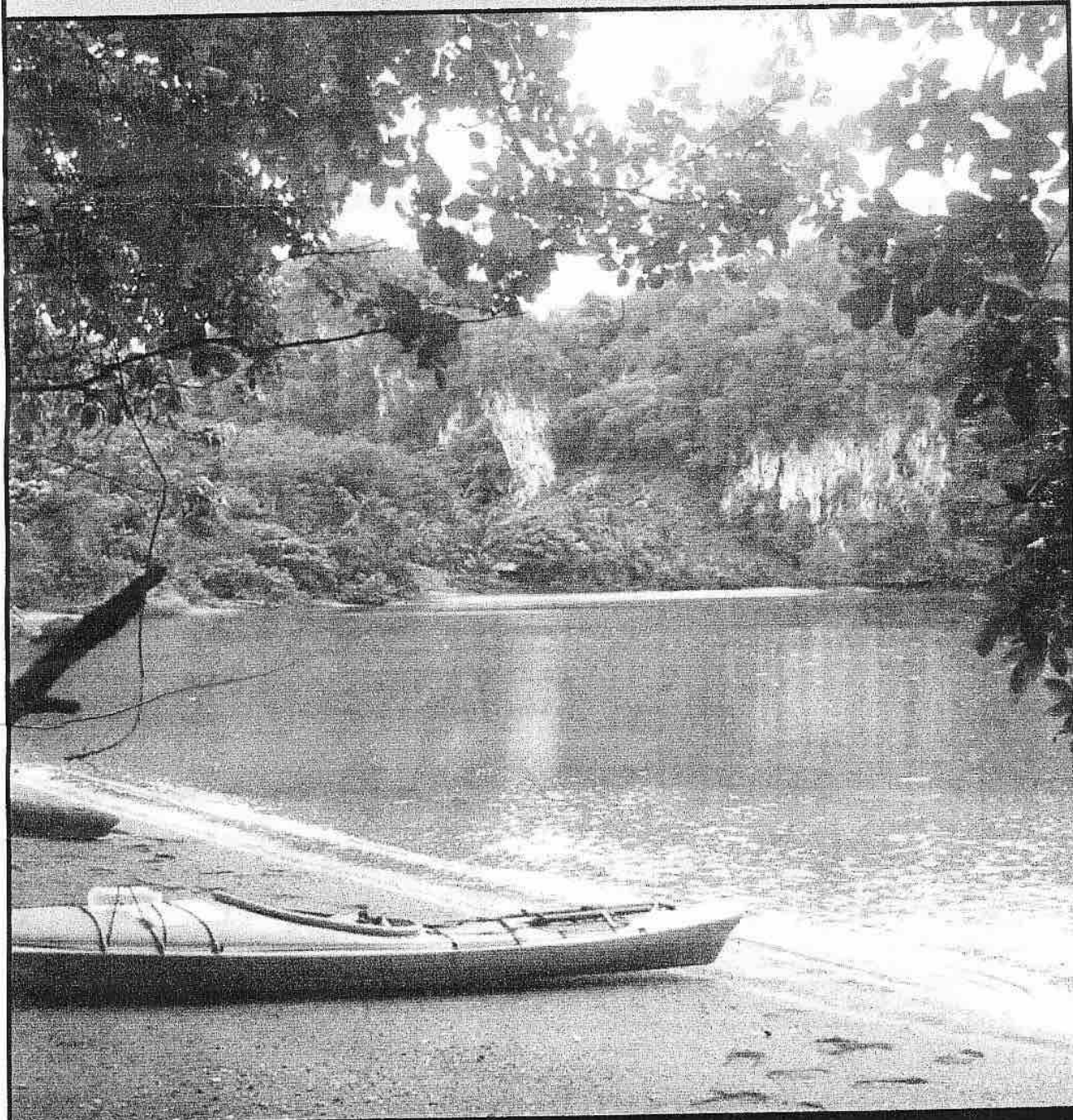


WA Seakayaker



ISSUE 50 September - October 2004



Newsletter of Sea Kayak Club WA Inc. 2a Braunton Street Bicton WA 6157
Phone: Pres. Eric Pyatt 9339 2952 Sec/Treasurer Roger Lloyd 9339 6860



NOTICE BOARD



Welcome to the following new members

Lionel Camm
Bradley Hobbs

Sea Kayak Club WA Inc

Caps and Shirts are now available
In Royal blue with white club logo

Caps \$12

Shirts \$28

Some smaller ladies' sizes will soon be available. Contact
Roger or Mick

Rottnest Island Trip

12th - 14th November 2004

The next Rottnest Island trip is scheduled for the weekend of 12-14 November 2004. House No 152 has been booked again this year. Rental for the house is \$580.00 and this cost will be shared equally between all starters irrespective of whether one or two nights are stayed. The house has eight beds and an additional four people can sleep on the floor ie the accommodation is restricted to a maximum of twelve people. Members intending to participate should register their intention to do so with Roger Lloyd as soon as possible. Relatives, friends and lovers are welcome to attend but priority will be given to paddlers. In the unlikely event that there are less than eight starters 2-3 weeks before the trip date the trip may be cancelled as the club incurs a penalty and may lose the entire \$580 in prepaid rent in the event that we cancel less than two weeks prior to the 12 November. Anybody who registers as a starter and cancels within the two week period prior to the trip will be expected to pay their part of the rent if a replacement cannot be found.

Newsletter Editor Required

Due to pressure of work I am stepping down as the WA Seakayaker newsletter editor and unless somebody else is willing to fill this role, this is the last newsletter you will receive.

It requires some computer skills as well as regular attendance at paddles, weekend trips, committee meetings and general meetings.

I am more than happy to discuss what is involved with any member who may be interested. This is an opportunity for another member to contribute fresh ideas to your newsletter.

2004 / 05 Club Committee

All committee positions are vacant for the 2004 / 05 year, only three current committee members are standing for re-election. The club must have a minimum of six committee members according to the constitution. The club cannot run without a full committee. Nomination forms are provided with this newsletter. If you are interested in standing for committee, or know of someone who is, get your nominations in 28 days prior to the AGM. Anyone needing information about committee duties can contact Roger Lloyd who will be pleased to help.

Cover Picture:
Sea kayaking in Thailand
Photo by Les Allen

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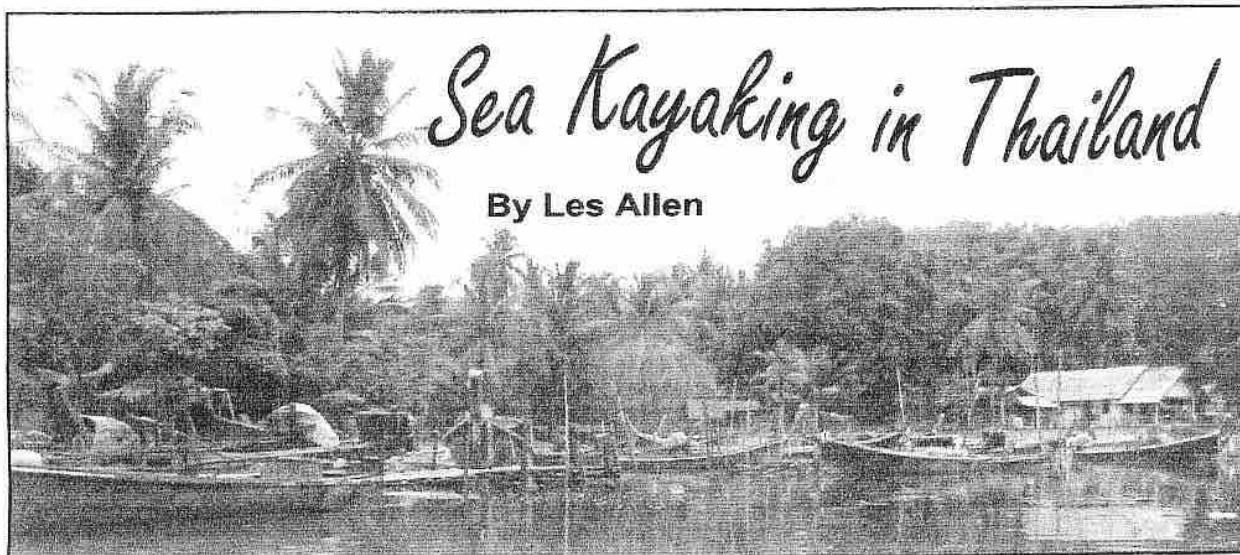
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Deadline for next issue :
Friday 15th October

CONTENTS

Office Bearers	Page 2
Notice Board	Page 2
Sea Kayaking in Thailand	Page 3,4,5,6
West Coast Kayaks (Adv)	Page 5
Eric's Birds	Page 7
Canoeing Down Under (Adv.)	Page 7
Mainpeak (Adv)	Page 8
List of Library Books	Page 9,10



Sea Kayaking in Thailand

By Les Allen

I was crammed in an extra cab ute with two of us in the front and two sitting behind the seats on a small bench. We arrived through a narrow road surrounded by mangrove onto a landing with a couple of food stalls on one side and a concrete wharf on the other. Around the wharf was an array of 10 to 12 longboats in varying sizes. The huge motors balanced at the end of a 6 mt long shaft tipped with an evil looking propeller seemed to intertwine with each other and the boats, making separation a difficult and dangerous operation. Across the green narrow river the mangrove encroached on the water trying to choke the river out.

There were people all over the landing who seemed to know exactly where to go and what to do. I looked around trying to identify the ferry from the rest of the boats in the clump. Moo was untying the kayak I had hired off her, so I helped her instead. While I was gathering my gear the kayak was slid onto the back of a 12 mt long longboat. Moo pulled a sheet of paper off her note pad so I could write down the Thai names of the village I would be staying at. I thanked her as I grabbed my gear and climbed aboard. My sea kayaking trip in Thailand was now starting.

The front of the boat had rows of wooden bench seats with a canopy over the top. Behind that was the large diesel truck motor under a wooden cowl almost as high as the seat canopy. The last 3 to 4 mts had a wooden deck at gunwale height with a high chair behind a vertical steering wheel mounted on a rusty pipe. This boat was different from the rest as it had an inboard motor rather than the typical long tail. The kayak was just sitting on the deck with the last 1mt of the bow sticking out from the stern. I had some cord in my bag so I scrambled back to tie the kayak onto the chair so I wouldn't lose it. As I crouched down next to the captain's chair I noticed that it was not tied or

bolted on either. Hmm, I wonder how he gets on in rough water. I immediately had a picture of the captain perched on his chair flying overboard. With that thought in mind I packed the kayak completely, ready for a seal launch over the back if necessary. That way if I lost the boat I could jump off after it, do a re-entry roll and start my paddling trip a bit earlier than planned.

On the 20 km crossing to Ko Yao Noi I was standing next to the captain with my chart trying to orient myself. The captain didn't speak English but with a bit of mime and hand signals he asked where I was going. I pulled out my notes and in my best Thai I told him the village I was staying at while pointing to the chart. He nodded smiling and said something in Thai I did not understand.

As we got close to Ko Yao Noi we headed into a bay and not between the islands as I expected. At the end of the bay was a small river mouth and about 200mt up that the river stopped at a small concrete wharf with a landing and some buildings behind it. As the boat approached the captain shouted something in Thai to the people there and then indicated to me that this is where I get off. As we were negotiating the kayak off the boat a local taxi or Took Took started backing up to the wharf. A Took Took is a little Suzuki ute with a canopy and seats in the back. The driver jumped out and grabbed the front of the kayak while talking to the captain. With alarm I stepped in waving saying No No. the drive looked at me with a puzzled look on his face. The captain took my chart pointed at where the village was and said Took Took, Took Took. I shook my head saying no Took Took, traced my finger around the island and did my best impression of kayaking by flaying my arms around in the air. The captain responded by tracing his finger around the island while shaking his head then pointing to the village saying Took Took at which

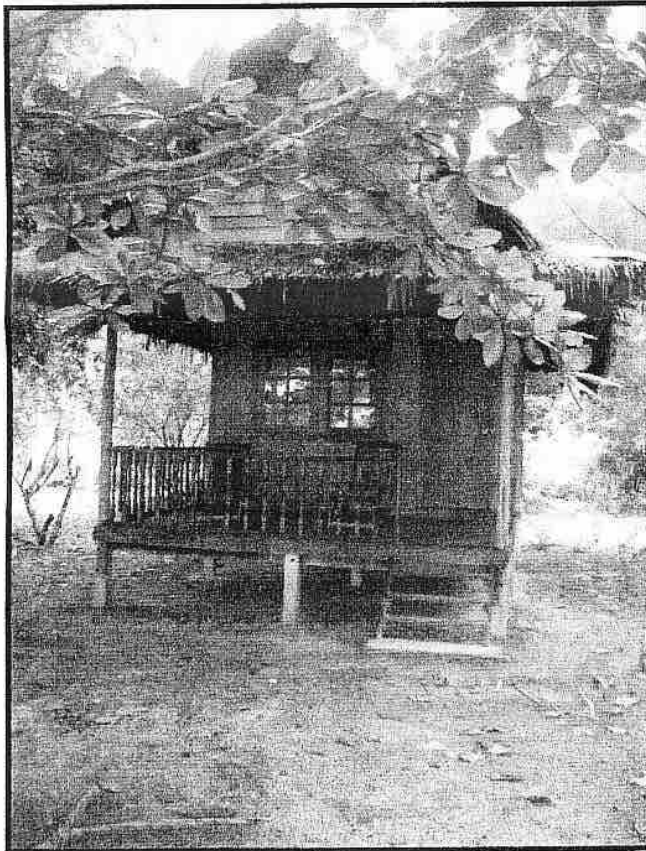
I shook my head saying NO NO. The captain was getting frustrated while the driver and the rest of the people stood back with big smiles on their faces enjoying the spectacle. The captain spied a woman coming over and let fly with a barrage of Thai. She could speak good English and said that the Took Took would take the kayak and me to the village, "no problem". I explained to her that I did not want the Took Took that I was going to paddle around the island. She smiled and said no the captain says it is too far for my little boat. I then proceeded to show where I planned to paddle my "little boat" over the next few days. She translated for the captain who just looked at me smiling and shaking his head. He obviously thought I was crazy but shrugged his shoulders, waved goodbye and hopped back on his boat.

This left me with an entourage of about 15 people. I bobbed down to check my boat and was surrounded by 15 pairs of legs. This wasn't going to work so I grabbed my spray deck and PFD out of the cockpit. The bloke behind me leaned over to see what I was doing and I nearly knocked him over as I stood up. The crowd was getting into it now as the boat was lifted off the ground by willing hands. We all swayed back and forth as the kayak was pulled and pushed with nobody sure how it was going to be lunched. I noticed the driver leaning on his Took Took pissing himself laughing. In desperation I

forced myself to the bow and removed the willing hands. I then led the boat to the edge of the wharf and using the bow rope lowered the bow into the water. I then indicated with an exaggerated throwing motion the stern was to be dropped into the water. Phew, this was hard work and I hadn't even started yet.

I climbed down the steps and pulled the boat back stern first. The stern hit the wall with the cockpit just out of reach. Bugger. I had to climb up to the third step to access the cockpit and this left me with a height problem. I looked at the water that was a solid green with a nice diesel sheen to it. The last foot was topped with a variety of flotsam from plastic to bits of old twig and leaf. This was going to be a very smooth operation or I was going to end upside down in that filth. I looked up to a wall of smiling faces. Double bugger. Holding all my weight with my arms I lowered my feet into the cockpit. Balancing the boat with my feet I slowly transferred some weight. Now was the moment of truth. I squatted down while sliding my legs into the boat. As my backside hit the seat I lost all grip on the step. The boat wobbled but I was able to keep my balance and stayed upright. Phew, I was sweating profusely with all the exertion. As I looked up, my audience approved the manoeuvre with some light chatter and approving nods. I then put my spray deck on to a chorus of owls and concerned chatter. They obviously didn't think a spray deck was a good idea at all. I didn't want to go through the laborious process of explaining the need for a spray deck so I just pushed off, paddled a few strokes and turned back to wave. I was sent off by a smiling, waving gaggle of people. Off to my solo island hopping adventure.

As I paddled out of the river mouth a magnificent sight opened up before me. The background was mist covered, gray mountains with dramatic islands jutting straight out of the water in the middle of the bay. The islands had cliffs hundreds of feet high that were topped with a layer of thick green jungle. This was a scene straight out of Jurassic Park and I half expected to see a Pterodactyl come swooping past, but got a sea eagle instead. Then that "I'm all alone" feeling crept in. I mean there I was in a strange country and I didn't speak the language. I was heading off into strange waters and going to a Muslim Thai fishing village I knew nothing about. All the Thai people I had met so far were very friendly and kind but I knew nothing about Muslims except what I had seen on TV and those images were not reassuring. I brought things back into perspective by looking at the next hurdle first, as experience has taught me that the biggest fear of all is the fear of the unknown.



I was cruising down the channel between Ko Yao Noi and Ko Yao Yai quite quickly as I had the ebbing tide with me. The chart showed a current of 1.7 knots running north south along the outside of the islands and I was heading east to intersect it. 1.7 knots is not a big current but past experience has taught me not to trust charts when currents come through channels and islands. To my right was a curved sandy beach culminating in a sandy spit and on my left the end of the island had a rocky point jutting out. In the channel between I could see pressure waves near the rocky point I had to round. As I got closer I could see 30 cm high evenly spaced waves with a distinct eddy line. It looked quite mild so I powered in. The boat rocked back and forth quite gently through the pressure waves as I set up to cross the eddy line. I punched through at about a 45 ° angle without a problem. Another perceived fear just disappeared. As it was now spring tides this

was the worst it was going to get.

Heading north along Ko Yao Noi I stayed close to the shore so I picked up the eddy as the current was against me. The shoreline was rocky with the jungle-covered rocks heading up at about a 45° angle. The jungle was so thick that looking into it was impossible. It emitted strange noises and I had fleeting glimpses of exotic birds. Around a bend in a fold in the hills was a small flat area that had a white sandy beach with a coconut grove behind it. This was one of those idyllic scenes I though only existed in post cards. In the coconut grove I could see an old lean to with a thatched roof adding that rustic look. There were some nice shady trees to stop under so I pointed the bow at a good spot and as the bow slid up the sand I climbed out humming to myself some stupid tune that I could not get out of my head. Sitting in the shade of a huge tree I sipped some water and looked out at a new set of dramatic islands that would be my destination tomorrow. Everything from the view, the sound, and the humid jungle smell was so un Australian. This was fantastic!

It was 2.00 pm and the tide was just about out as I rounded the bend looking into a bay that I thought was where the village should be. The beach was at least 200mt from the water's edge and in the left hand corner of the bay I could just see the corner of what looked like a building in the jungle. In the centre of the bay was a little island, well an island when the tide was in, as now it was the green knob on a spit. To my right I could see a small wharf with some stranded long-boats in front of some old buildings. I side surfed some 20 cm high waves in next to the future island and got out of my boat to further survey the bay. My eyes picked up movement in the jungle then out popped a bright yellow scooter with a small man working to keep control in the sand. He stopped about half way and came running up shouting, "Are you the Australian kayaker?"

"Yes" I said and "Are you "Mr Bow?" "Yes yes. Welcome! The bungalow is over there." He pointed to where I saw the partial building in the jungle. I tied the boat up to a rock, pulled out my change of clothes and followed Mr Bow. At the edge of the jungle I hopped on the back as we "put putted" to the bungalow.

Mr Bow was a top bloke. Friendly and smiling he showed me around and explained

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Custom sea kayak trips can be organized for both club members and their friends. We assist with the planning, provide boats and gear and have a Sea Kayak Instructor on the trip to advise and help lead the trip.

The Sea Kayak School is now open. If you want to do Sea Skills, Advanced Sea Skills to Sea Kayak Instructor just let us know and we will organize a training weekend.

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everything to me. The bungalow was on stilts with a veranda out the front. The room was made of woven bamboo with a thatched roof and the double bed had mosquito net hung in place. There was a table and an open cupboard. The bathroom was a tiled room with a non-flushing western toilet in the corner, a trough of water in the middle and a flexible shower nozzle on the wall to the right. In the corner was a hand basin and mirror. The place was clean and had everything you needed including a wall-mounted fan pointing at the bed. Another fear dissolved, the bungalow and restaurant were great and the people friendly. "What a life" I thought as I sat back in the open air restaurant with a cold beer in my hand, a spectacular view and good conversation with Mr Bow.

As I reached the end of the island the tide was again in peak ebb and the now familiar pressure waves and eddy line were at the point. I powered around ignoring the waves only to be hit with another stunning view. It would take a long time to get sick of this. There were caves to explore, islands everywhere covered in jungle that was dark and foreboding. Cliffs that jutted straight up from the water with magnificent colours and the occasional scampering monkey, spectacular bays with cool shaded sandy beaches, unusual sounds and some of the biggest insects I have ever seen. I ignored the current and headed straight for Ko Ku Du Yui. My plan was to round the island and pick up the tide for a ten kilometre crossing to another group of islands. As I rounded the island I found eddies and tiny whirlpools everywhere. They were not strong enough to affect my paddling and it was fun to paddle through them.

As I headed out into smooth water I needed to head at about a 30° angle to the following tide. A light wind sprung up at about a 45° angle off my bow giving me a small wind wave. Still calm conditions but with a rudderless boat the combination of the two effects kept turning my boat. By leaning and using a correction at the end of every right hand stroke I could keep the course but it was starting to piss me off. I made a mental note that when I bring people over on the next trip to make sure I have boats with rudders. The crossing gave me time to reflect on my experience so far.

The village and its people were fantastic. They are not rich people but have a caring, sharing, happy way of life that is infectious. In our busy, rich, life styles it's easy to forget the basics and spending time with these people highlights that. I am sure that the village will impress people when I bring them over as it has been a highlight of my trip so far. But it is

not immune from the effects of big business.

If I got the story right it's only about six years ago that the village was self sufficient as they did not have to buy food in to survive. Now, fishing alone won't support the people. They have to have another means of earning money to sustain the village. Big business from Bangkok and overseas has bought up all the land with beach access driving the price up so it is out of reach of the local people. They of course will employ the villagers but on a low subsistence wage that keeps them on the poverty line. Their only hope is to cash in on the tourist business themselves. The problem is to maintain the village life as it is and have tourism. In Phuket there is decadence that will destroy the village way of life. One of the resorts built a bar with loud music, excessive alcohol and of course the next thing would have been bar girls. The locals burned it down and good on them. This is a challenge that is facing a lot of villages in the world today and I hope they find the right formula because what they have now is very special.

They have changed my thinking on moderate Muslims. These people don't drink but didn't mind me having a beer. At no time did I feel threatened or did they try to modify my behavior. Mind you if you want to be treated the way I was it pays to be humble and try to respect their way of life. If you give a little, they will give a lot and it is a good feeling. One example of village life that stays with you is the trust. Bow wanted me to leave my boat in the village instead of struggling to get it up to the bungalow at low tide. I explained that it was too far to carry all my gear. He looked puzzled and said "Leave it with the boat."

I said "But what if it gets stolen?" He just laughed and said that the village would look after it for me. It was then that it struck me that the bungalow had no locks, nor did the restaurant, all the motorbikes had keys in the ignition, and the shop did not have enough walls to lock up properly. Silly Australian.

With the aid of the current the 10 kilometers was a quick trip and then I was immersed in dramatic islands again. As I nudged into yet another cave I felt sad to be leaving this strange and wonderful world the next day. I will be back though, with a group of the right tourists for the village. People who want to experience a different world without destroying it. People who don't want an air-conditioned, sterile world of organized tour groups being shown a stereotyped, sanitized attraction. My little adventure turned out far better than I could ever have expected.

Les Allen

Eric's Birds



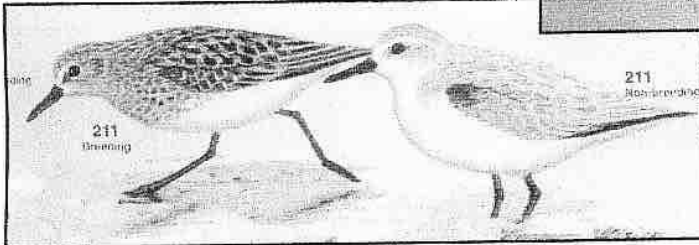
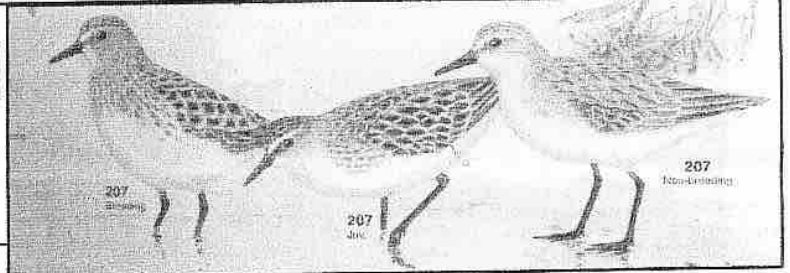
Eric Pyatt

RED - NECKED STINT: The waders are here; flying all the way from the Northern Hemisphere. When on the river, around the sandbanks at Alfred Cove or along side the Freeway, that is where they will be. You could also count on them being on the sand flats opposite where we launch at "The Chimneys" on the Peel Inlet, Mandurah way. Not as plentiful as they used to be; the human being probably having something to do with that. There is a little one, usually in big numbers, which feed right on the water's edge, the Red-necked Stint. The red neck not always obvious down south as they breed up North. The reddish neck denotes that they are in breeding mode.

Red-Necked Stint

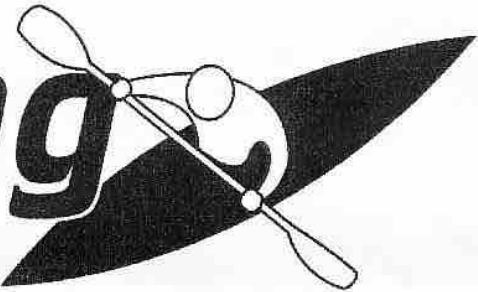
Illustrations from Simpson and Day

Sanderling



SANDERLING: This one is not to be confused with the above. It's the Sanderling. Very similar but note the longer bill. Not quite as red in season and darker on the cap. Have a look and see if you can pick any differences.

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Collection of Newsletters

File

- 26 Southern River Paddler (Albany Canoe Club)
- 27 Ascot Kayak Club News
- 29 Canoe WA
- 31 The Grey Dolphin (Mandurah)
- 32 NSW Sea Kayaker
- 33 Ocean Paddler
- 34 Canoe SA Update
- 35 South West Canoe Club
- 36 Victorian Sea Kayak Club
- 37 Swan Canoe Club
- 29 Various Magazines & Newsletters
 - ♦ "Canoe & Kayak"
 - ♦ International Sea Kayak Association
 - ♦ Sea Kayaker Magazine (Oct 2002, Dec 2002, Oct 2003)
- 28 Australian Canoeing Inc
 - ♦ Board of Canoe Education
 - ♦ Award Scheme Handbook

Various photocopies of articles:

- ♦ Bush Cooking
- ♦ Rescue/Safety/Survival
- ♦ Basic White Water Skills
- ♦ Excursions/Trips
- ♦ Basic Kayaking Information
- ♦ Skills/Tips

Books

Title

Author

Kimberley Challenge	Terry Bolland
The Long Way Home	Terry Bolland
Canoeing Downunder & Avon River Guide	Terry Bolland
GPS Afloat (GPS Navigation Handbook)	Bill Anderson
Exploring GPS	A GPS Users Guide
GPS Vehicle Navigation in Australia	Robert Pepper
The Dreamtime Voyage	Paul Caffyn
TAFE Coastal Navigation	Study Guide
TAFE Coastal Navigation 100	Study Guide
Cold Oceans	Jon Turk
Complete Book of Sea Kayaking	Derek Hutchinson
The Complete Sea Kayakers Handbook	Shelley Johnson
Sea Kayaking	Shelley Johnson
- A Ragged Mountain Press Woman's Guide	
Sea Kayaking	Jonathon Hanson
The New Kayak Shop (Build Your Own Kayak)	Chris Kulczycki
Sea Kayaker Deep Trouble	Sea Kayaker Magazine
- True Stories & Their Lessons	
The Essential Sea Kayaker	David Seidman
Fundamentals Of Kayak Navigation	David Buich
Kayaking Across Bass Strait via Flinders Island	Ian Dunn
The Optimum Kayak	Andy Knapp
Marine Radio Operators Handbook	Australian Maritime College
Boating Guide (x12)	Dept. Of Planning & Infrastructure (ie. Marine & Harbours)

Maps

Assorted maps of -

- ◆ Dampier
- ◆ Rottnest Island
- ◆ Peel Inlet
- ◆ Little Rock
- ◆ Garden Island
- ◆ Nornalup Inlet
- ◆ Dirk Hartog Island
- ◆ Broke Inlet

Admiralty Charts

Cervantes
Nornalup Inlet
Green Head
Cape Naturaliste to Cape Leeuwin
Jurien Bay
Shark Bay S.E. sheet
Shark Bay S.W. sheet
N.W. Cape – Pont Maud
Ocean Reef – Cape Peron
Rottnest Island
Harvey Estuary – Peel Inlet

Chart Number.

DMH 422
WA 1046
DMH 628
AUS 756
WA 947
AUS 748
AUS 749
AUS 745
WA 001
DMH 412
WA 848

Committee - Helier Beardsley

Helier Beardsley has accepted an invitation to join the club committee for the remainder of the 2004/05 year filling a casual vacancy left by the resignation of Jim Bramley earlier in the year. With Eric away we are down to five



First Aid Kits

All members should carry their own first aid kit specific to their own personal needs on all club trips.

Trip Leaders

All those who are regular trip leaders are strongly encouraged to put their names down to complete a club subsidised first aid course.

Sea Kayak Club WA Inc
2a Braunton Street
Bicton
WA 6157

SURFACE MAIL



Secretary
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Bicton, WA, 6157