

MIDWEEK CRUISING 2008

The midweek cruises combine social sailing with an objective. Eight one day cruises are planned for this year; the expeditions being as follows.

Traditionally we start with the Blackwater cruise. Starting from Ramsey Island we sail to Maylandsea for lunch, round Northey Island to Heybridge for tea and then back to base, rounding Osea Island on the way. Sailing distance is 16 miles.

Using Hayling Island Sailing Club as a base we have 2 expeditions. One is round Hayling Island, typically lunch at The Ferry Inn and tea at Emsworth, 18 miles. The other is towards Chichester, coffee at Bosham and lunch at Dell Quay, 17 miles.

Calshot is also a useful base for 2 trips. One rounds Calshot Castle to visit Ashlett Creek for lunch, back round the Castle to Lepe for tea and return to base, 11 miles. The other is up the delightful Beaulieu River to Bucklers Hard, stopping at Lepe on the way, 14 miles.

We also aim to round all the islands in Poole Harbour. Unfortunately there is not enough water to do this during Poole week this year but we plan to organise a trip during the week from Sandbanks to Hamworthy Park for lunch and then back round the islands, 12 miles. The regular full rounding to include Giggers Island is 18 miles.

Then there is the BIG ONE, round the Isle of Sheppey, 32/34 miles according to how the wind blows. We usually wait until we are in good form before doing this one.

Last but not least there is Mersea Island with the causeway to cross, lunch at Brightlingsea, 14 miles.

Our objective is to do them all - the Grand Slam! In past years this has occasionally been done. We aim to sail with advantageous tides that will bear us to safety if the wind drops or something breaks. The tides are predictable but the sailing conditions are not. So we identify dates with acceptable tides and then wait for reasonable winds at those times.

We work by email, telling interested Seavets of our plans and then confirming by phone or email on the evening before the event that the expedition is on and the starting time. We have no safety cover and everyone sails at their own risk.

For approximately 40% of the midweek days (Tuesday to Thursday) the tides are unfavourable. On these days we try to keep our muscles in trim by sailing at Datchet Water Sailing Club based on the Queen Mother Reservoir near Windsor. Again we use email to inform interested Seavets of the selected day and start time. You can join us there paying a day sailing fee of £6.

If you are interested let me know. I will put you on my email list and mail you our 2008 Program. There is no obligation on your part: you can choose to turn up if you fancy a sail. If not, we shall sail anyway but the more Seavets the merrier !

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