

Pilotage North West Passage: West to East *Dodo's Delight 2013*

Nome to Point Barrow

The lagoon by Teller is reputed to give good anchorage but it is not that far from Nome, the main port of entry or exit in these parts. Pontoons at Nome, amongst the gold dredgers.

The Chuckchi Sea can be a difficult place, subject to strong winds with short sharp seas owing to it being relatively shallow. The problem is there are few places to shelter along its coastline.

Point Hope

Shelter can be found to the north or south of Point Hope

To the north

Karen's Cove 68° 27N 166° 19W - our name. Anchor in 7 metres off a beach by the curve of the shoreline here

It may be possible to enter the beginning of the laguna, well hidden a little to the west of here, but it is still then ten miles from the settlement

To the south

The shore is very steep-to in the vicinity of the settlement

The best anchorage is approximately 3 miles to the east

Recommended 60° 20N 166° 37W

A bank gives depth for anchoring at a reasonable distance from the shoreline

Or further east still 62° 20N 166° 36W

It is still a long way to Point Barrow from here with no real shelter available. It may with good charts be possible to enter one or two of the gaps in the chain of islands but depths are generally shallow.

The pilotage into Wainright is so complicated and detailed as to be impractical. Even calling for help can be fraught - *Balthazar* were not impressed with being dragged several hundred metres trailing their rudder in 5 metres waterline depth

Peard Bay by Franklin Point, some 50 miles south west of Barrow, can give shelter with careful pilotage – it seems best to make a wide loop round if entering from the south west. Note: a yacht was driven ashore here in a storm in 2013 and had to be pulled off by a tug boat from Prudoe Bay.

Barrow is an open roadstead. Anchorage off the slipway is still a long way out and access ashore by dinghy is only really possible in calm conditions

Point Barrow to Tuktoyaktuk

Barrow Laguna 71° 16N 156° 05W

The laguna gives shelter as long as shallow water can be tolerated. But it is consistently shallow over large areas without sudden sandbanks. The best entrance is the most northerly, though a wide loop to avoid sandbanks is necessary if approaching from the east. Entrance has been made from the wide gap some seven miles to the south east but careful pilotage through sandbanks is necessary.

Once again the problem is that there is virtually nowhere to hide along the North Alaskan shelf

Anchorage has been made to the east of Cape Halkett in shallow water.

Barter Island

Shelter was found off the west side of Barter Island in strong winds (2013) (70° 07N 143° 47W)

2.2 metres under the keel but consistent and protected. The inviting northern arm of Barter Island was found to be shallow quite a way out from the shore. It might be possible to work closer in, with courage.

Demarcation Point

Gives good shelter, as does Herschel Island with its Park Ranger, old whaling station and sauna!

Tuktoyaktuk

If approaching from the west it seems best to loop round well to the north at first to keep in reasonably deep water (7 metres). The line of buoys leading in from the Fairway Buoy can be difficult to follow at night as several of them were not lit (2013).

Without local knowledge it is important to take the buoyed eastern entrance. (Great sailors have run aground exiting to the east...)

It is customary to swing to starboard (westward) to tie up at the Town Quay – shallow depths will be encountered on the way. To moor in the NTLC (commercial dock) is not recommended

Beware: neither ordinary engine oil or propane gas were available Aug 2013. Plenty of diesel and stores. The local guest house was very welcoming and friendly.

Tuktoyaktuk to Cambridge Bay

The long haul up to Cape Bathurst, the next significant key to the Passage, is at least in reasonable depths

Snowgoose Passage

The passage between the Bathurst peninsular and Baillie Island was found to be passable by staying in the centre of the passage, with a least depth of 3.7 metres (2013)

Summer Harbour 70° 07N 125° 25W

A wide encircled bay affording anchorage to big ships, where small boats can find depth along the shores according to wind direction. The Admiralty Pilot does point out it can be windy which proved true, but it is a welcome 'hurricane hole' (though quite large as such)

Anchorage round Cape Parry and in Bernard Harbour are well known and documented.

Edinburgh Island

A good anchorage 'inside' or north west? of Edinburgh Island has been reported.

Cape Alexander 68° 56N 106° 17W

An anchorage inside and between shallow ground, if required this close to Cambridge Bay

Cambridge Bay

Perhaps the major town of the North West Passage, and psychologically at least, halfway. Most requirements are available. But beware of call out charges for the diesel tanker and water? over the weekend

Cambridge Bay to Fort Ross

We were fortunate in that Victoria Strait had opened so there are no pilotage notes from us for the usual passage round via Gjoahavn

Tasmanian Islands

Sophie Louise Cove – our name 71° 14N 96° 32W

A pleasant anchorage by a beach at the far western end of this cove. However ice floes on the unpredictable tidal currents can be a problem

Bellot Strait

Leask Cove 71° 59N 95° 80W

Remains the best anchorage in False Strait on the west side as reported in 2012. A good place to wait for the tide if necessary. But in northern winds it can be subject to ice

No real anchorages were found down the Strait itself.

It is important to have accurate tidal times at the east end by the Magpie Rock to work out the times of slack water – turns west 2hrs before High Water, turns east 2hrs before Low Water - but in calm conditions it is possible to pass safely through with the flood or ebb as long as it is with you.

Fort Ross 72° 00N 94° 13W

Anchor anywhere off the old Hudson Bay trading post. One of the huts still has some rudimentary stores within

Alternative anchorage was sought to the south in a gale but not too successfully (kelp is a problem). Port McLintock was not investigated. The inviting huge bay over the spit to the north is reported to fill easily with ice.

Fort Ross to Clyde River

Prince Regent Inlet

This can be something of a trap with ice and predominant strong northern winds if trying to complete the Passage to the east quite late in the season, and there are few bolt holes within it.

Port Leopold in the north west corner was used by the Swedish boat *Anna* (2013) with success

Fitzgerald Bay 72° 09N 89° 41W or better 72° 09N 89° 40W

It is possible to find shelter on the eastern side of Prince Regent Inlet in this bay

Tucked in behind the island – Hemn – our name - in the northerly wind proved best.

Note: the pilotage in and out of Fitzgerald Bay was decidedly tricky with sand banks. The southern entrance/exit seems best but not problem free

Admiralty Inlet

Arctic Bay 73° 02N 85° 08W

A surprisingly well protected bay by the settlement, whilst the wind raged in Lancaster Sound to the north according to the forecast. We anchored in the north east corner in calm water.

All facilities, negotiate at the hotel. Or contact Clare (male) at the Visitors' Centre

Navy Board Inlet

Tay Bay 73° 30N 80° 44W

A 'storm shelter' was found in the north east corner of Tay Bay in strong northerly winds, in spite of a sudden lessening of depth and the odd sandbank. But it was strangely well protected from all north winds by the lie of the land

Pond Inlet

Well known as an open roadstead to be avoided if at all possible! Dinghy rides back and forth for all renewal of any resources.

The hotel on the other hand is very friendly and helpful.

Clyde River

Well protected except from the south. No jetty however so dinghy rides again. Only stocks the more refined grade of diesel

Video Record of Seabed Flora for Stuart Anderson Consultancy

Video records were made of the seabed to determine the flora on the seabed in the North West Passage. Very little if any of this had been done before. However our efforts were probably inadequate owing to the pressure of having to make progress to try and complete the Passage in one summer

Coronation Gulf North Coast

Recordings were made at:

Aug 27 1135 at 68° 31.6N 111° 54.4 W at a depth of 10 – 13.5 metres

1153 at 63° 31.632N 111° 51.271W 6.5 metres

1208 63° 31.356N 111° 50.108W 20 – 24 metres

1220 end Lat and Long 63° 31.320N 111° 49.465W

Dease Strait

South Coast

Aug 28	0901	68° 53.704N 106° 22.496W (to 54.712'N 22.603'W)	13 – 15 metres
	0917	68° 54.891N 106° 20.611W (to 54.931'N 20.364'W)	23-27 metres
	0936	68° 54.448N 106° 18.675W (to 54.500'N 18.608'W)	14-15 metres

