



2010



## Testing the new rig in the Baltic

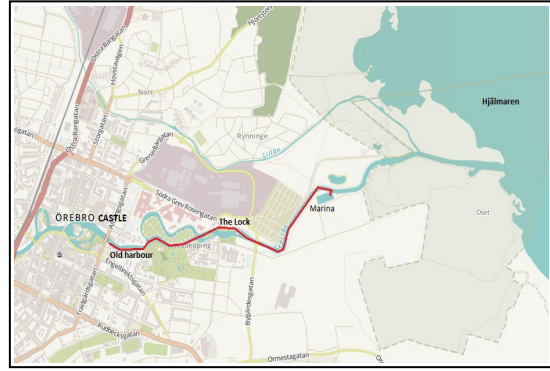
Örebro, Stockholm, Åland, Öland and Figueholm by Johan Kjellander 2014



Last year we tested Bird of Passage at sea without rig. After that we spent the winter in the ice of our home marina in Örebro and this year we will put the rig on and try her out under sail. The rigging is done in Stockholm in June and after that we made one trip down to Figueholm and another trip up to Åland.



The winter (2009/2010) was colder than usual with more snow. The ice grew thick around the Bird and we had to add a little extra heating inside to keep the temperature comfortable. Many mornings we had to dig our cars out of the snow. (Toves car to the left, my to the right).



Spring was late, the ice kept its grip of Bird of Passage until early April. Then everything changed quickly. The picture above is from the annual Örebro boat meet which is kept by the end of May. You can see from the light green colour of the trees that it is early in the season. The boat meet is interesting because it is kept in the Old Harbour right in the centre of Örebro. To get there you need to follow the river (Svartån) upstream, through the lock and continue all the way up to the bridge before Örebro Castle. The map above shows the details



Örebro Castle, photo by sk12, © CC-BY 2.0

The oldest parts of Örebro Castle are known to have existed in the middle of the 14:th century. In 1434 the rebel leader Engelbrekt Engelbrektsson took over the castle and during the early 17:th century it was used to house the Swedish parliament. Today it is used by the regional government. The Governor lives in one part of the castle but it is also open for tourists with restaurants and shops.



The annual boat meet is a good opportunity to buy fresh fish from lake Hjälmaren. The fisherman with the nice beard (nickname Skräcken) specializes in pikeperch. One of my very favourite fish species.



We left Örebro in June. On our way through lake Hjälmaren we met friends in their boat Thyra. They had anchor problems, something stuck, an old wire or cable ? Together they fixed it. Good work !

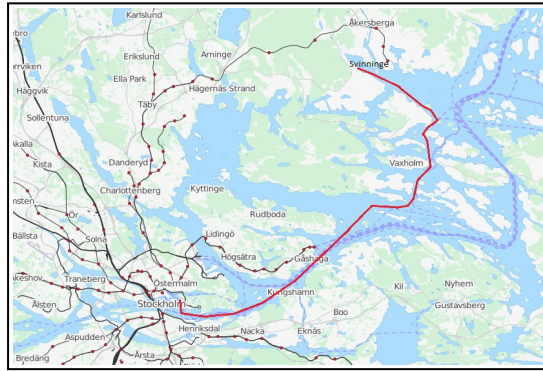


Close to Thyra and her anchoring problems this animal came swimming. There are two snake species in Sweden, the poisonous Adder (Huggorm, *Vipera berus*) and the harmless Grass snake (Snok, *Natrix natrix*). If you find a snake swimming in water it is probably a Grass snake and if it has a white or yellow collar behind the head you can be pretty sure. The one on the picture meets both requirements so there is no reason to worry.



This was one of the last boats we met before leaving Hjälmaren this year. On board is skipper Wille, a person with many stories to tell and always caring about other people. Unfortunately he suddenly got ill and passed away 2013. I think this picture is a nice memory of a person we miss very much.



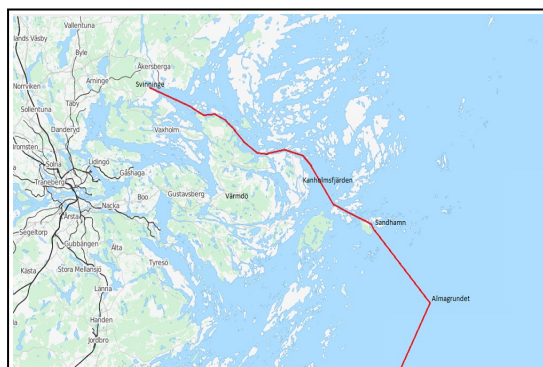


We took the usual route through Hjälmar and Mälaren to Stockholm and then continued to Doghouse Marine in Svinninge marina a few NM north of the city. This is where the rigging was going to be done.



We stayed in Svinninge a few days to work with the rigging. On this picture the mast is on its way up. This was an important milestone in the construction of Bird of Passage of course. Finally a complete sail boat.

## Svinninge - Figeholm





It was now time to try her under sail. Unfortunately we were very short on sails however. The plan had been to try to get hold of cheapest possible used sails for the first year and try them out before ordering new sails that would fit perfectly. Right now we had only one sail, a genoa from a Hallberg Rassy-44 in quite bad shape. On the other hand, there was a big family reunion organized by relatives in Figueholm a few days later so we decided to go anyway, with only the Genoa.



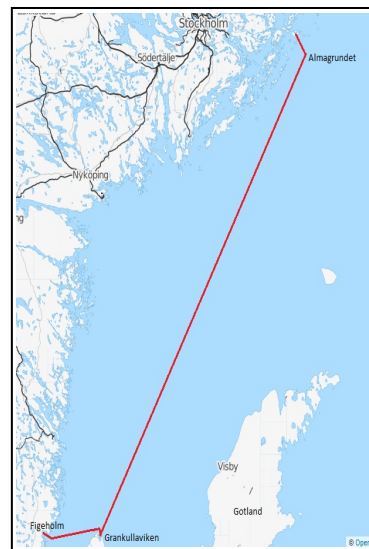
We left Svinninge in the evening, cruised out through the archipelago in the dark, passed Sandhamn and finally Almagrundet next morning as the sun came up. We were now in open sea. 125 NM south of here was our next stop, Grankullaviken on the north tip of Öland. We planned to be there about 24 hours later. The weather was nice, a clear sky but not much wind. Martin seems to enjoy the situation.



We kept on heading south, mostly by motor and at the end of the day we crossed the ferry line between Gotland and the Swedish mainland. Here she comes, 32 knots !



Every sun down at sea is different but always beautiful in some way. Here are two pictures that I thought would fit here (the right one is probably not from this voyage). As the sun went down we had less than 50 NM to Öland so we would probably be there early the next day.



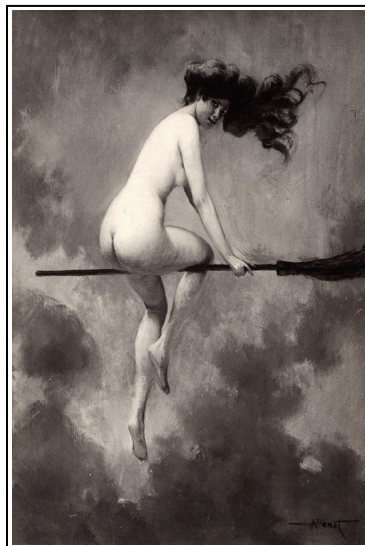
We anchored in Grankullaviken early in the morning and then had some sleep. The next day we sailed the last 20 NM to Figueira da Foz. The wind was perfect and for the first time we did more than 7 knots with our old little foresail ! If we hoisted it all the way up, as on the picture above, there was still 2 meters missing in the lower end. It was also interesting to note that the Bird sailed very good without lowering the retractable keel. We had to, the hydraulic system to control the keel was still not completed at this time !



Gustav liked the speed and when the sea got higher he had to enjoy the motion on the fore deck. I think the movement was worse than he anticipated. He came back inside quickly, wet and exhausted !



If you check the map image above you see the small island named *Blå Jungfrun* (Blue Maiden). The distance from our route down to Blå Jungfrun is 6 NM and on the picture to the left you see more or less what we saw, she is nicely rounded, often surrounded by fog and bluish in colour.



A witch on her way to Blåkulla, by Albert Penot 1910, © Public domain

Blå Jungfrun is a National Park, there is no harbour and no people living there. In the old times it is said that the island was used by Satan each year on Maundy Thursday for a big orgy. He then called for his witches to come and they flew on broomsticks. During the second half of the 17:th century Sweden had a period when women were accused to be witches, even by their children, and executed by fire. A typical accusation could be something like: I saw her flying on a broomstick to Båkulla, which is another name for Blå Jungfrun.





Sweden has three nuclear power stations. Forsmark (3200 MW), Ringhals (3700 MW) and Simpevarp (2600 MW). What you see in the background on the picture above is Simpevarp with its three reactors. What you see in the foreground is Martin and Gustav enjoying the nice weather.



Figeholm has a nice harbour well protected by the islands in the archipelago outside. It's not a big place, but has most of the service you might need. Around 700 people live here, many of them with work connected to the nuclear power station in Simpevarp close by. We stayed here a few days for a family reunion organized by relatives living here and of course we had lots of fun.

## **Figeholm - Åland**

With no mainsail and a foresail which was too small the Bird was still not a real sail boat. We desperately needed a mainsail. My telephone went hot these days talking to people with sails for sale, but it was not easy to find one that would not ruin us and still be big enough. Finally we decided to go with a used mainsail from a Hanse 400. The sail would be delivered to Svinninge marina in Stockholm so now we headed back north again.



The sail was originally used for racing but still in very good condition. It was a little too small, but big enough to really test the Bird under sail. To connect the main halyard to the sail you have to climb three steps up the mast.



We also found a blue sun cover big enough to protect the mainsail. Here she is, ready for sea, with two used sails, both too small, but still a real sailboat.



We now left Svinninge and headed into the north part of Stockholm archipelago by sail. The goal was our summer house on Åland but first we wanted to make a stop and visit old friends.



## Back in Örebro





This winter we wanted to have Bird of Passage on land. She had been in the water continuously for more than a year and I wanted to inspect the under water body. We also had a water leakage problem related to the retractable keel that I wanted to attend to. Living in a boat on land is not as comfortable as living in the water but we had water and toilet only 50 meters away so we managed.



Martin now fulfilled one of his dreams by purchasing a small sports boat, we think it was a *Jerry*. It had a 15 hp outboard and according to our IPAD with Navionics charts she easily did more than 20 knots. Almost 25 with only Martin aboard. Very much fun !



The Jerry was probably much more fun than our dinghy with an outboard motor of only 2 hp. Especially if there is no gasoline in the tank ! Here they come, Martin and Gustav, with no gas and no oars. Good planning guys ! A piece of wood and a boat hook had to do.



Winter weather, photo by Anders Ek, Örebro, with permission.

The winter came early, just like the year before and there was plenty of snow and very cold for long periods. Tove and Gustav took care of Lobacken during the weeks but Martin and I stayed in the boat all winter. Here is a nice picture of the Bird in a snow storm winter 2010/2011, taken by photographer Anders Ek from Örebro. I learned to know about the picture because it was published in the newspaper. I then contacted him and got a high resolution copy with the permission to use it for publication.



**The End of 2010**

