

Baja Voyage (cont'd)

Day 22

We took an early morning swim and then we had to decide if we were to go to Mulegé or explore the islands around Coyote Bay that lie within the much larger Conception Bay. Hey, we had some ice and Alice still wasn't eager to leave the sea and islands for "civilization". Not only that, I had poured off into the solar shower the ice melt water the previous day so in no time we had a nice hot shower on deck. Conclusion: we didn't need no stinkin' town.

We ghosted along south to Coyote bay about 7 miles away and "anchored" off the beer Palapa/hot spring beach that Brad and I previously visited (see day 12 & 13). I say "anchored" because I dropped the hook in 15 feet of water under sail. We were making only slow headway and I wanted to go into the cockpit, so I just let the rope slowly pay out from the anchor locker under the deck. Needless, as I sat in the shade of the canopy and Alice offered me a cold drink, I turned off the sailor mode part of my brain. The gentle bump as we touched bottom re-energized it and with the mental alarm screaming "Idiot!" "Idiot!," I rushed forward. Now, we were in no danger since there were no other sailboats around to laugh at me. I started up the motor and tried to find the anchor. Because of the hot springs minerals, there is a great deal of plankton in the water and visibility is like the Chesapeake in the summer, so finding the anchor and line in 15 feet of water was going to be a challenge. Now I know I was supposed to secure the bitter end, one of those things I never got around to, besides what Idiot would not tie off the anchor? Alice's shout brought me around and there in front of us was the last 6 feet of pristine white and *dry* anchor line slowly snaking itself under the water. A mad lunge with the boat hook snagged the line and all's well that ends well.

After a snack and short row ashore, we motored along the coast among the numerous small islets and beautiful water until we came to famous Donkey Bay. (Don't know if it is Bahia de burro or assino; though after my anchoring fiasco, I'm not surprised they named a bay after me). Any way, we anchored off an intriguing palapa with a Corona Beer umbrella and chair on a platform 15 feet off shore. I could see that the Palapa was really one big room with a large bar, but it wasn't commercial. Hmmm, that was my kind of architecture. I rowed ashore to inquire about fuel and ice and met the owner, an expat from the LA area. He was retired from retail, and though still young, had been living down here for the last 10 years. It seems that every 4th of July he hosts a BBQ for all the cruisers in the area and this year he said he cooked up 400 hotdogs for the cruisers and locals. Apparently this is a really big thing. Almost everyone of the cruisers we met later said "so how come we didn't see you at the Donkey Beach 4th of July BBQ?" We've gotta do it sometime!

From Donkey beach we sailed over to Isla Bargo also known as Coyote Island and anchored for the night. It was still early in the day and we went for a swim. There



Lone Kyaker, Isla Bargo

exploring around the island. The climb down was even more difficult.

were no jellyfish and Alice had a grand time. Though hot, I was determined to climb up the island to get a picture of the boat in overhead light. Man was it a hot, sweaty and nervous climb. The cliff/hill was crumbly and the pebbles acted like ball bearings so progress was slow. However, when I reached as high as I could climb, the view down to the boat was worthwhile. Perhaps 20 meters above me there was a neat cave (must have been full of pirate treasure) but just too difficult for me to get to so I just had to leave it unexplored. Below, a lone

kyaker had stopped on a small beach to stretch his legs and was soon gone,

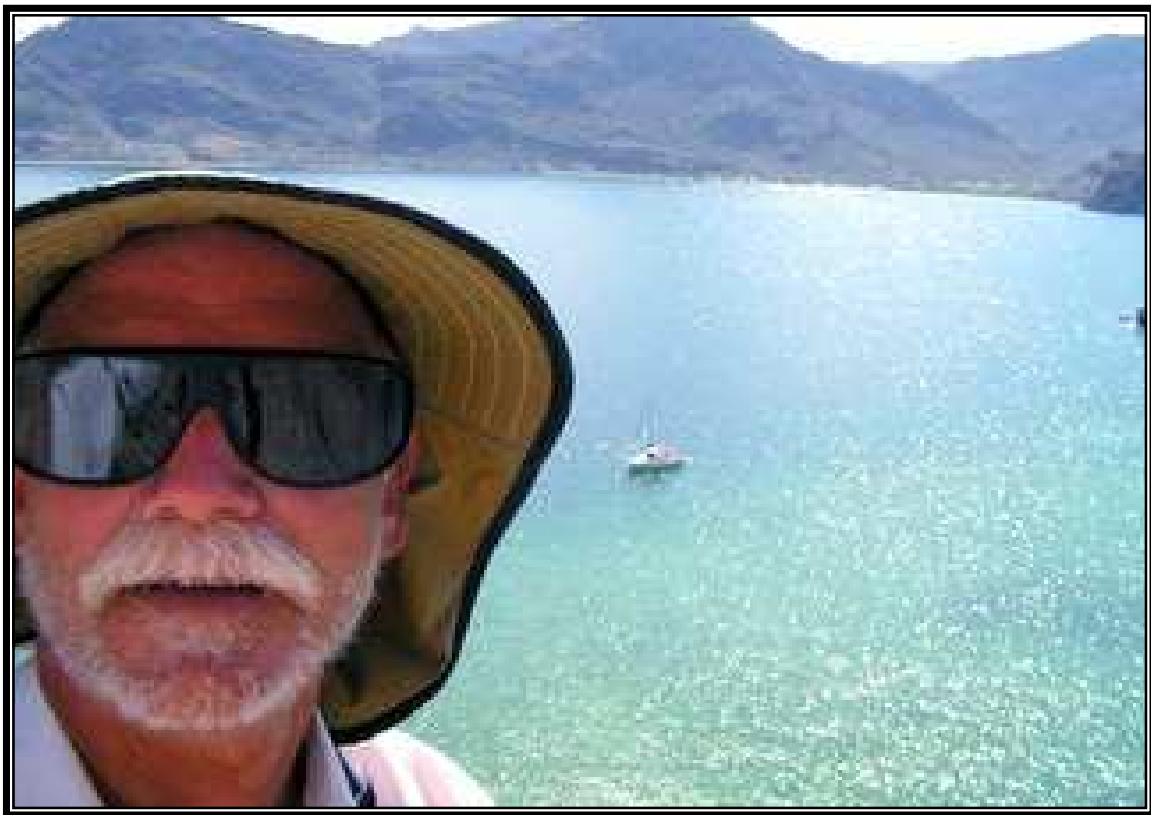


The view down from Isla Bargo after a long climb up

Later that afternoon just at sunset, we saw a fellow walking along the base of the cliff towards us followed by his girlfriend. Since the island is uninhabited we were surprised. It seems that Domingo, a waiter at a very upscale restaurant in Mulegé and his girlfriend

were marooned on the island when their jet ski's battery died a couple of coves over. Ah, Mcgyver to the rescue. I removed the 12volt killer battery from my three million candle power light and rowed around to his Jet ski; we hooked it up and it turned over....twice, then nothing. Bummer. We rowed, with me towing the jet ski, slowly back to our boat with the intention of towing him behind Enosis to his friend's house a couple of miles away. However, just as darkness fell, the cavalry arrived, in the form of a panga captained by Domingo's friend. Seems he saw our boat and heard Alice's signal, (an air horn) so he altered his search and came over. Well, we got to stay in our serene anchorage and Domingo and his girlfriend got a ride home. You know you are on a good sailing vacation when a Jet Ski rescue is the most exciting thing to happen the whole day.

Oh well another day (and night) in paradise.



Ok, now that I'm up here, how do I get down? Isla Bargo