



Editorial

Pawl Hewson

So, while all the world's attention is drawn to the kayaker who was "eaten" by a whale¹, we are lucky this month that Terry Calcott has started a new set of articles on the wildlife we see in Plymouth Sound. This month, we have an account of the seals we love to see in the Sound on page 3.

Also note that the Introductory Courses are starting to be advertised, please do share this with anyone you know who might be interested; see Sarah Carlson's materials on page 2.

We're still short on human new members to introduce on page 5. Please do consider sending a few words about yourself (ideally with a photo): newsletter@ppca-canoe-club.org.uk if you have joined recently, for some vague definition of "recently".

This month, Adam Coulson has taken logged the club's activities, which means a much more detailed and informative chronicle is presented on page 6.

Finally, if anyone understands what's going on in this photo, please let me know (caption

competition anyone).



As usual, comments, questions, material to include in future editions: newsletter@ppca-canoe-club.org.uk. If anyone wants to write something about the forthcoming Women's Sea Kayaking Festival that might be particularly interesting.

¹The whale presumably just objected to inflatable kayaks





New Introductory Course Programme

Sarah Carlson



Come and Try Kayaking

A day Introductory Course

Saturday 26th April - 09:30-15:30

May 24th

June 21st

July 19th

August 23rd

September 6th

Boats and
equipment
all provided

Cost : £65 with 50% discount on joining fees
within a month

enquiries : email:

intro@ppca-canoe-club.org.uk

Apply via website.



@port_of_plymouth_canoe_club

www.pzca-canoe-club.org.uk



Plymouth Sound Wildlife 1#

Terry Calcott

The Atlantic Grey Seal (*Halichoerus grypus*)



Figure 1: Grey Seals hauled out at Drakes Island

I have been contributing articles to the club newsletter for many years now. Most recently writing a series of short articles about the history of Plymouth Sound, after 30 articles it is becoming increasingly difficult to come up with new ideas. Being keen to carry on putting something into print and supporting the newsletter I am going to do a similar series

about Plymouth Sound but covering the wildlife we see while out paddling in our backyard.

We are fortunate to have regular sightings of numerous animals during our local paddles around the Sound. Many are common and well known but occasionally a few rare and infrequent visitors make an appearance. These



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monthly articles will highlight a different animal each month, with a short snippet of information and a few photos. As the title says the first snippet is about one of my favourite's the Atlantic Grey Seal. On most of the club paddles, the familiar shout of "seal" will be shouted by someone. This will almost certainly be a Grey Seal.

The Grey Seal is the larger of the two UK species. Easily distinguished, being much larger than the Common Seal and having a longer head, Roman nose and parallel nostrils. The scientific Latin name means "hook nosed sea pig".

Although there are no large seal colonies in the Sound there are several lone seals spotted all year round. In recent years there has been a small group of seals at Drakes Island You are likely to see seals in the water almost anywhere in the Sound. They do haul out onto rocks usually around Drakes Island.



Figure 2: Grey Seals hauled out at Drakes Island

Bulls (males) are around 2 metres long and weighing up to 300kg. The cows (females) are smaller. Recently there has been a large Bull seal

who likes to haul out near the breakwater lighthouse and is often seen in the water there.



Figure 3: Grey Seal off Picklecombe

The UK is home to over 40% of the world population of Grey Seals. Grey Seals have finely tuned senses using smell, hearing, sight and touch. I know as paddlers we are respectful to wildlife and follow the code of conduct when coming across seals when out paddling. It is a wonderful experience to sit and watch them from a distance. Although on occasions they can be inquisitive, especially the juveniles who may come closer for a look at our kayaks.



Welcome new members

Refreshed Deck Line



Figure 4: Derek the Deck Line

For the second month running, nobody volunteered a new member introduction this month; and I'm sure I asked a few people in person who were too polite to tell me it was all a bad idea. I do understand people not

being too keen to submit a photo, and if you don't want to submit a photo that's fine. But I've seen other clubs do this and I think it's a good way of understanding our club.

Therefore, this month I'm going to introduce you to a deck line that has been added to a boat that paddles with the PPCA fleet occasionally. It's also symbolic of the knots you get into trying to fill a piece of newsletter.

Please, rather than make stuff up it would be great to say something about recently joined paddlers. If you've joined recently (like, in the last 12 months) could you send a few words about yourself and (ideally, but entirely optionally) a photo to: newsletter@ppca-canoe-club.org.uk

Exchange and Mart

Some retailers offer a discount to our members: details are on the PPCA website



Kayaking Chronicle

Adam Coulson



From Joy Ashford's Facebook: 15th January Paddle

Warm Wet events

- 15th December Pool Session



- 29th December Pool Session (Sea Kayaks)

Wet events

- 4th January Being the first Saturday of the month there was due to be both a sea kayak paddle and a short recreational paddle. Being the first Saturday in January it was wintry, wet and windy which meant that both were cancelled.

- 5th January Well with plenty of rain at least there should be a white water trip. However, it rained all night leading to very high river levels which were way above the club remit so this was cancelled also. Hoping no more "no paddle" weekends.



- 11th January Clive led a group of 10 in a mixture of GL and Sea Kayaks out across Jennycliffe Bay to Bovisand and along to the East end of the breakwater. This feature of Plymouth Sound was serving a purpose today and some of the group bounced long the outside and others glided along the inside to meet up



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again at the lighthouse. From here we enjoyed a following sea across to Picklecombe and along the coast to Barn Pool for a lunch stop at Mount Edgecumbe. A short afternoon crossing took us back to Mountbatten

- 12th January Pete led 8 of us on a slightly bony paddle down the Walkham from Magpie Bridge and then the slightly more watery Tavy to Denham Bridge. With the low levels the “Slot and Drop” was a more challenging drop and the surf wave proved really rather retentive. What fun!



- 18th January Andy proved as popular as ever and got a group of 18 on the water on this slightly grey January day
- 19th January It hasn't really rained for more than a week so river levels are low. However the Lower Dart was holding up for Phil to lead a small group down from Holne to Buckfastleigh



- 25 th January Adam led 9 paddlers from Mountbatten at 10:00, but only returned 8 in the afternoon, having lost one to Clive's short paddle group already out. We paddled out to the cage via Bovisand wall where a big swell was creating some interesting sea conditions. The whole group then buddied up to paddle across the seaward side of the breakwater and toward Pier Cellars before picking our way along in the sheltered water to

Penlee Point. A few then popped around the corner to experience some larger swell before returning to the calmer waters of Cawsand Bay for lunch. We marked the coming Burns night with some tablet (thanks Karen) and a bit of pipe music (thanks Paul). A following sea assisted us back to Mountbatten.



From Lesley Hitchen's Facebook

- 26th January Clive led Julian, Big Al and Louis down the loop. There was much whooping and hollering! The level was quite low as we started but was gradually rising. Looking at the gauges, it all went a bit mad in the afternoon, but we were safely home by then.

5.1 Dry Events

- Committee Meeting



The PPCA Committee

PPCA is a friendly Club, and we'd love to hear from you!

The Club is run by a committee of unpaid volunteers, most of which work full-time. Contact details are listed below. For non-urgent enquiries, please email the person you require rather than telephoning.

If you are new to paddlesport or thinking of taking it up then please contact our Intro Coordinator who can point you in the right direction. Our Intro Coordinator can also answer any questions you may have about our Club, courses on offer etc, drop them an email at intro@ppca-canoe-club.org.uk

Chair	Mark Perry	chair@ppca-canoe-club.org.uk
Vice-Chair	Vacant	vchair@ppca-canoe-club.org.uk
Club Leader	Adam Coulson	leader@ppca-canoe-club.org.uk
Assistant Club Leader	Vacant	acleader@ppca-canoe-club.org.uk
Club Secretary	Jackie Perry	secretary@ppca-canoe-club.org.uk
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Welfare Officer	Alan Ede	welfare@ppca-canoe-club.org.uk
Intro Course Coordinator	Lesley Hitchen	intro@ppca-canoe-club.org.uk
Treasurer	Julian Miles	treasurer@ppca-canoe-club.org.uk
Equipment Officer	Pete Anderson	equipment@ppca-canoe-club.org.uk
Publicity Officer	Sarah Carlson	publicity@ppca-canoe-club.org.uk
Youth Development Officer	Jane Hitchings	youth@ppca-canoe-club.org.uk
Health and Safety Officer	Damean Miller	safety@ppca-canoe-club.org.uk
Club President	Clive Ashford	president@ppca-canoe-club.org.uk

Thank you to everyone who contributed material, especially the material we just stole from Facebook.

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