

Section 5 - Malmo to Stockholm, (Sweden)

Sailed in August 2010 with Kaj Landell (Finland) as crew

Time taken: 22 Days Distance covered: 410 mls



Day 1 - I had made an early morning rendezvous at Malmo Rail Station to meet up with Kaj (pronounced Kai), before setting off with boat and trailer to Höllviken, the start point for the previous cruise to Rantzausminde. It took much of the morning to carefully pack the boat with the necessary provisions to be self-sufficient for at least the next seven days.



Tied up at Höllviken and made ready for the cruise to Stockholm.

The Falsterbo canal that connects Höllviken with the southern coast.

The harbourmaster was extremely interested in our proposed venture and kindly waived the normal launching fee for using the slipway. With the boat packed and ready to go, and somewhere nearby found to leave the car and trailer safe during our cruise, we enjoyed a leisurely lunch before deciding to venture only as far as the end of the Falsterbo canal.



Kaj helming beyond the Falsterbo canal, the two marks visible in the background indicating the entrance.

We motored to a convenient quay heading near the southern entrance of the canal and tucked ourselves inside the normal mooring places. We again managed to avoid being charged for the privilege, unlike a yacht arriving a little later, who didn't appear to be at all pleased at the charge made for his yacht in comparison to our zero rating!

Day 2 - Fully recovered from the previous day's jet lag we had woken completely rested and made ready for the adventure that lay ahead. The day was overcast, but the light winds from the south were ideal conditions to introduce Kaj to coastal cruising in a Wayfarer.

We passed Smygehuk, the most southerly point of the Swedish mainland, and sailed to the small harbour at Abbekås. In the light winds, 23 Nm was a good distance to cover, and we were well satisfied with our first day's progress. Rather than use the visitors moorings, we found a more sheltered spot on the other side of the wall, and for the first time, were charged the normal overnight fee by the harbourmaster.

Ralph helping out of Abbekås into a light headwind.



Moored in a sheltered spot at the fishing harbour of Abbekås.

Day 3 - The wind had veered round to the east the next day and increased steadily, which eventually required both sails to be reefed and resulted in a very wet sail. The self-draining cockpit of this design of Wayfarer coped well to remove the spray coming over the foredeck. The winds had increased to F.6 by mid-afternoon, and it was evident that it would take at least a further two hours to reach the next headland. I looked for a suitable landing place on the steeply shelving beach and noticed that the beach flattened out looking back towards the west. By continuing along the shore to the flattest and easiest section to pull the boat out, I happened upon an almost invisible entrance to a creek.



Tied up in a sheltered anchorage near Nybrostrand.

The shallow entrance to the inlet – with Abbekås visible in background.

We got out in the shallow water and hauled the boat over the sandbar to discover a most perfectly sheltered inlet, which widened into an ideal mooring spot for the night. I was quite amazed by our good fortune.



Day 4 - Re-crossing the sandbar entrance was not quite so easy next morning. The water level had gone down and rather more hauling was needed to get the boat out into the deeper water again. Sand then locked the centreboard into its fully raised position, the problem being resolved by rinsing it out from the top whilst on a run downwind.

Moored against the far harbour wall at Kåseberga.



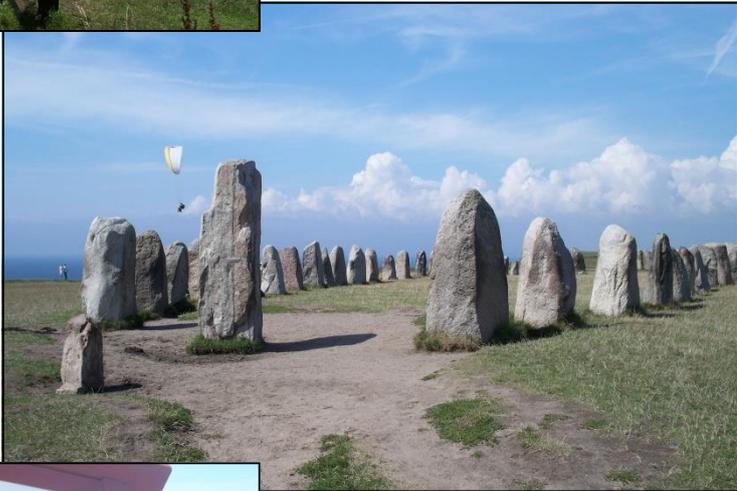
Inset shows location of "hidden" entrance of inlet to anchorage.



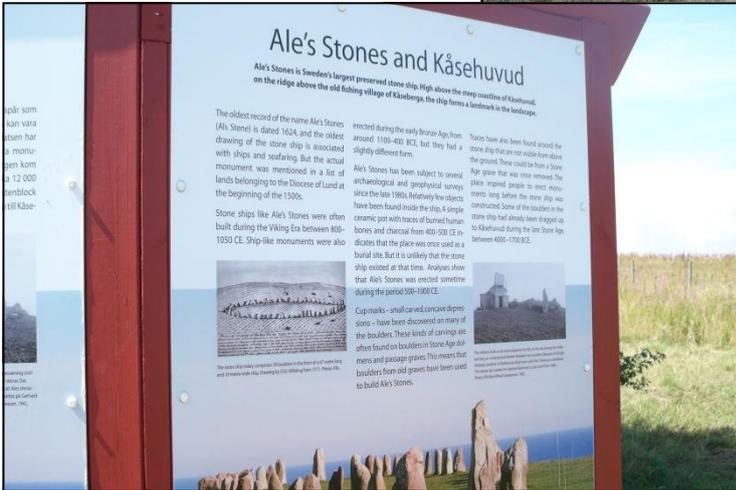
With the wind veering round to the east, it proved the right decision to stop for the night where we did, rather than beat into the increasing strong winds of the previous day. We enjoyed a far easier sail to the next headland of Kåseberga, with its sheltered harbour.

Tying up to the harbour wall, (the smaller of the two boats seen against the far wall in the photo above), we enjoyed a leisurely lunch break, even spoiling ourselves to a cooling ice cream in the hot, sunny conditions, before climbing up some steep steps to visit Ale's Stones.

The well laid out and informative ancient site at Ale's Stones.



Complete access to the whole site was freely available.



Ale's Stones is a renowned tourist attraction of the area with the great stone blocks, being the shape of a Viking Longboat, said to represent a memorial graveyard to the Viking adventurers, and built circa 500 to 1000 AD. Hang-gliders were also making the most of both the cliff-top location and fine weather.

Leaving the harbour at Kåseberga, we set course for the next headland, where the coastline turned north-east. Whilst both the weather and wind direction couldn't have been more perfect when setting out, the conditions deteriorated during the afternoon with rain showers, and the wind increasing sufficiently to need a reef in the sails.

Moored up in a sheltered area of Brantevik, used by fishing boats.



Kaj helming in ideal conditions after leaving Kåseberga.

We made our next stop the small fishing harbour of Brantevik. Tying up among the sheltered fishermen's boats, I was welcomed with the offer of two freshly caught flounder. Trying to decline the over-generous offer of the two fish, I was greeted with, "Be a Viking - have both!+

Day 5 - We were woken early by the effect of a fresh breeze on the boat. Looking out, the wind had gone round to the north and the sky revealed some forthcoming stormy weather. We moved the boat to the best protected spot available for visiting yachts, just prior to a period of heavy rain and strong winds.

Kaj stopping for a break during our walk along the coastal path.



Tucked into the most sheltered spot available between 2 boats.

Whilst the rain ceased after a short while, the wind continued to blow strongly from the north. There was little alternative but to remain where we were. We walked the 5km north to the larger and far less appealing harbour at Simrishamn. Thankful that we had stopped at Brantevik, we returned to make a fine meal of the fish we had been given.

Day 6 - We woke the next morning to misty, dull weather, with visibility far too poor to contemplate setting sail. Having taken a walk north the previous day, we thought we would try the scenery to the south. We walked only a few kilometres when a fresh southerly breeze started blowing away the grey mist to reveal the most glorious of sunny days.



Morning fog kept us in the harbour at Brantevik.



Sailing with the spinnaker set is a great highlight of any cruise.

Returning quickly to the boat and packing as fast as we could, we set out from Brantevik and hoisted the spinnaker to make the most of the fine sailing conditions. It took us only around 4 hours to sail the 25Nm to the next stopping point of Åhus. The wind blowing straight down the river into the city meant the visitors moorings were very exposed. To Kaj's slight consternation, I decided instead to use a vacant private mooring quay we had passed on our way in.



The visitors mooring berths on the right at Åhus were very exposed.



Unloading Spree Lady onto a vacant private quay.

Our berth could not have been more ideal for our purposes, with plenty of space to unload all our gear onto the secluded jetty heading. We were able to cook and enjoy a fine meal. It would also have been very quiet and peaceful, but for the fact that directly opposite was the Absolut Vodka distillery, with the turbines feeding the grain from the silos emitting a constant drone.

Day 7 - We were storm-bound again the next day, with easterly headwinds of at least a F7, and had no choice but to remain at our isolated sanctuary. Although the city was directly opposite us, it proved a long walk by the river to reach a bridge that finally gave us access. We made use of our visit to re-stock our dwindling food supplies.

Viewing our next destination in the strong, F. 6/7 onshore winds.



Moored up at Åhus to a sheltered and vacant private quay heading.

During the afternoon we walked to the headland to observe our next distant destination. With the sea full of white horses, any prospect of setting out that day was out of the question. We returned to our berth, resigning ourselves to enduring a further night of background drone.

Day 8 - It rained heavily during the night - the patter of the down-pour on the tent even drowning the noise from the distillery, but by morning the wind had at last dropped to a reasonable level, and we made preparations to move on to our next destination.

Tied up at Vastra Näs – before the wind backed more southerly.



Ralph helming out of Åhus into the F 3/4 easterly winds.

About an hour out from Åhus the wind increased once more, reaching a greater strength than the previous day. There was no alternative but to make straight for the nearest safe haven, which was a hamlet on the near horizon. It turned out to be Vastra Näs, though there had been no chance of checking the charts or GPS to confirm this at the time.

Though the harbour had provided us with sanctuary from the gale force winds, it was not ideal for an overnight stop. The building with the facilities was locked, and unusually, no-one came to enquire as to our presence. With the wind decreasing slightly later but backing southerly, it left the harbour rather too exposed, and we decided to set sail in the less than ideal conditions.

Reaching in the strong winds – the seas bigger than they appear.



Berthed at Vastra Näs, when it was protected from the strong winds.

It proved a hard sail to windward out to the headland and it was only just possible to clear the shallow, rocky reef well out to sea . being clearly marked by the surf line above it . on the one tack. The sailing was easier once clear of the headland, though the strong winds had built up the sea to form large waves.

Passing the town of Hällevik, it was evident from the huge number of masts that it had a large marina. However our approach would have entailed running directly downwind, and with rather too much danger of the boat capsizing in the big seas, we continued to the island of Hanö.

Moored up safely in the harbour at the scenic island of Hanö.



Sailing toward the harbour of Hanö in the strong winds.

Sailing into the harbour of Hanö, the rather astonished Harbour Master appeared to find it difficult to believe that anyone could have survived the conditions at sea in such a small boat. He mentioned that the yachts berthing earlier had reported how extreme the seas had been on their course into the harbour.

Day 9 - We woke to a period of heavy rain, and were most thankful of the showers and other facilities immediately to hand, which wouldn't have been available had we stayed at Vastra Näs. Quite amazingly, Kaj found his dentist was also moored in the harbour. Such a meeting must have been about the same chance as winning a National Lottery!

The Union Jack hoisted at Hanö to recognise our presence.



A wet, miserable start to the day in the harbour at Hanö.

The kindly Harbour Master raised a Union Jack in recognition of our presence, which may have been the cause of being asked a few times whether we had sailed all the way from the UK. The day brightened up considerably later in the morning, making it worth our while to prepare to set sail again.

Setting off from Hanö, the sailing conditions were ideal with blue skies and a moderate breeze from the south. Taking full advantage of the weather to make as much progress as possible, we sailed directly for the headland of Torhamn, after which we would turn north again for the final leg of our sail to Stockholm.

Tied up in the harbour on Sturkö facing into the strong winds.



Perfect 'armchair' sailing after setting out from Hanö.



Even without making the earliest of starts, we managed to cover the excellent distance of 27 Nm, and reached the group of islands west of Torhamn before looking for somewhere to stop for the night. We made use of a convenient harbour that appeared as we sailed between the islands of Tjurkö and Sturkö.

Day 10 - The winds next morning were blowing strongly again from the south, which made the seaward passage to Torhamn too exposed. Opting for the safer inland route, the mast needed to be lowered to pass under the low bridge that connected the two islands. Being only a short distance away, we set the mast on the boom crutch in the harbour, and motored to the bridge.

Approaching the low road bridge – with doubtful clearance.



Motoring towards the bridge with the mast lowered.

I had some concern that the low bridge ahead might take off the wind indicator I had fixed at the top of the mast. In the event, as is usual when shooting bridges, there was more than adequate space for us to pass safely beneath it and then seek somewhere to moor up.

Tying up to a convenient jetty, we raised the mast to put the boat back into sailing mode. This being a relatively simple operation since the mast is pivoted near its foot. With the sails rigged, we set off in calmer waters on the scenic and sheltered route to the south of Sturkö.

Kaj helming after shooting the second road bridge.



Raising the mast again after passing under the low bridge.

Emerging from the south-west of the island, a second, higher road bridge was encountered and rather easier to negotiate, allowing us to raise the mast afterwards without the need to stop. This proved easy sailing, as there was a whole series of small islands providing us with shelter from the strong southerly winds.

We weaved our way through the many small islands . making a mental note that it was a perfect location to return to one day and explore in more detail. Clearing the last of the islands that had afforded us good shelter, we were confronted by the full force of strong onshore winds, and immediately put a reef in both sails.

Approaching the headland at Torhamn, with its shallow rocks.



Emerging from the last of the islands providing shelter.

Sailing out toward the headland, breaking water started to appear almost everywhere directly ahead. The well protected centreboard also indicated that the water had become much shallower. We threaded our way through the granite rocks, being closely watched by a passing yacht keeping to the marked channel!

Passing the Cape of Torhamn, we set course northwards along the eastern coast of Sweden, with Kaj taking over the helm. He was rather less comfortable helming through the rocky outcrops, particularly after the centreboard hit a very solid rock, with the bang startling a row of black cormorants on rocks nearby.

Berthed at Bergkvara after a good day's sail of 35 Nm.



Kaj on the helm after rounding the Cape of Torhamn.

Now protected from the strong south-westerly winds, we shook out the reefs and enjoyed an easy sail along the coast, albeit punctuated by sightings of rocky outcrops that needed to be avoided. Late in the afternoon we reached the harbour of Bergkvara, and stopped for the night in the marina.



Day 11 - The picture-postcard feature of the Garpen lighthouse was situated immediately opposite the harbour of Bergkvara, on such a low-lying island that the land was barely visible from a few miles away. It was a popular tourist attraction in the area, though we didn't take time out for a visit after setting out the next day.

Markers indicating an exclusion area for boating activity.



The scenic lighthouse marking the entrance to Bergkvara.

After negotiating the channel out through the entrance, we sailed on an easy reach in the offshore winds. Passing a line of red marks out to sea, we sailed closer to a mark in another set some 5Nm distant to read that the area was closed to all boating activity. Whoops!

This part of the coast provided us with one of our easiest days sailing, since the water was sufficiently deep not to have to keep a constant watch for shallow areas of rocks. Our next landmark was the 7Km bridge between the mainland and the long (140Km) offshore island of Öland.

Kaj on the helm after passing under the Öland bridge.



Approaching the town of Kalmar and the bridge over to Öland.

The bridge had been built high enough for yachts to pass under its spans, with even the lowest span being sufficient for us. Kaj took over the helm to sail on for another 5Nm. It was our normal custom to look for somewhere to stop by about 16.00, and at that time we had reached a suitable peninsula that afforded us the shelter we required.

Day 12 - We had beached the boat on the pebbled shore close to Venenäs for the night, though by the next morning the water had gone down some 100mm to leave the boat rather stranded. Putting some rollers under the hull, it was an easy matter to get the boat launched again, and we set off for another fine day's sail.

There were numerous rocky outcrops many miles from shore.



The boat stranded on the shore after the water level dropped.

We sailed on our usual, most direct course, a mile or so out from the coast. This part of the coastline however had numerous shallow rocky outcrops, and we were caught whilst sailing through one shallow area with the hull crunching over the rocks, and the ominous sound of tearing glass fibre.

Sailing on through the shallow area into deeper water, there was little option but to continue and hope that the damage wasn't too serious. With it being a Saturday, we also needed to re-stock our supplies before the shops closed, so it was necessary to continue in haste to reach the town of Oskarshamn.

Tied up to a floating pontoon that didn't appear to be in use.



The rocks on the far right were used to inspect the hull.

Arriving at Oskarshamn, we pulled the boat up onto some smooth rocks within the harbour to inspect the damage, and found a 100mm tear in the hull below the waterline. This was patched with a piece of waterproof tape before moving the boat to a convenient landing stage. Kaj then set off into town to buy the necessary provisions.

Day 13 - Departing from our over-night haven on yet another day of ideal wind conditions, we passed the nuclear station of Simpevarp and the start of the archipelago of granite-rock islands that stretched beyond Stockholm. We generally took the marked channel through the maze of islands, but sometimes explored a shorter route, being caught out once, when the boat ended up beached on a huge rock just under the water's surface.



Approaching the nuclear power station at Simpevarp.

No damage was done this time however, with the boat's strongly built keel taking the impact. Pushing the boat back into the water, we skirted round the edge of the rock. The experience made Kaj decide to hand over the helm to me whenever I suggested navigating off-piste. The sailing was idyllic and we stopped at the most beautiful and tranquil of anchorages for the night.



Moored up at Eknö in a perfect isolated anchorage.

Day 14 - This proved to be the most perfect sailing day during our whole trip, with glorious sunshine and a steady following breeze. The spinnaker was hoisted within 10 minutes of setting out, and kept up for most of the day. We sailed on a reach through what must be considered one of the best cruising grounds available in Europe. Not needing to keep to the marked channels, it made progress around and between the many islands a fascinating exploration.



Setting off from Eknö in perfect weather conditions.



The spinnaker was set soon after starting out from our anchorage.

The route was well marked with navigation buoys, but a compass, detailed chart, and a GPS with a screen map marking the present position were also almost essential navigation aids to ensure that a proper course was made. It would otherwise have been only too easy to have got lost in the maze of large and small islands, and not known which route to take.

Spree Lady tied up in an ideally sheltered anchorage on Torrö.



Kaj helming in idyllic cruising grounds with perfect weather.

Rounding the northern tip of the Torrö, there was a small break in the shoreline to indicate a sheltered stopping point. The entrance was protected by some large rocks just visible above the water, but once through these, it turned out to be yet another perfect anchorage for an overnight stay.

Day 15 - The island of Torrö had a fascinating history. A huge cross had been used as a seamark since the middle ages, and a pilot hut, built circa 1650, now provided good facilities for visiting naturalists. The highlight of our stay though, was spotting a Sea-hawk in its nest.

Sailing through the archipelago with the genoa furlled.

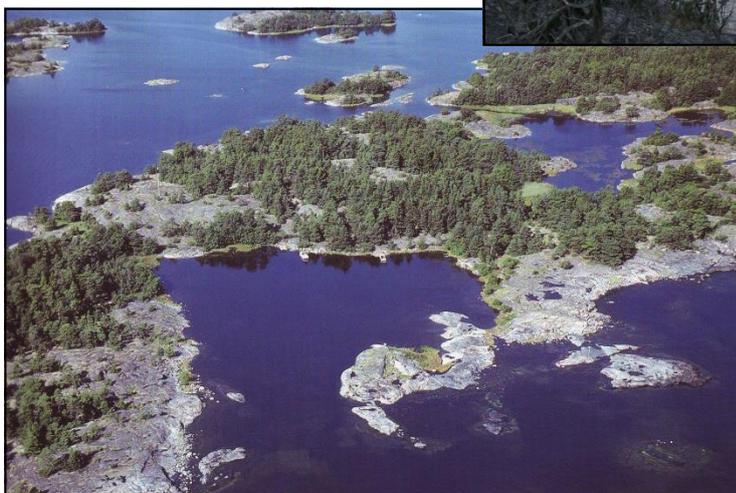


Some low lying rocks can just be seen to the left of the entrance.

We manoeuvred our way around the low-lying rocks of the small inlet and set sail north in good winds but overcast skies. We spent another day negotiating our way through the archipelago, much of the time with an open expanse of water to sail, but also occasionally encountering more interesting narrow passages between the islands.

The wind increased steadily during the afternoon and reaching Lunda, the need to find shelter for the night became paramount. This urgency had led to us opting for the first available mooring place, rather than looking for a more ideal situation. Tucked in around the headland of a small bay had been fine, until the wind backed to leave it exposed.

An aerial shot of Lunda, showing many sheltered mooring spots.



Tied up in a sheltered spot on Lunda, until the wind turned.

Day 16 - The day began with winds far too strong to sail, so we decided to make an exploration of the island. Walking north through woodland and areas of barren rock, we discovered many sheltered inlets that would have provided us with a much more protected anchorage had we sailed a little further.

It was debateable as to whether the wind had dropped significantly on our return, but keen to keep moving after averaging around 30Nm for the last 7 days, we made ready to set off with a reef in the sails. Once into the open water of the Bråviken and the crossing to Oxelösund, the winds increased considerably.

A well marked shallow reef in the middle of the Bråviken.



Kaj helming sailing across the Bråviken in strong, F.7 winds.

We put a 2nd reef in the main and furled in the genoa. Other craft had been out sailing around Lunda, but once out into the Bråviken, there were no other vessels in sight. A well marked shallow reef appeared ahead, with the sight of the waves crashing on the rocks so awesome I didn't think of taking any photos until we were well past.

Another archipelago of assorted islands marked our approach to the peninsula dominated by the large town of Oxelösund. The channel was well marked, so there was no difficulty in setting a course through them. A period of rain started soon after reaching this point and quickly becoming wet and cold, we decided to look for somewhere to stop.

Spree Lady anchored off the rocks at Östra Sackholmen.



Sailing through a period of heavy rain to the next group of islands.

With the town of Oxelösund in the near vicinity however, every landing point had a property development situated immediately behind it, so there was no option other than to continue on to a more remote area. We needed to cross an open stretch of water to Pyran, and on to the small island of Östra Sackholmen before finding a suitably sheltered spot to tie up for the night.

The aerial photo below shows the island of Östra Sackholmen, with many smaller outcrops of rock in its immediate vicinity, which is typical coastline for the whole of the Archipelago. Spree Lady was moored behind the point of the inlet at the top left of the picture.



Day 17 - We set out from Pyran in a light following breeze, but this gradually dropped away to a mere zephyr of wind. We had however, been extremely fortunate to have had such excellent winds for the previous 6 days, enabling us to cover nearly twice the distance that would normally have been possible to cruise during that period of time.

***The entrance to the narrow cut
- visible only when close to it.***



***Kaj using the paddle to assist
the minimal wind power.***

We decided to make Trosa our next stopping point, and the chart showed a channel making a short cut between the mainland and the large island of Hänö.



***Drying out after sailing through some
heavy showers during the day.***

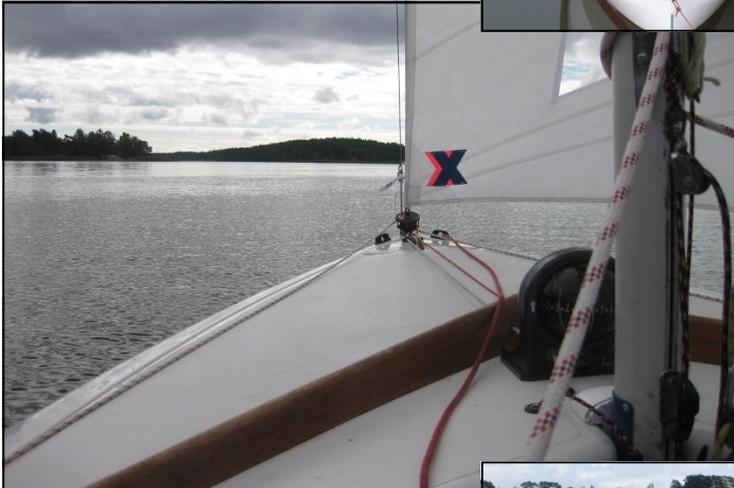
***Power lines blocked our way with the mast up and
we used the jetty to the left to moor the boat.***

The entrance to the narrow cut had been invisible from the main channel, with the high grass on each side forming a continuous vista, and we would have passed on by but for a small motor boat emerging between the high grass. Veering round under motor to the entrance, we found power lines across the cut and decided to tie up to a jetty to use the situation for a comfort stop.

It had been one the least enjoyable days of the trip, with frequent showers and light or no wind requiring the outboard to be pressed into service, so it had been a considerable relief to finally tie up at Trosa.

Day 18 - The previous evening, we had made the most of the luxury of the shower and sauna available, followed by an excellent meal at the adjacent cafeteria, and we returned to the café the next morning to make the most of a good breakfast. We headed into town to re-stock our supplies, before preparing the boat for the next day's sail.

Sailing out of Trosa in light winds and overcast skies.



Tied up in a vacant sheltered mooring spot at Trosa.

Sailing out of the harbour past a yacht flying the British ensign, the skipper remarked that he had once owned a Wayfarer . and was even able to recall its sail number. The wind was light and the sky overcast as we made our way down the main channel, this time following the marks and passing north of Hänö.

We entered a large open expanse of water that gave the appearance of being surrounded by land, the islands blending into each other such that the gaps between them were not visible. Nearly in the middle was an unusual ice-cream man . it made for a much more interesting mark than the standard buoy!

Looking out across the bay of Svrdsfjärden toward Krokskär



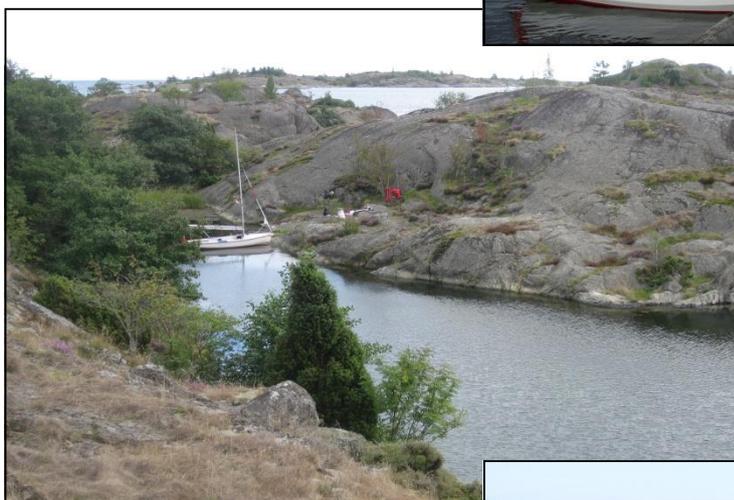
The 'ice-cream man' was a novel way to mark a shallow rock.



As with any other day, we had only vague plans as to where we might stop at the end of the day. Our aim this day had been to cross the 10Nm bay of Svrdsfjärden. The wind strength increased steadily during the afternoon requiring the sails to be reefed. Approaching the headland at Krokskär, it became essential to seek shelter.

With no opportunity to consult a chart or GPS in the near gale winds, a small hamlet appearing ahead looked the best place to stop and check out possible options. Tying up at a convenient landing stage for nearby houses, Kaj asked a lady sitting on a veranda for a suitable place to stop and was advised that an adjacent island would be ideal.

Moored in a narrow inlet on a small island opposite Krokskär.

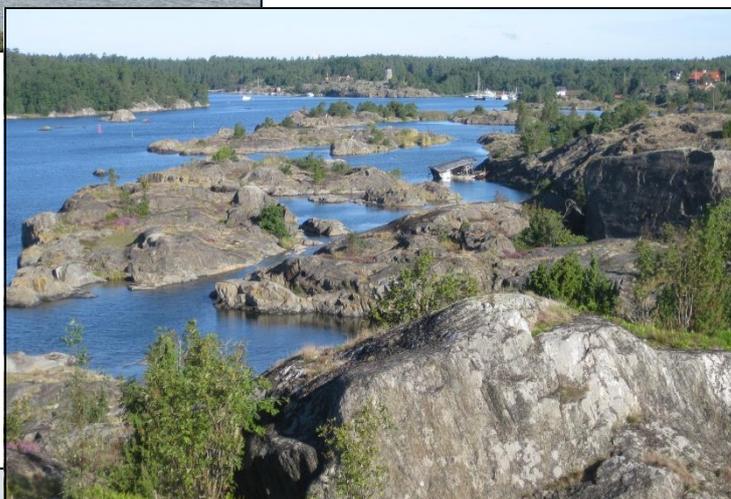


Tied up to a jetty on Krokskär to seek guidance on where to stay.

Checking out the position on the chart before setting sail, we crossed the short distance north to the island to find the most perfect anchorage possible, since it offered complete protection from every wind direction. On exploring the island, we found we were not in fact, totally alone on the island.

We managed to startle a deer, which tried to keep a respectable distance from us. There were settlements on the outlying islands to the south, which were well served by a regular ferry service, though this traffic did not disturb us during a very peaceful night.

Kaj on the helm across the next stretch of open water.



Looking back toward the mainland from our mooring.

Day 19 - A short stretch of open water to the next headland lay ahead before turning north again to reach our final destination. We passed a group of canoeists, which was one of the few times we had encountered any other small craft. With yet another fine day and a good wind, we rounded the point to set a course for Nynäshamn.

With Nynäshamn - or New Harbour as Kaj said it translated to - in sight, we were greeted by the spectacle of a huge yacht regatta, the fleet well spread out for it to be evident the course marks were some of the off-shore islands. We emerged into an area of open water after passing Nynäshamn, which was naturally protected by an adjacent island.

Notices lined the shores of most islands prohibiting landing.

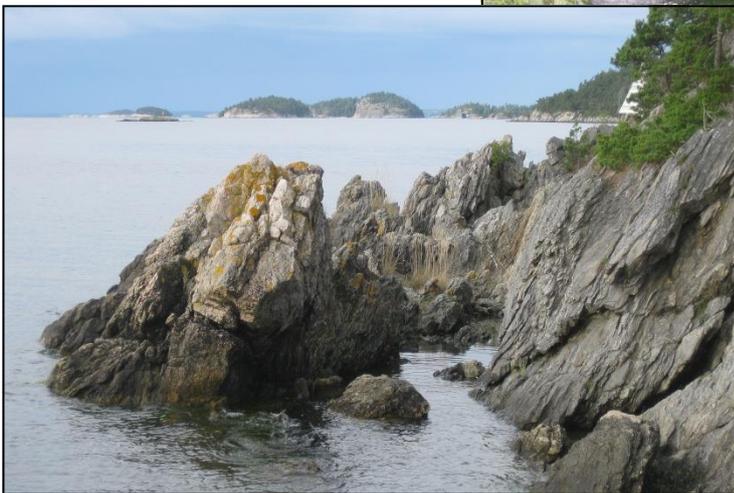


Part of the large fleet of yachts taking part in a big regatta.

Having sailed the area previously, Kaj informed me that the next part of the coast was designated as a military area, and we needed to keep to the main channels, with it being prohibited to land on any of the islands. Indeed, this was clearly indicated by prominent signs near any possible landing point.

It became evident that we would not clear the area before needing to stop for the night, and to Kaj's initial consternation, I selected a suitable small pebble beach on an island near Muskö to partially pull the boat up for an overnight stop, since it had no prohibited landing sign.

The view looking back on our route with sharp rocks to avoid!



Spree Lady at anchor on a stony beach on Gubbholmen.

Kaj's concern and apprehension about our presence on the island, leading to our immediate arrest, was quelled by a notice stating the island was now a public amenity area! Suitably reassured, we set out for an exploration of the shoreline and Kaj pointed out the remains of a fort King Gustav III built before his war with the Russians of 1789-90.

Day 20 - We set out in a light breeze the next day, quite amazed by the astonishing progress we had made so far on the trip. After an hour of good sailing the wind died sufficiently for our passage to need assistance with a paddle. It was however a good, bright day, which was made none the less enjoyable by our slow speed.

The outboard being used to maintain some forward speed.



Kaj using the paddle to assist our passage in the lightest of wind.

The wind finally dropped to almost nothing, and it proved necessary to use the outboard to assist the main-sail. The motor is relatively quiet, so that at a slow speed, it purred along nicely without totally spoiling the tranquillity of our day. It enabled us to continue our passage north-eastwards towards Dalarö.

Threading our way through the well marked route between the islands, we emerged from a channel to find a picture-postcard view of Dalarö ahead, the wind by this time having picked up sufficiently to sail, rather than motor. We used our stop-over in the town to buy more provisions.

Tied off between 2 sets of rocks providing easy access to shore.



Approaching Dalarö with the wind beginning to pick up.

The increasing on-shore wind made the harbour mooring too exposed to stay in the town for the night, so we headed off in search of somewhere offering us better shelter from the prevailing winds. We reached the island of Måbärsskär, and secured the boat between rocks, which gave us protection from the wind and the wash from passing motorboats.

Day 21 - Having been incredibly lucky with the wind direction since the third day out from our start at Höllviken, it finally turned against us and blew from a more northerly direction for our penultimate day's sail. Sailing close-hauled through the mass of islands to the east of Stockholm became a lot more demanding.

Anchored off the shoreline on the island of Gällnö.



Passing the main passage into the city of Stockholm.

Turning north-west after rounding the island of Skarpö, we at last had an easier sail and after a short while reached the channel I had previously sailed on my Stockholm to Helsinki trip, thereby linking up the complete route in Scandinavia. We reached the island of Gällnö, and decided to moor up for the night.

Day 22 - Waking up to a crisp, misty and windless morning, we lit a fire to warm our morning spirits. The first of the regular ferry services passed by a little later, this one slowing to reduce its wake. The next went through at full speed, causing us great difficulties in fending Spree Lady off our stepping stone rocks.

Kaj on the helm the boat under motor towards Åkersberga.



A typical fast ferry providing a service to the outlying islands.

There was only a relatively short distance to cover on this final day, so we took our time to pack the boat for the last time on this longest, and most memorable cruise I had yet completed. We had hoped the wind might pick up to allow us to sail the last few miles to our final destination of Åkersberga, but it was not to be, and we motored the rest of the way.

There were 3 marinas marked on the chart at Åkersberga. We called in at the first of these, since it was also nearest the rail station I would need to use get back to Malmo. Kaj asked someone working on their boat if it was OK to tie up, and was informed that all 3 marinas were private clubs, and we wouldn't be allowed to moor up for the night at any of them! He returned somewhat dejected to report the news. Not giving up that easily, I set off for the marina we had launched the boats from for our trip to Helsinki. Tying up to a side-walk, we got out a small flask of whisky in order to celebrate the successful finish of our cruise.



Celebrating our arrival at Åkersberga.

A few moments later, the marina manager came along to enquire about our presence, and rather than telling us that there was no room at the inn welcomed us with the greatest hospitality possible. We were given a key to use the clubhouse whenever we wished, and told it was no problem staying at our present mooring for the few days it would take for me to get back to Malmo to pick up my car and trailer, before driving back to Åkersberga in order to load up the boat and return home. It was the most gracious of offers from the Trälhävets Båtklubb, and very much appreciated.

Ralph Roberts W 9885

Footnote from Kaj:

Our trip was made in 22 days, having sailed more than 400 Nm. Regarding the fact that we sailed mainly in the afternoon, generally no more than 6 hours a day and waited two days for a weather change, we did the trip quite fast, with our average sailing speed some days exceeding 5 knots.

There are several reasons why the Wayfarer dinghy functions so well in many different conditions. The most important seems to be that Ian Proctor designed the Wayfarer as a sturdy all-round dinghy from the beginning, and a very positive detail for cruising is the spacious, well designed cockpit with its self draining system. Water from any rain or spray never stayed in the cockpit during our trip - and only happened sometimes after stopping when we had forgotten to close the bailers in time. The reefing system on Spree Lady also functioned very well, with the boat well behaved, even under fully reefed main alone.

Why should anyone cruise long distances in a small sailing dinghy? A simple answer could perhaps be that it's the only way to experience narrow, shallow waters like the archipelago or sandy/stony beaches, without preferring to row or paddle. Another answer could be that it is fun to helm such a sensitive sailing dinghy and to have the dynamic option to haul the whole unit ashore should a gale be encountered.

Kaj Landell, Associate member of UKWA, Helsinki, Finland