

Tondelayo's Voyage

South to San Carlos - A month of cruising with loads of heat, snorkeling, and seafood

Aug 16 - Sept 15, 2002

	See Map - press your browser <i>back</i> button when finished.
Aug 16-17	Port was closed again this morning, so we walked around town to find an automotive regulator for Tondelayo, and a few other little parts. Also bought a new fillet knife. Finally got approval from Port Captain to leave, but we had to sign a waiver that said that we were fully responsible for our own actions. Puerto Penasco is definitely too close to the US of A. Anyway, left about sundown with light wind out of the SSE which put us close reaching to head for Isla San Luis, the largest of the Islas Encantadas (Enchanted Islands). Had 10-20 knot headwinds all night and pretty reasonable seas, maybe 3 feet. Lots of putting in reefs, and later shaking them back out. The day brought more of the same, and after being on 1 tack for 80 miles while crossing the sea, we had to start tacking. Ended up sailing most of the way, with a little motoring to make the anchorage by sunset. Seahorse arrived just after dark. I had a Bloody Mary, and combined with no sleep, ended up passing out cold almost immediately. Nice anchorage, but a little rolyly.
Aug 18-19	Woke up and found the house batteries were flat dead again. Turned out I left the field current for the alternator on all night. Oops. Decided to wire the field current to the ignition (to prevent last night's problem), which meant that I actually had to fix up the ignition properly, which I've been meaning to do for 10 months. Got that done and charged the batteries a bit. Later, went spearfishing with the Seahorse folks and got about a pound or so of scallops, and shot a triggerfish for revenge because he was eating my scallops. Lisa came up with a humongous lobster and so we had quite a feast aboard Seahorse. Yummy. Next day, I hooked up the new regulator, and either I blew it up also, or it was not mean to be hooked up the way I hooked it up. Gave up on that, and ended installing a light bulb as a resistor to be used while motoring, and a switch for maximum charging while at anchor. Viola, a 2 stage manual regulator. Working beautifully so far. Went spearfishing again and speared a 15lb Pargo right through the eye. Damn, I'm good. I don't think the spear would have gone through anywhere else, his bones were so thick. This fish put up hell of a fight. too. Went over to Seahorse for dinner, and had Coconut Fish Curry.
Aug 20-21	Hooked up the Flemming wind vane, in a kind of Rube Goldberg method. Just to see how it works and where all the lines are going to have to go. Then sailed/motorsailed down the coast about 10 miles to Bahia Willard. A nice protected cove, but a bit shallow, about 8 feet at low tide, 20 at high tide. Seahorse had some problems with their starter wiring, so they had to sail in and drop the hook. Made a new recipe for dinner: Poached Pargo with Sauce Aurore. Next day, helped out a bit on Seahorse. After a few hours, Lisa discovered a dirty connection that was causing the starter problem. That took up the morning, and we went over to find the store in the afternoon. Unfortunately, there was no produce, but the truck was supposed to come in the next day. Pat made Fish / Scallop chowder for vittles that night. We planned to get up early (5:30) and head to Puerto Refugio, about 44 miles away, mostly upwind.
Aug 22	Left the anchorage just after 6am, and started the long day trip to Puerto Refugio. Sailed / Motorsailed and Motored for 13 hours, but finally made it. Lots of adverse wind and tidal currents, but it feels good to be back in familiar territory. Also, I caught a dorado near the end of the day. Lisa made Steak and mashed potatoes for dinner. Mmmm, beef, its what's for dinner.
Aug 23	Working on the pump part of the fridge. One of the PVC pieces that I plumbed it with decided to crack and leak. I switched to bronze. Dinner was on Tondelayo: Coconut Lime MahiMahi with Mango relish, and cucumber salad. Tasty.
Aug 24	Pat woke me up early to go fishin, but we did not catch anything, but 1 triggerfish. I guess, 8 am is not really that early. More boat work, put a new shelf in the fridge. It is incredibly humid here. The dew falls an hour or 2 before sunset when the air temperature gets down to around 92 degrees.
Aug 25	More boat stuff, built a dinghy step, and a few other odds and ends. Fish tacos (with dorado) for lunch and Pepperoni Pizza for dinner. Getting ready to make a sail down to the next anchorage, Ensenada Pulpito, about 22 miles, upwind.
Aug 26	Left the anchorage before 10am, and the wind was all ready whipped up pretty good, about 15 or so. After an hour or so the tide shifted and started setting us the wrong direction. For the next 6 hours, it was like running

	<p>on a treadmill, but we pounded to weather all day and finally started making some time, in the late afternoon. I went most of the way with 2 reefs in. Well, eventually we got here, and Seahorse anchored in the twilight, and I anchored in the dark, right after.</p> <p>Oh, I forgot the most important part of the day. I caught a huge bull Dorado (MahiMahi), which was 4 feet long and probably weighed in at around 22-25 lbs. When I yanked him on the boat, he went nuts and ended up down below before I could subdue him. Anyway, we cut up some sashimi, and I cooked up part of a fillet for dinner. The chunk that I cooked up looked like a chicken tri tip when it was done. Yummy.</p>
Aug 27	<p>Woke up at 8 and it is already 89 in the boat, gonna be another hot one today. Went snorkeling with the guys on Seahorse, but were not shooting anything since the fridge was full of Dorado. At the second spot we were at, we came upon some extra large lobsters. Pat and Lisa started shooting. I pointed one out to Pat, and he went down and started taking aim. Right then, Lisa came around the side of the rock and speared him right as Pat let go with his own shot. Once we had 3, I said "Stop, we have plenty" and swam back to the dinghy with 2 of them, figuring Lisa would follow with the one more that was on her spear. But she did not. I ran the dingy over to the hole they were fishing, and they each now had 2 more and could not shoot any more without dropping the ones they had. So at this point, I took the lobsters and the spears, since we had 6 huge lobsters, more than we could eat in days to come. Pat said, "But there is a whole cave full of them down there." Anyway, since we had so many lobsters, I decided to can some of the meat. We cleaned the lobsters and ate 2 tails for lunch, (all we could eat) and then started the processing. We cooked legs and heads of lobsters, and picked them for several hours. In total, I would say that we had about 4-5 lbs. of meat (not including tails). I filled 4 pints, and stuck them in the pressure cooker, and saved the rest of the pickings (1-2 lbs) for lobster omelets, etc. Pat made Lobster stuffed MahiMahi for dinner. Then I went to bed early, fat and happy.</p> <p>Also a Westsail came in and anchored a few coves down from us, and we said hi on the way back from foraging. They said that it was blowing pretty hard (like 40) around the point to the south of us, glad we were not trying to head south.</p>
Aug 28	Lobster for breakfast. Boat cleaning, reading, not much of anything really. Lobster for dinner.
Aug 29	Who turned off the wind? Motored 20 miles down to the next anchorage, the last one before we leave Isla Angel de la Guardia. We anchored off a small white sand beach in about 15 feet of crystal clear water. The sand on the beach was like powdered sugar it was so fine. Messed around on the boat, and cleaned up, and went snorkeling. A large pod of dolphin came in, so we went out and swam with them, and they would come about 15-20 feet away.
Aug 30	Motored, and then sailed (slowly). Set up and tried out the drifter, and used it a bit. It worked quite well. Arrived at Isla Partida in the afternoon, and it still had crappy water visibility, like the last time I was here. Figured we would leave the next morning.
Aug 31	Motored and tried to sail a few times to Isla las Animas, but there was not quite enough wind. Anyway, checked out the first anchorage, and it looked a bit small, so we went around the corner to another bigger, but less protected anchorage. Had some nice snorkeling there, and finally ate the last of the lobster. Awakened in the middle of the night by wind and waves rolling straight into the anchorage. The wind was only about 12- 15 knots but gusty, and the waves were small since we were kinda protected, so I decided to tough it out and try to get a little more sleep.
Sept 1	Got up at light and got out of there before the wind picked up any more, the seas were starting to get bigger. Went back up to Isla Salsipuedes, to the north slot, where I had been before. A small, but well protected cove. I think it is on the cover of Charlie's Charts of Mexico. Walked up to the top of the closest hill, to check on the progress of Seahorse, and give them a heads up on the anchorage.
Sept 2	Went hiking on the Island again. After lunch, noticed a trimaran (Defiance) has come up and anchored in front of me. We all went over to meet Nancy and John, and ended taking them snorkeling with us. Had a nice dinner with sushi and Dorado on Seahorse.
Sept 3	One more day in Salsipuedes. Trying to use up the rest of the Dorado. Cleaned up the boat, and got ready to go. We decided to head back to Bahia San Franscisco, and then try to cross the Sea toward San Carlos from there.
Sept 4	Left in the morning, but the tidal currents were vicious, so I dropped my anchor after 2 miles, and took a nap. After a few hours, the tide turned, and it was possible to make way against it. The weather predicted NW wind, which is the only wind that I did not get. Lots of light air sailing, using the new drifter to close reach, mostly. Arrived in the inner harbor about 6pm. 2 Other boats here, Good Neighbor and Lonestar. Good Neighbor is a Tayana 37 like Seahorse, and friends of thiers. We had Grouper and some wonderful fruit salad over there for dinner. Used up the last of the beer. Time to head for civilization.

Sept 5-8	Hanging around. Snorkeling. Tackless Two showed up and I talked to them about Central America, which was interesting. They really liked El Salvador. Then, more of the usual. Read a couple books and did not do much, cause my back was hurting. Heard about a possible storm that may pass close by, but it petered out long before getting near us. Got some valium and finally got my back to stop spasming.
Sept 9	<p>Rain. Sprinkles, and north wind in the morning. We decided to go ahead and leave to Cross the Sea with the favorable wind. We had some info on an island out in the middle called San Pedro Martir, that we would stop at if weather looked favorable, and we found somewhere to anchor.</p> <p>As soon as we left the anchorage, it started to rain for real! I got out the soap and shampoo, and then started scrubbing down the boat. Everything got a nice fresh water wash. About noon we sailed out of the front and everything cleared up. Then the carnage started. Dorado were all over the place. I was watching then come screaming up to the lure and hitting it. I saw about 10 hit it, hooked 5 and got 3 to the boat. Seahorse caught one also, Pat's first dorado. Im sure I could have caught more, but I stoppped fishing. Awesome. Then, I'm sailing along at a couple knots in light wind and I almost hit a big Sperm Whale. Really, about 10 feet from the boat, just hanging out on the surface. He never did dive, maybe he was asleep. (He was breathing - so, no: he was not dead).</p> <p>Around Sundown we anchored by San Pedro Martir in about 40 feet, over sand. A little roly and some weird currents, but we decided to stay and see how the night went. The sea lions were screaming all night, and with all the caves around, it amplified it, and gave it this strange haunting quality. Very Creepy, really! All night, these blood curdling howls coming off the beach.</p>
Sept 10	<p>Awakened at midnight by the boat making weird sounds. Turned out the whirlpool was thuring the boat in circles about 1 every 10 minutes and so the anchor snubber fell off. Add 20 knot gusts to that, and it seemed like it would better to leave than to stay. Once away from the island the wind was a constant 15-18 knots out of the NW, which mad for a nice, fast, comfortable ride. Caught a lot of 10 minute naps diring the trip. Hitting 7 knots a lot of the time, but only making 4-5 by sunrise. Turned the motor on around 10 and motored the last couple hours into the anchorage.</p> <p>Anchored in a really nice little cove protected by a reef and a big rock. Over sand, 15 feet. Got a some good sleep that night.</p>
Sept 11	Cleaned the prop. Went snorkeling with Lisa and Pat. The water is very warm, and you can stay in indefintly. I found a few shells, Pat and Lisa found a few Lobsters for linguine. We heard about the Memorial services through the SSB radio.
Sept 12	Awesome sail about 10 miles down the coast. With the following current we were making over 6 knots average speed. Ended up in a little cove just big enough for 2 boats. Swell was making the boats a little roly that night.
Sept 13	Went snorkeling for several hours searching for lobster to freeze, to eat during our stay in San Carlos . They were prolific, but small. We found a few medium sized ones. Moved around the point to another big, flat beautiful cove.
Sept 14	More snorkeling around, lots of small bugs, and cool rock formations. A couple of boats showed up, a trimaran that the guys on Seahorse know, and another boat.
Sept 15	Heading back to civilization, after 30 days out of port. Life with the fridge makes this much more practical. I used my last cucumber after 27 days, and I still have frozen chicken. Do not have to throw away uneaten food after all the ice melts. Arrived around 4 and headed to shore for a meal and a beer. Found El Regalo, a Tayana 52 was in the marina, and Pat, Lisa and I went over to say hi to Charles and Teresa. Ended up enjoying the air conditioning (this is a really bitchin, big, brand new boat), and a few Rum Summbitches, which were both delicious, and strong. Then we went to Tequilas for a steak, but Lisa had too much Rum Summbitch, so she went to bed. Ahhhhh, civilization. Someone else not only kills your food, but cooks it for you as well. Very Cool.