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BOOK REVIEWS

North Africa

Graham Hutt & Di Stoddard

CA: 18783, ISBN: 978-178679-185-6
Imray, 5th ed 2023, £47.50

This new 5th edition of the RCC/Imray publishing collaboration of the North Africa Pilot book covers Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Malta, Libya, Ceuta & Melilla, Gibraltar, Pantelleria and the Pelagic Islands and is the first update since the 2010 fourth edition. It will be welcomed by many sailors in the Mediterranean, whether first-timers new to the area or seasoned sailors who are looking for something different – here it is! It also encompasses the Atlantic coast of Morocco, so will be useful for those who wish to make their way towards the Canaries down this coast for a change.

A well-laid-out, practical book with all the necessary information to hand, it has updated chartlets where appropriate. Read the main Introduction, as well as the introduction of each chapter, before arrival, as the information contained in these parts of the book will save time on entry and even possible embarrassment when coming into contact with these different North African cultures. As the authors mention, it would also be worthwhile brushing up your French.

Many new marinas have appeared along the northern coastline, mainly in Tunisia, with others being started in Morocco (Atlantic and Mediterranean coasts). As noted, not every one that has been started will be finished, but all are included. Warnings abound throughout and the rules and regulations set out for sailing in Algerian waters should definitely be adhered to, due to the delicate political situation; all skippers should check this out before planning their visit. The authors have also retained information regarding sailing in Libyan waters even though entry is currently forbidden; there is always hope for the future.

Also discussed is the usefulness of laying your yacht up in Tunisia out of the EU's stay/time constraints; often a useful, cheaper and more interesting place to

leave your boat. Inland visits from a safe marina base are great, especially when there are places like El Jem to explore.

A "must have" book for anybody wishing sail in these interesting waters, written by people who have spent many years enjoying their sailing in the countries they are writing about

Sandy Duker

Sailing for Seals

Jenny Hobson

CA 18789; ISBN 978-1-7390837-0-0;
self-published 2023, £7.99

This captivating tale combines sailing adventure with a mission to spread awareness of the danger to seals from flying rings, all with an evident love of nature.

The sailing adventure is a partial circumnavigation of Britain from the Solent up the west coast to Scotland, through the Caledonian canal and eventually to lay up in the Wash. In their Rustler 36, their home for six months, they had many wonderful experiences and few dreadful ones. The story is told with the minimum of nautical jargon but where it is unavoidable is explained for the benefit of non-sailors. It's a travelogue in which the reader can almost feel the damp, the midge bites, and the exhilaration of another beautiful anchorage.

The mission was to raise awareness of the risk to seals from flying rings which, unlike a frisbee have a hole in the middle. If a seal gets their head caught in one, then it suffers terrible injury and eventual death. This was experienced firsthand by the author in her work at a seal charity. During their extended cruise the author spoke to shops selling flying rings on the coast and got a mainly sympathetic hearing: many shopkeepers were unaware of the danger.

The love of nature is evident throughout the book. The author takes every opportunity to seek out wildlife and writes vividly of her experiences. If the aim of this book is to raise awareness of

the danger to seals in an entertaining and heartwarming manner, then it certainly succeeds.

James Parnell

Channel Islands, Cherbourg Peninsula and North Brittany

Peter Carnegie, rev by Annabel Finding

CA: 18785, ISBN: 978 178679373 7
Imray, 2nd ed 2023, £47.50

Once a year I go on a "boys" trip with my friend James. Next year it will be to the Channel Islands, so I read this book with some interest. This pilot also covers the area from St Vaast to the Iles Chausey and from there all the way round to Plateau des Roches Douvres. It includes the estuaries and parts of the inland rivers.

I looked first at the Channel Islands and found a huge amount of information I hadn't seen in other pilots. Very clear charts included clear routes, as well as details of leading lines, buoys, and especially inter-islands passages. I particularly liked the *Character of the Winds* chart in the information chapter.

Looking at Saint-Vaast and around to Saint-Malo, including the Rance, I noticed that the authors don't offer individual views: there was the occasional mention of a restaurant but that was all. Did it matter? For me probably not. After Saint-Malo the Guide goes further west, along the north coast of Brittany and then south to Ouessant.

The appendix has really good tidal stream charts, not only for the area covered, but also ones for each island in the Channel Islands. After that is a further reading list.

I was disappointed with some of the photographs. The shadows were deep in some photograph, but if you looked hard there was detail in them. With a little digital enhancement of the original scans, they could have been vastly improved.

So, James will be getting a copy of this book for Christmas, as long as he returns it to me after the trip next year!

Gilbert Park

