



May 2025

Canoeist



Under the Pennines
The wrong kind of training
Racing kayaks for fast sea touring



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Calendar

SURFING

May

17/18 Cornish O, K

August

15-17 Summer Sessions, Bude,
Llangennith, Freshwater W

MARATHON

May

4 **National Championships, Sh,
Peterborough**

4 Fal, H

4 Spey

25 Malton, H

25 Grand-Dunk, Grandtully

June

1 Tamar Circuit, H

2-8 **European Championships,
Ponte de Lima**

7 Burton Phoenix, H

8 Adelphi, H

8 Wokingham, H

12 Linlithgow Summer Series

15 Exe, H

15 Hereford Wye, H

15 Leighton Buzzard, H

15 Royal, H

15 Derwent Mike Jones Memorial

21/22 Bradford

22 Falcon Midsummer, H

22 Maidstone, H

22 WV10 6TQ

27-29 Budejovice-Slapy-Praha

28 Conwy Ascent

29 Bishop's Stortford, H

29 Shropshire Paddlesport, H

29 Wey, H

July

6 Manvers, H

6 Reading, H

10 Linlithgow Summer Series

20 Tewkesbury, H

20 Medway

26/27 **National Championships,
Norwich**

August

3 Camel, H

3 Hurley, H

9 87th Sella Descent

9-10 **World Games, Chengdu**

10 Richmond, H

14 Linlithgow Summer Series

16 54th Descenso del Río Miño

16-18 Backwater Ultra, Linköping

24 26th Descenso del Cinca

30 Southampton, H

31 Tonbridge

September

1-7 **World Championships, Gyor**

7 Gloucester, H

11 Linlithgow Summer Series

12-14 Hangzhou Super Cup

13 57th Descenso del Sil

14 S Lakes 1, H

21 Pangbourne, H

21 Saltford, H

21 Forth & Clyde II

27 Liffey Descent

27 Scottish K1 Championships, L
Ken

27/28 French National Championships,
Vernon

28 Dart, H

28 Elmbridge, H

28 Wolfreton, H

28 Nith Descent

October

5 28th Subida Rio Arade

5 **Worcester, HF**

11 Royal Paddling Challenge

11/12 Glasgow-Edinburgh Challenge

12 Fowey, H

12 Gailey, H

12 Tony & Shirley Pell Memorial

18/19 Torino

19 Chelmer, H

19 Soar Valley, H

19 Reading K4

25 Linlithgow

25/26 Adige, Verona

26 Banbury, H

26 Malton-Howsham Descent

November

8/9 4th Grande Maratona da Ria de
Aveiro

9 Remembrance Day

15 Gondomar/Troféu Cláudio Poiares

16 Charles Hicks Canal Challenge

23 Royal 10

30 Ross Warland Memorial Canal
Challenge, Cropredy

SLALOM

May

1-4 Ivrea

2-4 77th Tatra, Liptovsky Mikulas

2-4 4th Memorial of Stefan

Kapkaniak, Kraków

2-4 Chilliwak

14-18 **European Championships,
Vaires-sur-Marne**

17/18 Langham Farm, 3/4/O

24/25 Merano, 1/2

24-26 Shepperton, 3/4

25/26 Cardiff Bay, P/1/4

31/1 Bala Mill, 2/3/O

31/1 Old Bank End Farm, 4

June

5-8 **La Seu d'Urgell, WC**

7/8 Solkan, J

7/8 Fairnilee, 2/3

7/8 Stone, 3/4

12-15 **Pau, WC**

13-15 Valstagna, J

14/15 Llandysul, 2-4

14/15 Orton Mere, 3/4

21/22 Ivrea, J

21/22 Paul Mcconkey Memorial, P-3/X,

Holme Pierrepont

26-29 **Praha, WC**

28/29 Flattach, J

28/29 Tryweryn Chapel Falls, 1/O

28/29 Cardington, 2-4

July

3 Rally Noguera Pallaresa, X

5/6 Augsburg, J

5/6 Oughtibridge, 3/4

5/6 Shepperton, 3/4

8-13 **World Championships, J/U23,
Foix**

10 Cardiff Bay Pool, 4

12/13 Bala Mill, 2/3/O

19/20 Roudnice, J

21-24 European Y Olympic Festival,
Skopje

25-27 Kraków, J

26/27 **Persley, 2/3/Scottish J
Championships**

30-3 **European Championships,
J/U23, Solkan**

August

1-3 Bratislava

2/3 Oshu O, Iwate

8-10 Minden Hills

9/10 River Festival, 2-4, Llandysul

14-17 Asian Championships, Xiasi

15-17 Canadian National
Championships, Jonquièrre

15-17 Praha

16/17 Grandtully, 2

22-24 Epinal

23/24 Nordic Cup Estonia, Sindi

23/24 Grandtully, 1/2/O

28-31 **Ljubljana, WC**

30/31 Abbey Rapids, 1/2

30/31 Cardington, 2-4

September

4-7 **Augsburg, WC**

6/7 **Interclubs, Cardington**

12-14 Hangzhou Super Cup

13/14 Tryweryn Graveyard, P/1

13/14 Nene, 2/3

13/14 Alva, 3/4

20/21 Oughtibridge, 3/4

20/21 Langham Farm, 3/4/O

25 Cardiff Bay Pool, 4

27/28 Pinkston, 1/2/J/V Championships

27/28 Wagon Lane Bingley, 3/4

29-31 Tacen

29-4 **World Championships, Sydney**

October

4/5 Shepperton, 2/3

4/5 Stone Town Council Cup, 3/4

4/5 Old Bank End Farm, 4

10-12 Segre Cup, La Seu d'Urgell

11/12 Tees Barrage, P/1

11/12 Symonds Yat, 2/3

12 Alpe Adria, Klagenfurt

18/19 Llandysul, 1/2/4

25/26 **Lee Valley Olympic, P/1/2/X**

WWR

May

3/4 Augsburg

10/11 Ceske Budejovice

14/15 Vaires-sur-Marne

17 Diekirch

24 London O Championships, Sp/Cl

25 Matlock, Sp/Cl

June

4-8 **European Championships,
Mezzana**

14 **Holme Pierrepont ECA Cup &
British O Sp Championships**

14 Orton Mere, Sp

20 Langham Farm 2, Sp

July

1-5 **World Championships, J/U23,
Solkan**

11-13 **Banja Luka, WC 3-5**

19/20 Austrian National Championships,
St Ruprecht & Ramingstein

August

15-17 Canadian National
Championships, Jonquière
23/24 Lipno

September

19-21 **World Championships, Sp,
Ceske Budejvice**

26/27 **Skopje, WC**

October

4 Legendary Barrow Series 1

November

1 Tyne Tour
8 Usk, CI
8 Legendary Barrow Series 2

15/16 **BUCS**

22 **Welsh O, ECA Cup, Sp/CI,
Llangollen**

December

6 Legendary Barrow Series 3

January

17 Legendary Barrow Series 4

February

7 Legendary Barrow Series 5
21 Dart, Sp/CI

March

7 Legendary Barrow Series 6

FREESTYLE

June

16-21 **World Championships, Plattling**
28/29 Millau

SPRINT

May

8-10 Asian Championships, Nanching
16-18 **Szeged, WC**
22-30 **Poznan, WC2**
23-25 38th Bratislava, J/U23
31/1 **O/British Masters National
Championships, National Water
Sports Centre**

June

7 Elmbridge
19-22 **European Championships,
Racice**
20-22 Auronzo

July

3-7 **European Championships,
J/U23, Pitesti**
5 3rd Festival Náutico Inclusivo,
Astillero
5 GP K4 Trofeo Ciudad de
Valladolid
6 62nd Sanabria K4
6 Intellectual Impairment
Demonstration, Pitesti
11-13 Gara, Lago le Bandie
12/13 **O & British Paracanoe, S/U23/J
National Championships,
National Water Sports Centre**
19 Royal
23-31 **World Championships,
J/U23/Mas, Montemor-o-Velho**

August

20-24 **World Championships, Milano**
23 Norwich
28-30 Pan American Championships,
Asunción

September

6/7 **British National Inter-Club
MacGregor Paddle Challenge,
Inter-Services Championship
& Andrew Bonham Memorial
C4, National Water Sports
Centre**
12-14 Hangzhou Super Cup
14 Bishop's Stortford

18-21 Olympic Hopes, Racice
19-21 African Championships
27/28 45th Trofeo Medaglia d'Argento
Presidente della Repubblica,
Savona

October

4/5 Sarcidano
10-12 I Giganti dello Sprint, Cabras
18 Bristol

MULTISPORT

May

11 **European Sp, Kassel**
17 **World, M, Gyekenyes**

June

1 **Euro Champs, M, Brigg**
14 **Koberbach, M, WC**
14 Norfolk Superhero, Burnham
15 **Cazalegas, Sp, WC**
22 **Dearne Valley, Sp, WC**
22 **Marvelhuman, M, WC, Seyssel**
28 **World, Sp, Tyn nad Vitavou**

July

6 Deva Divas, Sp, Chester
12 **Bydgoszcz, Sp, WC**
13 Offendorf
19 Kanutriathlon Kelheim

August

9 **World, L, Nagyatad Gyekenyes**
10 ExtremeMan Nagyatad
24 Hückeswagen
30 **Bohinj, M, WC**

September

6 Montgomery Canal Triathlon
7 **National Championships, Sp,
Brigg**
14 Fehmarn

October

11 Awesome Foursome, Sp/M, Bude

SAILING

May

24 Aldeburgh, IC, P

June

14 Weston, IC, P
24-27 Bala, OC

July

21-25 **Europa Cup & National
Championships, Brixham**

August

15-17 Kielder Water, OC

September

6 W Kirby, IC, P
19-21 Rutland Water, OC

POLO

May

3/4 Charleroi
10/11 23rd Obersee, Rapperswil
10/11 1/2/O
17/18 Praha

21-25 **World Mas Games**

24/25 Pfyn
24/25 P/1/O
31/1 Amsterdam O

June

7-9 Deutschland Cup
14 W P/1
21/22 Avranches
28 **European Cup, Millau**
28/29 5th Salzburg Alps Cup
28/29 Deventer
28/29 2/3/O

July

5/6 **Hull**
11-13 34th Franco Baschiroto Memorial,
Castello di Porpetto

12/13 P/1/O
22-27 Belfast, J
25-27 18th Fraser Hill
26/27 Torino Cup

August

2/3 Skovshoved
2/3 Welsh O
9/10 De Paddel
16/17 3/O
13-16 **World Games, Chengdu**
23/24 Pan American Championships,
Edmonton
30/31 Gekko

September

9-14 Asia Championships, Putrajaya
20/21 13th Trofeo Ponterosso, Trieste
25/26 1st Torneo Costa Smeralda, Porto
Rotondo Olbia

27/28 **Clubs European
Championships, Kaniow**

October

3-5 African Championships, Cape
Town
25/26 1st Torneo Costa Smeralda, Porto
Rotondo-Olbia

DRAGON BOAT RACING

May

-1 Australian National
Championships, Sydney
4 Mox Lamma Festival, Hong Kong
10 Sarasota
10 Bury
11 Skipton
10/11 Gara, Lago le Bandie
15/16 Power 2 Challenge, Surrey Docks
17 Blue Skys Festival, St Anne's
18 Himley
18 Ilford
23-25 **6th Castelldefels, EC**
25 Chatham
25 Stockton-on-Tees
26 Dorset Championships, Sherborne
26 Guanzhou Festival
30-1 Taipei Championships
31 SJM Macau, Nam Van Lake
31 Stanley Championships, Hong
Kong

June

1 L Lomond
4-7 **ECA Nations, Spresiano**
6 NSPCC Challenge, London
6/7 Hong Kong
7/8 **Batumi, EC**
8 Bristol
8 Cambridge Festival
8 Woking
12 Booker Grocery Aid Challenge
12 Oxford
14/15 Toronto
21 Manchester
22 Chichester
28 Willen Lake
28/29 Bradford Festival
29 Exeter

July

5 Ilford
10 London
10 N York Water Park, Wykeham
12 Dover
12 Ulverston
12 Rotary, Wakefield
13 York Rotary Challenge
15-20 **17th World Championships,
Brandenburg an der Havel**
17 London Ambulance Challenge
19 Northwich R Festival

19-20 Shrewsbury
 20 Kingston
 26 Falmouth
 26 Naomi House & Jacksplace,
 Winchester
26 UK Corporate Games, Leeds
 27 Wakefield
 27 Warrington
 31 London

August

2 Richmond
9-10 World Games, Chengdu
 16 Northern Nevada, Sparks
 24 London Rowing Centre
 25 Chipstead
 30 Bewl Water

September

**4-7 20th European Club Crew
 Championships, Beograd**
 6 Edinburgh
 6 St Catherine's Hospice, Crawley
 6/7 Southampton
 7 Leeds
 7 Pershore
 7 Tonbridge
 12-14 Hangzhou Super Cup

13 Jersey
 18-21 ICF Club Crew Championships,
 Ruse
 19/20 Birmingham
 20 Gt R Race, London
 20 Wakefield

20/21 British National Championships, Nottingham

21 Stratford-on-Avon
 26/27 Newcastle-on-Tyne
 27 Birmingham Festival
 27/28 San Diego

October

4 Orlando
 11/12 16th Kipros, Ayia Napa

November

2 Japan Championships &
 Governors Cup, Osaka City
 15/16 St Martins Summer Festival,
 Toscolano Maderno
 28-30 Penang Festival

December

12-14 Dubai, EC

OCEAN RACING

May

1-3 Eurochallenge, WC, Villajoyosa
 3/4 Exe Bay
 15-18 Naxos Cup

June

7 Sussex Classic

September

26-28 Fortza Paris Cup, Cagliari

October

4/5 Madeira Ocean Challenge
 12 Trofeo Vila de Portonovo
 Deputacion Pontevedra de la
 Semana Abanca

17-19 World Championships, Durban

25/26 Tigullio

November

10-16 Run Océan, WC, Reunion

MISCELLANEOUS

May

23-26 Crick Boat Show

July

18-20 Bristol Harbour Festival
 18-20 Thames Traditional Boat Festival,
 Henley-on-Thames

Memories to share?

Do any of your trips deserve a larger readership? We are pleased to hear from those who wish to share memories of their trips with others.

mail@canoeist.co.uk

*Has your
email
address
changed
or do you
want to be
added to
the mailing
notification
list when
copies of
Canoeist
are issued?*

*Email mail@
canoeist.
co.uk with
your email
address
(with your
former
email
address if
changed)
and ask us
to add you
to the list.*

Canoe alone

Why can't all days be like this one?
 It was warm and it was sunny
 And my body worked for its duration,
 Kept away the old man in me.

I canoed my way upriver with my
 Dog there stood on the prow
 While this older man felt like a young
 Man which doesn't come about
 So often now.

They say there are seven shades
 Of green in the treeline
 But that's kind of river boat men's
 Chat
 Yet the trees looked lovely this
 Morning; there is no doubt of that.

I landed on a point that I have known
 Since my boyhood
 And just sat looking about me
 For a half hour in the day
 While the dog wandered around
 Until, that is, it was time to get
 Underway.

Some folk are born unlucky.
 Some need more than me
 But I only need what I have got.
 Oh how lucky then must I be...

Kevin Pyne



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Editorial

Paddling down a river, I encountered a man paddling an aluminium open canoe in the opposite direction. He had two small girls in the bow. As they passed, one of the girls leaned over and picked a flower out of the water. Somehow it seemed very familiar. Then I remembered Frances Ann Hopkins' painting *Canoe Manned by Voyageurs*. Could we reproduce that picture or something related? No, for the simple reason that they had already disappeared around the next bend. Sometimes a snap decision has to be made without delay.

To shoot or not to shoot

On another occasion I was walking up the footway away from the popular beach at Rockcliffe on the Solway. Looking back, I saw coming towards me a small vehicle carrying a slalom kayak vertically, even the cockpit clear of the top of the vehicle. I unpacked the camera as quickly as possible and swung round as it passed, to be faced with a naked child in the centre of the shot I wanted to take. An immediate decision was made not to take the shot. This was at the time when there was increasing objection of taking photos of children in any circumstances. Some think they should be neither seen nor heard. Indeed, a respected instructor once had a word with me on use of a photo on a Welsh canal towpath with a group of children in anoraks and buoyancy aids with their backs to the camera. Twice I have had objections by adults for taking canal shots when they were present in the scene, both times in central Manchester, places which would look odd without people present. In fact, there are no restrictions on photographing in public places.

During a marathon I was faced on the roadside by the naked rear of a man as he changed. Normally I would have had no interest whatsoever but this was the rear of the BCU's chief executive, who had recently made a pronouncement about covering up when changing in public. The public do not like being told how to behave by somebody who ignores his own pronouncements, as Boris found out to his cost. I did not take the shot. I have, however, since decided that any potentially interesting picture should be taken and the implications thought through thoroughly at a later date.

The luxury of having time to decide is not always enough. In Llangollen I photographed a car with a GB Slalom Team sticker on its rear window parked across the gateway of a house displaying a notice asking for access to be kept clear. The issue was who owned the car as publishing the picture was likely to lead to problems with somebody and I was unable to find out whom as a publishing deadline approached. On one hand, should I publish without fear or favour? On the other, it would not make sense to do so without finding out who was likely to react. In the end I published.

A leading paddler accused me gleefully of being cruel for taking a photo of a paddler falling in big time at a portage at a marathon nationals at Worcester. However, I took the picture, to consider at leisure. The swimmer was cracked up with laughter when I examined it closely and enjoying the experience as much as everyone else, a lovely picture, so it was included in that issue.

Stuart Fisher

Most of us can tell the difference between a man and a woman more easily than we can define the difference between a canoe and a kayak. At least, we thought we could. Recently, however, it seems to have become increasingly difficult, especially when gender change is involved.

When is a woman not a woman?

Thus, April's judgement by the Supreme Court on sex and gender, especially in relation to sport, is to be welcomed as simple and clear and has already resulted in some sports having to make changes to their rules.

Despite the variety of the disciplines, competition canoeing has avoided sex problems better than some sports. This is because there is often a women's class and an open class. Trans people no longer have the advantage of being brought up as biological males, to the disadvantage of biological females. Everyone gets to compete. The tail does not wag the dog. In a Lords debate on Sport: Gender Inclusion, Baroness Noakes suggested 'that for nearly all sports, the only rational solution which is safe and fair for all is to have two categories: an open category for everyone and one reserved for natal women only'. That is the way various canoeing disciplines operate. If there was a class for natal men as well then it is likely there would be a small number of

left over people who would rarely be able to compete as classes would usually be iniquitous. For those who have undergone the trauma of a sex change it would seem that competitors in sport would be a lesser concern and less than for natal females against whom they might compete.

David Train's marathon divisions were set up using only performance, with no reference to gender at all, except for a ceiling stopping women going into the top divisions at a time when they would be too thinly spread. Otherwise, iniquitous classes might get their entries moved towards senior male kayak paddlers, those likely to produce the best results. A girl in a C1 in the nationals might be moved to boys, to girls of the next older age group upwards (downwards for veterans) or kayaks if there are not enough in their own category. Men are expected to have a strength advantage. I am still sore about being overtaken by Pauline Goodwin in an Usk WW race while still in the team! There might be an overall finish list but with additional lists of subcategories, as in the Devises-Westminster Race or quadrathlons. Dragon boats will not allow men in women's boats although women can go in men's boats and there also mixed crews. Women may compete in men's polo teams, usually to make up numbers.

Occasionally women or canoes may compete against men in sprint out of choice to get meaningful competition at the sharp end of sprint. It does not help a competitor of international standard to only compete against others far slower.

It does not always work. Vic Brown was prevented from working her way up the slalom divisions on the men's side as a personal challenge although she still went on to get Britain's best canoeing result in the 1972 Olympics. Such requests are usually accepted.

There can be unintended consequences. Where we used to live, the best athletics club in the area was a ladies' club, who were obliged to admit men when single sex clubs were no longer allowed. Our son left the Scouts when big girls were able to join and changed the mood of his group.

While the Supreme Court ruling will be widely welcomed, it only applies to Britain. Other bodies including the International Canoe Federation and International Olympic Committee could come up with other interpretations. As sport governing bodies are each to come up with their own rules this is unlikely to be the end of the story.

Stuart Fisher

Publisher contact

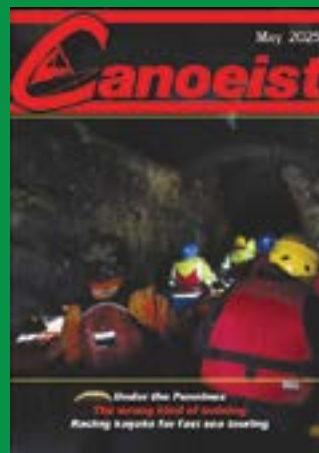
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Disclaimer

Opinions expressed in this magazine are not necessarily those of the editor or publishers. References to waters do not necessarily imply that access or passage is legally permitted or that they are safe in all conditions. The editor and publishers can not be held responsible for any omissions of references to hazards from notes on these waters. They do not hold themselves responsible for inadequacies in items of equipment reviewed here.

Governing body enquiries

Canoeist is the not for profit magazine of Paddlers International. Enquiries to governing bodies and associations should be addressed as appropriate.



Paddling through Standedge Tunnel, Britain's longest, highest and deepest canal tunnel.

Hackney canoe to borrow

Raphael Holca has made his open canoe available for the public to borrow. Based in Hackney, it can be borrowed for three hours without cost by booking online at bit.ly/canoe4all, when the code to release the combination padlock will be revealed.

Angler numbers recovering

The Angling Trust say that numbers of young anglers are increasing. This appears to be a recovery of numbers post Covid.

Information outstanding

The Basingstoke Canal restoration may not be continued any further west towards its original terminus in Basingstoke because bats are roosting in Greywell Tunnel. The £100,000,000 bat shed on HS2 is intended to keep bats out, away from trains. How should bats tell whether they are supposed to be in or out of tunnels?

Footpath deadline removed

The previous Government had threatened to delete permanently all footpaths and bridleways not officially registered by 2031. The current Government have cancelled the deadline. This is excellent news as there are many paths leading to water which have not been registered but are needed for access and egress.

Abandoning safety

A day is a long time in American politics and trade, these days. Those able to do so must be tempted to batten down the hatches and let the storm abate a bit. One place where that won't work is the stop in hiring staff for safety purposes at the start of the summer season.

Undercurrents



To celebrate Native American Heritage Month in November Google used a kayak sketch by Inuit artist Natasha Allakariallak.

Parry resigns

CRT chief executive Richard Parry is resigning this year after having been in post for 12 years that have included the Toddbrook reservoir failure with a £50,000,000 repair bill and needing to address the slashing of the Government's grant to the canals when needed more than ever. Unlike some of his predecessors, he has been seen paddle in hand at times.

His successor from October will be Campbell Robb, who has had 15 years in the charity sector, including as chief executive of Shelter, the Joseph Rowntree Foundation and NACRO.

Another big EA licence price rise

The EA have increased their Thames licence charges for unpowered open boats for this year by 10.9%. The costs now range from £5.90 per day to £52.90 per year. It has long been noted that licensing authority rates for non PUK members have shot up since PUK included canoes on the Thames and other waterways on their compulsory licences.

The EA have issued a report on how they operate on the non tidal Thames. Much of it seems to relate to 'offending'. They say

'We have identified 2 priority areas of illegal activity on the River Thames. These are

- * evading boat registration requirements and payment of fees

- * endangering other river users

We will focus our regulation and enforcement response on targeting these activities for the whole river, while recognizing that our intelligence has identified specific 'hot spots'.

They say 'We will routinely check and enforce the registration of unpowered boats including stand-up paddleboards, canoes, rowing boats, inflatable dinghies. We will issue advice and guidance to the users of any recreational equipment that we do not consider to be safe to use on the river, such as inflated lilo, inner tube or other novelty inflated pool toys.'

They do not comment on the higher reaches of the Thames, there being photographic evidence of commercial vessels working at Waterhay, near Ashton Keynes, in earlier days. They consider that navigation rights do not begin until Cricklade, these days, but largely ignore anything above Lechlade.

It is difficult to work out CRT licence charges as their website has become so complex.

Trips

Cyril Derreumaux has crossed the Atlantic in 72 days, starting on Dec 23rd. His 4,630km route was from the Canary Islands to Martinique. Strong winds and unexpected currents 45km from his landfall resulted in his accepting a tow from a support boat in the

closing stage of the trip. Previously he had paddled from California to Hawaii in 92 days, a route he repeated in 2016 as part of a rowing crew.

Breast cancer survivors have undertaken a dragon boat journey down more than 700km of the Loire. Some four dozen paddlers from France, the British Isles, Australia, Belgium, Spain and Italy in relays, typically 250km in five days, ran rapids, portaged, camped, sang, laughed and told stories despite language difficulties.

While he was undertaking his latest trip, Gábor Rakanczay was crossing from La Palma to Antigua, a 5,100km journey in 76 days. He was using a craft similar to that of Derreumaux but with a single blade so it counts as a canoe. He had made a 2012 crossing by canoe that had involved a capsized 1,000km from land and twice failed to cross by SUP. The 43 year old Hungarian has no further Atlantic plans.

Liam Cotter and Johnny Cope have undertaken an eight month 5,000km journey from Dublin to Istanbul, including unsupported crossings of the Irish Sea and English Channel, the latter after their support vessel withdrew at short notice. Inadequate paperwork and then ice stopped them from using the French canals, resulting in a 350km portage. Then more paperwork resulted in a further portage through the Black Forest to the source of the Danube. Passport issues resulted in problems with the police, being arrested twice, a night in jail, a fine, an injured shoulder, a change of team member, a holed kayak, the donation of a replacement kayak and having the kayaks washed away overnight on rising floodwater. Ryan Fallow replaced Cotter after the injury. So it was a trip with a few memories.

David Berrisford and Frank Wolf are undertaking a 900km circumnavigation of Prince of Wales Island from Prince Rupert, off the British Columbia/Alaska border. Starting at the beginning of May, 23 year old Rafe Parker is paddling from Washington to Florida, the two extreme points of mainland USA. The route should take seven months, give or take a month.

Gaia Aish and Dave Greene are travelling northwards from the US border 1,800km to the Arctic Ocean by canoe and bike. The canoe leg is down the Teslin and Yukon rivers for 746km.

Cruise reaches Westminster

A campaign cruise of powered craft has been undertaken from Doncaster to Westminster and is returning up eastern England. The cruise picked up boats along the journey to reach 26 outside the Houses of Parliament, where they sounded their horns, accompanied by further noise from spectators on Westminster Bridge prior to Prime Minister's Questions. The 20 week cruise has been organized by Fund Britain's Waterways, supported by 160 organizations appealing to successive Governments not to cut waterways funding.

Cetacean watchers needed

Do you know the difference between a dolphin and a porpoise? Why not get involved with Shorewatch, no experience necessary. The Bardsey Marine Mammal Project is working with Whale & Dolphin Conservation to bring its Shorewatch programme to Wales. As part of the drive to increase marine mammal recording around Llyn they will be offering training and recruiting volunteers to carry out cetacean surveys from key sites including Bwlchtocyn, Uwchmynydd and Porthdinllaen. WDC's Shorewatch involves a whale,

dolphin and porpoise survey carried out at specific sites. All volunteers attend an initial training session so that each 10 minute Shorewatch is carried out the same way and can be compared with other watches and sites. Everything is completely flexible. You could do a Shorewatch once a week, once a month or every once in a while. Perhaps you pass one of the sites regularly or would like to make a day of it in the area; how you get involved and how often is completely up to you. There will be plenty of support to help you build your knowledge of marine mammals and cetacean ID. Over time we hope to build up enough watches to reliably note when cetaceans are changing, how they're using the sites and how the data gathered will be used to influence policy and ensure better protection for these incredible animals. If you would like to know more about the marine mammal species seen around Llyn and learn how to complete a Shorewatch survey, so that you can contribute to the project, why not join them at one of the following sessions:

Online: 7-8.30pm Thursday 12/06/2025

In person: 10am-noon Saturday 14/06/2025, Nefyn Golf Club, Morfa Nefyn (followed by a guided Shorewatch at Porthdinllaen in the afternoon).

Canal closures

Following a breach near Bosley, the Macclesfield Canal has been closed for repairs. Those could be ongoing until late June.

A New Year breach of the Bridgewater Canal at Dunham Massey replicated one there in 1971 and will take until Christmas 2026 to repair.

However, a breach of the Lancaster Canal at Hollowfirth Aqueduct has been repaired and the canal reopened.

Problems with Tardebigge top lock mean the country's longest lock flight will be closed until the end of August.

Some 526t of sludge contaminated with 4m³ of toxic sodium and zinc cyanides last August in the Pleck area of the Walsall Canal has been removed and the canal reopened. Nearly 2km of canal was closed and devoid of all life.

In May several geese were found dead along the Walsall Canal, suspected of being victims of poison scattered along the towpath. Anyone with information is asked to contact the Wildlife Incident Investigation Scheme led by Natural England.

Little progress in two decades

This May marks the 20th anniversary of a meeting Paddlers International held at Stoke Bruerne with British Waterways to discuss a number of safety and similar issues. BW chairman George Greener was unable



New for Keswick Mountain Festival this year were accessible canoeing sessions. Open canoes were fitted with outriggers and with seats fitted with back supports and mobile hoist if required. Participants, whether disabled or not, were met, fitted with safety gear and given a short paddling safety lesson before being taken to explore Derwentwater down to Herbert Island where a wood burning kettle was used for a brew before paddling back.

to attend at the last minute but the heads of safety, engineering and the southeast region were present. We were invited to take along other interested parties and invited the Canoe-Camping Club and BCU. Many of these issues, not least tunnels and portages, required firsthand knowledge and I didn't need others less well informed to speak my words.

We prepared a fairly extensive agenda with many points to be investigated. There were no replies although we were aware that one issue was discussed with the BCU alone, discourteous at best. Each time we reminded BW we were asked by a receptionist what the meeting was about. Repeatedly we sent the agenda and heard nothing further.

When Robin Evans was appointed to head BW he undertook a nationwide consultation tour. We raised our concerns. He sent details of a use agreement with a school rowing group on the Gloucester & Sharpness Canal, of little relevance. At a Crick Boat Show consultation around 2010 we asked what was the point of such meetings if there was no action taken on them. Host Vince Moran agreed to investigate but did not do so, even after reminders.

Finally, Tony Stammers of CRT, as they had now become, suggested we needed to start again and we had a two hour meeting in Devizes, with nobody else involved, just the two of us. Available with this issue are my list of concerns to be addressed and minutes, mostly showing action to follow on some of the topics, generally awaiting further responses although there were no further replies.

When problems were addressed, you would expect CRT to desire maximum publicity to benefit from the credit. The difficult portage on the Liverpool Link involved having to drop a kayak or canoe well over a metre down a wall onto deep water and then dropping into it. There was no way back up, of course. It was rumoured that this had been dealt with although CRT's press office were unable to confirm this. Eventually I had to make a journey there to check for myself. It had, indeed, been made safe, resulting in PI advising the CRT press office rather than the other way round.

Since then other issues have arisen. Included has been the dangerous free online CRT book for beginners, now thankfully removed. Bevere on the Severn has been made unsafe recently and inspection of the fouled weir chute prevented. Different embargo dates for different publications are another topic that has been another problem that has surfaced.

The 2013 meeting considered again the issues raised in 2005. Available to download here are issues that were to be considered in 2013 and minutes as recalled by CRT and PI, also a platform design requested for use at portage points that would be usable by all canoeists and wildlife, not just marathon racers. Many issues have not been resolved, issues which also feature in canal and river navigation books for all users as well as for canoeists.

Note Tony Stammer's comment about the BCU buying a place at the table, not that it has done much for addressing the issues. At last year's CRT AGM a question was asked about this and it was stated that CRT made more money from selling compulsory licences to BCU members at a reduced rate, regardless of whether they needed them or not, than they would from selling licences at full price only to those who needed them.

Reservoir trials started

Regardless of their financial state, Thames Water have begun trial digging for their South East Strategic Reservoir Option, a huge new reservoir near Abingdon, bigger than all the other proposed new reservoirs added together. Various amenity carrots are on offer, including a K1 in use in their latest update. The location is centred on the line of the Wilts & Berks Canal, being restored, but the current offer is only to leave space round the outside, falling well short of the original offer, when they were seeking support, to build the emergency drawdown channel to canal dimensions and to take it

Intruder arrested

An American influencer has been arrested for breaching a 5km exclusion zone around the Sentinel Islands in the Indian Ocean. There are thought to be about 200 members of the Sentinelese tribe, who have no protection against outside diseases. The 24 year old American had made two previous attempts to visit, last October using an inflatable kayak. A 27 year old visited in 2018 but was shot and killed with bows and arrows.

Scottish floods

SEPA have introduced a new flood forecast. This one advises on watercourses which risk being in flood longterm, including small burns. This is static advice, unlike Floodline which gives live notification when floods are expected. Perhaps of most use for paddlers is the Scottish Flood Forecast, which gives daily flood information for the next three days, showing which watercourses are likely to be in spate and when.

Home from home law

The MCA have carried out a consultation on new laws that might be applied to seafarers from this year. One suggestion is that those on the water might be required to have internet access in order to keep contact with friends and family. Another is that they must have a balanced diet with a varied mix of carbohydrates, protein, fat, vitamins and minerals. Should some of this be suggested as education rather than legal requirements? Will the same requirements apply for tanker crews as for wave skis? Do you remember when they were going to require every boat afloat to have sufficient boats aboard to carry all those aboard in the event of a capsize, including rafts on white water?

Wilde award

John Wilde has been voted life membership unanimously by the New South Wales Sea Kayak Club. He first made his mark in paddling as a slalom C1 paddler with Aberystwyth University Canoe Club before shifting to sea kayaks, especially in North America. In subsequent decades he has been mostly in Australia and was Australia's highest qualified kayak instructor for three decades. He was head of safety for the 2000 Olympic slalom in Penrith. Winters would see him heading for the Sun Kosi for an annual fix of white water river running.

under the A34 to link up with the Thames. If you were building a high embankment to contain a large reservoir, would you want a group of canal enthusiasts to dig a channel next to it afterwards or would you prefer to use the plant already on site to excavate and shape the waterway professionally while you were still there, not to mention using the material dug out?

Zongzi

The Dragon Boat Festival is one of Taiwan's three major annual traditional holidays, the others being the Chinese New Year and the Mid-Autumn Festival.



The festival commemorates the life and death of Qu Yuan, who was a patriotic poet who lived during China's Warring States period. Persecuted by corrupt officials and forced into exile, Qu drowned himself in the Miluo River as a furious protest against his government. Following his death, locals rowed their boats up and down the waters to find him. When they could not locate his body they threw rice into the river to feed the fish so they would not eat him. This practice eventually evolved into dragon boat races and the Chinese tradition of eating zongzi.

Many areas of Taiwan from New Taipei City to Yilan County and Changhua County to Kaohsiung each hold their own events to celebrate the festival. In recent years the festivities have been expanded to include international races featuring competing teams from Taiwan and abroad.

Zongzi (also referred to as meat rice tamales) is a steamed glutinous rice dumpling wrapped in bamboo leaves along with ingredients such as diced pork, mushrooms, peanuts or egg yolk. The origins of zongzi can be traced back to Qu Yuan. For the Taiwanese, however, zongzi are not merely restricted to the festival but are eaten all year round as either a snack or a light meal.



INCIDENT FILE

PLBs for swift response

A group of seven kayak paddlers needing rescue from near Pwll Deri at the end of November were commended by the MCA for having Personal Locator Beacons and using them. They became trapped between cliffs and deteriorating sea conditions as the wind increased and sent out a PLB call, registered with their details. Mobile phone reception was poor but a 999 call to Milford Haven eventually allowed precise details to be given to an approaching lifeboat. All weather lifeboats were sent from Fishguard and St David's, a helicopter from St Athan and rescue teams from Fishguard, St David's and Dale and a general Mayday to vessels in the area. The group were all on a lifeboat an hour after sending the first call.

Whale eats paddler

A Chilean paddler and his inflatable packraft were taken into the mouth of a humpback whale for several seconds off Patagonia. His father was present and encouraged him to stay calm as he recorded the incident on video.

Kiwi statistics

New Zealand accidents for 2024 put the fatality rate at one death for 100,000 boaters of all sorts. Of these, 70% were within 1.9km of the shore. Indeed, 28% were within 400m of the shore. People tend not to allow for the fact that getting swamped or capsized is more likely to happen close to the shore. In tests, most people could not swim as far or for as long as they expected. Only 2% could float for more than five minutes in a pool. Only 6% could swim 100m in a pool in under five minutes, a figure that fell to 2% in open water.

Air lock

When paddlers end up in the water, especially non swimmers, they are sometimes kept afloat only by the air trapped in their clothing. Thus, approach should be so that wash from an approaching boat should not be allowed to knock air out of their clothes. Approach speed should be slowed so that it doesn't cause the death of the person it is attempting to save.

Mexican rescue

Two men on a sit on top double kayak were picked up by a cruise ship off the Mexican coast. They appeared fit and well on a video taken by one of the passengers, just a long way from where they should have been with no kit.

Unexpected seal launch

George Parsonage of Glasgow Humane Society recalls some of the issues with weirs on the Clyde in Glasgow. Among those who had not done their homework were a party of canoeists who saw flat water each side of an overhead structure. As it happened, there was a 900mm height difference and they got away with an unexpected seal launch.

Alligator kill

A 61 year old woman was killed by an alligator on Florida's Lake Kissimmee near Tiger Creek while canoeing with her husband. In 800mm deep water, the couple were capsized then they appeared to drift over a large alligator. Her husband was unable to fight it off. This was during the mating season in May, when alligators are more likely to be aggressive. There had been a previous attack in the vicinity on a kayak this spring, a woman escaping with a bite on this first attack.

Peter Frank was also chased by an alligator in Florida this spring. The 23 year old is paddling 9,200km of the eastern USA Great Loop but in the anticlockwise direction, including going up the Mississippi, which he has already done downstream. He is using a decked canoe, a Loon, as was used by Verlen Kruger (Mar 1995, p28). Another oddity is that he is paddling dressed as a pirate as they used clothing to suit the conditions rather than modern fashionable high street outdoor gear.

Haverfordwest judgement

A former police officer who lost four of a commercial party of seven paddleboarders she was leading on the Western Cleddau in Haverfordwest in 2021 has been jailed for over a decade. Regardless of the details of the management of the trip, it is unacceptable to all concerned that the incident has taken nearly four years to come to court or the lack of criticism of the dangerous state of the river.

Cygnets rescue by kayak

A cygnet was extracted from behind part of Waltham Town Lock on the Lee Navigation in April by a kayak paddler. Craft were prevented from using the lock until she had completed the operation or it would have drowned.

ACCESS & environment

Threat not just to boaters

Canal operators have been required to apply for water abstraction licences since 2017, prior to that being permitted to borrow whatever was needed to run canals. CRT has had to submit some 150 licence applications, each taking about half a day to prepare with no certainty of acceptance. One of the most seriously threatened is the Monmouthshire & Brecon Canal which could lose up to 90% of its supply, to be restored at exorbitant cost at a time when already reeling from slashing of its Government grant. The result is likely to be closing down of the canal during the height of the tourist season with knock on effects for tourist businesses, boat hire, accommodation and a cascade of damage to local services which rely on income from tourists. Reduced water in the canal will adversely affect wildlife, fish and the structural integrity of this canal, which already suffers from breaches as a result of the difficult geology. An appeal by CRT has already been lost, to the delight of Afonydd Cymru, whose sole interest seems to be having plenty of water in the River Usk, from which the canal is supplied at Brecon, to support the declining numbers of salmon which anglers want to catch. Although use of locks is a prime requirement for canal water, even canoeists who portage will have problems. An online petition to the Welsh Government needed to collect 10,000 signatures to initiate a debate. It reached 13,000 before Easter so a debate should now go ahead. The problem could be avoided by refunding the charge when the water is returned to the river.

Access questions increasing

Our MP until the General Election, James Gray (Con), wanted to see a reduction in the number of public footpaths, including objection to aspects of the English coastal path, and did not want to see improvement in the river access situation. He was on record as saying that Martin Salter, the MP most vehemently opposed to canoeing, was welcome in the constituency.

Like so many others, Gray was ousted at the General Election and was replaced by Dr Roz Savage (LD), whose major claim to fame has been rowing solo across



The UK and Welsh Governments have set up a £1,000,000 fund to investigate why the Wye is getting dirtier and wildlife declining. Farmers, environmental groups and citizen scientists will play a part in evidence gathering. Although there is no mention of recreational use of the river, a Welsh Government news release is headed by a picture including what could be a canoe on the river.

Q Asked by Gareth Thomas (Harrow West) Asked on: 15 June 2020
Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs 59339
Rivers: Boats
To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, under which statutes are users of small craft restricted from any Common Law rights to navigate freely the inland rivers of England and Wales.

A Answered by: Rebecca Pow Answered on: 23 June 2020
Those seeking to navigate inland rivers for recreational purposes where there is no navigation authority should establish that they have a legal right to do so, either through voluntary agreement with riparian landowners or otherwise.

Q Asked by Gareth Thomas (Harrow West) Asked on: 29 June 2020
Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs 65901
Rivers: Boats
To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, pursuant to the Answer of 23 June 2020 to Question 59339, whether there is not a statute or other legal restriction which inhibits the common law rights to navigate freely the inland rivers of England and Wales.

A Answered by: Rebecca Pow Answered on: 07 July 2020
It is not the Government's role to offer advice on such legal matters, and only the courts can determine whether a public right of navigation exists on a particular stretch of river.
My answer of 23 June 2020, to which the Hon. Member refers, sets out the current position with regards to navigation of inland rivers for recreational purposes where there is no navigation authority.

Question

Michael Fabricant
Conservative
Lichfield Commons

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, with reference to the guidance for riparian owners published by the Environment Agency entitled Living on the Edge, what the legal basis is for the statement in that guide that there is no public right of navigation on most non-tidal watercourses.

[Hide full question](#)

Answer

Rebecca Pow
Conservative
Taunton Deane Commons

Answered on

2 March 2021

The legal position is complex. It is the Government's view that those seeking to navigate inland rivers for recreational purposes where there is no navigation authority should establish that they have a legal right to do so, either through voluntary agreement with riparian landowners or otherwise.

the Atlantic, Pacific and Indian oceans. Her attitude to small boats is very different from his.

In the past we have had to go outside the constituency to put questions, policy not approved, and have received assistance from Gareth Thomas (Lab) and Michael Fabricant (Con), in particular, to get Parliamentary questions put and have been aware of Caroline Lucas

Some answers to questions put for us in the past. Compare the wording with the words offered by the current Government on the following pages.

Question



Dr Roz Savage
Liberal Democrat
South Cotswolds



Commons

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, which legislation created the requirement for individuals to obtain permission from every riparian property owner to pass through their land while using a waterway; and whether he plans to (a) clarify and (b) amend existing guidance on public access to rivers.

[Hide full question](#)

Answer



Emma Hardy
Labour
Kingston upon Hull West and Holtemprice



Commons

Answered on

21 January 2025

Determining access rights onto rivers is complex. There is no general waterway access right and the matter has not been tested in the courts. It is not government's role to offer legal advice, and at present those seeking to navigate inland rivers for recreational purposes where there is no navigation authority should establish that they have a legal right to do so, either through voluntary agreement with riparian landowners or otherwise.

The Government is considering the approach to improving access to nature and is committed to working with stakeholders as this develops. A further update will be provided in due course.

(Green) being very supportive. Now, with a different party in power, seemed the right time to see if we could get a different answer. It seems not. The first answer to Savage, in an answer from Defra Parliamentary Under-Secretary Emma Hardy, contained exactly the same words as had been used by Rebecca Pow (Con) to Thomas and Fabricant.

We have been publishing answers that appear misleading, evasive, dishonest or show a difference in approach to the needs of boaters from that towards walkers, anglers or other interests so that there is a record for future reference. An increasing problem is the sheer number of MPs asking questions about waterway access, which bring answers only about green spaces or do not answer the question asked. Not giving an honest answer is one thing. Giving a dishonest answer is another.

The first answer to us this year repeats answers in the past, for which no justification was offered. Our pursuant question referred to Magna Carta but the response referred only to the reply to the initial question, which did not mention Magna Carta.

The increasing number of questions about countryside access, either about water access or about contrasting attitudes to land access, is now getting too large to print them all. Some of the more relevant answers have been to

John McDonnell, Hayes & Harlington, Ind, Dec 20th

Dick Timothy, N Suffolk, Con, Jan 6th

Liam Conlon, Beckenham & Penge, Lab, Jan 21st

Roz Savage, S Cotswolds, LD, Jan 21, Mar 3rd and Apr 3rd, 16th and 29th

Uma Kumaran, Stratford & Bow, Lab, Feb 11th

David Taylor, Hemel Hempstead, Lab, Feb 24th

Anna Sabine, Frome & E Somerset, LD, Mar 7th x 2

Alice Macdonald, Norwich N, Lab, Mar 19th

James McMurdock, S Basildon & E Thurrock, Ref, Mar 25th

Question



Dr Roz Savage
Liberal Democrat
South Cotswolds



Commons

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, if he will provide clarity on the law on the public rights of navigation on non-tidal waterways; and if he will make a comparative assessment of his policy and Magna Carta.

Answer



Emma Hardy
Labour
Kingston upon Hull West and Holtemprice



Commons

Answered on

3 March 2025

I refer the Hon Member to the reply previously given on 21 January 2025 to PQ [24394](#).

Stan Witherden, Montgomeryshire & Glyndwr, Lab, Mar 28th

Ellie Chown, N Herefords, Green, Apr 3rd

Satvir Kaur, Southampton E, Lab, Apr 3rd

Blake Stephenson, Mid Beds, Con, Apr 4th and 10th

Olly Glover, Didcot & Wantage, LD, Apr 8th

Jenny Riddell-Carpenter, Suffolk Coastal, Lab, Apr 25th

Phil Brickhill, Bolton N, Lab, Apr 28th

Azal Khan, Manchester Rusholme, Lab, May 8th

Edward Morello, W Dorset, LD, May 13th, 15th x 3

Ian Roome, N Devon, LD, May 15th

The final sentence in the reply to Brickhill's question is interesting. If the EA/Defra admit that they know of no legal basis for their claim that there is no right of navigation on our rivers, unlike the case with Magna Carta, as in Defra's Freedom of Information response to us (Nov 2021, p13), there should be no need to ask permission of riparian owners.

Caroline Voaden (S Devon, LD) is presenting the Green Spaces Bill, presently adjourned but due to be resumed on Jun 28th. Why only green spaces and not blue?

The impossible wait

When the waiting list for permits to run America's Grand Canyon reached 20 years it was obvious that the system had failed. To run this part of the Colorado as a student you would need to apply at birth or before. The permit system is also totally inadequate for the rivers with available permits hardly increased in number while applicants have increased by many times over the years. Your chance of success on the San Juan is about 3.5%, 3.4% for the Green, 1.6% for the Yampa, 1.8% for the Middle Fork of the Salmon and a mere 0.6% for the Selway. Even if successful, what chance is there that conditions will be suitable when you are allowed to go, or that you will still be friends with the same people

High speed pollution detector

The EA are using the Surfbee, an inflatable boat with camera and monitoring equipment, to search for chemical or biological pollution in rivers at up to 14km/h. If it finds anything it phones its users to investigate further.

Welsh tourist turnoff

A £1,000,000 Year of Croeso Weather-Proofing Fund has been set up to help businesses protect against the weather. Grants of £5,000 to £20,000 are on offer to help companies try to attract visitors, who currently put £3,800,000,000 per year into the Welsh economy. Visit Wales data claimed 55% of businesses recorded fewer visitors last year because of poor weather, despite the anti motorist policy for anyone going to or through Wales. Cabinet Secretary for Tourism Rebecca Evans said 'our visitors can always be guaranteed a warm welcome' although river users might be inclined to note that Wales has the least warm welcome of any country in the world.

Welsh bathing water standards

Of 110 Welsh bathing water tested venues, only Rhyl was recorded as Poor and Llandudno North, New Quay Harbour and Wiseman's Bridge were Sufficient. The rest were at least Good, an increase of 2023, with 75 Excellent.

Thames flooding

The EA and Royal Borough of Windsor & Maidenhead Council are investigating persistent flooding at Cookham and Hurley over the last two years. The EA's Jubilee River was intended to be a flood relief channel for Maidenhead and won numerous awards before a series of design faults were revealed, including being under capacity. When there is floodwater about, the EA have to decide where to put it and they would not want to have flooding around their recent flood relief channel.

Question



Dr Roz Savage

Liberal Democrat

South Cotswolds

Comment

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, if he will bring forward legislative proposals to improve (a) public access, (b) environmental protections and (c) biodiversity enhancement for (i) rivers, (ii) lakes and (iii) other inland waterways.

Answer



Emma Hardy

Labour

Kingston upon Hull West and Haltemprice

Comment

Answered on

29 April 2025

The government recognises the importance of providing access to the outdoors including blue spaces for people's health and wellbeing and is working to ensure this is safe and appropriate. We are currently developing policy working closely with key stakeholders to improve access to nature, in line with our ambitious manifesto commitments to create nine new national river walks and three new national forests in England. This includes access onto unregulated inland waterways, taking account of environmental protection and biodiversity enhancement.

Question



Phil Brickhill

Labour

Bolton West

Comment

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, whether his Department plans to extend rights of responsible access to include more inland waters for recreational use.

Answer



Emma Hardy

Labour

Kingston upon Hull West and Haltemprice

Comment

Answered on

25 April 2025

The Government recognises the importance of providing access to the outdoors, including blue spaces, for people's health and wellbeing and is working to ensure this is safe and appropriate. This is why we have set out our ambitious manifesto commitments to create nine new national river walks and three new national forests in England, expanding access to the great outdoors. We are currently developing policy to improve access to nature, including onto unregulated inland waterways, working closely with key stakeholders to reduce barriers preventing people from accessing green and blue spaces.

Sinking pennywort

Floating pennywort is an invasive South American aquatic weed that grows up to 200mm per day, choking waterways. Trying to keep it in check is costing over £25,000,000 per year. A weevil which feeds only on this plant has been released on the Cam Washes by CABI to address the problem. The work is being funded by the EA.

A selection of questions put by Savage. She also put others of broader scope. Notice the final sentence of the answer to Brickhill.



Don't get too cross

***We are what we repeatedly do.
Excellence, then, is not an act but a habit.***
Aristotle

An interesting piece of information that came out of the Hong Kong dragon boat racing crew in 1996 was that, whereas most of the crew were reporting 5 - 6 training sessions a week during their preparation, of those sessions only about a quarter of the crew were managing more than 2 - 3 sport specific sessions.

To be a fast runner you must run a lot.
To be a fast paddler you must paddle a lot!

Although the principle of cross training can help development, no-one disputes that as a priority your training must closely resemble what you have to do in competition. To help you identify how specific your training is, we've devised a unit training system which scores each session according to how relevant we feel it is to dragon boating.

Suggested activities are:

Unit	Score
* Structured paddling session in small boats or dragon boat	10
* Upper body strength training session	10
* Upper body endurance circuit	9
* Structured paddling machine session	9
* Nordic skiing (machine or snow)	6
* Rowing ergo	6
* Rowing	5
* High wind windsurfing	4
* Swimming	4
* Mountain biking	3
* Step/aerobic sessions etc	3
* Running	2
* Cycling (ergo or road)	1

Next step... how many units to do

The realistic maximum number of sport specific sessions the average club paddler could achieve per week is 6, which gives a score of 60 units.

Working down from this, 40 or over should show significant improvements.

30 is about the minimum to show any improvement and below 20 would be considered recreational training (or you could be a very good runner).

Two important points here:

1 All the sessions must be structured to be of benefit (ask the coaches if you need advice or structures).

2 It's not possible to store fitness; you must use it or lose it. Doing 100 units in one week and then nothing for a fortnight will not work!

John Griffiths was a C2 wild water racer before becoming a coach for the British dragon boat racing team at the time this policy was proposed in 1997. Since then he has been the coach for the world's most successful Paralympic canoe team.

What's new Eureka!



Pyranha have the Ozone Freeride Whitewater, a river running playboat with rockered bow for dry wave rides and planing, adequate volume but short enough to throw around.



OverBoard have tidies to carry laptops, tablets or phones in any of their waterproof backpacks. They come in 360 or 380mm sizes and work with 20, 30 or 45l backpacks.



Supermarkets Lidl draw attention to their range of products. This one proves to be the right size to take a cushion.



Howies' unisex Ystwyth Active Jacket is 100% recycled, even the YKK Natulon zip.

Loss tracker

We have been advised of the Anti-Loss Tracker tag, a small device to be attached to kit, pets or anything likely to wander. If it goes missing it can be traced over up to 100m outdoors, 30m indoors, using iOS devices but not Android. It is showerproof but not submersible. Batteries last well over a year. A point of concern is that their website in America notes live sales by name and state. These appear to be at 15 second intervals, even in the middle of the night for Americans.



The Sea Eagle Razorlite is the world's only inflatable kayak using drop stitch technology. The floor and two rigid inflatable side walls mean tracking is good and there are adjustable footrests, tie down points and a central lifting point for easy carriage.

Eddyline joins Jackson

Jackson, who have built up from a freestyle and white water background, have acquired Eddyline, who have half a century of producing lightweight touring kayaks. Eddyline production has been moved to Jackson's location in Tennessee. This follows Jackson's acquisition of Werner paddles.

Pelican, who are one of the largest kayak manufacturers, are being bought by former executives of their company, which was established in 1968 by the Élie family.

Beyond forever

Per and polyfluoroalkyl substances are chemicals with valuable properties, for use in many products, including drysuits and dry tops. However, these PFA synthetics also have some less desirable properties, some related to cancers, fertility, liver and thyroid issues. These forever chemicals, as they have been called as they are so enduring, have been present in a wide range of products since Teflon in 1938 and are being seen increasingly in foods and even drinking water so they are being banned increasingly. Manufacturers of outdoor clothing are among those needing to find alternative chemicals but with numbers put at 15,000 to 7,000,000 PFAs there are a vast number to be addressed.

Plastex fire

Plastex suffered a fire in April that totally destroyed their premises in Warsaw. However, they have moved fast and are back in business, working from a new factory at a different location.

On show



The Worldwide Classic Boat Show has been one of the best virtual exhibitions to have resulted from Covid lockdowns. Based in Maine, it has a North American emphasis but with exhibitors from around the world. Here is a small selection of exhibits.

Boats



Wee Lassie, a 3m cedar strip canoe built in 2023 to a design inspired by Rushton's 1890s models.



Mary Oliver is a 3.7m Herbert of 2013.



A 3.7m skin on frame ultra lightweight Hawaiian outrigger concept.



A 4m Oughtred McGregor trimaran sailing canoe of 2004.



This 1900 Kingsbury canoe has a lateen sailing rig.



This 3.6m Friedel Otter is built of three colours of cedar and skinned inside and out with glassfibre.



This 4.4m Fox was built in 2019 with a 2m long cockpit.



Wayne Timmo's Haereere is a Bob's Special built in 2018 in cedar strip but incorporating decoration using North American cedar and such New Zealand timbers as miro, rimu and rewarewa which were harvested over a century ago.



Sylph is a 4.6m sailing canoe of 2004.



Joy is a Monfort Arrow 14 with a clear vinyl skin, to puzzle spectators.



Bean wood and canvas canoe, first home build by Chip Asbury and son, in Seattle during lockdown, powered by Zeeks pizza and Fremont Sky Kraken hazy pale ale.



Shooting Star of 2018 is a 4.9m Baidarka.



This courting canoe of about 1915 has unusually long decks for a cosy space for two.



A 4.6m stitch and glue Fox of 2006.

Jude S-R Photography



This AA grade canoe was purchased in 1912 by 1st Viscount Runciman of Doxford, Northumberland, whose 1938 diplomatic mission to Czechoslovakia on behalf of Neville Chamberlain's government was key to the enactment of the British policy of appeasement of Hitler preceding the Second World War. The canoe is a model MC of which only a handful were made. It is very probably the sole remaining MC.



Fry is a 5.2m CLC Waterlust sailing canoe with Hobie auxiliary pedal power.



Shirley is a 5.2m Greenley kayak built in 2022.



A 5.2m Steve Killing kayak of 2016.



Muskeego, a 5.2m Ojibway birch bark canoe of 1999.



This 5.5m 2024 touring canoe is traditional in style with glassfibre skin and optional ribs.



Patrick McCorkle built his Murrelet from a Pygmy Kayaks kit.



Ootek is a 5.2m Rob Macks/Laughing Loon sea kayak.



Alan Dater built his New Squeeze from a Chesapeake Light Craft kit.



Esplugues Sea Spirit kayaks, the 4.9m Eos and 5.5m Selene are standard designs or can be custom built in a wide range of materials from okume and bamboo to carbon fibre, with extensive design changes as required.



A 5.5m expedition kayak of 2007.



Nick Schade has plans for high performance Guillemot Kayaks models



A 5.5m Otca model, built by Old Town in 1930, with lateen rig, having a longer forward deck than usual.



Thought to be a 1901 model by the company that would become Old Town, the bow and stern lashings are similar to those of a birchbark canoe.



An Old Town Molitor of 2021.



A 5.5m Thomas Willow/Quickbeam kayak.



A 6.1m Mekong long tail canoe driven by a small petrol engine.



Evangeline is a 6.1m Sarby Class E sailing canoe of 1947.



Corona is a 5.5m double, inevitably built in 2021.



Gator Won is a cedar strip 5.5m freighter with a powerful Mercury outboard.



The 11m Gondola Rosanna was built in 1958, later moving from Venice via Stratford on Avon to Germany.



This 11m Venetian gondola replica was built in 2024 but in 1880s styling although without the roofed centre.



Leif Knutsen's Min Pike is a Pacific North West First Nation Native motif canoe but CAD cut from 6 and 9mm plywood.

Schools



Cape Falcon Kayak of Portland, Oregon, offer skin on frame kayaks and canoes, especially with Arctic associations, and with building video instruction online.



Wiigwaasi-Jiimaan is a project by the University of Wisconsin and the Lac du Flambeau Lake Superior Chippewa Indians to build an Ojibwa birchbark canoe.



The essence of the Small Boat School in Copenhagen is having fun while building boats with online instruction. The boat is simply a by product but one which offers further fun.

Clubs and communities



The Irish Currach Club of Milwaukee promote the heritage of Ireland's canoes, including racing.

Museums



The Center for Wooden Boats in Seattle and on Camano Island offers hands on experience of over 100 wooden boats plus boatbuilding classes.

Festivals, shows and regattas



Anacortes Waterfront Festival with car exhibits, boatbuilding competition, music, food and family activities.



The Blackburn Challenge is an unpowered 32km open water circumnavigation of Cape Ann in Massachusetts.



Boston Hong Kong Dragon Boat Festival was the first dragon boat regatta in the US.



Florida Gulf Coast Small Boat Meet at Cedar Key is part of the recovery process after the 2024 hurricane season.



Wye Island Challenge Electric Boat Marathon, a 39km circuit including a Picnic Class for those who do not want to race.



Steveston Dragon Boat Festival, British Columbia.



Maine Canoe Symposium is a non profit event to appreciate North American canoeing heritage and develop skills.



Gig Harbor Paddlers Cup, Washington, for dragon boats and anything smaller, racing for all ages and ability levels.



Zanzibar Beach & Watersports Festival has every sport from kayak and dhow racing to goat racing and much more with plenty of music over three days.



Toronto International Dragon Boat Race Festival is one of Toronto's signature cultural events with, typically, over 5,000 paddlers on the water.



Vogalonga Venezia is a 30km race, not too serious, from the Piazza San Marco through the Lagoon, typically with 6,000 people in anything unpowered that floats but a protest event against powered craft damaging the city.



Régates 1900 in Cenon-sur-Vienne in early 20th century costume includes canoe and other races, live music and Vete Venitienne, an illuminated parade.



Stari Grad International maritime festival Days in the Bay involves four days of sailing, introduction of many unusual kinds of Mediterranean craft and discussion of the future of Croatian nautical tourism.



Products of Bear Mountain Boats of Westport, Ontario, include sprint C4s and C15s and restoration of historical craft.



Nomad Boatbuilding of Victoria, British Columbia, build, restore and teach wooden boatbuilding and are keen to share details of processes.



Northwoods Canoe Co of Atkinson, Maine, build and restore wood and canvas canoes and offer kits and building classes.



TenderCraft Boat Shop of White Salmon, Washington, custom build and refurbish woodstrip canoes and kayaks and have varnishes, finishes, rare fittings and advice.



NorthWest Canoe of Clearwater, Minnesota, offer a canoe building and repair shop.



Bayles Boat Shop of Port Jefferson are planning to expand into other youth and community building programmes.



The Wooden Canoe Builders' Guild promote and celebrate wooden canoes and kayaks.



Old Town Canoes & Kayaks are based in Maine.



Navarro Canoe of Rock Island, Illinois, make their hulls from glassfibre, Kevlar or a combination while the ribs and floor are of black cherry.



The students of Eden Canoes build canoes and also build teams in their aboriginal community and go on to explore the waterways from Merimbula to Kiah.



Laughing Loon have strip canoes and kayaks, plans, instruction books and instructional films.

Superstitious nonsense

From our last office window I could see the Sinodun Hills, all two of them, overlooking the Thames in the distance and topped by the Wittenham Clumps, the oldest recorded woodland in Britain. An old folk tale says that if the cuckoo is trapped inside the clumps, summer will last for ever. We already have a big ferris wheel and a big dome tent built beside the river. Add something like a big version of London's zoo's Snowdon Aviary and we could have endless summer, global warming or climate change, whatever you want to call it. What a load of superstitious nonsense!

Witches and barons

Further downstream the river has had other such mumbo jumbo. After the Norman conquest Sheppey was ruled by four barons, one of whom had a hot temper. In a row with a priest who wanted payment upfront for a burial, he killed the fellow in front of more witnesses than could easily be silenced. Realizing this was not a good situation, he decided to get his own version of the story to the king before anyone else did. The king was, conveniently, moored in his ship in the shallows off Sheppey at the time, appreciated the gesture of one of his loyal barons riding out on horseback to greet him and duly pardoned him. Back on land the baron encountered the local witch, who demanded alms. On being told where to go, she predicted that the horse which had just saved his life would cause his death. To prove her wrong he pulled out his knife, butchered it on the spot and went home by taxi. Some time later he was walking along the beach discoursing with a friend (because that is what sages did) when they came across the skull of the horse. The baron related the tale, gave the skull a kick in passing, cut his foot, caught gangrene and died. Witches 1, Barons 0.

The sea monster

Just north of Skye there was a folk tale that a monster would come from Loch Kishorn. (Notice the word 'from', not 'to' as you would have expected.) It would rise to the surface three times then sink beneath the waves for ever. You can imagine the three great writhing coils, the fangs and the red eyes, can't you? It didn't take much for the locals to transpose Nessie. In the 1980s Howard-Doris wanted to build their Condeep oil platforms in the Inner Sound but the British Underwater Test & Evaluation Centre had already bagged the area for testing submarines and, as we have seen, they keep a close eye on anyone else doing anything. The platform engineers had to move round the corner into Loch Kishorn, out of their way. One platform launched by Prince Charles in 1989 was the largest object ever to have been moved by man on the face of this planet, a monster by anyone's standards. If you work in the oil industry and are concerned about the rest of the tale coming true, Ninian Central is the one to avoid.

Lesser creatures of the sea

Of course, some claimed sightings of fantasy creatures are much easier to dismiss, such as Selkies or seal folk, creatures which were seals at sea and could turn into men on land by taking off their tails. If their tails were hidden while they were away they were trapped on land as men. Selkies didn't go to the disco on Saturday nights. They went off round the coast seducing unsuspecting village maidens. At least, that was the excuse given by the village maidens.

Matching the Selkies were mermaids. Sightings were commonest in the north of Scotland where, obviously, the folk were much more simple and gullible. Strangely enough, a recent theory is that these creatures with removable tails were actually Finn folk in kayaks paddling across from Scandinavia, surely too far fetched, although it would explain why there were more mermaids in an area a long way from the tropical seas they are normally thought to inhabit.

The chap who came ashore in Scotland in a kayak, now in Aberdeen University's museum, was real enough but he had come from Greenland and may have hitched the last bit on a ship, not necessarily voluntarily.

Men of the English east coast

Sometimes it was not just sightings which were the problem. There were close encounters of the third kind. In the 13th century fishermen at Orford landed a naked hairy man. He was kept in the local castle for several months, would only eat fish and would not say anything intelligent even when hung up by his heels and tortured. This chap was clearly a very persistent actor. Taken down to the sea for a swim, he managed to escape past nets hung below him. Obviously he existed, whatever he was.

Likewise, fishermen at Skinningrove captured a sea man off the Yorkshire coast in 1535. He would only eat raw fish and communicated in shrieks for the months he was in captivity but was courteous to the many visitors who came to see him, especially the ladies. Eventually he escaped back to the sea. He behaved a bit like a seal but what seal could live in a house out of water for many weeks?

As recently as the 19th century the sole survivor of a shipwreck at Hartlepool was a monkey in military uniform. Such creatures dressed in this way were popular with sailors on ships at the time but the locals thought he was a French spy so they tried and hanged him. People you have known probably knew people who were alive at that time, shockingly recent for that level of ignorance.

Foreign catches

In *De Piscibus Marinis* Rondeletius reported that four years before the Skinningrove catch the Poles had caught a marine creature resembling a bishop and taken it to the king. Also, that the Norwegians had caught a creature with something like a monk's cowl on its shoulders. This was all getting a bit confusing.

Mermaids of northern Scotland

Is it any surprise, then, that simpler folk in backward places got it so wrong in the more distant past, especially when nobody knew just what mystical powers these creatures had. Certainly it was claimed they could control the winds and they could communicate by telepathy. If television killed the art of conversation, radio did much the same for telepathy. It is not totally dead, of course. Rounding northern Scotland, Sean Morley reported how often he found himself communicating by telepathy with Ian Wilson but they were only a short distance apart. In the past, those widely separated would agree to meet on a particular island at lunchtime the following day and it would happen.

Another question is whether these mermaids were maids at all. After all, anyone able to paddle across the North Sea would have a fairly well developed chest. Whereupon you will accuse me of being sexist and claim that maids would have been equally capable of paddling across the North Sea and it seems you would be right. While nobody wanted to get too close to creatures with magic powers, various sightings suggested that the tails did not have scales as expected but were smooth, as if of skin. Anyone that close should have been able to tell the difference between a mermaid and a merman. Did we have a history of topless blondes from Scandinavia paddling around the Scottish coast?

One good sighting was made by the schoolmaster in Reay in 1797 but the report did not appear in the *Times* for another dozen years. These days the *Sun* would have a photographer there before she could put away her comb. Way back then, if you were a respectable member of society like a schoolmaster you didn't come out with such nonsense or it would not have been a reporter who arrived but a couple of men in white coats with a wagon to cart you off to the funny farm.

If a mermaid parks the stern of her kayak between the rocks and the upturned bow is reflected in still water then you would see the characteristic mermaid tail. However, sooner or later someone would see one with her stern showing and that would require two tails. Most mermaids don't have two tails except the little one in Copenhagen harbour. Also Mélusine, who married Raymond of Poitou in mediaeval times, had children with him, some of whom had odd things like large

teeth, but did not allow him to see her in the bath once a week, which he did, eventually, especially the two tails, following which she fled, leaving only her image in French heraldry and on coffee cups and a few other places. Actually, there are quite a lot of images of mermaids with two tails if you look about.

Another strange thing is that in all these sightings there is a notable absence of comment on paddles. The schoolmaster in Reay watched his mermaid combing her hair, as they do, but was unable to see whether her hands were webbed. If they were, was she using hand paddles?

A further characteristic reported regularly was the ability to dive at will and come up some distance away. Did that mean taking a big breath or would a breathing tube down into the cockpit have done the job?

So here we have it, maids paddling across the North Sea with hand paddles in squirt boats. Surely you don't still harbour some slight scepticism.

In 1814 two Buckie fishermen of integrity were 400m offshore in calm conditions when they saw a merman near them, close enough to see no scales on his tail. He dived and came up some distance away, accompanied by a mermaid. Meanwhile, the men rowed for the shore and safety as quickly as they could.

Thomas Love Peacock's *Nightmare Abbey* was interested in these goings on. It includes various sightings including an English ship 720km from land in the Greenland seas in the late 17th century, approaching a flotilla of 60 - 70 'skiffs' with a man apiece, all of whom dived when the ship approached them.

If you were going to hunt for mermaids, where and when would you look? I'll bet it wouldn't be the far north of Scotland at the beginning of January yet the most recent sighting was on January 5th 1900 at Sandwood Bay, within the lifetime of the late Queen Mother, to name but one person who has lived up there. About the only thing plausible here is that it is the first landing point after Cape Wrath but even then you would want to be a fair surfer to land here in most conditions. The other factor is that the shepherd concerned might still have been under the influence, it being only four days after Hogmanay.

Little people

In for a penny, in for a pound. What about goblins, dwarfs, pixies, elves and the rest? Obviously fairies have wings (as distinct from a backpack of split paddles) and trolls live under bridges and eat gruff billygoats but the others are just a set of malevolent little imaginary malingerers and troublemakers to blame when things go wrong, disappear, get broken or generally need to be blamed on someone else. Even if you wanted a decent pygmy the nearest were in Africa, weren't they?

Apparently not. Due west of Sandwood Bay is the Butt of Lewis. Not far from the point is a near island where the bones of a colony of small people have been unearthed, predating 1549. The site is at Luchruban, a name which should not be confused with leprechaun, mythical little people who lived in Ireland. Mermaids may have been reported from as far down as the Mull of Kintyre but these Luchruban characters were not known to have got beyond Colonsay, only three quarters of the way to Ireland.

Miniature mermaid

Six Shetland fishermen working off Yell in 1833 landed a metre long creature which they kept on board for some three hours. She had stiff bristles on top of her head and down to her neck which she could raise and lower at will but otherwise looked like a normal mermaid with a salty Mohican, no gills, fins or scales, no aggression, just a piteous moaning. They were all quite certain she was a mermaid and eventually decided to get rid of her over the side, whereon she dived vertically.

Three years earlier some crofter women in Benbecula had met a creature playing just offshore, about the size of a four year old child but with a fully developed chest. A few days later she was found dead about 3km further down the coast. She had a tail without scales from the waist down, not unlike a sea sock by the sound of it. She was given a decent burial but, of course, nobody wanted to pry too much. Mermaids are a bit like CRT television sets, perhaps able to give a fatal shock even when dead.

Superstitious nonsense

This is only a selection of the reported sightings on offer. There is so much romantic rubbish, folk fancy and superstitious nonsense around that if you started to believe any of it there is no knowing where it would lead. It would be much better to ignore it completely than loosen the lid of this can of worms.

I claim no particular right to describe the story of modern day ocean paddling.

I'm not an academic.

I claim to be an amateur historian on a subject about which I do know something.

I'm simply an ex-paddler who believes that how any activity, institution or country's history evolves matters. Here's why...

Why recognizing the history of our sport is important

It matters, as the origins of a nation, for example, will set the scene for its future. Will it become a totalitarian state or one where human rights and democracy matter? Will an institution or an activity succeed in its endeavours by setting out its purpose and constitutional principles that are deemed appropriate from the onset? I believe that the historical significance of every activity sets the tone for its future, hence its importance. According to Wikipedia, history is always incomplete and will retain its debatable mysteries.

So it is with my account of the evolution and establishment of ocean kayaking from its place in the survival of the Inuit aboriginal people to its use today as a global recreational activity.

Here's a quote from the man himself, Duncan Winning OBE, 'I feel that it is important to record the history of our sport and that every effort should be made to get it correct. It is very easy to mislead, albeit unintentionally, and an error repeated often enough readily becomes accepted as fact' which means I'm open to correction or even advice regarding our history.

First, a brief overview of the origins of sea kayaking

I have given this subject a fair coverage in my books, *Sea Touring* and *Sea Kayak Touring*, as have others. Much greater experts than I have written about the European development of these 'not so frail craft', those such as John Brand (*The Little Kayak Book*), Duncan Winning, Harvey Golden and many others.

All I plan here is to provide my own take on what have been watershed moments of the recent developments of our sport since it was introduced to ourselves here in western Europe so, first, I'll give credit to its very roots.

The Inuit were the first among nations to use kayaks as a medium of travel. There is clear modern evidence that five thousand years ago they were building kayaks from driftwood, whale bones and seal skins. Their prime use was to provide access to their coastal waters where they hunted for seals and fish. Given that they lived in the high Arctic with no opportunity for farming, this was their only source of sustenance.

Wooden kayaks and fabric kayaks on wooden frame (such as the Klepper) dominated the market up until the 1950s, when glassfibre boats were introduced. Rotomoulded plastic kayaks first appeared in 1984.

I remember make a couple of early crossings of the English Channel using such craft, to which we added a skeg to aid directional stability. This consisted of a fixed rudder made from glassfibre which was made to fit over the rear of a touring kayak and held in place by elasticated cord secured by wrapping around the cockpit coaming.

Second, by whom, how and when did kayaking begin as a modern recreational activity?

The story of how these craft found their way to Europe and, very soon after, were adopted as an activity in their own right is one of opportunity and foresight.

First, there are several accounts of how the kayak was introduced to Europe as well as how travellers from Europe were able to visit and discover how the Inuit were building and paddling this narrow and apparently flimsy craft in their local waters.

An early example was Vitus Bering who, in the 1740s, visited the Aleutian Islands with a party of Russians. Here he found the local people using kayaks with skill and daring in order to hunt for food. At this time sea otters were a popular commodity in Europe and Asia for hats and other items of clothing and it was hardly a leap of imagination that led to the rapid decline of the poor old otters that populated the Aleutian seas as they were exploited for profit by the Russians.

This is not meant to be a definitive historical record of how paddling on the ocean originated and developed

Instead it is an attempt to summarize the key moments.

This is my take on what these moments are...

1 The Inuit developed the kayak as a hunting tool which provided food for them.

2 The Scottish moneyed class took up sea kayaking in the 19th C but

The history of modern ocean paddling

the activity was restricted to the few who were both interested and could afford it.

3 The sport of ocean paddling suddenly took off in the 1950s and, in my view, this was due to several factors coming together, viz:

- The advent of several sources of activity throughout the country; the most important was centred around the Farne Islands in the NE of England.

- It was becoming increasingly available to the average kayaker who'd been competing and/or touring on inland waters, who had sufficient funds to buy the equipment as well as travel.

- The advent of the BCU Sea Touring Committee which led to the formation of the Advanced Sea Kayak Club and subsequently the International Sea Kayaking Association. Both promoted the activities of sea kayaking worldwide. This led to the organizing of events, coaching programmes and educational symposia, initially in the UK, to be followed by other major events in Europe.

- The relationship between the UK sea kayakers made a fundamental breakthrough back in the early 1970s when they succeeded in getting HM Coastguard Agency on side so that, whenever they informed the coastguards of a proposed trip along the coast, they were met with positive rather than negative reaction.

- This, in turn, led to the formal adoption of a British Canoe Union coaching/certification scheme which encouraged safe practice. It was this scheme and the intervention of a small group of experienced coaches that saved our activity from being set back by the deaths of four young trainees at an outdoor centre whilst paddling in Lyme Bay in 1993. This led to Government imposed reforms in the way in which activity centres were accredited in the UK. The outcome may have led to further restrictions but these didn't happen.

- Other notable moments have included the intervention of ASKC in the French Maritime Authorities legislation limiting small craft from landing on the French coast which led to reconsideration and subsequent retraction, giving the French paddlers the same freedoms as every other country.

- It is fair to say that our sport of ocean kayaking or sea kayak touring is here to stay. It has become globally accepted as a recreational activity as testified by the proliferation of clubs, expeditions and Facebook sites devoted to ocean paddling.

Should you wish to read a much more comprehensive account of our history with a greater emphasis on its roots then I suggest the following:

1 *The Development of Sea Kayaking from a British Perspective: A Personal Account* by me.

2 *History of Modern Sea Kayaks & Kayaking*, an extract from *Sea Kayak Touring*, also by me.

3 Wikipedia.

4 *The Importance of Ken Taylor's Iglorsuit Kayak* by Duncan Winning.

5 *Modern Sea Kayaking - Recent History*, written as a presentation for a sea kayaking symposium, May 2011.

6 *It's Inuit, Int It* by Duncan Winning.

7 An extract from Bill Taylor's book *Angmagssalik Around Britain* by Geoff Hunter.

8 *John MacGregor*. His story tells how he, virtually single handedly, started the interest in canoeing back in the 19th century. Nicknamed Rob Roy, he is generally credited with the development of the sailing canoe as well as popularizing canoeing as a sport. He founded the Royal Canoe Club.

Finally, we are attempting to compile a list of those who we feel have made a contribution to the early development of our sport. It's become known as the ISKA List. An updated version can be viewed on the ISKA Facebook page.

John Ramwell founded ISKA.

The plan is to include names from the past that we believe have made some fairly serious contributions to the foundations of our sport of ocean kayaking over the past few decades.

Nominations are coming from the history books as well as established paddlers and ex-paddlers.

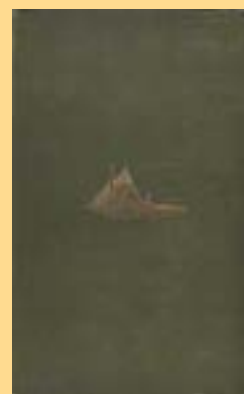
Our sport is over 5,000 years old if we include the Arctic Inuit but its modern history goes back to the early 1960s, since when we've seen the numbers grow from a handful here in the UK to thousands around the globe.

This interest and growth didn't occur without effort, effort provided as a labour of love. By this I mean the motivation was always to have fun, enjoy the ocean, the companionship (excepting the solo paddlers), the discovery and the environment. The fact they enhanced the opportunities for others along the way was serendipitous but many individuals within this group were pioneers, teachers, coaches, builders, innovators, editors, authors, all with skills, time and energy that they gave freely to advance sea kayaking within clubs, expeditions, groups and individuals that make up one of the best outdoor activities, one where we can still be humbled by Mother Nature. It's only over the last few decades that we have been able to rely on modern technology such as mobile phones, GPS, more reliable weather forecasts etc, together with improvements in the gear and clothing that we so take for granted and that have collectively changed the nature and the safety elements for ever.

For every nomination made and accepted there'll be many that have made huge contributions that will forever remain unsung.

This is inevitable just as those who have performed all sorts of heroic acts will forever remain unsung because they were not recognized or recorded at the time but this is not a reason for not pushing ahead with this project.

In time I hope, with your help, to place a link to information regarding everyone listed to include a précis of why they've been selected.



Longest, highest and deepest



About to head south from Marsden.

Standedge Tunnel on the Huddersfield Narrow Canal is, at 5.2km, the longest canal tunnel in the country. It is also the highest yet the deepest below ground level, it being possible to look up a shaft to the surface 194m above. Outside are notices banning canoes, as there are outside many shorter canal tunnels.

However, CRT have now recognized the interest and have begun running trips through for canoeists. These cater for a couple of dozen canoeists at a time, for which they provide solo and tandem Prospector canoes, which must be used, and other kit for participants although other personal equipment and clothing may be used as desired.

Trips are run at weekends, one weekend per summer

month, south from Marsden to Diggle in the morning and back in the afternoon, participants usually paddling one way only. A satisfactory level of ability in open canoe handling is required. Being a narrow canal, much of the route is not wide enough to turn a canoe so that anyone feeling ill or unhappy with claustrophobia is asked to make it known as soon as possible as it is better to retreat from the tunnel ends than from the centre of the tunnel. That said, there have been subsequent railway tunnels built parallel, allowing several cross connecting adits, from which smoke used to burst during steam train days. These are now used by CRT staff to monitor groups as they pass and could permit paddlers to walk out if necessary. These adits are lit and the



A section with brick arches.

tunnel is monitored here for air quality. CRT lead and trail canoes accompany groups and keep them together as well as giving a commentary at the lit adits on the construction of the tunnel, its methods, reasons and purposes.

The tunnel, which took 17 years to build, has a range of finishes, bare rock, stone blocks, original and more recent bricks, sometimes as jack arches, or with shotcrete. There are some short straws towards each end although nothing like the stalactite rapiers that Robin Witter and Jon Goodwin found in the original Harecastle Tunnel (May 1980, p21).

Most falling water can be avoided but there are a couple of heavy curtains right across the tunnel towards the Marsden end and so boaters remain dry for longer when northbound. The temperature in the tunnel is a fairly constant 8°C.

Passage takes about two hours, including stops for talks and to let stragglers catch up. At Marsden the canal centre includes a café and toilets while Diggle has a popup snack shop in a portable cabin and a portable toilet. Diggle has parking adjacent whereas it is a ten minute walk to where any parking is allowed at Marsden. A similar walk is required at each end to catch the connecting local bus. Walking the whole way is a fairly strenuous 8 to 11km over the hill. I have done it in the past, not portaging the kayak, passing a rifle range, getting lost and having to



Typical level of lighting at an adit stop.

Publicity is locally or on social media, bookings filling up overnight when dates are made public. CRT are short of cash because of slashing of Government grants so CRT should be seeking any way possible to increase revenue, of which this is a welcome example.

Price £110 per canoe, solo or tandem
<https://canalrivertrust.org.uk/news-and-views/news/paddle-under-the-pennines-for-the-first-time-and-help-keep-canal-alive>



**Unique
experience
Lighting
Support in
tunnel
Commentary
Food and
toilets**



**Booking
information
Return
logistics
Parking**



Arrival at Diggle.

climb over a fence to reach the road, an option not open to somebody leading a tow horse several years ago, who faced the same problem. On the day before our trip this time there was a fire on the hill, attended by seven fire engines.

Each canoe is fitted with a headlight and the series of arcs of light mean that much more can be seen than would be visible from a single narrowboat. The geology and range of construction techniques are fascinating and need to be seen firsthand.

The tunnel bends in places as those digging the tunnel attempted to meet each other, requiring some accurate surveying. There are some wider chambers to permit working boats to pass but there were inevitable confrontations in the long narrow sections, the tunnel consequently changing to letting boats through perhaps three at a time before the gates were locked, a young lad walking with the key to the other end, a return journey he made twice a day. These days the canoes are tied in a line and pushed into the tunnel with the gates locked overnight for safe keeping.

There is a significant level of interest in canal tunnels, not just because they are often safer than alternative portage routes. This one is exceptional. There is a long waiting list.



Locking the canoes away for the night.

THE FOXYS MOUNTAINS LOCHS

Legend

- Roads
- Planning
- A Road
- B Road
- Stream
- Water Tower
- Interpretation Centre
- Museum/Gallery
- Loch/Groundwater

A map showing a cycling route starting at Enniscorthy, passing through Enniskerry, and ending at Leek Rannoch. The route is highlighted in red. Key locations include Enniscorthy, Enniskerry, Leek Rannoch, and Enniskerry. A compass rose indicates North. Text labels provide distances: Enniskerry 1237 m, Walk/Cycle 28 miles, Ascent 1000 m, and Leek Rannoch 1.2 miles. Other labels include 'Leek Rannoch via Enniskerry' and 'Enniskerry via Enniskerry'.

A Foxy is the combined traverse of a loch or lake (over 1km) and the summing of a mountain (over 2,000 ft) bearing the same name. (See May 2022, p21.)

The overnight train arrives into a damp, overcast and gloomy Aviemore at 7.30am and, after reloading the packs on my bike, I start the ride up to Loch Eanaich. I have purposely not looked too closely at the weather but after Act 4 of the Foxy's I am packing spare clothes and taking a flysheet to set up a base camp and shelter at the loch should the weather turn. The weather, fortunately, starts to improve and the damp low clouds I have cycled through have lifted and the sun is starting to break through as I arrive at the loch. I set up the flysheet for my base camp and then take the packraft out for a paddle on the loch. After a brew and refuel I pack the daysack and make my way up the stalkers' path below Einich Cairn. The path eventually heads in towards Am Bodach and into Coire Dhondail. Ahead there appears to be an



A vibrant green tent is pitched on a grassy field. In the background, a calm lake reflects the surrounding steep, rocky mountains under a blue sky with scattered white clouds. Various camping gear, including a bicycle and bags, is visible near the tent.

Base camp by Loch Eanaich.



Out on Loch Eanaich



Refuelling.



On the stalkers' path.



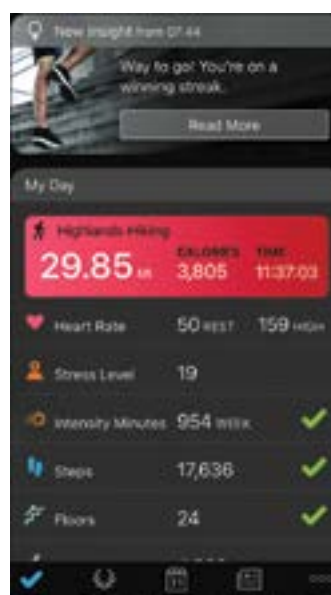
Cresting onto the plateau.

impenetrable headwall with a cascading waterfall. The path, however, tracks up towards it and there is a little scrambling before you emerge above the waterfalls onto open ground. It is a slow climb towards Carn na Criche; however, once you crest the rise the full plateau stretches out before you. The skies are clear and strikingly blue as I make my way over to Einich Cairn for a late lunch stop. I retrace my steps, taking in the Wells of Dee and sipping the clear cool water. I take an empty bottle from my pack and fill it with the clear, cold, pristine fluid; what better to open the flowers of whisky later. I descend back to the loch; the weather has changed and a wind whips waves on the shoreline. I take shelter in the flysheet and brew a hot drink before packing up.

The bike out from Loch Eanaich is fast with a super single track route part way down that hugs the river; despite this I end up arriving back in Aviemore after dark but with a couple of hours to kill before the night train back to London.



At the Wells of Dee.



The Wells of Dee

*I walk
This high
desert plateau
I have trod
the stalkers' path,
Scrambled
side by side
with falling water,
Footsteps
over windswept grassland,
sparse
green moonscape
beneath my feet.
I have touched
the edges,
Looked into
the depths below,
Gazed to horizons
beyond my reach
But within my mind,
This desert
desolate
But alive.
I have sipped
from the Wells of Dee
and I thirst no longer.*

Bienn Loinne + Loch Loyne



The bike ride out from Ben Loinne.

Today I started in the dark and now I have finished in the dark, and I am beat.

The fuel crisis is over; now we just have to worry about the turkeys for Christmas. I have a weekend opportunity to finish the remaining two Foxys, Loyne and Fannich.

Despite all the motorway closures, traffic jams and delays that the road network throws at me, I reach Cluanie Inn by midnight. I set the alarm for 6am but it's dark when I awake and I'm not rushing to get out of my pit. I am, however, on my bike by 7.15am and start the climb up the track to the bealach between Beinn Loinne and Creag a' Mhàim. This was apparently a motorable road before the Loyne dam submerged it.

There is no discernible route through the bog from the bealach and I opt to make for the high ground just to the north as soon as I can. The weather is clear although a little overcast but there are views of Ben Nevis to the south. Just over two hours after starting I am at the cylindrical trig point of the high summit of Ben Loinne. There is a second summit ahead and given more time and a longer day I would have trekked to this but I have a lot to cover today. I descend as fast as can back to the track and once I am on this it is a speedy descent back to the car.

The weather improves as I drive around to the south of the mountain and park up by the Loyne Dam. I take the kayak onto the loch and paddle up far enough to see the peaks at the far end of the loch.



On Loch Loyne.



The dam wall on Loch Loyne.

Beinn Liath Mhor Fannaich + Loch Fannich



After a late lunch I start the 70 mile drive north to the south of the Fannichs.

There is a locked gate that precedes a track up to the loch. I have parked a little way down the road and have cycled up to the gate; having just lifted my bike over the fence, over which I am about to climb, I am met by a descending 4x4. I hide my embarrassment but the driver is genial and appears unconcerned; we have a chat about how their day has been and it is just after 4pm when I start the cycle up.

It's just over 3 miles to the loch and with the occasional push I am there within the hour with clear views of the Fannich ridges ahead. The loch is smooth, which always bodes well for packrafting, and I take to the lake and cross to the other side. These high lochs have a calmness and seclusion about them; the only habitation here is Fannich Lodge



The cycle in to Loch Fannich.

on the far side. By the time I am off the water and have repacked the raft the light is failing and, despite a fast descent, I have switched to full beam on my bike lights and I arrive back at the car in the dark. I drive north and park up at the Silver Bridge parking area.

Today I started in the dark and now I have finished in the dark and I am beat. I have shovelled a bowl of tinned chicken tikka masala combined with microwave wave rice and heated over the stove



Coming ashore from Loch Fannich.



We are not alone.



Mission accomplished.

down my throat, washing it down with a cup of tea; I am now lying horizontal in the back of my car, totally trashed. It's 8.30pm. I set the alarm for 6.30am and turn off the head torch.

Sunday brings overcast weather and low cloud and after breakfast I drive the short distance up the road to park up at Droma Dam. I am back on my bike again following the track up to a small dam where I leave my bike. Whilst I had plotted a route via Loch Sgeireach up to the summit of Bienne Liath Mhòr Fannaich there is a well worn path that tracks up to the south. I take this obvious route and it lasts for a reasonable time until losing its way amidst boulder fields and bogs. I eventually arrive on a fairly broad spread of gently rising ground and in the low cloud I am slightly disorientated. A check on both the map and the GPS suggests that I go south to the summit which I do, checking on the GPS that I am heading in the right direction. I reach two large cairns that mark the short ascent to the summit where I sit down for a moment of reflection. I call my wife to let her know where I am. (It feels a bit like that scene from Everest (where the guide dies on the mountain) so I ring off and say that I will call again when I am safely down. There are still some pockets of crystalized snow and with the low cloud and dampness I begin to feel the cold and so I head back down to my bike for the final cycle descent to the car.

The Foxys are complete, 21 mountains, 21 lochs in 2021.

Yet again I have travelled to places, hiked mountains and traversed lochs that I would not normally have gone to. The Foxys, an excuse for an adventure.

Alan Fox



Alan Fox photographs

Home, James, and don't spare the horses.

Paddle from Stirling to Port Edgar

32.5 miles in 4 hrs 21 mins, 30th March 2025

I'm not a sea kayaker, although I do paddle on the sea a lot, and have done so since 1962, when I started canoeing at the age of 15. I'm 78 now, to save you the calculations. All my canoeing since 1968 has been done in racing boats: K1s and River Racers (RR). I've paddled round St Kilda, Gigha, Fair Isle, Rathlin Island, Iona, and Scarba, to name but a few, always in a RR. I do all my paddling of this nature solo, which I prefer. I've also paddled from Arisaig to Rum in a K1, but the older type, which was more stable than the latest boats. See picture below taken at Rum. I used to paddle from Ardrossan to Brodick in the same K1, and once did it at night.



That makes me unusual for sure. Some would say eccentric or even foolhardy, and that's fair comment, because I'm unaware of anyone else daft enough to do what I do.

Why a RR? Most regard them as unsuitable for the sea, as they are too unstable and have none of the features of sea kayaks. I have never found stability a problem, because in comparison to a K1 they feel rock-solid. But you do have to hold on to your paddles all the time to prevent capsize – I can't sit back and have a cup of tea in the waves. They also don't have a rudder or skeg, which makes broaching inevitable on large waves. So, 15 years ago, I had an understern fin rudder fitted, with T-bar steering, just like racing K1s. That has made a huge difference to my paddling on the sea, and I regret not fitting a rudder forty years before.



The Marlin with fixed fin rudder.

So, why the RR? They are very light. Mine weighs only 10kg. I have done a camping trip in one once, using waterproof bags for kit. I paddled from Plockton to Applecross, then Skye and back to Plockton, but didn't enjoy it much, so that was that. All my paddling is on day trips only, and for that, a fast, light boat is the business. The MX5 of the sea! I paddled round St Kilda in 90 minutes, and wasn't racing, just enjoying the scenery; fifteen miles round Rathlin Island in 2 hours 15 minutes, with some tidal help. The speed is useful, because I can cover long distances in a short time, and when I was with friends or family, I would often do big paddles before breakfast. Brodick round Holy Isle and back by 8am (12 miles), then breakfast, and the rest of the day with the family. All the Scilly islands in a week, one each day, before breakfast,

and a 14-mile trip round Bishop Rock and back by 7.30am. That way, I've had my paddle, and I can spend the rest of the day, relaxing with family or friends, drinking coffee and eating cake with a clear conscience.

And so it was with the 32 miles from Stirling to Port Edgar, completed in 4 hours 20 minutes, from 6.35 to 10.55 on the morning of the 30th March 2025. Crazy, yes, but that's the way I like it, and it's always solo. The massive benefit of this quick-fire approach is that I've managed to fit canoeing into my entire life, even when I had a young family, was running a school Boarding House with 50 boys, seven days a week, and teaching full-time. In the seventies, when I taught at Broxburn Academy, I'd often paddle twice a day, before and after work, or at lunch for a flat out 22 minutes on the local canal. Yes, I still remember the time!

Now, all of the above gives you background to my paddle down the Forth. All I want to do now, is give you the rather bizarre statistics, to show you what's possible, even for an old man.

Up at 3.30am old time, and on the water at 6.35 new time (clocks went forward that night).

Training: None as such. I just keep fit by paddling regularly all the year round. c 50 miles per month in the winter, usually 2 to 4 miles at a go, but max effort. My VO_2 max is 46, and I weigh just under 60kg.

The week before:

Tuesday – 8 miles flat out in a 20-foot Surf Ski on the canal at Falkirk, along with four chums. 6.3mph (10kph)

Thursday – 10km along Loch Earn in under an hour, with my training mate, Gilbert Speirs. Force 4 following wind. He paddled a Ski and was well ahead of me in my RR. Some good wave riding in the last three miles. (6.5mph)

Food: Dinner the night before very light: yoghurt, honey and nuts. Porridge at 5am, and 100 ml of milk just five minutes before setting off. Took no fluids with me. Three little cubes of marzipan (50g in total = 250 calories) lying in the slot where the spray deck fits the deck of the canoe. Just sweeties to give me a glucose boost.

Why such sparse food and drink? Like many old men, I have a degree of prostate trouble, and I didn't want to have toilet stops on the way to Port Edgar, because there's virtually no place to stop – the banks are all thick mud, especially so as the tide goes out. If any of my male readers are in the same position with regard to their prostate, the trick is to avoid both protein, and big meals before bed. In my view, all the other remedies are worthless and expensive – I never use them. The kidney works hard after a proteinaceous meal, and that will give you problems overnight. So, my paddle to PE was trouble-free in terms of a toilet stop. When I arrived at PE I was neither thirsty nor hungry. Keep in mind, our digestive systems tend to shut down when we are exercising hard; the hunger and thirst come much later. Keep in mind, the metabolism of an old body is much slower, so the demand for nourishment is less. Now I'm eating half what I used to eat. I would have carried 500ml of juice if the weather had been hot.

Starting point: Stirling, where there's a super wee spot at the end of Castle Vale Road in Cornton. That's just two miles upstream from the rowing club. Because I had parked my car there at 6.15 and left it all morning, a thoughtful member of the public reported the car to the police. The roof rack with V-bars and the number plate K1YAK, gave it away of course. The police contacted me at 11.30 to check all was OK, which it was. Very impressive on all fronts... and appreciated.

Finish: Port Edgar marina, where friends were waiting to pick me up and take me back to my car after, changing into a full set of dry clothes. I gave them a rough ETA which turned out to be optimistic by 20 minutes.

Tide: High tide at 4am in Leith and 5am in Stirling, and it was a very high equinoctial spring tide. The river was one metre up when I arrived at 6.30, and the flow was fast, as there had been a fair bit of rain the day before. Low tide at Leith – 10am.

Weather: See details later. Wind, a bit too strong for my liking. I had hoped to get big waves to surf down the Firth but it didn't quite work out as expected. The gusts were so strong in the river, I had to down tools to stop being blown over – the wind catches the underside of wing paddles very strongly – they are 'wings' after all. That's one of the advantages of using the long thin wooden 'Greenland' paddles – great for rolling, and much reduced windage, but hopeless for fast paddling, sadly.



Two views of paddling round Kerrera.



Running the Awe in spate in the 1970s.

Safety: mobile phone in waterproof pack, attached to the canoe.

Clothing: I wear very little on these paddles. I liken my style of paddling to playing football or rugby or going for a run. The players/runners wear very little clothing despite adverse weather conditions, and that's because they are exercising fairly hard, which is what I'm doing. I'm well protected inside the kayak, with a neoprene spraydeck too. So, I wore two thin long-sleeved Gul rash vests, with a Nike running vest on top – no neoprene, no wet or dry suit – far too hot and sweaty for non-stop paddling.

Commentary on the paddle itself

The run down the river is fairly easy. There are no rapids, just a few swirls, but nothing to worry about. Of course, you must paddle with the tide behind you. Plan to start at Stirling just after high tide, keeping in mind, high tide in Stirling is an hour after high tide in Leith. Low tide in Stirling doesn't really exist as such. Ideally, choose Spring tides, which occur just a day or two after full and new moon (if you don't know that already). Moreover, if there's been a fair bit of rain, the river will be higher. Use the SEPA website to check the level of the river Forth. Craigforth is in Stirling and should be over 0.6 metres ideally.

The distance between Stirling and Port Edgar as the crow flies is just 23 miles. However, the river meanders hugely, to the point you are almost paddling round in circles and going back to where you started from. So the total distance from Cornton to Kincardine Bridge is 18

miles. I did that stretch at 8.2 mph with the strong tide and full river behind me. My STW is about 6 mph, so that equates to an expectation of over 2 mph assistance. (3.5 kph)

One warning: there are very few places to stop on the river, simply because of the vast amount of mud on the banks. Consequently, my advice is to plan to do the river without having to go ashore. I did the whole paddle to Port Edgar without stopping at all, and that's what I wanted to do.

Once onto the estuary, the tide should still be behind you. Keep in mind that it tends to flow out to sea up to an hour after low tide at Leith. So, you have more than six hours in total, to benefit from the tide. If you think it will take you longer than six hours, it might be worth starting from Stirling at high tide, or even before high tide.

Ideally, choose a following wind too, keeping in mind that you won't benefit from that in the meanders. But once into the Firth a following wind with some waves to help you along, is perfect. It wasn't so for me. I fondly imagined a wonderful 13 miles of big wave riding all the way to Port Edgar, but I was wrong – so easy to err when it comes to paddling on the sea.

The problem with the top end of the Firth is that it's relatively narrow with sandbanks on the south side, which extend all the way down to the bridges. The tidal currents over the banks cause variations in the wave patterns which make it difficult to manage. Back eddies and swirls cause the waves to break too, and there were many white horses. The big waves break on the shallows of course, and there's wave refraction too, if you paddle close to the bank. So I found the paddle more difficult than I expected, and much slower as a consequence – only 7 mph with wind, wave and tide behind me. That's very slow for a RR.

As to other boats/ships on the water – I saw none, and didn't expect big boats, because the tide was fairly low by the time I reached the



Tide times.



Weather forecast.



The route.



Heart rate.

Firth. In addition, I kept outside the central shipping lane for most of the time.

Big waves not too much of a problem in a RR – after all they are designed for them.

That's me paddling down the Awe in spate in the 1970s. I capsized in the wave and rolled up shortly after. Wouldn't be trying that now.

Note relatively low heart rate of my training and racing, when I am mostly in red and orange.

See below, on the right, for comparison: 8 miles in a Surf Ski on canal five days earlier – flat out. 77 minutes.

Damage to body: None whatsoever. No aches and pains, no numb bum, no sore arms, no blisters. Went for a paddle two days later – no problem at all. Only damage was skin abraded on the side of both big toes with having to use the T-bar so much in the last two hours. I always paddle with bare feet.

Concluding remarks

Was it worth it? Yes and no. Pleased I was able to sustain over 4 hours in difficult conditions, but the Firth was far too tricky to be enjoyed. So, mixed views. Won't be doing it again for sure, but why not give it a go in quieter conditions? It's a lovely paddle, and you don't have to be daft and race down it like me.

See more data to following.

Tide and weather on the day. I set off at 6.35am. High tide Stirling is an hour after Leith (5am).

Surf Ski and Marlin River Racer. Both 10kg, same width at the cockpit and roughly same stability.

I can sustain 10 kph in both in calm conditions, although the Ski is slightly faster. Twenty years ago I could sustain 11 kph in the Marlin.

Note fastest current at the Kincardine Bridges, where the river narrows. Variable speed in the Firth depending on how difficult the waves were, and decreasing with the arrival of low tide an hour before I finished.

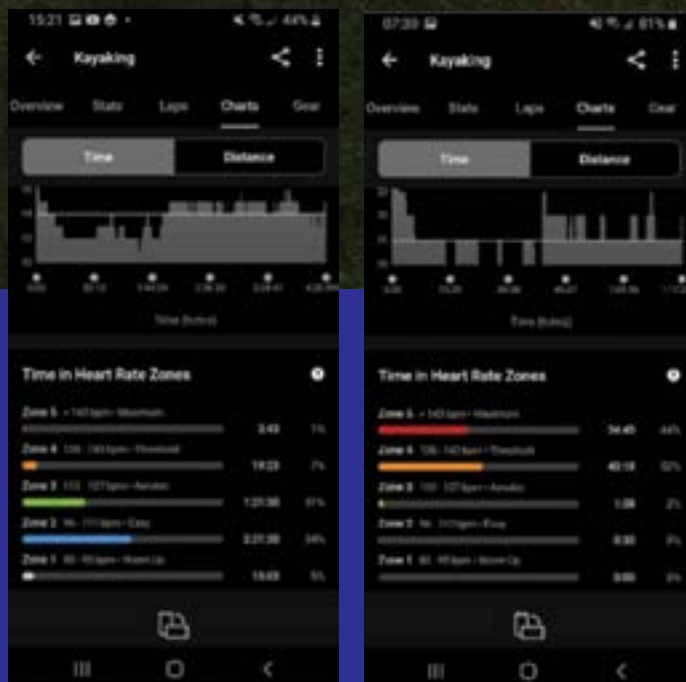
Max heart rate of 149 is about right. The rough rule of thumb for max rate is 220 less your age, which gives me 142 bpm.

Isn't the heart an amazing organ!

Andy Morton

A guide from Stirling to Cramond, all of the river in this article, is included in *Rivers of Britain*. The August 1999 guide in *Canoeist* covered the Falkirk shore from Kincardine to Cramond. My Kevlar river racer was built for the 1979 world championships and has since had an additional skin over the hull as it was getting rather flexible but I can still lift it with my little finger. – Ed.

Racing kayaks for the sea, 10kg each.



Low heart rate training and high rate racing.

Island of Rona

A hard
landscape
for broken
people



Port an Teampuill with the peaks of Trotternish on Skye beyond.



Not to be confused with North Rona, Rona or South Rona is an island extending northwards from the northern end of Raasay.

Of glaciated Lewisian gneiss, it is a rock platform, tilted to the west like Raasay.

After Culloden, Government troops landed on Rona, searching for chief Malcolm MacLeod of Raasay, who had accompanied Prince Charlie. They could not find him so they imposed a scorched earth policy on Raasay.

In his subsequent *A Journey to the Western Isles of Scotland*, Samuel Johnson noted that Rona was used as winter grazing for 160 cattle, accompanied by a solitary herdsman. In the mid 19th century the island was used to house victims of the Clearances on Raasay. The Rona Raiders were seven families who seized more fertile land at North and South Fearn and Eyre at the southern end of Raasay in 1919 but were jailed in Inverness despite public outcry, subsequently being piped home from the jail. Rona has been owned by the UK Government since 1922 and was inhabited until 1943.

It is not easily accessible. The nearest it is possible to get a vehicle is a cleft at Rubha Crion on Loch Arnish at the north end of Raasay, still 7km from Rona or more if the channel inside Eilean Tigh is dry. A steep track with a chain across it leads down to a rough slipway. A space by the side of the road looks like a passing place but is not marked as such. There is little traffic here as the road ends 300m away up the hill, where there is plenty of parking space.

Off the southern end of Rona is Garbh Eilean, rough island, separated by a drying channel leading to Port an Teampuill. An Teampull is an attractive little graveyard, from where a footpath leads up the centre of the southern half of Rona to Dry Harbour, there being no roads on the island.

Caol Rona flows northwest from Dover +0030 and southeast from Dover -0320 to 4km/h. Clear of 111m Eilean Tigh and Rubha Dubh Chamais, it opens out into the Sound of Raasay.

Acairseid Mhòr, the big harbour, is one of the best anchorages on the west coast. In the 17th and 18th centuries it was the place of Broken Men, pirates and

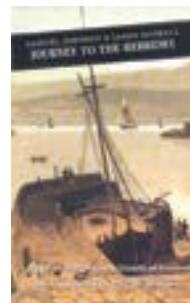
robbers based in Port nan Robaireann, the port of robbers. Completely sheltered to its north, east and south, it is protected by Eilean Garbh on the southwest side of its entrance with several skerries to its northeast. The Trotternish peninsula of Skye intercepts most of the Atlantic weather and provides an interesting skyline.

Acairseid Thioram with the Dry Harbour township is more open to the northwest but was occupied by crofters evicted from Raasay during the Clearances. There is a Mission House and some crofts have been restored as holiday cottages.

Sgath a' Bhannaich and Beinn na h-Iolaire are each 110m high, standing behind Port an Fhearrainn and Ob nam Feusgan.

The Sgeirainn Buidhe Bhorlum break up the coast at Rubha na Sgàth Mòine. The yellow colour is from wrack, bootlace weed and kelp. Cormorants, herons and starfish are present.

Oban Dreallaire winds its way in to a tidal pond from the mouth of Loch a' Bhràige, where there is a NATO signal station and boaters have found themselves being scanned by binoculars. The 13m Rona lighthouse seems to appear time after time between rocks on rounding the northern end of the island, where Sgeir Shuas, Limpet Rock and





The Sound of Raasay with the peaks of Trotternish on Skye beyond.



Eilean Garbh protects the mouth of the Acairseid Mhór.



The Acairseid Mhór, one of the best anchorages on the west coast.



The rather more open Acairseid Thioram.



A seal investigates inside the Sgeirean Buidhe Bhorlum.



Overhanging rocks inside the Sgeirean Buidhe Bhorlum..



Loch a'Bhràige with the lighthouse visible.



Seals resting at the north end of Rona.



The control building with its cables into the sound.



The lighthouse appears repeatedly.

FACT FILE

Distance

Rona is 8km long and lies 1km off Raasay.

Transport

There is no public transport.

Youth Hostel

Raasay Youth Hostel is 17km away.

Campsites

There are campsites 14km away at Applecross, 15km away at Achachork and 13km away at Staffin.

OS 1:50,000 Sheet

24 Raasay & Applecross

Admiralty Charts

2210 Approaches to Inner Sound (1:50,000)
2479 Inner Sound - Northern Part (1:18,000)
2480 Inner Sound - Central Part (1:25,000)
2534 Plans in the Sound of Raasay. Loch a' Bhràige (1:7,500)

Tidal Constant

L a'Bhràige Dover -0420

Sea Area

Hebrides

Submarine Areas

Portree
Rona South
Raasay

Lifeboats

All weather lifeboat: Portree

Connection

Isle of Raasay - See *Coastal Scotland* p125

Cow Rock attract otters and common seals, Ron-y meaning seal island. What appears to be a cormorant with wings spread to dry is actually a solar panel on Sgeir Shuas. Even a concrete block is worthy of being marked on charts.

The skyline changes from Lewis in the Outer Hebrides to the distinctive Wester Ross peaks on turning into Inner Sound, where flows are to 2km/h. The water is to 283m deep and this is a submarine exercise range. A low building

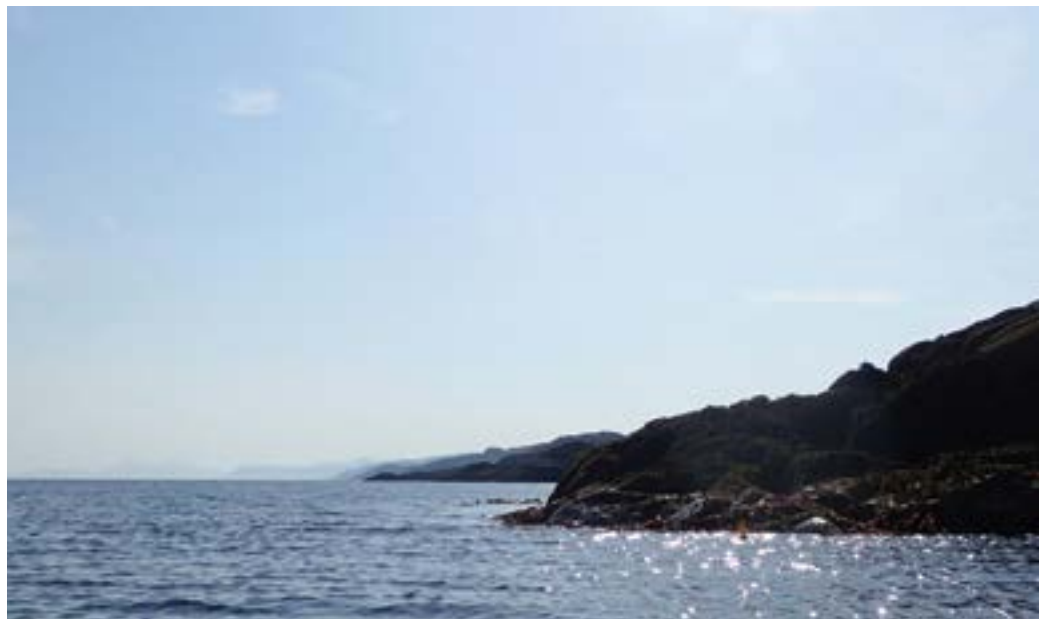
between another tidal pond and the lighthouse has numerous cables running down into the sea.

The east side of the island is steeper than the west and has less in the way of inlets and skerries. A conspicuous conical structure and solar panel stand on Rubha Chèil-tairbh, inland from which a township is hidden. The island's highest point is 125m Meall Acairseid.

Warriors Cave or Church Cave was last used in the 19th century. As well as rock pews it has a font fed by water dripping from above.

The shielings of Doine na Guaile were used by crofters evicted from Raasay during the Clearances. Blackbacked gulls are likely to be present with urchins and lion's mane jellyfish.

Ahead are the Cuillin although only 1km offshore the water is 321m deep.

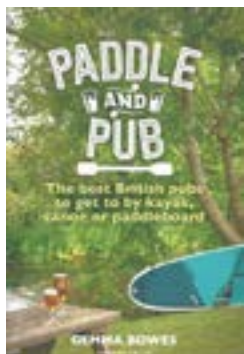


The east side of Rona, leading down to the Cuillin.

BOOKS

Reviews of books and publications

Paddle & Pub



Gemma Bowes
Adlard Coles
978 1 3994 1057 1
2025
230 x 160mm
240 pages, paperback
£19.99

Gemma Bowes wrote *The World's 100 Greatest Places to Paddle* for the ICF (Nov, p13), including the Basingstoke Canal at number 13, also featured in this book. She is primarily a paddleboarder but also uses kayaks and canoes here.

The claim is to present the best British pubs it is possible to reach by paddling.

With 47 venues on sea, river, lake and canal across the whole of the UK, they are thinly spread, predominantly in southern England, although some have brief alternatives in the vicinity. Her favourite is possibly the Hamble.

One of the options on the Llangollen Canal (in the Vale of Glamorgan!) only does crisps although there are plenty of others for which you might need a gastronomic dictionary. While it is possible to go too far down market, you could have the converse problem and there is an expensive restaurant in Bray where it might not be appreciated if you drip on the floor.

The paddles range from a couple at 800m each to as many kilometres as you want to go before turning round and returning to the start.

They usually have an outdoor centre, hire venue and sometimes instructors or guides nearby. Could these centres have been found first and asked to suggest suitable pubs? Accommodation is often available and comments might include bedroom colours to garden plants. There are usually selections from the menu and local brews on offer. Websites for all of these are given. Pictures are supplied mostly by the outdoor centres, by the pubs or by agencies. One half page picture appears twice in the first dozen pages.

At the start of each chapter is a panel with information such as the paddle distance (usually there and back), the direction, the nature of the water and whether a licence or launching fee is involved. There are also three words, not the sort for which you need to go online to find a location but three words describing the trip. I love it (except for the Thames from Buscot to Lechlade with 'coastal, dramatic, cave').

Together with a sketch map, each chapter begins with some history and general background, details including rental and parking, overnight accommodation and alternative routes.

There are some missed points, such as why the Mathematical Bridge in Cambridge is so called or the thinking on which side of the river you should paddle when a rower in a fast boat with a sharp end is approaching from behind, neither of you looking at the other, a point I debated with a Cam rowing coach who did not understand this.

This is a book with plenty of variety.

Paddle the East of England

Jess Ashley, Oli Jordan, Andy Large & Matt Payne
Adlard Coles
978 1 3994 1843 0
2025
230 x 160mm
192 pages, paperback
£17.99

Written by four members of East of England Paddlesports, this book presents 31 selected paddles from Essex, Suffolk, Norfolk, Cambridgeshire, Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire. Primarily aimed at paddleboarders, it does also include some kayaks.



Each chapter has a simple sketch map, a history of its route, a description, wildlife, food stops and other activities. A box gives some essential information such as licences and tides but also some less obvious things such as the need to wear shoes because of broken oyster shells on beaches. Initial data includes the distance (usually modest), water type and difficulty, launch point and parking, including any vehicle height barriers.

The book is well illustrated, many sunrise or sunset shots, a number of dogs and various drone views including a fascinating one of a sit on top kayak in a wreck at

Tollesbury.

Each trip is stand alone but there is a small amount of overlap between trips, resulting in some repetition. Again, the Mathematical Bridge in Cambridge is included but its significance not mentioned. (It was built about 1750 without bolts, screws, nails or other fixings and dismantled by Victorians to see how it was done, then being unable to reassemble it without bolts.)

The authors have a good stab at licences, not fully successfully. Of the Great Ouse they say, correctly, 'As with most rivers in the UK, it was historically used for commercial navigation, but these days is mainly populated by pleasure craft including canal boats, motorboats, rowers and paddleboarders.'

Elsewhere they say 'As with most inland rivers and waterways, you need a licence from either Paddle UK or the Environment Agency to paddle the River Stour'. Only about 4% of the waterways in England and Wales require licences, mostly from the CRT for their canals and navigations, and Scotland's waters are nearly all free to use at all times. The EA have been unable to produce any evidence that some 96% of inland waters south of the border are not still free for the public to use as well, as in the past.

In a couple of pages on the complexity of different licences, the authors say 'If that wasn't enough to put you off paddling unlicensed, there is the incentive that, in all cases, the money goes back into gaining access to the water (remember, a lot of our rivers go through private land), maintaining the water and improving facilities at the water's edge, for example portage points.' Really? At least they have attempted to address this thorny problem.

Anyone looking for places to paddle in East Anglia will find plenty of interest in this book.

Great British Paddling Adventures

Richard Harpham & Ashley Kenlock
Adlard Coles
978 1 4729 8914 7
2025
230 x 160mm
336 pages, paperback
£20.00

Richard Harpham and Ashley Kenlock run Canoe Trail, based near Bedford but taking clients out on the water with canoes, kayaks or paddleboards all over Britain. This chunky book cherry picks from 50 locations, sea, rivers, canals, lochs and lakes across the country. Usually they are one day or half day trips but with extensions suggested, generally up to grade 2 although they do include the Serpent's Tail. The routes are primarily ones they use with the business and there is no shortage of pictures with their logo and with their dogs. Even when they do not have customers they go paddling again.

Each route is introduced, its difficulty level noted and the distance and trip time given, as are the shuttle distance, time and directions. A couple of dozen icons indicate hazards and which craft would be suitable. Relevant points are given with grid references, postcodes



and What3words codes. A sketch map and a comb diagram are given for each route to a variety of scales, the comb diagrams sometimes being to different scales even on the same line for different sections. The description begins with some background and history before getting down to the route, which usually suggests where to drink and eat, including where to stop for picnics. There are reminiscences of what has been interesting for clients or themselves, where they have held courses, even where he proposed to her, wildlife seen and other attractions on and off the water. Other instructors and campsites are mentioned,

usually run by close friends, and it is helpful to have kit hire venues detailed.

There is no shortage of enthusiasm. Much is 'fantastic', 'perfect', 'incredible' and peppered with exclamation marks. The statement that a venue has been used by Canoe Trail courses for many decades would appear to be overoptimistic.

Introductory pages for newcomers include an excellent order of priorities for undertaking rescues if things do go wrong, as they will do, inevitably, from time to time.

Most of our books derived from *Canoeist* guides are published by Adlard Coles so I know them very well and have also been involved in production of some of their non canoeing titles but I am surprised at the many things that have slipped past the proofreader in this one.

'You can launch at Killin... where you'll have to pay a lunch or hire fee.' It would not be hard to be confused by this and the suggestion of places to eat by the Falls of Dochart, which are not too difficult except for the final drop into a nasty slot hidden under the bridge.

'Be aware, standing on paddleboards across the aqueduct is now (quite obviously) forbidden.' See our review in November 2022 of the CRT's free *Canoeing, Kayaking & Paddleboarding for Beginners* with the suggestion that the Pontcysyllte Aqueduct is a good place for novice paddleboarders to go, a book since removed from the CRT website.

Some of the routes are on rivers that Defra claim are private. We are told to obey access agreements. These don't work, of course, if people do not know about them, the people who set them up or whether there is any law requiring them.

The selection of routes in the book is varied and interesting. Running these will give you a wide experience of the best that Britain has to offer the canoeist.

The Summer Isles



Philip Marsden
Granta

978 1 78378 300 7
2020

200 x 130mm
338 pages, paperback
£9.99

This is not about the Summer Isles. They were the intended destination for a sailing trip from the Fal up the west coast of Ireland and then the west coast of Scotland. 'The east coast is for pussies.' It is Ireland that gets the bulk of the attention.

It was a poor season for weather but advice included 'Choose your weather - a patient sailor always has good winds.'

It is also less of a sailing narrative than would often be the case although there is no shortage of references to sailing craft, preferably wooden, including naomhógs, traditional Irish open skin canoes, which require a rowing technique unlike any other I have experienced.

Much of the book relates to mythology, otherworldly circumstances, imaginary islands that appear and disappear, from Hy-Brasil or Antillia downwards, strange people and animals, spirits and those that change from one to another, held together with folk writing and verse. Yet there is enough fact to stop it from being dismissed out of hand. Did St Brendan use a leather canoe to sail from Brandon Creek to discover America long before Columbus?

'Beyond Smerwick Bay was the bulk of Mount Brandon. I looked up at a thousand feet of slab and shadow and above that the high green world of heathery slopes and streams. The mountains were doing strange

things to the wind. It would drop away to nothing, then come fluking down hard'. Some years ago I climbed Mount Brandon on a day when the summit disappeared in cloud. At the top the strong winds whistled past, died to nothing and then came whistling back the other way equally strongly, repeatedly reversing. I could not see what was causing this, as if I was on some eddyline, but there was scope for something mystical. There was room for other sensations as I realized the sound of breakers I could hear were below my feet, not a good place to be.

My favourite story has to relate to Portree.

'One of the men, it turned out, was skipper of the tourist boat I'd seen below the cliffs.

'We were looking for sea eagles.'

'Sea eagles!' spluttered the other. 'They're not sea eagles. Those guys just whistle and down the buggers come. They're just big bloody budgies.'

Despite the fantasy nature of so much of the content, there is extensive documentation of sources, particularly of the Irish west coast.

15 Short Walks Isle of Skye



Terry Marsh

Cicerone

978 1 78631 233 4
2025

170 x 120mm

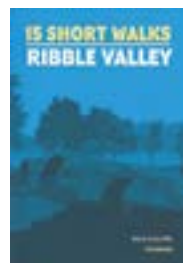
95 pages, paperback
£9.95

In the usual format for this series, nearly all the walks in this volume are coastal and what a coast. Scenery and geology are spectacular and the book is heavily illustrated with enticing pictures.

Routes are generally circular and supported with sections of 1:25,000 OS map. Thus, they can be considered from any point, such as a beach, rather than needing to be started from a carpark.

For a longer book the author has Cicerone's *Walking the Isle of Skye* and corresponding books for Mull (Nov 2019 and Nov 2024)

15 Short Walks Ribble Valley



Mark Sutcliffe

Cicerone

978 1 78631 236 5
2025

170 x 120mm

95 pages, paperback
£9.95

The central Ribble valley from Bolton-by-Bowland to Ribchester is the area covered by this walking guide. The Ribble is followed from Sawley to Clitheroe and the Hodder confluence to Ribchester. The Hodder is traced from Over Hocking to the Ribble confluence and the Calder from Cock Wood to Whalley. In addition, various becks are encountered, especially around Bolton-by-Bowland.

This book has more river pictures than is usual in this series and a number of them are larger than usual, some very attractive views. They have mostly been taken at quite low flows but the lack of rapids suggests they would be calm at higher levels. Even a winter spate at Sawley appears only a fast grade 1. An exception is a large horseshoe weir at Clitheroe.

Framing the rivers are the Lancashire fells, not least Pendle.

Imray and FB form joint venture

There's been a lot going on since Imray announced last autumn about ceasing to publish paper charts.

They have now signed a letter of intent to create a joint venture with Freytag & Berndt, a long established Austrian cartography firm, publisher and travel bookshop.

This means that Imray charts will continue to be published after autumn 2025 but also that the new venture will take over the publishing of Imray books and digital products.

The new company will be based in Vienna, which will help to ease many of the issues relating to EU distribution created by Brexit. It will

continue to work with Imray's existing customers including their UK based distributor, Bookharbour (Stanfords). There will also be continued involvement from the Imray production team.

The next step is for Imray and F&B to formalize arrangements between the two companies.

This collaboration will ensure the continued availability and development of Imray's nautical charts and books. There will be no interruption in service. Paper and digital charts and books will continue to be available as always.

The new joint venture, FB Imray Laurie Norie & Wilson GmbH (FB Imray), will be headquartered in Vienna. Bookharbour (Stanfords) will continue as the main UK based distributor of Imray charts and books. Combining Imray's maritime expertise with Freytag & Berndt's extensive cartographic knowledge will strengthen and expand the Imray portfolio.

The evolved organization is set to launch in the summer. The focus will remain on producing high quality nautical charts and publications under the established Imray brand while also developing new products tailored to the needs of sailors and advancing digital navigation solutions.

The two companies each date back over 250 years. Operating in its current guise since 1904 and still owned and run by descendants of the original founders, Imray, Laurie, Norie & Wilson is a cornerstone of nautical navigation, setting industry standards and providing sailors and maritime enthusiasts with expertly designed charts, books and guides since the mid eighteenth century. Lucy Wilson, managing director of Imray, is a direct descendant of one of the founders.

Carl Rauch, managing director of Freytag & Berndt, says 'With this joint venture we are taking a big step towards becoming a global cartographic publisher. Until now we have only been involved in predominantly land based cartography so with this partnership we are literally filling a large blank spot in our maps. By continuing and further developing the Imray portfolio and tapping into digital opportunities we are creating innovative solutions for navigators.'



Headquartered in Vienna, the traditional publishing house can look back on over 250 years of experience. The extensive range now includes around 1,500 maps and atlases, specializing in hiking and cycling maps, international road and leisure maps and city maps from Austria and abroad. A team of 30 cartographers ensures that all maps are up to date and of high quality. In recent years the publishing house has also specialized in digital outdoor geodata for apps and hiking maps. In addition to the publishing house, the company also owns a distribution centre and a travel bookshop in Vienna and Rother Bergverlag from Germany.

Letters

CRT

From **Andy Morton**.

What's CRT stand for?

Ed: When British Waterways became a charity it split into Scottish Canals north of the border and the Canal & River Trust to the south. I have asked a number of times whether the River bit relates to all rivers or just the ones for which they charge a licence fee but nobody will give a straight answer. It has particular relevance when they claim that X% of the population live within Y distance of a river.

Length of the Thames

From **Nick Creswell**.

On page 6 of the November issue 'Thames records' it states Steve Backshall and Tom McGibbon lowering the time for the 270km Lechlade to Teddington section. Is this not 200km, as claimed in the Thames Ultra? Incidentally, I took part in the Thames Ultra and had a thoroughly good time as part of a relay team although the ski I was in was certainly not ideal for portages!

Ed: You are right about the 270km. Backshall's publicity said 168 miles, which I metricated without spotting this was nonsense. I wonder if the original info said 200km with a typo taking it to 270km which somebody then translated to imperial units.

Lengths of walks

From **David Martin**.

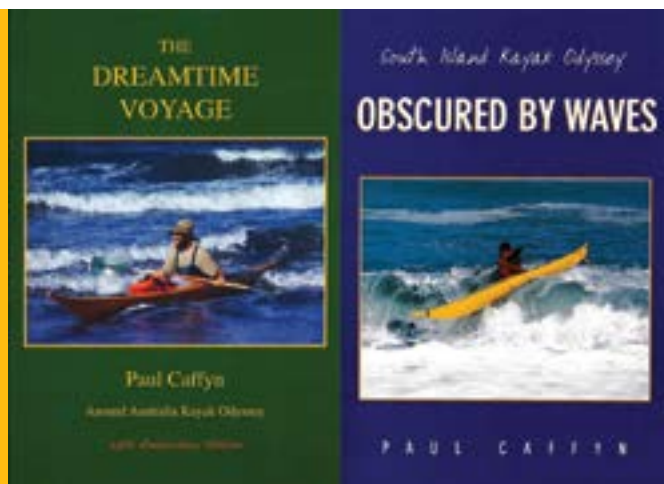
Looking at your book reviews with a number of 15 Short walks xxxxx books, one has to ask what's a 'short' walk? I guess (but could be wrong) that these are day walks but could you help please by characterizing their average lengths? Eg > 10km or > 20km or < 20km?

Ed: Distances range from 1.5 to 13.5km in the titles reviewed with 7km being typical. However, the interest for us relates to water being followed and that might only be part of the walk.

Paul Caffyn Klassic Kayaking Books

Now available in England, both the Australian and South Island books.

Sadly, the exorbitant cost of overseas postage has killed off mailing these A4 size books from NZ. However, an old work colleague, Mick, loads up his hand luggage after he visits NZ annually. He has already sold out of the recent 2nd edition of the Stewart Island book but the two classics are available in England from:
paulskayakbooksuk@gmail.com





Junior winners Lovell/Cramer.



Zielski, Walkinton, Payne and Williams at Wilcot.

Further Sharpe practice

ThruDark Devizes-Westminster Race

A late Easter meant there was more daylight than usual for this race although that did not guarantee good weather. The run up was fine and pleasant but it ran out just before the big event. As a result, water levels were low so it was not a year to break records while a cold northeasterly headwind took its toll. On the other hand, portages remained fairly dry underfoot, no slithering down muddy banks.

Sponsorship came from the appropriately named ThruDark, an outdoor clothing company set up by two former special forces members. The success of the race has often been credited to the lack of involvement of the BCU but this year some funding also came from PUK. No doubt this was the reason for a SUP class. There were only two entries. Slow paddlers are not much of a problem for kayak paddlers but do not help race officials needing to wait for cutoff times at the end of a long day or night.

A relay class was also introduced. Why you would want to take part in and get the credit for only a section of an extreme distance race is not clear but nobody did and there were no entries.

Veteran/juniors Davies/Davies of Wey got racing off to a good but overcast start, taking a first day lead to Newbury of 8 minutes over



Junior/veteran pair Bullion/Colman.



Emma Watts of Wey, fastest veteran lady.



Half century racer Beaver of Soar Valley.



Devizes mayor Ian Hopkins, Allan Bennett and former record holder Brian Greenham with starter Sally Peake.



Graham Bell trails a Lord Wandsworth College pair.



Junior/veteran winners Davies/Davies.



James Walkinton, 2nd in K1.



Cameron/Balogh of Hereford.



Hadberg from Roskilde portages Kintbury.



Services pair Bandrowski/Joseph at Pewsey.



Dobson/Rees-Clark at Horton, second C2.



Services winners Al-Sheikhly/Evans.



Ingpen/Bell going well at this stage.

Colman/Bullion of Lord Wandsworth College. They extended this by 43 minutes during the second day to Longridge and by 57 minutes on the third day. The final day on the Tideway added 7 minutes more to give an aggregate win of 2 hours 6 minutes at the finish at Barn Elms.

I heard the junior doubles class referred to as the schools class, almost correct as the public schools are a central pillar of this race. There was just one other crew, Lovell/Cramer of Worcester and Southampton, who took a first day lead of an hour and five minutes over Barrett/Brown of Kimbolton School, the previous year's under 17 winners. They were followed a couple of minutes later by Phippard/Francis of Kelly College. The lead was opened by 59 minutes on the second day with the space between the next two crews unchanged. Lovell/Cramer were way out ahead again on the third day but the second best performance of the day was by Green/Corfield, who had been the mixed class winners the previous year. The final day's second best performance was by Slocock/Smith of Lord Wandsworth College. Overall, Lovell/Cramer won by an unassailable 3 hours and 6 minutes from Barrett/Brown and then the next four crews came in at about 5 minute intervals.

Green/Corfield were mixed winners again by two and a half hours.

George Durden put down his marker in singles on the first day for Elmbridge with a half hour lead over James Walkinton of Chelmsford,

a further minute ahead of Radek Zielski of Reading, who had won the event in 2014. Irish paddler Russell was two minutes back with James Williams of Runcorn two more. Chelmsford's Sienna Payne was the leading lady with Mark Louw of Richmond the first veteran.

Durden increased his lead over Walkinton by 24 minutes on the second day. Russell pulled up three minutes on Williams and Zielski.

Durden improved by another 5 minutes on the third day.

Walkinton's 20 second lead on the final day did not change anything, Durden taking the title by 40 minutes with Zielski in 3rd place as the winning veteran and Payne in 8th place as the leading lady.

Saturday began with drizzle which did clear up later although the cold headwind remained and there were many retirements. Several years ago competitors had Halley's comet for company. If the race had been a few days earlier this time they might have had the aurora but it had gone by now, just cold. Is that what caused Andrew Ingpen and Olympic skier Graham Bell to retire after Teddington, the head of the Tideway?

Kat Burbeck was paddling with Olympic slalomist Fiona Pennie-Douglas while quadrathletes Simon and Keiran Hammond and polo and white water paddlers Alison Cooper and Katie Farley added variety. Devizes pair Edd Dobson and Mike Rees-Clark, third in K2 last year, were back this year in C2.

Last year's runners up, Billy Butler and Jon O'Grady, were back again, as were winners Anoushka Freeman and Tom Sharpe, who had taken the course record the previous year. Dutch racer Jouke Wittereen has probably done the race with various partners more times than anyone else. Andrew Birkett/Tom Simmons, John Cameron/Robert Balogh, Luke and Tim Escott, David Horkan/Dan Palmer and Ben Webb/Paul Baker, not forgetting mixed crew Joe Petersen/Brynde Kreft, suggested an interesting and close race.

Others might remember it for different reason. Most encountered the Pewsey swan that was known for attacking anyone in his territory. With less excuse, William Morland of Mississauga had an angler cast a line at him near Hungerford and, having embedded his hook in his hand, proceeded to reel in the line. (I recall racing in a marathon on the Severn at Bridgnorth some years ago against Mike Crossman, who finished the race with a hook through his ear lobe and a maggot



Winning lady Sienna Payne takes out at Kintbury.



Half Century winner Mark Louw of Richmond.

wriggling just below it on a short length of line, too close to an eye for comfort.) Later, he and partner Mark Turner were capsized by a low flying Canada goose. The Canadians carried on until Marlow.

C2 Thornton/Bowen stopped after Henley, a watershed for many over the years. Other pairs to call it a night were the Escotts and Poole/Tebbett at the head of the Tideway.

Winning the C2s were Hall/Kirk of Nashua River, nearly three hours ahead of Dobson/Rees-Clark.

Burbeck/Pennie-Douglas won the ladies' doubles by eight hours. The fastest men's veterans, Butler/O'Grady, chose not to take part in the usual cat and mouse game of trying to be the last to leave Devizes, getting away a considerable time before the final crews, a policy that worked for them. They worked with Horkan/Palmer until Wootton Rivers where Horkan/Palmer had rudder problems. Butler/O'Grady arrived at Teddington at 07:52 for a run of 2 hrs 7 minutes on the Tideway, to be third overall, 21 minutes ahead of Bradford-on-Avon

pair Birkett/Simmons with Horkan/Palmer a further 27 minutes back. There was nobody else for another hour and 17 minutes, the Dutch pair Witteveen/Zegers.

That meant the first two boats were both mixed. Sharpe/Freeman were to retain their title for another year. Indeed, Sharpe had also won the year before that with Moule, breaking the course record, making him the all time master of this race. It was not an easy race, however. At the top of the Tideway Petersen/Kreft had been 51 seconds up, arriving at 08:50 and taking 2 hrs 6 minutes on the Tideway. Sharpe/Freeman, last away from Devizes, reached Teddington at 9:05 and took 2 hours 1 minute on the Tideway. A change of leader so late in the race is not something expected. The tidal flow can be sufficiently strong for it to make a difference, although it was a weak tide this year, the time of joining it to be affected by the flow rates on the canal, the river and whether the tide turns at the predicted time. A close race had been anticipated but few would have expected this outcome.



Petersen/Kreft at Horton, leading until the Tideway.



Sharpe/Freeman retaining their title but by only 4 minutes.



Graham Durden, K1 winner by nearly an hour.



Witteveen/Zegers, fastest overseas crew.

- 1L - Black Swan Salver:** 1 S Payne, Chelmsford, 18:34:56.
 2 L Romar-Kuiuper, ALSKV Levitas, 22:01:10. 3 E Watts, Wey, 24:34:01.
- 1LV - Fastest Veteran Lady:** 1 E Watts, Wey, 24:34:01.
- 1LO50:** 1 E Watts, Wey, 24:34:01.
- 1 - Marsport Shield:** 1 G Durden, Elmbridge, 15:51:09. 2 J Walkinton, Chelmsford, 16:49:29.
 3 R Zielski, Reading, 17:01:00. 5 J Williams, Runcorn, 17:23:35. 6 A Abraham, Bryanston Sch, 18:14:09. 7 S Riley, RN, 18:18:10. 8 S Payne, Chelmsford, 18:34:56. 9 M Louw, Richmond, 19:31:51. 10 G Bell, Fladbury, 20:09:49. 11 T Beaver, Soar Valley, 20:18:37. 12 W Abson, Richmond, 20:21:17. 14 N De Jongh, Bisham, 21:36:28. 16 A Park, Devizes, 22:36:18.
 19 C Hodgson, Duddon, 24:04:52. 20 C Good, Marlow, 24:07:15.
- 1V - Maureen Duck Memorial Cup:** 1 R Zielski, Reading, 17:01:00. 2 P Russell, Ireland, 17:10:29. 3 S Riley, RN, 18:18:10. 4 M Louw, Richmond, 19:31:51. 5 T Beaver, Soar Valley, 20:18:37. 6 W Abson, Richmond, 20:21:17. 8 N De Jongh, Bisham, 21:36:28. 9 A Park, Devizes, 22:36:18. 11 C Hodgson, Duddon, 24:04:52. 12 C Good, Marlow, 24:07:15. 13 E Watts, Wey, 24:34:01.
- 1050 - Half Century Cup:** 1 M Louw, Richmond, 19:31:51. 2 T Beaver, Soar Valley, 20:18:37.
 3 A Hadberg, Roskilde Fjords, 20:30:54. 4 N De Jongh, Bisham, 21:36:28. 5 A Park, Devizes, 22:36:18. 7 C Hodgson, Duddon, 19:58:22. 8 E Watts, Wey, 24:34:01.
- C1 - Mobile Adventure Canoe Trophy:** 1 G Bell, Fladbury, 20:09:49.
- 2UJ - Junior Ladies Trophy:** 1 Lee/Martin, Dauntsey's Sch, 23:45:05.
 2 Baldock/Williams, Kelly Coll, 24:19:46. 3 Lee/Searle, Kelly Coll, 24:33:44.
- 2L - Woodpecker Cider Ladies Rose Bowl:** 1 Burbeck/Pennie-Douglas, Bishop's Stortford/Cambridge, 21:30:41. 2 Cooper/Farley, Cardiff Bay, 29:35:35.
- 2LV - Bulmers Cider Trophy:** 1 Burbeck/Pennie-Douglas, Bishop's Stortford/Cambridge, 21:30:41.
- 2MixJ - Oliver Brown Trophy:** 1 Green/Corfield, Lord Wandsworth Coll, 19:59:37.
 2 Ellinar/Wright, Kimbolton Sch, 22:26:08. 3 Croucher/Lawless, Kimbolton Sch, 22:40:22.
- 2Mix - CPO WR Templeton RN Memorial Trophy:** 1 Sharpe/Freeman, Richmond, 17:17:23. 2 Petersen/Kreft, Banbury/Falcon, 17:21:27. 3 Groom/Haines, Runcorn, 29:23:48.
- 2U175Sch - BSCA Junior Trophy:** 1 Ellinar/Wright, Kimbolton Sch, 22:26:08.
 2 Newell/Opie, Kelly Coll, 23:40:41. 3 Jolliffe/Griffiths, Churcher's Coll, 24:00:27.
- 2J - Wiltshire Gazette Shield:** 1 Lovell/Cramer, Worcester/Southampton, 16:31:32.
 2 Barrett/Brown, Kimbolton Sch, 19:37:53. 3 Phippard/Francis, Kelly Coll, 19:48:59.
- 2CivJ - Berksonion Trophy:** 1 Lovell/Cramer, Worcester/Southampton, 16:31:32.
 2 Barrett/Brown, Kimbolton Sch, 19:37:53. 3 Phippard/Francis, Kelly Coll, 19:48:59.
- 2 - Devizes-Westminster Challenge Cup:** 1 Sharpe/Freeman, Richmond, 17:17:23.
 2 Petersen/Kreft, Banbury/Falcon, 17:21:27. 3 Butler/O'Grady, Nederland/Runcorn, 17:25:09.
 4 Birkett/Simmons, Richmond/Bradford-on-Avon, 17:46:32. 5 Horkan/Palmer, Ireland/Truro, 18:13:49. 7 Balla/Leblanche, Barking & Dagenham, 20:02:17. 9 Al-Sheikhly/Evans, RM, 21:12:32.
 10 Burbeck/Pennie-Douglas, Bishop's Stortford/Cambridge, 21:30:41. 11 Cameron/Balogh, Hereford, 21:52:11. 12 Baker/Webb, RM/Wey, 22:11:40. 13 Johnson/Margot, Cambridge, 22:27:36.
 15 Bandrowski/Joseph, RM, 22:55:48. 16 Jackson/Forrest, Exeter, 23:08:28. 17 Dobson/Rees-Clark, Devizes, 23:09:45. 18 Clarke/Robert, Devizes/Sutton Bingham, 23:12:45. 19 Symonds/Edwards, 23:25:46. 20 McCall/Charnell, Hinckley, 23:48:37.
- 2Civ - Devizes-Westminster Civilian Trophy:** 1 Sharpe/Freeman, Richmond, 17:17:23.
 2 Petersen/Kreft, Banbury/Falcon, 17:21:27. 3 Butler/O'Grady, Nederland/Runcorn, 17:25:09.
 4 Birkett/Simmons, Richmond/Bradford-on-Avon, 17:46:32. 5 Horkan/Palmer, Ireland/Truro, 18:13:49. 7 Balla/Leblanche, Barking & Dagenham, 20:02:17.
 9 Burbeck/Pennie-Douglas, Bishop's Stortford/Cambridge, 21:30:41. 10 Cameron/Balogh, Hereford, 21:52:11. 11 Johnson/Margot, Cambridge, 22:27:36. 12 Jackson/Forrest, Exeter, 23:08:28.
 13 Dobson/Rees-Clark, Devizes, 23:09:45. 14 Clarke/Robert, Devizes/Sutton Bingham, 23:12:45.
 15 Symonds/Edwards, 23:25:46. 16 McCall/Charnell, Hinckley, 23:48:37. 17 Robinson/Renko, Cambridge, 24:40:00. 19 Last/Bell, Devizes, 25:18:30. 20 Stevens/King, Devizes, 25:45:47.
- 2JV - Fred Bartlett T trophy:** 1 Davies/Davies, Wey, 19:31:58.
 2 Colman/Bullion, Lord Wandsworth Coll, 21:37:41. 3 Tait/Tait, Devizes, 25:01:39.
- 2Ser - Devizes-Westminster Services Trophy:** 1 Al-Sheikhly/Evans, RM, 21:12:32.
 2 Parry/Devereux, RM, 22:46:56. 3 Bandrowski/Joseph, RM, 22:55:48.
- 2Res - Devizes-Westminster Reserve Trophy:** 1 Smith/De Ruig, OTC, 24:3:11.
- 2RN- Roger Crane Memorial Trophy:** 1 Al-Sheikhly/Evans, RM, 21:12:32.
 2 Parry/Devereux, RM, 22:46:56. 3 Bandrowski/Joseph, RM, 22:55:48.



Burbeck/Pennie-Douglas and Webb/Baker at Pewsey.



Irish pair Walsh/Austin across from the Shannon.



Birkett/Simmons and Poole/Tebbett at Wilcot.

Stop press: Controversially, PUK president Alan Laws has been invited to present the prizes for the race

25cts- Devizes-Westminster Scout Trophy: 1 Turner/Spreadbury, 23rd Salisbury, 29:53:28.
20ES - European Overseas Trophy: 1 Witteveen/Zegers, ALSKV Levitas, 19:30:13.
 2 Walsh/Austin, Shannon, 27:39:45.
20S - Overseas Trophy: 1 Witteveen/Zegers, ALSKV Levitas, 19:30:13.
20Univ: 1 Smithy/De Ruig, OTC, 24:3:11.
2V - Lee Trophy: 1 Butler/O'Grady, Nederland/Runcorn, 17:25:09. 2 Burbeck/Pennie-Douglas, Bishop's Stortford/Cambridge, 21:30:41. 3 Cameron/Balogh/ Hereford, 21:52:11. 5 Johnson/Margot, Cambridge, 22:27:36. 6 Parry/Devereux, RM, 22:46:56. 7 Jackson/Forrest, Exeter, 23:08:28. 8 Clarke/Robert, Devizes/Sutton Bingham, 23:12:45. 9 Symonds/Edwards, 23:25:46. 10 McCall/Charnell, Hinckley, 23:48:37. 11 Robinson/Renko, Cambridge, 24:40:00.
 12 Last/Bell, Devizes, 25:18:30. 13 Walker/Whitehead, Pangbourne/Newbury, 26:03:10.
 16 Meeson/Finch, Basingstoke Canal, 27:42:36. 17 Hill/Sumner, Wey/Elmbridge, 28:33:26.
 18 Groom/Haines, Runcorn, 29:23:48. 19 Turner/Spreadbury, 23rd Salisbury Scouts, 29:53:28.
2.100 - Century Trophy: 1 Parry/Devereux, RM, 22:46:56. 2 Jackson/Forrest, Exeter, 23:08:28.
 3 Clarke/Robert, Devizes/Sutton Bingham, 23:12:45. 3 McCall/Charnell, Hinckley, 23:48:37.
 4 Walker/Whitehead, Pangbourne/Newbury, 26:03:10.
 7 Meeson/Finch, Basingstoke Canal, 27:42:36. 8 Hill/Sumner, Wey/Elmbridge, 28:23:36.
2F- Folding Boat Trophy: 1 Board/Earl, RM, 28:51:58.
C2 - Devizes-Westminster Canadian Trophy: 1 Hall/Kirk, Nashua R, 20:18:59.
 2 Dobson/Rees-Clark, Devizes, 23:09:45. 3 Gransden/Gransden, Canada, 24:46:25.
 4 Walker/Whitehead, Pangbourne/Newbury, 26:03:10. 5 Pyke/Howe, Cambridge, 28:03:54.
 6 Turner/Spreadbury, 23rd Salisbury Scouts, 29:53:28.
2LJT - Junior Ladies Team Trophy: 1 Mt Kelly, 48:53:30. 2 Dautsey's Sch, 50:08:47.
2JT - Junior Team Trophy: 1 Kimbolton Sch, 60:01:50. 2 Lord Wandsworth Coll 1st, 60:27:33.
 3 Mt Kelly, 64:18:03.
2CCFJT - HMS Alacrity McKaig Cup: 1 Lord Wandsworth Coll CCF, 65:10:04.

World events

The ICF have announced several forthcoming world events. Ocean racing World Cups will take place this year at La Vila Joisa in Spain and in Réunion. La Plagne will have a WWR World Cup next year with a sprint World Cup in Canada. Junior and under 23 slalom world championships will take place in Pattaya in 2027, the first time in Asia, the following year in Ivrea and the two years after that in Kraków.

Polo quits Holme Pierrepont

The Polo Committee have given up with Holme Pierrepont and have selected a new venue at Spring Lakes, Long Eaton, on the western edge of Nottingham, near the M1 but with a convoluted route to reach it. It was to be used for the national championships early in April but these had to be postponed when moving the pontoons proved more time consuming than had been anticipated. There had been a continuing series of problems at the National Water Sports Centre which were not being addressed by Serco, who manage the site.

Polo had no availability to expand what they offered there, suffered issues with toxic blue green algae and Canada goose muck, there was a flood last year which damaged some of the equipment (including clocks) both on the water and those in the storage being used. In that storage area there was an electrical fire which caused further damage, as a result of which polo were able to claim on insurance and replace the items.

PUK have issues with Serco so polo's moving helps them prove their point on the issues they also have with them. It is hard for the slalomists because they cannot just move their course like polo have moved their pitches, so they are stuck there with Serco being a problem. The same thing goes with freestyle and whoever else uses the white water course. For the regatta course there are also issues with Serco and polo's moving may help them.

The flood and fire relate to polo, not the centre buildings, although we published a photo of a bucket placed below a hole in the ceiling of the centre building (p9 of our November issue). There have been minor issues like a broken plank on a footbridge and weeds growing on slalom fittings. The slalom scoreboard hasn't worked for years and the sprint one fails at times. While sprinters can park facing the course, the dragon boat racers need to park in a field 800m away from the launch point, where the course cannot be seen or the commentary heard, particularly relevant as events can run an hour late because of scoreboard problems and crews of 20 needing to share boats. Dragon boat regattas have had to be shortened as time and daylight ran out. Parking needs to be paid by phone, for which not all people have the facilities. The whole place is scruffy. The finish line glass box is hung with cobwebs, has a wet floor and has loose chairs rather than set in a line opposite the finish wire. The trade stands have boycotted the trade area, to the detriment of racers who have come to rely on them to replace broken or forgotten items, because of the massive increase in charges. Even before the increase, traders were frequently trading at a loss, not making enough

to cover their loss of business while loading their vans at home, driving to the event and paying for staff accommodation but treating it as advertising and providing a service for their customers.

The bar does not open any more. The catering is very amateur, poor cooking and staff unsure how much to charge. The sprinters are actively negotiating to move to the Cotswold water park.

Chinese excellence centre

Fuyang Water Sports Centre in Hangzhou has been nominated as the ICF's first excellence centre, of which others are to follow around the world. Last year the centre hosted the multi discipline Super Cup with a limited entry but some significant names.

Los Angeles figures

The Los Angeles Olympic Games for 2028 will see 236 sprint paddlers contesting 10 medal events and 82 slalomists chasing six slalom events. Genders will be equal. Only five sports will have more medal events than canoeing.

ICF launch sprint world ranking system

The International Canoe Federation have launched a world ranking system designed to track paddler performances and bring fresh excitement into sprint events with men's and women's kayak and canoe categories.

It is also set to provide an avenue to secure places at the Olympic Games for Los Angeles in 2028 under the revamped qualification process currently being drawn up by the ICF.

Ranking points would be on offer at the two sprint World Cups this month, with Szeged holding the first of those from May 16 to 18th before Poznan played host from May 22nd to 25th.

Importantly, the system is not just about the sharp end of the sport. For development, it will fuel healthy competition across emerging nations, spotlight rising stars, justify investment in competitor pathways and drive organizers to continually raise their game, lifting standards and opportunities for everyone, everywhere.

The system works by awarding points at any ranking competition, including the Olympic Games, world championships, World Cups, continental championships and world ranking races.

A competitor can register a maximum of five results in the world ranking in each calendar year but those five results must be from five different competitions.

One of these results must also be from a ranking competition that is held on a different continent from the others.

Ironbridge cancelled

The Ironbridge regional classic and sprint WWR and selection event has been cancelled because of access issues.

Van Koeverden becomes government minister

Sprint icon Adam van Koeverden has been appointed Secretary of State for Sport in Canadian Prime Minister Mark Carney's new cabinet.

First elected to the House of Commons in 2019, Van Koeverden was re-elected this year as member of parliament for Burlington North-Milton West before being named Secretary of State for Sport.

The 43 year old is a four time Olympic medallist, starting with a gold medal in the kayak single 500m at Athens in 2004.

His gold medal in the Greek capital was Canada's first Olympic victory in canoe and kayak in 20 years.

He also took bronze in the kayak single 1km in Greece, Canada's only double medallist at the Games, before adding a K1 500m silver medal at Beijing in 2008 and a K1 1km silver at London in 2012.

A world champion and Pan American Games medallist, Van Koeverden finished his competitive career with ninth in the K1 1km at Rio in 2016.

He was also Canada's flagbearer at the closing ceremony in Athens and at the opening ceremony in Beijing.

In 2022 the Toronto native was inducted into Canada's Sports Hall of Fame.

Wiggs to miss this season

Emma Wiggs has dropped out of racing for this year. While she suffered a shoulder injury for 18 months before Paris she succeeded in adding to her medal haul at the successive Paralympics. Following surgery, she hopes to return to racing in 2026.

Polo injuries

Presenting the safety report to the polo ACM, Elan Winter drew

attention to two casualties who had suffered concussion and longterm health problems that had followed over many months. However, it was felt that no rule changes are needed. Competitors who do get injured should rest and should not drive home.

Managing dragon boat racing

A meeting, chaired by Chris Hawkesworth, has been held at Manvers Water Front Boat Club to discuss dragon boat racing. Present were

BDA and PUK representatives, who cooperate mutually, in contrast with the situation at international level.

Despite the ICF's claims to be the governing body for dragon boat racing, the IDBF continues to have far more support. Latest evidence is the ICF's European championships in June, not the first such ICF event to have been cancelled. Nevertheless, the World Corporate Games' dragon boat racing event this year has only been open to ICF crews, not mainstream dragonboat racers.

Back then



50 years ago

- ★ This was Vic Brown's final issue.
- ★ An invitation slalom with television coverage was to be run as an experiment at Linton-on-Ouse.
- ★ Leeds Canoe Club ran a sponsored marathon on the Leeds & Liverpool Canal to raise funds for the world slalom and WWR championships, Norman Jackson winning a canoe for the most sponsorship raised, £52 of a total of over £1,000.
- ★ The British slalom team for the Skopje world championships was smaller than usual as there were not enough paddlers of adequate standard.
- ★ Ironbridge and Stangerthwaite slaloms were cancelled while Marsh Lock was moved to Hambleden.
- ★ Those entering judges' events needed to pay a 50p entry fee, to be refunded when judging was completed.
- ★ Slalom organizers were asked to send a copy of results to the editor of this magazine.
- ★ On a trip through the Corryvreckan whirlpool Derek Hutchinson claimed to be alive as he was a coward.
- ★ Priority tickets for the Montreal Olympics were on offer to canoe club members, wives and children but not friends and relations.
- ★ The Wiggle Gate Test leaflet was out of print but was so popular it was published again in the magazine.

20 years ago

- ★ Swimmers won a court case allowing them to take midwinter dips in Highgate ponds where a ban had been imposed to protect authorities from any possible legal action over allowing cold bathing.
- ★ British Waterways had their Government grant cut to fund other problems.
- ★ The National Maritime Museum Cornwall unveiled Sean Morley's kayak used to paddle round the British Isles, Tim FitzHigham's paper kayak for paddling down the Thames and Derek Hutchinson's Baidarka for crossing the North Sea.
- ★ The EA put together a policy statement suggesting canoeists might be permitted to use sections of river where nobody else was interested.
- ★ At an international symposium on the Water Framework Directive at the Institution of Civil Engineers in London a third of the questions were put by Kevin East (Canoe-Camping Club and BCU) and Paddlers International.
- ★ Ahead of the General Election Tessa Jowell responded to our request for Labour's achievements on access while in office but Conservatives, Liberal Democrats and Plaid Cymru did not respond on policy.
- ★ WW racer Ian Torodff was to attempt a speed record for crossing the English Channel.
- ★ Our guide to the lower Tyne included a bridgescape unmatched in Britain.
- ★ Anglo Irish pair Baker/Mawer won the Devizes-Westminster Race by 26 minutes from Beazley/Dark.
- ★ All seven proposals (including the IDBF) for membership to the General Association of International Sports Federations (lobbied against by ICF president Ulrich Feldhoff) failed to get elected (including one body with no opposition) because applicants needed to have 75% support, abstentions counting as opposition.



10 years ago

- ★ Leading up to the General Election, politicians were making much of funding for the NHS, teachers and the police whereas a significant proportion of the public were more concerned about where they could walk, cycle, climb or get on the water at weekends.
- ★ A pair paddling round New Zealand got back the phone they had lost after the finder rang up the number of Paul Caffyn on its memory.
- ★ Scottish ferries replaced fares with Road Equivalent Tariffs, equivalent to the cost of driving the corresponding distance by road, helping Scottish island tourism.
- ★ Sport England ran a campaign under the slogan This Girl Can, encouraging women's sport, even if there were some complaints about shortage of political correctness.
- ★ The Angling Trust demanded that access information be removed from websites as they were about to post evidence that Douglas Caffyn's researches were wrong, which they have yet to do.
- ★ Craft at the London Boat Show included Jet UK's jet kayak and the Oru kayak, made of corrugated plastic.
- ★ A study by the ICF on artificial slalom courses showed the Lee Valley to be well over twice as expensive to build as any other in the world, only partly accounted for by an extra channel. Another was to be built at Linton-on-Ouse.

- ★ Oklahoma City was to get an artificial slalom course.
- ★ Tom Sharpe won the K1s in the Devizes-Westminster Race and Broughton/Moule included a female in the winning K2 for the first time ever, winning by an hour and 20 minutes.
- ★ The ICF were to have gender equality across the Olympic disciplines by 2020.



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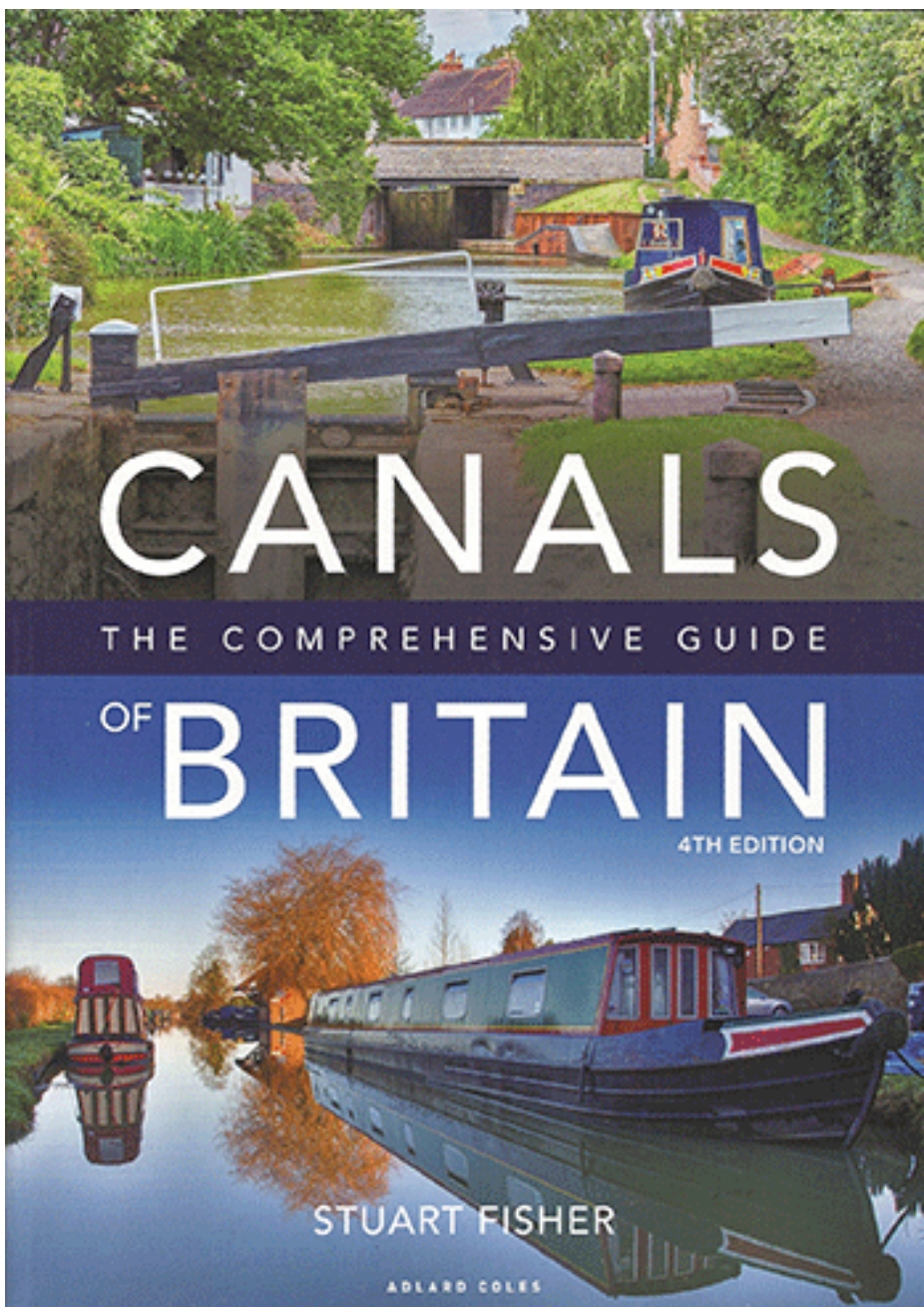
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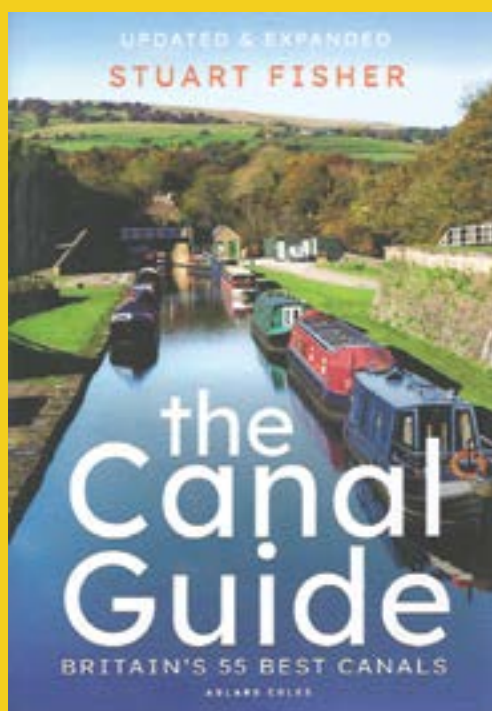
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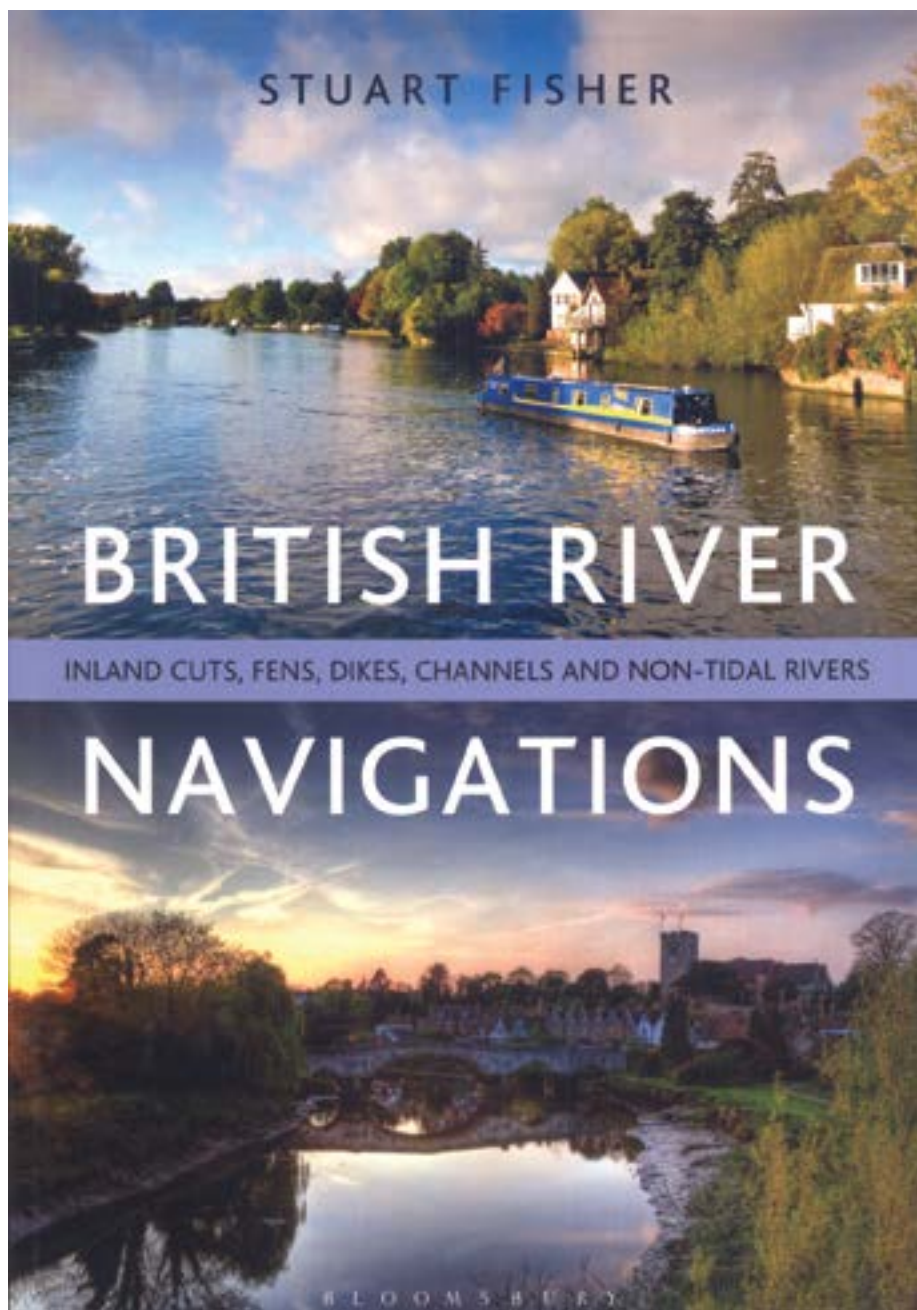
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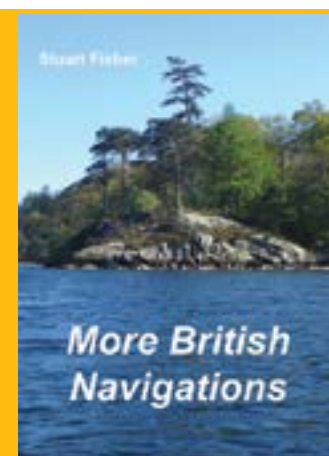
Keith Goss, *Waterways World*

'He packs in miles of paddling, and pages of travelogue info' -

Rowan Mantell,
Eastern Daily Press

'A comprehensive and practical guide to Britain's waterways with stunning photography and useful maps is a winning combination' -

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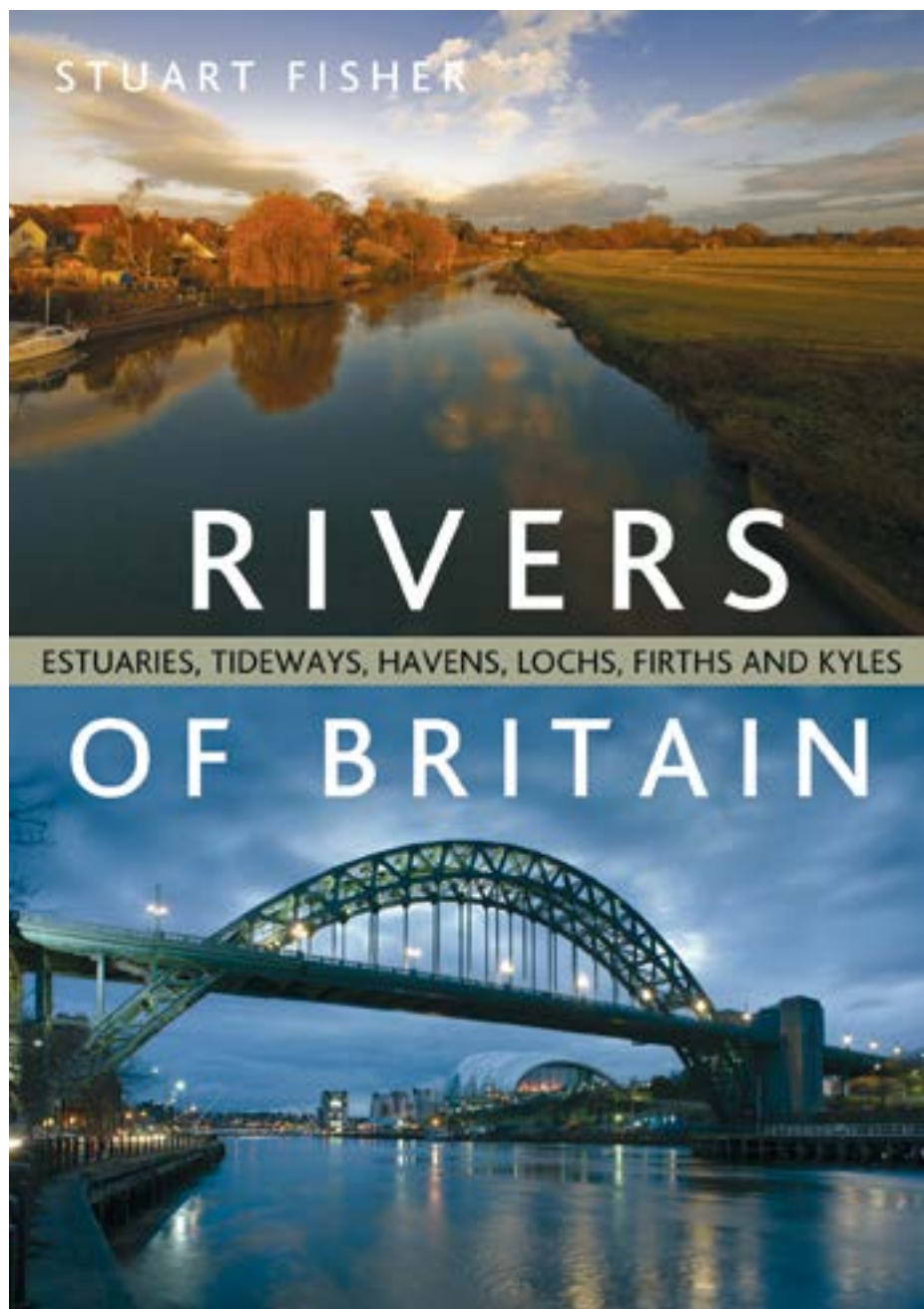
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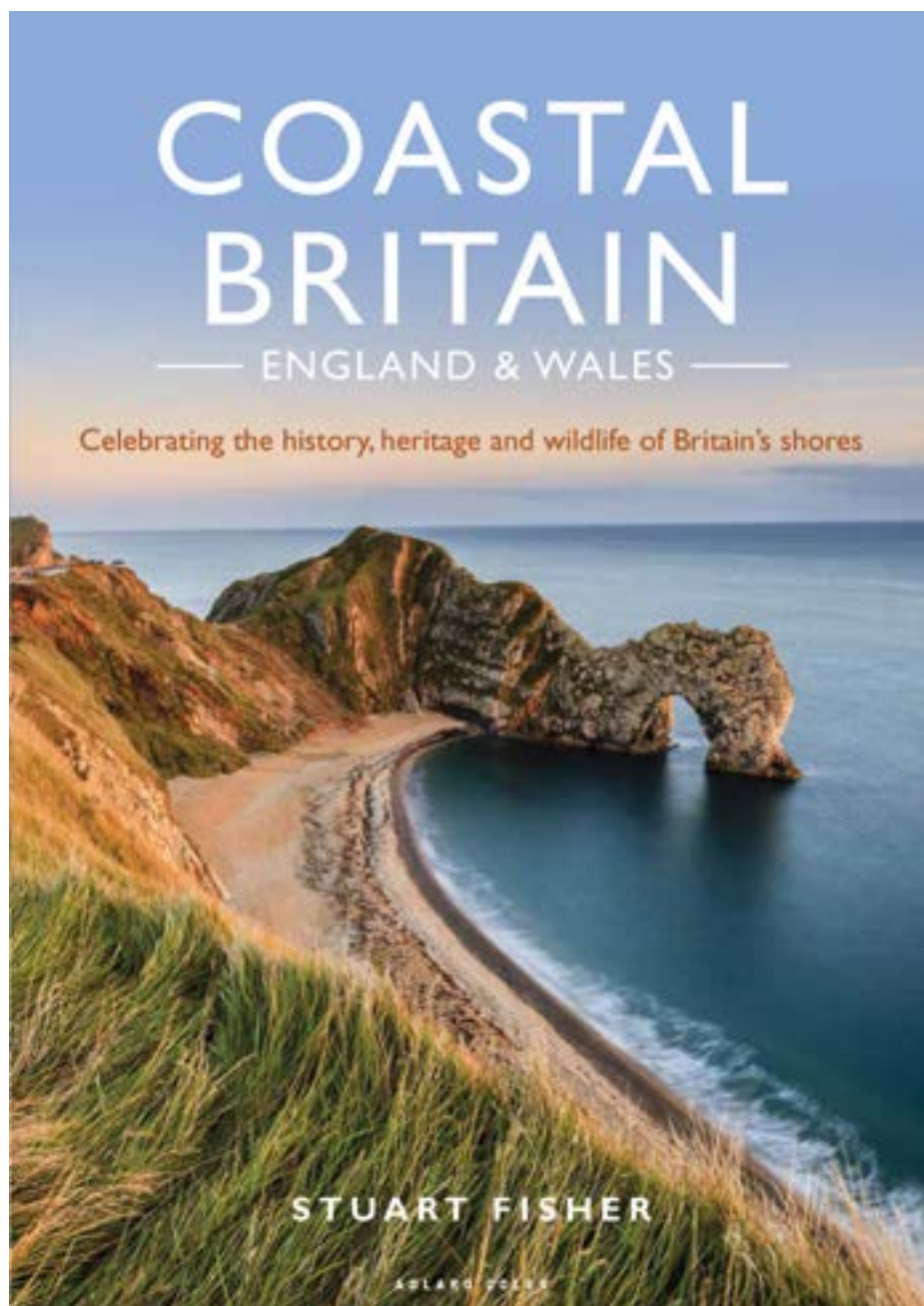
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Scotland has perhaps the most diverse and attractive coast in Europe although not always the easiest. The Corrieveekan is one of the largest whirlpools in the world, the Pentland Firth has some of the fastest currents in Europe, the Mull of Kintyre and Cape Wrath are a long way from civilization and some of the biggest surf in Britain is found along the north coast. Navigation aspects are covered fully.

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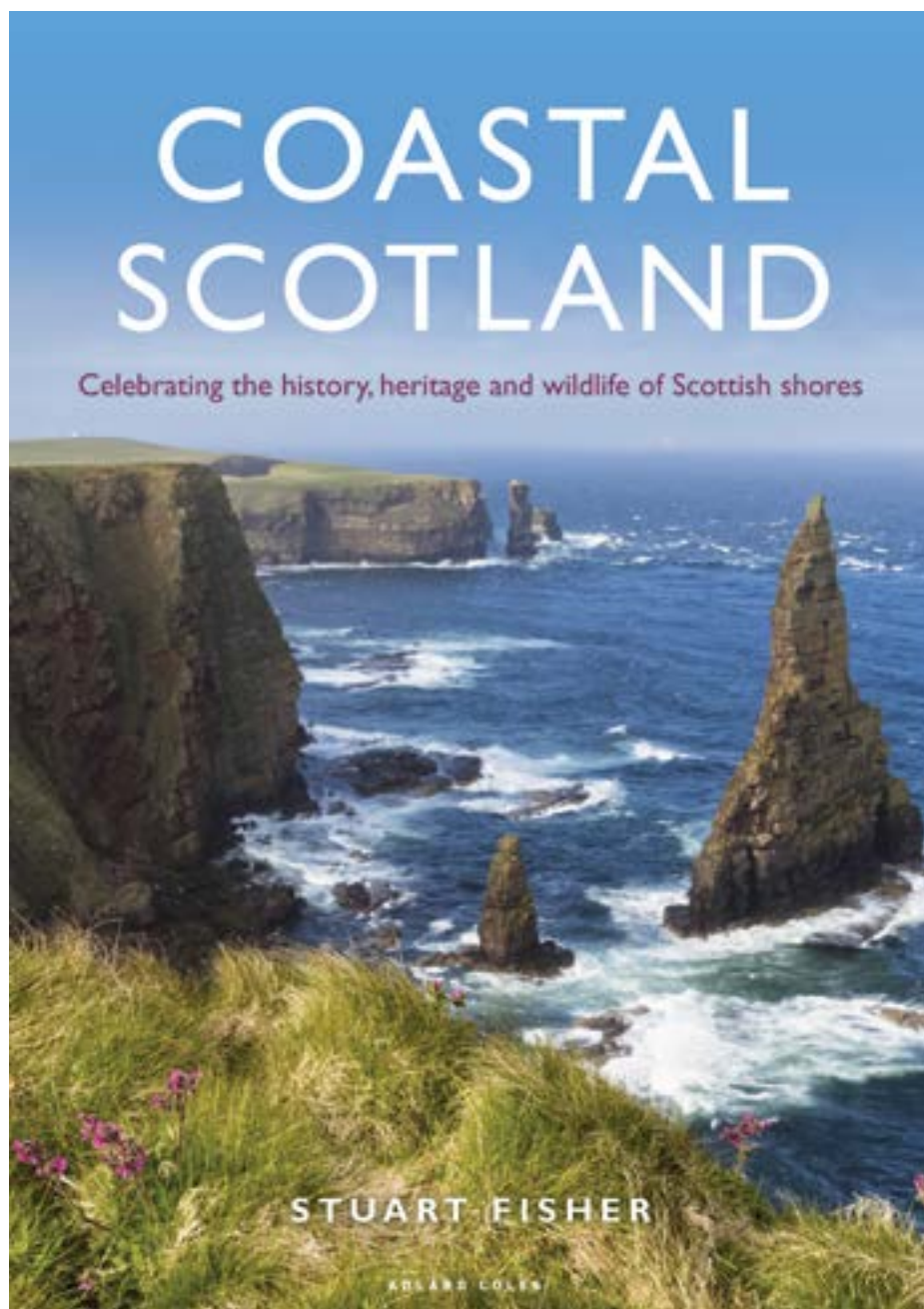
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'The numerous colour photos make one want to head off to the coast and explore immediately... I'd recommend this book for its interest and enjoyable mix of facts and stories. I enjoyed revisiting places I know well and those I am yet to visit.' - Cically Oliver, *Towpath Talk*

'there's more than enough detail here to satisfy anyone who longs for Scotland's shores... His kayak noses into places which may not have been seen before and, almost certainly, they will not have been photographed either' - Roger Butler, *Scottish Islands Explorer*

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Coast Book of the Month



This book features 50 lochs, both inland and sea. Some have been featured in *Canoeist* as guides or parts of guides but most are taken from a completely new study. They are generally the larger ones but not so large that they become open coastline. They are accessible by public road without the need for long carries to get on and off the water.

They do not include lochs which require commando techniques to access. Neither do they include the less interesting ones used for water storage which leave wide bands of dead grey rock along the shoreline for much of the year when drawn down.

Only three of these 50 lochs are Foxys.

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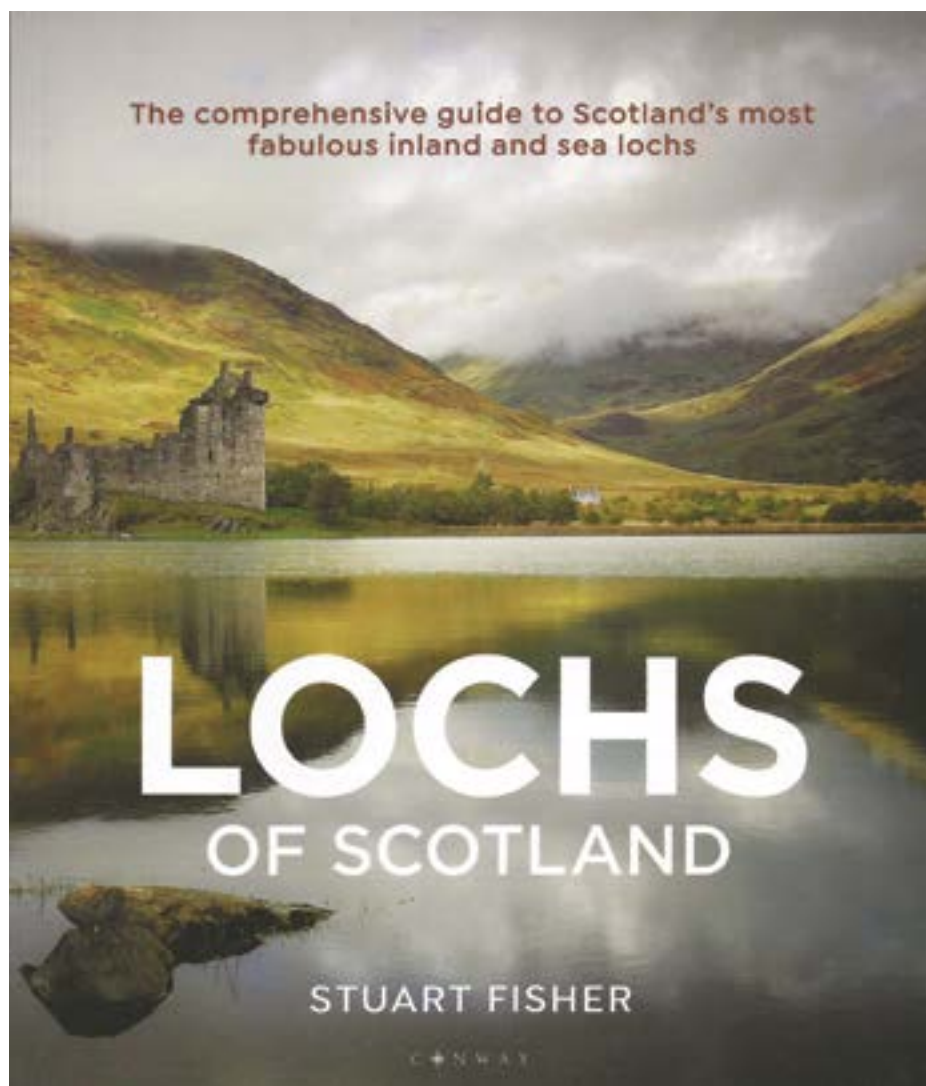
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'From spectacular coast to mountain nooks, this inspiring book showcases 50 of the most interesting lochs that frame the landscape of Scotland... it's packed with maps and information on local facilities, and is the perfect guide for anyone wanting to know more about these iconic locations.' - *Countryside*

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Which book?

This visual index gives a quick guide to which waters are included in each book. Some, such as some of the sea lochs, appear in more than one book.



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England & Wales

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Lochs of Scotland

