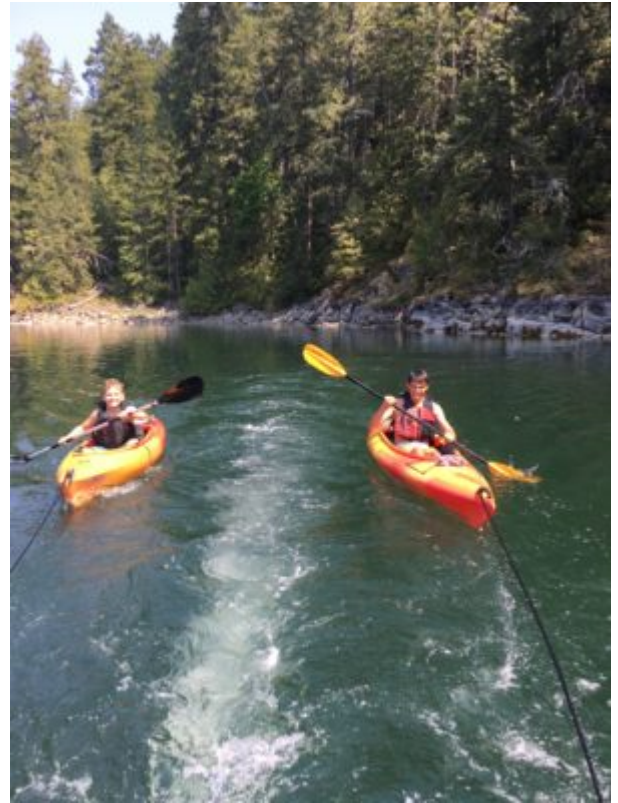




Deformed antlers



The Steel's on their way in
to Grace Harbor



The tow just before the
flood







Ava and Briana



Beaches & Back Injuries

Sunday July 30th – After 2 nights at The Cut we set a course

for Manson's Bay on Cortes Island. Julie did some research and this bay sounds really cool. It's a little exposed to the south but the weather forecast was good so we decided to make the 20nm run to check it out.

After arriving in the bay and motoring around a bit, we found it was going to be a little tricky to anchor in. It's deep, 80 feet, quite a bit deeper than the anchorages we are used to. We tried one spot that was about 60 feet but the anchor seemed to just skip across some rocks. Back to the 80-foot area we set out 225' of anchor chain that seemed to hold really well.

We sat on the boat for 30 minutes or so making sure all was well then took the dinghy to a huge lagoon. This thing is massive and the water was clear. It was running out of the lagoon like a lazy river with multiple pathways around small islands. Ava, Skylar and I took a nice (and cold) swim floating down the "river".

Our anchorage that night ended up being great. The sunset was awesome and Skylar could catch small rockfish right off the boat.

The next morning we were scheduled to meet back up with our friends in Gorge Harbor just 3.5nm away. But first, we decided to hike to a lake we read about. After a short dinghy ride and a 1-mile hike we made it to Hague Lake. This was an incredibly beautiful lake with a white sandy beach. We all relaxed in the sand and swam in the lake.

Back at the boat we pulled anchor and headed through the narrow waterway that opens up to a large bay with Gorge Harbor Marina nestled in the bay. After getting tied up we went to the pool while waiting for our friends to come in. They arrived and we met them on the docks learning that Todd had severely hurt his back a couple days before. He was confined to a chair just trying to keep things stable while his back heals. While we were away Todd had done a little shrimping.

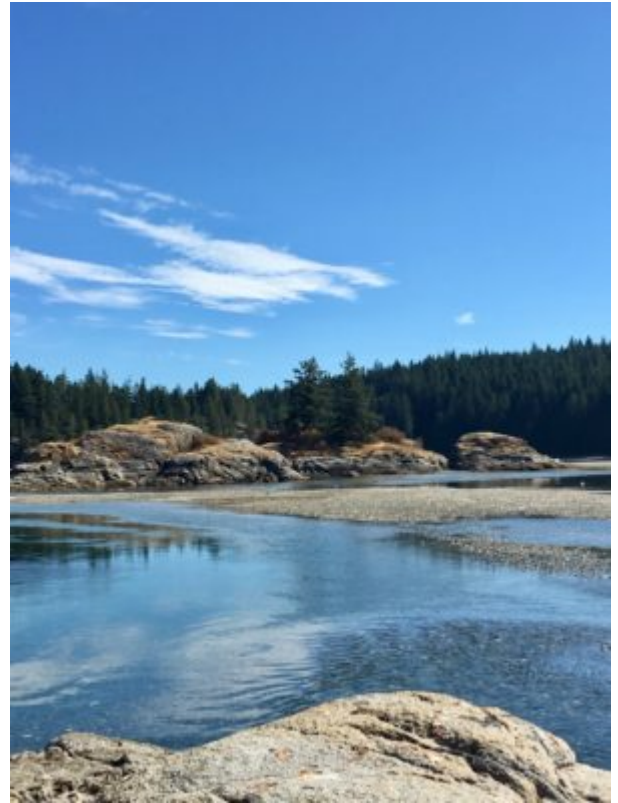
Our boat had the only shrimp pot puller so he was forced to pull the shrimp pots from 400' below. He was fine for a while then everything locked up with some serious pain. The only saving grace was that the pots had a lot of shrimp in them but that probably also contributed to his injury. Thankfully, after a lot of rest, his condition improved dramatically over the next several days.

We went to the small grocery store and stocked the boat then the four of us had dinner at the Gorge restaurant that evening.



A crazy cliffside boardwalk







Manson Bay public dock







White sand beach at the lake





Pool time at Gorge Harbor



View of Gorge Harbor





Zip-Tied

Thursday July 27th – Today we left our group and headed a short 3nm away to a no name bay we call “The Cut” to stay for a couple nights. We have seen this bay on previous trips, always wanted to stay there, but just haven’t done it yet.

This was the year, so we navigated the narrow entrance that opens up big enough for just a handful of boats. On the opposite end you can exit but its even narrower. You can make it through, even in the big boat but you need some local knowledge and it’s quite scary the first time you go through. However, the narrow entrance and small bay keeps things pretty quiet in there. In Skylar’s opinion the best thing about the bay is the rope swing that flings you off the rocks into the water.

After getting anchored and stern tied in the perfect spot Skylar took off in his kayak straight for the rope swing. After a low practice run he went higher as I warned him of the dangling rope below his feet. Caution to the wind he tarzaned

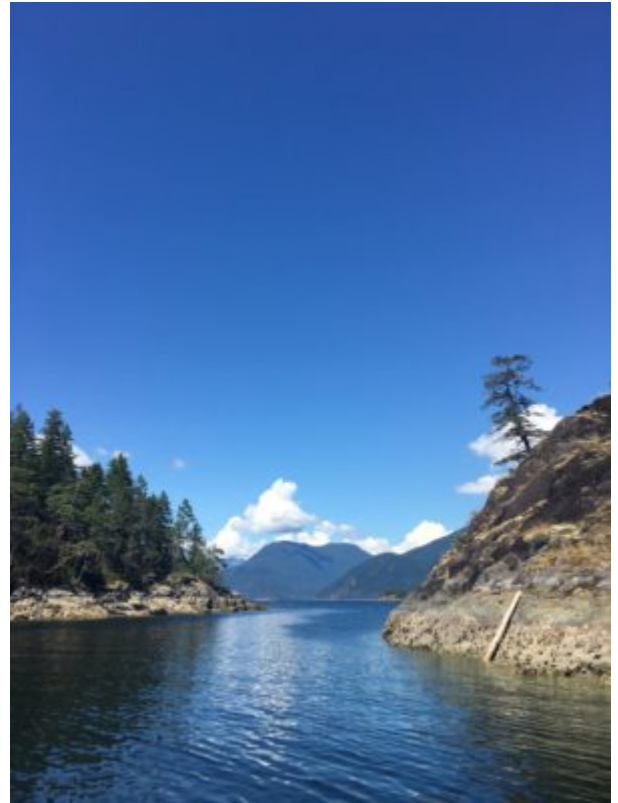
off the rock but as he let go that little bit of rope below his feet just barely got caught on his leg flipping him chest first into the water. He emerged with a look of pain on his face and a little bit of "I guess you were right dad". That was the end of the rope swing that day but like all kids his age the pain goes away and he was right back at it again although a little more cautious.

We had a lot of fun at "The Cut". We took the kids tubing behind the dinghy and set the shrimp pots. Skylar loves to tube as fast as possible getting whipped all over the place. But Ava loves just cruising along at a moderate pace looking at all the sights; the look on her face is pure joy.

We lost the access door to one of our shrimp pots so I used a Rubbermaid bin lid and zip-tied it on the pot to fill the hole so the shrimp couldn't get out. We all went out and set the pots in 300 feet of water then gave them a 5 hour soak. Upon our return we pulled the one with the lid. Sure enough there were about 15 shrimp inside, but now, stupid me, I completely zip-tied the lid on not realizing that was the door to get the shrimp out! I didn't have anything to cut the zip ties and I wanted to put the pot back down anyway. So, one by one I pulled them through a little crack, while they poked my hands until I was bloody. Taking the pot back to the boat would have been way easier but I guess I provided some good entertainment because Julie and the kids couldn't quit laughing as I struggled.



Our little reader!



The view from our anchorage



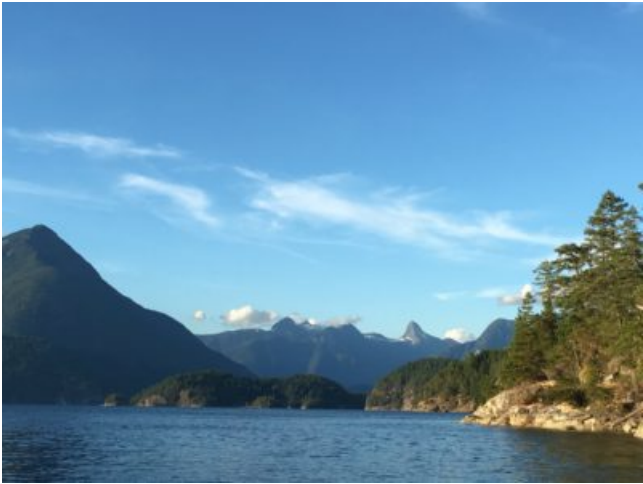




Skylar just before



his epic fail!







Jumping off the boat.





Awesome rope swing moment.