



South West Sea Kayaking

ISLE OF WIGHT TO THE SEVERN ESTUARY

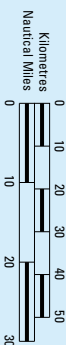


Mark Rainsley

2ND EDITION



Isles of Scilly



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Mark Rainsley

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Maps by Bute Cartographic.

Foreword



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Having kayaked the entire coastline of the UK and Ireland I can say with some confidence that the South West offers the paddler some of the finest scenery to be found anywhere on our shores. The appeal goes beyond the physical beauty of this uniquely diverse section of coast. There is something spiritual about the experience; as if the myths and legends allow us to escape from the modern world, the distant horizons giving a sense of freedom and the movement of tide and wave provide an injection of youthful energy. Even though I now live thousands of miles away, the south-west of Britain is, and always will be, my home.

The magical Penwith peninsula of Cornwall is perhaps most famous as a world-class sea kayaking destination and whilst it has a very special place in my heart there are many other highlights. Dorset is a county of surprising contrast: the genteel serenity of Christchurch, the intriguing Jurassic coast and the wild expanse of Chesil Beach. Charming Lyme Regis was the venue for the start of my first kayak journey around the peninsula and is one of my favourite seaside towns. Devon's divided shoreline is characterized by the two moors that dominate the view inland. Dartmoor feeds the rivers that rush down its flanks before flowing more gracefully through the wooded hills of the South Hams and entering the English Channel via some of the most pristine estuaries you will find anywhere. The towering cliffs of the North Devon coast of Exmoor give way to the rolling hills and marshland of Somerset. But don't be fooled by the softer landscape. The grey waters of the Bristol Channel can be ferocious!

I have always been fascinated by islands, by the desire to circumnavigate. To start where you finish gives you a sense of completeness. The islands of the south-west of Britain may not be as prolific as those on the west coast of Scotland or Ireland but they are very special. If you could imagine your ideal sea kayaking destination: beautiful scenery, spectacular wildlife, great weather and lots of good pubs then the Isles of Scilly have it all in abundance. Lundy is a jewel, sparkling in the waters of the Celtic Sea, its charm irresistible but do check the weather as this island has a habit of welcoming you but being reluctant to let you leave.

South West Sea Kayaking is much more than a guide book. It is a monument to the author's yearning for discovery, his determination to complete a project and his generosity in wanting to share his knowledge with others. As well as being full of indispensable information to make your journey by kayak safer and more enjoyable this beautifully written book is resplendent with the finest images that together will inspire you to explore this incredible coastline for yourself.

Sean Morley



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Coastal Access in South West England

Access to the outdoors in England is becoming increasingly encouraged (unless of course you wish to enjoy your fresh water river heritage by kayak, Heaven forbid) and the Countryside and Rights of Way Act (CRoW, 2000) has brought improved access to many areas of coastal land. Access problems are rarely encountered whilst sea kayaking. All of the routes in this book start and finish at beaches or harbours where public access to the foreshore is already established.

Areas of the coast between the high and low water mark are often described as 'foreshore' and most of this is owned by the Crown Estate. The Crown Estate does not normally restrict access to the foreshore. However, one unfortunate quirk of the South West is that the owners of several coastal islands attempt to deter or restrict landing by kayak, including some islands managed as public access nature reserves!

Access on the sea is restricted only in rare and extreme cases and information is given by the Coastguard during regular maritime safety information broadcasts. Access is frequently restricted in the vicinity of military firing ranges. These areas are usually patrolled by Ministry of Defence staff. Further information and firing times can always be obtained from the Coastguard.

At busy ports like Poole, Plymouth and Falmouth, advice should be sought from the harbour authority, either by VHF or mobile phone, before entering or crossing harbour entrances.

The south-west coast enjoys excellent public access due to a series of public footpaths. These include the 1,008km South West Coast Path National Trail extending between Poole and Minehead, the Isle of Wight Coastal Path, the West Somerset Coast Path and The Severn Way.

Further information can be obtained from www.countrysideaccess.gov.uk.

RESPECT THE INTERESTS OF OTHER PEOPLE

Acting with courtesy, consideration and awareness is essential. If you are exercising access rights, make sure that you respect the privacy, safety and livelihood of those living and working in the outdoors, and the needs of other people enjoying the outdoors. Maybe even jet skiers.

CARE FOR THE ENVIRONMENT

Sea kayakers are privileged to access remote places that others cannot. Many of these places have sensitive plant, animal and bird life. Be aware of and respect landing restrictions around nature reserves. Look after the places you visit, enjoy the land and leave it as you found it.

Natural England (www.naturalengland.org.uk) has created www.natureonthemap.org.uk, a source of incredibly detailed maps outlining protected habitats and sites. The Marine Conservation Society (www.mcsuk.org) offer advice on how to act appropriately around marine wildlife.

WILD CAMPING

This guide provides information on many commercial campsites. Although most are pleasant places, treat anything with 'Holiday Park' in the title with caution, if you value solitude and silence.

This author is happy to admit that he almost always camps 'wild' along the south-west coast, and has always been able to find an appropriate spot. Wild camping provides a special experience and forms an integral part of sea kayaking. There is no legally enshrined right to camp on the



English coast, and areas in the South West that *obviously* lend themselves to wild camping for sea kayakers are few and far between. Large groups requiring a roaring campfire and hearty sing-along are simply in the wrong region (and century?). There is however an established tradition of discreet wild camping being tolerated alongside the South West Coast Path for single tents and single nights, with permission sought from the farmer. The *Complete Guide*, published annually by the SWCP Association (www.swcp.org.uk), offers useful advice in this respect and is also a useful source of information on coastal bus and rail links.

If you decide to include a wild camp in your journey plans, choose a location away from dwellings and roads. Arrive late and do not pitch your tent until dusk. You should take down your tent early the following morning. “*Leave nothing but footprints and take nothing but photographs.*”

WARNING

Sea kayaking is inherently a potentially dangerous sport. The sea is one of the most committing and unforgiving environments. Conditions can change quickly and dramatically on the sea. When planning to venture out on any of the trips described in this book, ensure that your knowledge, experience, ability and judgement are appropriate to the seriousness of the trip. The author recommends acquiring appropriate training and advice from experienced and qualified individuals.

The information in this book has been thoroughly researched; however the author can take no responsibility if tidal times differ or if the information supplied is not sufficient to negotiate the conditions experienced on the day. The outdoors cannot be made risk-free and you should plan and act with care at all times for your own safety and that of others. The decision on whether to go out sea kayaking or not, and any consequences arising from that decision, remain yours and yours alone.

How to Use the Guide

To use the guide you will need an up-to-date tide timetable for the relevant area, the appropriate Ordnance Survey maps and the knowledge to use them. Unlike many inshore journeys in the UK, an Admiralty Tidal Stream Atlas is an important source of information for planning journeys around the south-west coast; the tides here are often strong!

Each of the fifty trip chapters is set out into six sections:

Tidal & Route Information - This is designed as a quick reference for all the 'must know' information on which to plan the trip.

Introduction - This is designed to give the reader a brief overview of what to expect from the trip and what the appetite.

Description - This provides further detail and information on the trip including the coastline, launching/landing points, the wildlife and environment, historical information and places of interest to visit.

Tide & Weather - Offering further tidal information and how best to plan the trip which takes the tides, weather and local knowledge into consideration.

Map of Route - This provides a visual outline of the route's start/finish points, landing places, points of interest and tidal information.

Additional Information - This section provides further information (including Admiralty Charts and other useful maps) that will complement the trip, or be of interest if in the local area.

Using the Tidal & Route Information

Each route begins with an overview of pertinent details beginning with the following information: grade of difficulty, trip name, route symbols, and trip number.



Grade A | Relatively easy landings with escape routes easily available. Offering relative shelter from extreme conditions and ocean swell. Some tidal movement may be found, but easy to predict with no major tidal races or overfalls.



Grade B | Some awkward landings and sections of coastline with no escape routes should be expected. Tidal movement, tidal races, overfalls, crossings, ocean swell and surf may be found on these trips. They will also be exposed to the weather and associated conditions.



Grade C | These trips will have difficult landings and will have no escape routes for long sections of the trip. Fast tidal movement, tidal races, overfalls, extended crossings, ocean swell and surf will be found on all these trips. They will be very exposed to the weather and conditions, therefore require detailed planning and paddlers to be competent in rough water conditions. With this considered, the journey may require good conditions for the trip to be viable.

CIRCUMNAVIGATION

COASTAL PADDLING

SHELTERED

OPEN SEA CROSSING

NO LANDING ZONES

STRONG TIDAL EFFECTS

PORTAGE NECESSARY

VEHICLE SHUTTLE

FERRY SHUTTLE

ROUTE SYMBOLS



Distance	Total distance for the trip.
OS Sheet	Number of Ordnance Survey 1:50,000 Landranger map required.
Tidal Port	The port for which tide timetables will be required to work out the tidal streams.
Start	△ map symbol, name and six-figure grid reference of starting point.
Finish	○ map symbol, name and six-figure grid reference of finishing point.
HW/LW	The high and/or low water time difference between local ports nearest to the trip and the tidal port.
Tidal Times	Location or area of tidal stream movement, the direction to which the tidal stream flows and the time it starts flowing in relation to the tidal port high water.
Max Rate Sp	The areas in which the tidal streams are fastest and the maximum speed in knots attained on the average spring tide.
Coastguard	Name of the relevant Coastguard Station.

MAP SYMBOLS



start & alternative start



finish & alternative finish



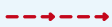
waypoint



possible escape



portage



described route



alternative route



tidal stream direction

-0520 HW

time relative to Tidal Port HW

7kn Sp

Max Rate at Springs



major counter-current



areas of counter-currents / eddies



areas of rough water / overfalls



lighthouse & light



lifeboat

lifeboat station



NCI

Coastwatch lookout (NCI)



ferry, passenger & car



campsite



bird reserve



town / buildings

Prohibited
Zone

prohibited area



Site of Special Scientific Interest



About the Author

Mark Rainsley

Over 20 years ago, Mark was the only Scout in his troop to capsize and swim when they tried kayaking. Undismayed, he enrolled for an ‘intro to whitewater’ course run by Franco (of Pesda Press), who threw him upside-down in his kayak over a Welsh waterfall. Mark has since paddled whitewater in over twenty countries on six continents and made first descents. He also sits on the BCU Expeditions Committee and created the most popular UK paddling media, the UK Rivers and UK Sea Kayak websites. Unfortunately, the humiliating wipe-outs and swims continue.

Mark grew up near Britain’s most inland point. For this reason, the sea has always retained a special allure for him, whilst retaining its air of mystery. After moving to the coast, Mark addressed this by buying a sea kayak and paddling solo around the South West. This 1997 paddle still ranks among his most cherished experiences. He has since sea paddled fanatically and has evangelically converted many other whitewater paddlers.

Acknowledgements

The author would like to express his thanks to all those who assisted in producing and updating this book, not all of whom can be named here.

Special thanks to my favourite paddling partner, my lovely wife Heather.

Über-sea kayaker Sean Morley shared his love of the region with us in the foreword. AS Watersports in Exeter generously hosted a launch party for the book.

Numerous paddlers contributed photos or local knowledge, including John Bagby, Steve Barraud, Graham Beckram, Nick Benny, Graham Bland, Barbara Browning, Eurion Brown, Simon Burke, Owen Burson, Jonathan Crawford, Graham Dennison, Chris Dew, Liz Garnett, John Gilmour, Ian Hackworthy, Anne and Paul Hanson, Dennis Healey, Dillon Hughes, Chris Jones, Monika Lloyd-Burton, Cailean Macleod, Tim Padfield, David Parker, Chris Peat, James Riggs, Duncan Smith, Alan Trevarton and Richard Uren.

Finally, thanks to Franco Ferrero (publisher) and Peter Wood (design) at Pesda Press, and Don Williams of Bute Cartographic (maps). Franco has been an inspiring and supportive editor, seemingly incapable of being fazed by anything at all.

Photographs

All photographs by Mark Rainsley, except where acknowledged in the captions.



The Isles of Scilly

An introduction

“Arguably the most exotic place in all of the British Isles” - Martin Clunes, Islands of Britain. The Isles of Scilly are a unique environment. Partly a piece of England, partly a piece of the Atlantic. Legend tells that the Isles are the sunken remnants of the Arthurian Kingdom of Lyonesse. Scientists have a less colourful theory, that the archipelago is an extension to Cornwall that has been drowned by rising sea levels since the last Ice Age. Picture Dartmoor, with only the craggy tors peeking above the water ... with Caribbean beaches.

The name ‘Scilly’ derives from ‘Sully’ meaning Sun Isles. The islands are 40km WSW of Land’s End and measure a tiddly 16km by 10km. There are about 100 islands and rocks, of which six are inhabited. The total land area is a mere 6.25 sq miles at HW and the population numbers just 2,000, three quarters of whom live on the island of St Mary’s.

Although the area is small, the variety is great and kayakers will be captivated. Each of the main islands has its own character and interest. They cluster around a central lagoon which permits sheltered island hopping in most weathers. On the other hand, the open Atlantic is just a few miles away, characterised by impressive reefs and lighthouses offering real exposure. If this isn’t challenging enough, there is of course the paddle out from the mainland.

Environment

Most of the Isles of Scilly belong to the Duchy of Cornwall, although the uninhabited islands are leased to the Isles of Scilly Wildlife Trust. The entire area is designated as Heritage Coast and encompassed by a Marine Park, as well as being a Special Area of Conservation and Britain’s smallest Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. This level of environmental protection and management has implications for paddlers. Wild camping is not permitted, and even landing is not permitted on certain islands to protect nesting birds. Ordnance Survey Explorer Map 101 shows the protected islands. Use discretion and common sense in interpreting these restrictions.

Tide and weather

Tide streams among the Isles of Scilly rarely reach more than 2 knots on exposed fringes and headlands. The Atlantic streams approach the Isles from a different direction at each hour of the tidal cycle, rotating right around clockwise in twelve hours. Inshore, tidal streams tend to hug the coast, flowing into bays at one end and out at the other. Offshore, streams flow in a more direct line up and down channels. Calculating when and where tides will rise, fall or flow involves a degree of luck and flaw. Complex and often unpredictable local currents are further confused by the effects of high or low pressure. Hence, the tidal data in this chapter should be treated as a guide only.

The inter-tidal zone is vast, huge areas of sand and rock drying out at low tide. Channels between islands disappear (don’t trust that OS map!) and some trips become more sheltered at low tide when reefs shut out the Atlantic swells.





Tresco's awesome beaches - Isles of Scilly



Scilly is famous for year-round mild temperatures, humid air and of course sunshine.

Background reading

Isles of Scilly Pilot, Robin Brandon, Imray 1994, ISBN 0-85288-411-7

The Isles of Scilly, Rosemary Parslow, Collins 2007, ISBN 0002201518

Secret Nature of the Isles of Scilly, Andrew Cooper, Green Books 2006, ISBN 1-90399-851-4

Walking in the Isles of Scilly, Paddy Dillon, Cicerone 2009, ISBN 1852845864

Scilly's Wildlife Heritage, Adrian Spalding and Pat Sargent, Twelveheads 2000, ISBN 0906294-44-4

Scilly's Archaeological Heritage, Jeanette Radcliffe, Twelveheads 2003, ISBN 0-906294-53-3

Shell Channel Pilot, Tom Cunliffe, Imray 2009, ISBN 1846231841

West Country Cruising Companion, Mark Fishwick, John Wiley & Sons 2008, ISBN 0470985690

Further information

www.ios-wildlifetrust.org.uk – Isles of Scilly Wildlife Trust.

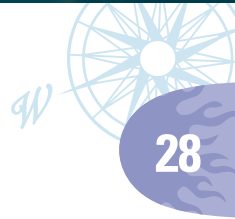
www.ios-aonb.org.uk – Isles of Scilly AONB.

Tel. 01720 424031 / www.simplyscilly.co.uk – Tourist Information.

Tel. 0845 7105555 / www.ios-travel.co.uk – The Isle of Scilly Steamship Company.



The Scilly Crossing



28

No. 28 | Grade C | 42km | OS Sheet 203

Tidal Ports Plymouth and Dover

Start  Sennen Cove (351 264)

Finish  Great Ganilly (948 144)

HW/LW HW Great Ganilly is 55 minutes before HW Plymouth.

Tidal times Around Land's End and Longships, streams often flow contrary to the offshore streams. Inshore at Land's End, the N going stream begins 2 hours and 40 minutes after HW Plymouth and flows for about 9 hours 30 minutes. A stream flowing south past Land's End begins 20 minutes before HW Plymouth and flows for 3 hours. Offshore, tide flows weaken and rotate in direction, but tend towards ENE beginning 3 hours after HW Dover, and tend towards WSW 3 hours before HW Dover.

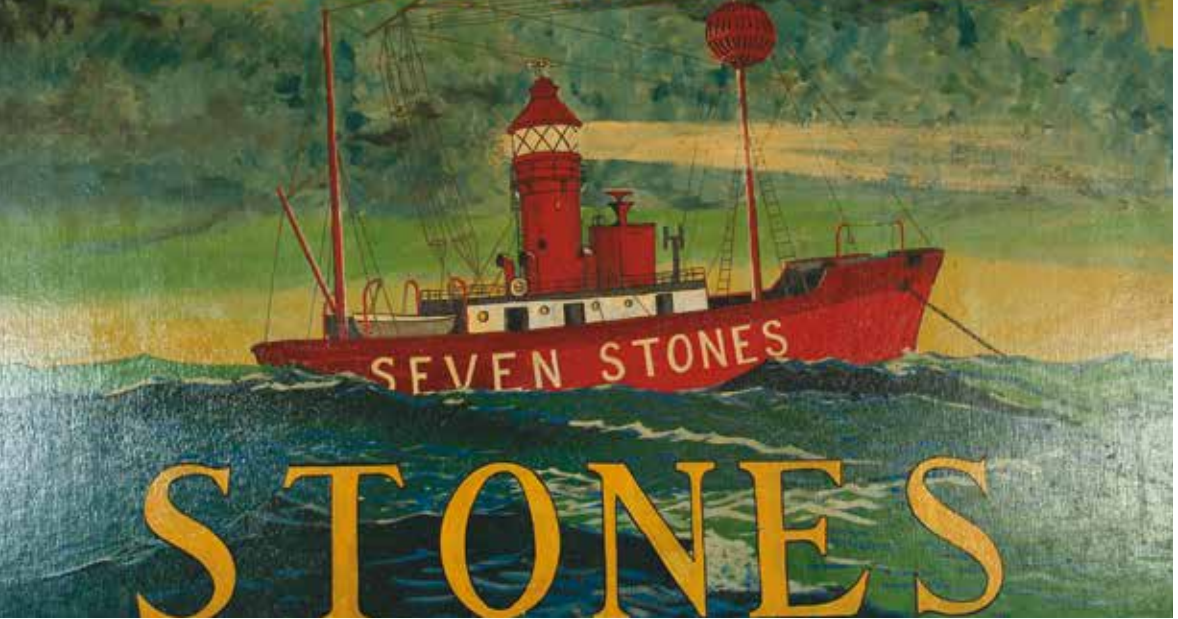
Max Rate Sp Rates around Land's End and Longships reach 4.2 knots. Further offshore, they weaken and do not exceed 1 knot.

Coastguard Falmouth, tel. 01326 317575, VHF weather 0110 UT

Introduction

The 'Longships' are the rocks offshore of Land's End. Imagining its lighthouse as a tall mast, this extensive reef can certainly give the impression of a Viking flotilla when viewed from shore

THE SEVEN



28

The Scilly Crossing

with the sun setting into the Atlantic. Much further out, the lights of the Isles of Scilly twinkle and beckon. Their appearance from Land's End is best described by novelist John Fowles: *'There they float, an eternal stone Armada of over a hundred ships'*.

With the right conditions, paddling out into the west is irresistible.

Description

Sennen Cove's harbour is described in Route 33. Passing the end of the breakwater, pick a path past the surf on Tribbens reef and paddle out into the tidal stream. You have just left the shores of England behind!

The Longships reef stretches for about 250m north and south of the lighthouse and rewards close exploration. A visit at low tide will obviously give you more to look at. Numerous tide races form around and between the sharp rocks and you share this aquatic playground with seals galore, sunbathing, sleeping, fishing, swimming, occasionally all at once. The lighthouse itself is the second on Longships, the 1795 original having been replaced in 1873 by the current 43m tower. A keeper of the first lighthouse had his hair turn white in a single stormy night, during which the lantern was smashed.

Pleasant as Longships is, your day has barely begun. During the author's most recent crossing (2009), he found time to calculate that the 48km from Sennen to St Martin's campsite required 27,000 paddle strokes.

The shortest distance between Sennen Cove and the Isles of Scilly is 42km, bringing you to Great Ganilly in the Eastern Isles (see route 30). Given that the Isles of Scilly present a target

just 10km wide, some pre-planning is a good idea. Consider a GPS for back-up. You may not see your destination for much of the distance and much of the pleasure of the crossing comes from seeing empty seas stretching to the horizon all around.

That said, there is a surprising amount to see between Longships and Great Ganilly. Encountering dolphins, porpoise, basking sharks or sunfish is pretty much a certainty. The Traffic Separation Scheme (TSS) will certainly give you something to look at. The TSS crosses the middle third of your voyage, a massive maritime motorway. The two 'lanes' that you cross (north going, then south going) are each 4.5km wide with a 3km 'central reservation'. Despite the wide lanes, the big ships tend to form up in a single line cutting the corner from the Channel to the North Atlantic by the shortest route. The sight of container vessels stretching back to the horizon is pretty memorable.

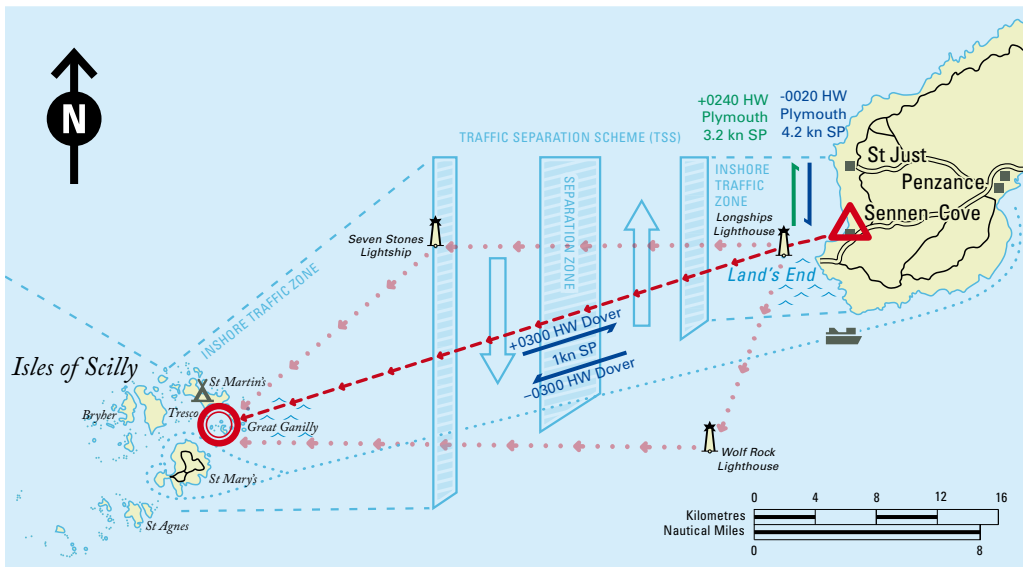
If all has gone to plan, your first touch of the Isles will be Hanjague rock. For the final kilometre to Great Ganilly, you'll be guarded by an escort of seals.

VARIATIONS

A more challenging variation could be to take in the infamous Wolf Rock lighthouse (270 119). During 1862, the first year of the lighthouse's construction, workers were only able to land on 22 days. Don't plan on a picnic stop!

Tide and weather

The tide streams off Land's End are complex, flowing strongly across your route with tide races forming around the Longships reef. Further offshore, the main tidal stream is weaker and changes direction of flow at markedly different times. Further out again, the tide conveniently bends to flow weakly between Land's End and the Scilly Isles. If contemplating the crossing, look for settled high pressure and a smooth sea state.





Landfall at St Martin's after 27,000 paddle strokes

Additional information

Camping on Great Ganilly is not permitted. The nearest campsite is 4km further on at St Martin's (route 30).

The Seven Stones Lightship

A visit to the Seven Stones reef adds several kilometres to the crossing. There has been a lightship here since 1841, although in 1967 direct warnings from the lightship crew failed to prevent the *Torrey Canyon* running aground in broad daylight. Thirty-one million gallons of oil spilled, causing a catastrophic slick along the Cornish coast and killing 15,000 sea birds. Classic British amateurism was displayed in botched attempts to ignite the spilling oil by dropping napalm bombs (the RAF kept missing the 300 metre long tanker) and also in confused efforts to disperse the oil from beaches (it was often ploughed into the sand). The current lightship (087 257) is distinctively red-hulled and has been unmanned since 1987, subsequently being filled with buoyancy foam. Despite the thickness of the mooring chains, it has broken adrift on several occasions.

Don't be close when the foghorn goes off!



St Mary's



No. 29 | Grade B | 14 km | OS Sheet 203

Tidal Port Plymouth (Devonport)

Start ▲ Hugh Town (903 107)

Finish ● Hugh Town (903 107)

HW/LW Local HW is 55 minutes before HW Plymouth.

Tidal times Within Crow Sound, the E going stream begins 15 minutes after HW Plymouth. The W going stream begins 5 hours and 40 minutes after HW Plymouth. These streams flow for about 3 hours and then weaken.

In St Mary's Sound, the SE going stream begins 5 hours and 45 minutes before HW Plymouth. The NW going stream begins 45 minutes after HW Plymouth.

In St Mary's Road, a tide stream varying in direction of flow between NW and SW begins 1 hour and 45 minutes before HW Plymouth. The east going (and stable) stream begins 5 hours and 40 minutes after HW Plymouth.

Max Rate Sp In Crow Sound and in St Mary's Road, flows reach 1 knot. In St Mary's Sound, flows reach 1.7 knots at springs and 0.7 knots at neaps.

Coastguard Falmouth, tel. 01326 317575, VHF weather 0110 UT

Introduction

St Mary's is the 'big' island of Scilly. The circuit of the island makes a good introduction to Scilly, especially if combined with forays ashore to explore further.

Description

Scillonian III offloads visitors at the quay in the 'capital' of St Mary's (and indeed Scilly), Hugh Town. There is a convenient launching beach beside the quay if you wish to paddle off right away. However, Hugh Town has a useful supermarket and cash machine, so a wander up the street may be your first priority.

Be careful in Hugh Town harbour (known as 'St Mary's Pool'); the water is chock full of nippy little inter-island launches that don't take prisoners.

St Mary's west coast slopes gradually from the sea, with landing usually possible. Here in Scilly's central lagoon ('The Road'), it is possible to visualise Scilly's appearance a thousand years ago. The islands were all joined as one landmass 'Ennor', subsequently submerged by rising seas. When the settlement at Halangy Down (910-124) was occupied, it looked out over a wide wooded plain. Today, it is worth landing to view the oval houses of this excavated Iron Age village. Close by is Bant's Carn, an impressive Bronze Age entrance grave.

Rounding the northern tip of St Mary's at Bar Point, be aware that the deep water channel of Crow Sound only extends out for a few hundred metres. Offshore, a sand spit, the 'Crow Bar', forces ships like the *Scillonian III* close in.

St Mary's east coast is more imposing, with low granite cliffs often impeding landing. At Innisidgen more entrance graves (922-127) are close to shore, but the landing is rocky. Pelistry Bay is a secluded sandy cove linked to Toll's Island, a link severed at high tide. A stroll around the island reveals the Civil War defences of 'Pellows Redoubt' and a string of kelp pits.

Porth Hellick's narrow entrance is easy to miss. This beach is a shell hunter's paradise. Sir Cloudisley-Shovell washed up here after the 1707 disaster (see boxed text) and was briefly interred in the sand before reburial at Westminster Abbey. There are numerous entrance graves on Porth Hellick Down, including the so-called 'Giant's tomb'.

The next kilometre (passing under the end of the runway) has wrecked two ships in recent times, the *Cita* at Newfoundland Point in 1998 and the *Brodfield* in 1916. The *Brodfield's* steel plates are still visible.

Old Town Bay is a good place to stop if you don't fancy the exposure of Peninnis Head, Hugh Town being just a short walk away across a narrow isthmus.

The cliffs of Peninnis Head are topped by an ugly metal lighthouse, but are redeemed by engaging rock formations. The granite has eroded into shapes with names like The Pulpit, The Monk's Cowl and Big Jolly Rock. A tide race will need to be negotiated as you enter St Mary's Sound.

Porth Cressa offers another back route into Hugh Town, but it is worth completing the circumnavigation by paddling around The Garrison. This part of St Mary's was fortified in the wake of the Spanish Armada's threat, commencing with the building of the Star Castle in 1593. Battlements and cannons are visible beside the water, and make for a pleasant walk around if staying at St Mary's campsite, located on The Garrison.

MV Scillonian III

Most paddlers reach Scilly by The Isles of Scilly Steamship Company's *Scillonian III*. From March to October, this sails up to six days a week between Penzance and Hugh Town. Kayaks are charged extra but it is possible to negotiate half price carriage for a second kayak.

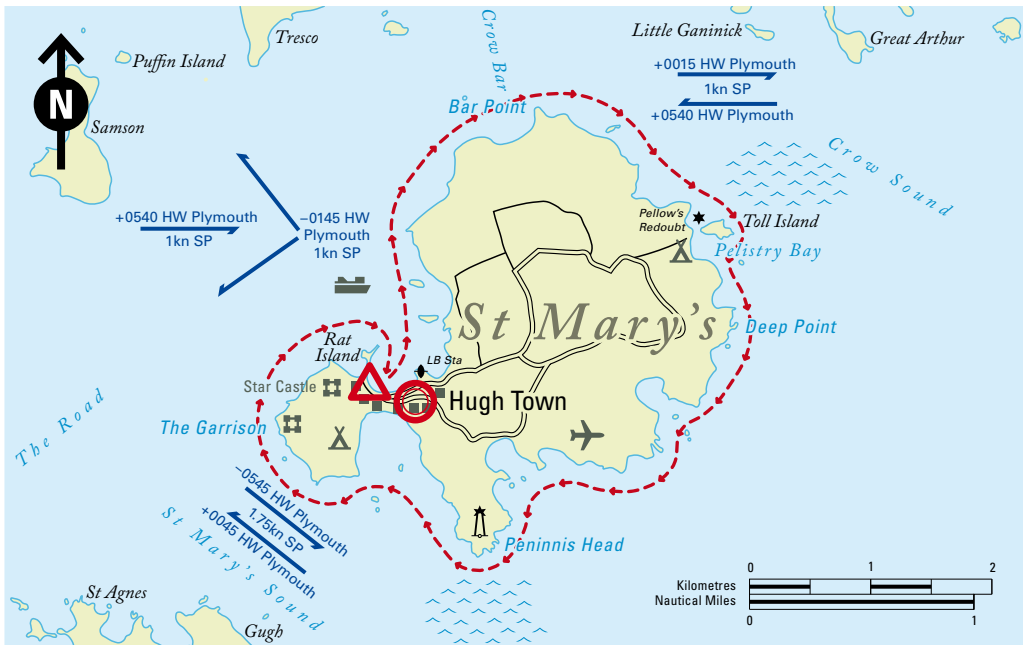
Kayaks need to be ready on the quay, empty, at least two hours before sailing. Kayaks are placed on a pallet or in slings and craned onto the deck or into the hold, never a convincing process to watch! Minor damage has been known to occur, consider padding your boat.

The crossing takes 2 hours 40 minutes and may help you to understand why locals call the *Scillonian* the 'Vomit Comet'. Landing at Hugh Town on St Mary's, there is organised chaos as baggage is sorted into crates bound for different islands. If camping on St Mary's, your gear (but not your kayaks) will be driven uphill to the campsite, provided that you labelled it properly.

Paddle around tiny Rat Island which forms part of the quay and head into Hugh Town for fish and chips and medals.

VARIATIONS

Rounding Bar Point, a detour to the Eastern Isles is tempting! See route 30.





📷 Bant's Carn entrance grave

29

St Mary's

Tide and weather

Penninis Head forms a tide race which can be quite lively with wind or swell thrown into the mix. Rough water forms in Crow Sound with wind against tide.

Additional information

The Isles of Scilly Museum in Hugh Town is well worth a visit, containing a waxwork of former PM Harold Wilson as it does; 01720 422337, www.iosmuseum.org.

St Mary's campsite (898 104) is 1km inland from Hugh Town Quay. It is run by Mr and Mrs Moulson, tel. 01720 422670, www.garrisonholidays.com. Pelistry Farm Camp is a basic campsite at Pelistry Bay (928 119), tel. 01209 721413, www.cornwall.gov.uk/cornwalloutdoors.

📷 Front Cover – Durdle Door, near Lulworth Cove

📷 Back Cover – Bishop Rock, Isles of Scilly



South West Sea Kayaking

2ND EDITION

ISLE OF WIGHT TO THE SEVERN ESTUARY

The stunning shores of the South West encompass such treasures as the Solent's cruising grounds, the Dorset and Devon Jurassic Coast World Heritage Site, Atlantic Cornwall's sheltered harbours and rugged rockscapes, the glorious Scilly archipelago, Exmoor's soaring cliffs and the entrancing tidelands of the Bristol Channel.

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