



CAMPING AT LAKE POWELL, OCTOBER 2014

Base camp across
the channel from Knowles Canyon

EDITOR'S NOTE: There have been three Lake Powell houseboat trips and many self-supported outings reported in the *Mountain Paddler* in the last handful of years. Ten club members went again this October. A couple of them shared their impressions but no one wrote a full trip report. Here are some pictures and a few details about that trip.

The group left from Bull Frog Marina on a very windy morning. Some were having trouble steering and they quickly pulled out to discuss the situation.

After checking the forecast and looking at options they resigned themselves to camping within a mile of the put-in. Thankfully, there was better paddling weather for the whole rest of the trip.



Brian bowled tumbleweeds
with his Greenland paddle

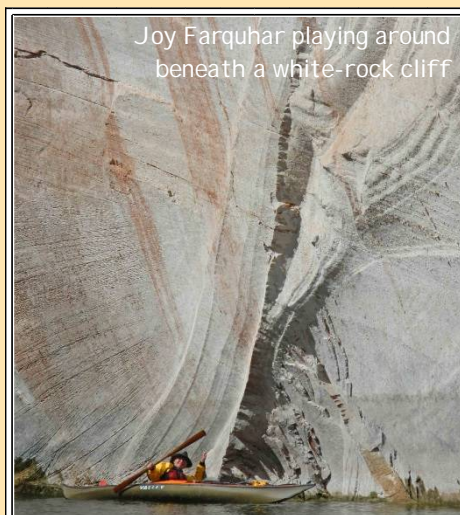


They could tell which way the
wind blew from Al's beard

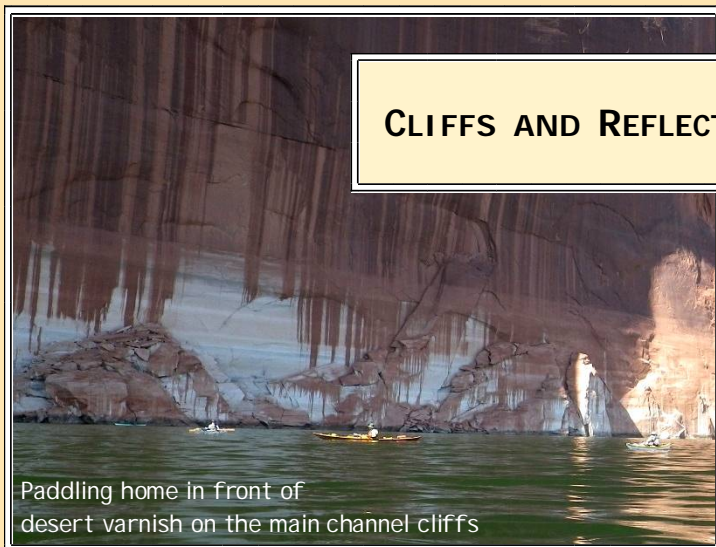
In the morning they went up-lake about 13 miles and camped across from Knowles Canyon. Over the next four days people divided into different small groups and explored nearby canyons. Trip Leader Anne Fiore and

Gary Cage went up-lake to Sevenmile Canyon and beyond. The others visited Defiance House in Forgotten Canyon, Crystal Spring and Hansen Canyon, Knowles Canyon, and Warm Springs and Cedar Canyon.

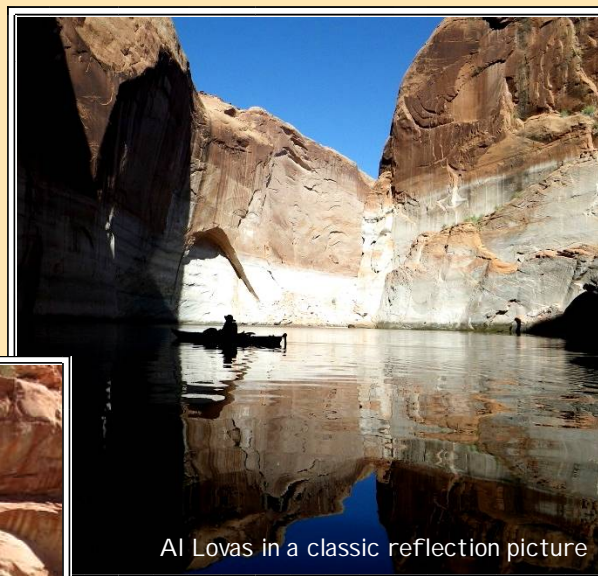
Everyone except new member Joy Farquhar had kayaked on Lake Powell before, but the returning paddlers (Anne and Gary, Marsha Dougherty, Sue Hughes, Brian Hunter, Jud Hurd, Dave and Lou Ann Hustvedt, and Al Lovas) thought the cliffs and the reflections, the vistas, and the plants and wildlife were as wonderful as always.



Joy Farquhar playing around beneath a white-rock cliff



Paddling home in front of desert varnish on the main channel cliffs



Al Lovas in a classic reflection picture

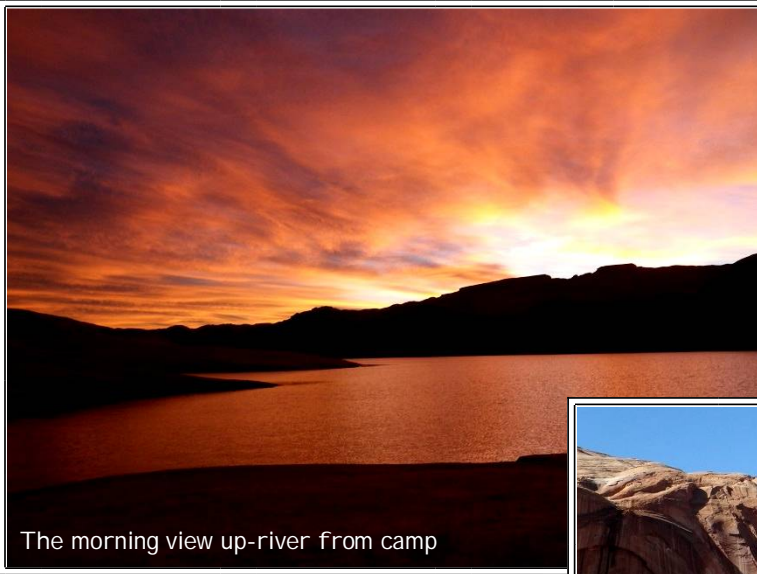


Reflections in another color of water

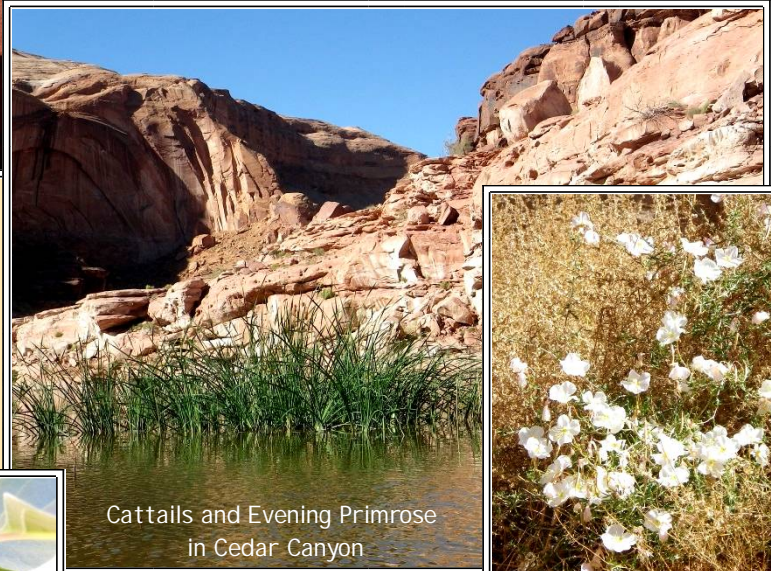
The zebra reflections in the photo to the right undulated in the kayaks' wakes. Their movement would have made a good video.



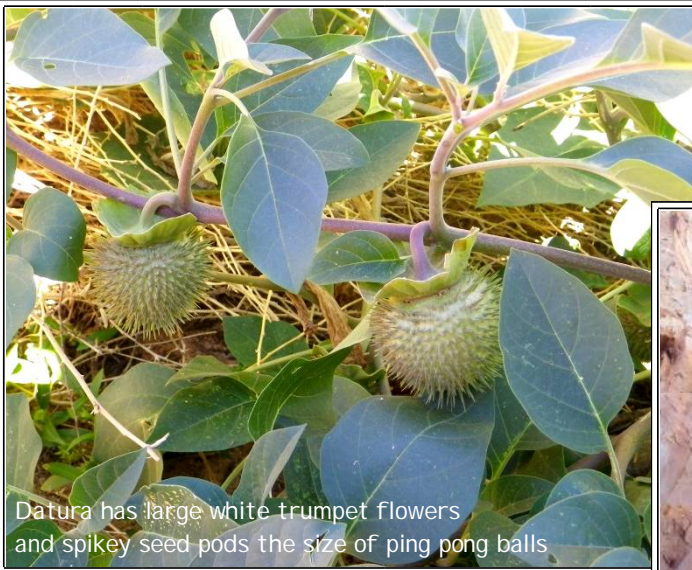
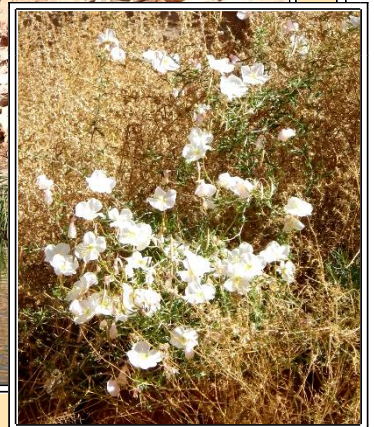
VISTAS AND PLANTS



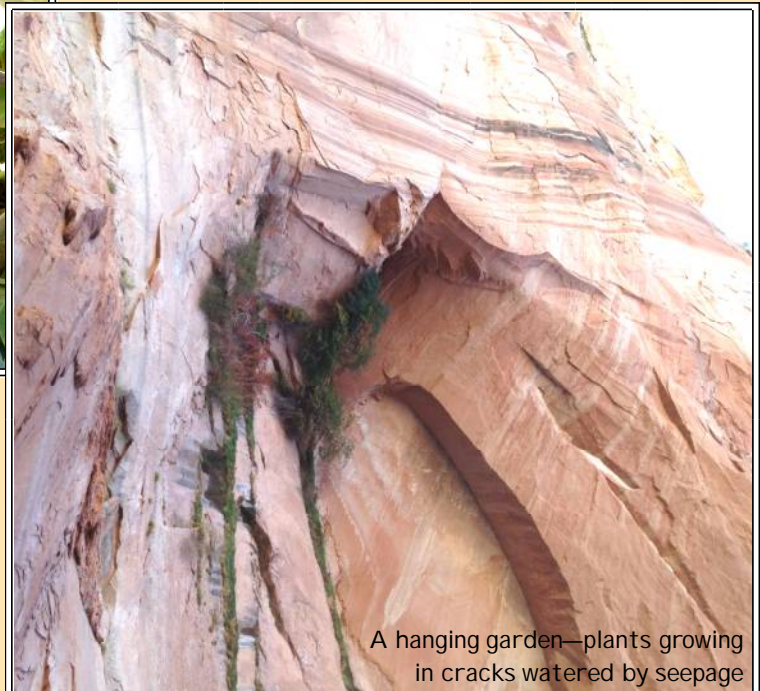
The morning view up-river from camp



Cattails and Evening Primrose
in Cedar Canyon



Datura has large white trumpet flowers
and spikey seed pods the size of ping pong balls



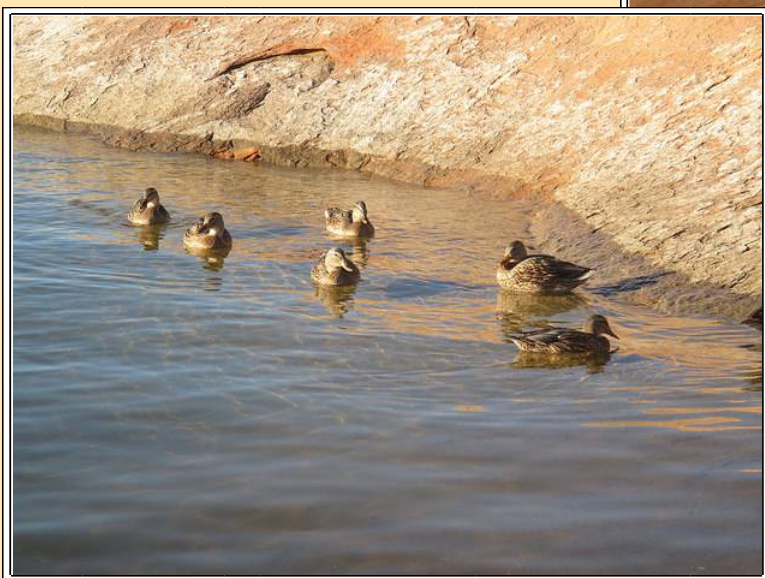
A hanging garden—plants growing
in cracks watered by seepage

The group saw a blue heron almost every day near a small drainage behind their campsite.

These ducks came by in the morning to see if they'd get fed.

There was an old catfish in the launching area that wouldn't take Dave Hustvedt's bait.

Dave did catch sight of a fox that was rattling things in camp one night.



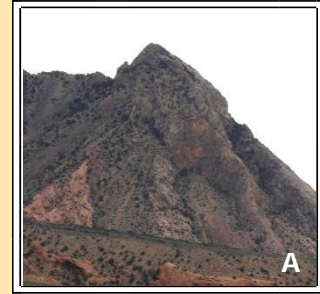
WILDLIFE

Who knows what got Sue's MRE that was jammed way up in her bow.

Maybe it was the same varmint that ruined her lunch dry bag.



CAMPING AND KAYAKING PICTURES



Dave Hustvedt says that the formation on the hill at Mile 19 [A] is the bullfrog that the marina is named after. Can you see it?

Tied the usual way, the skeg-pull string got worn off and had to be replaced. The problem was solved when the knots [B] holding it in place were tied above the edge to protect the cord from being scraped.



I KEA bags (C) are sure handy for hauling gear and keeping it out of the sand.

Dave and Lou Ann pitched their tent up the hill on the rocks. One of their "stakes" was especially well shaped [D].



The group ate dinner at the Tamarisk Restaurant, 870 Main Street, in Green River on the way home. The service was good, especially considering they'd been camping for a week, and the food was outstanding.

EDITOR'S NOTE: Joy Farquhar has kayaked for years, but this was her first time paddling in Canyon Country and her enthusiasm was fun to watch. Here are her memories and impressions of the trip, and more information about the geology of the area.

I am writing this brief report three months after our group kayak at Lake Powell. My memory still brings the awe felt on first paddling beneath the towering sandstone cliffs. In 1957 I visited the Glen Canyon Dam project; never did I dream that one day I would paddle on those dammed up waters.

What a congenial group! Need help? It was gladly given. Go it alone? No problem. Flexible days? Make and share plans to fit the individual wishes. Follow the rules? Be safe!

The geology was often a central focus. Turn a corner and there was a new formation, new colors, new sculpting, and new "ohs" and "ahs"! Conversations were often questions:

Where and when were these cliffs formed?

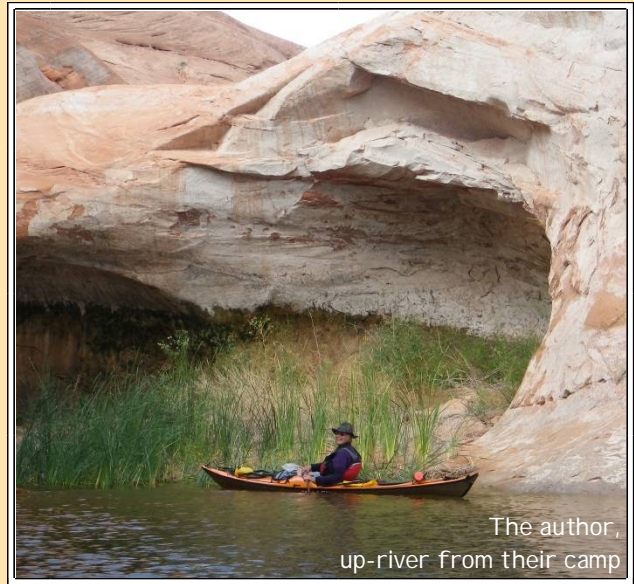
What caused the colors and why?

What are the mysterious iron concretion marbles we found gathered on the shore surface?

How did all this happen?

Who lived here?

The experience lingered on long after the return to home. Answers to geology questions could lead you to *Mysteries of Sandstone Colors and Concretions in Colorado Plateau Canyon Country* by Marjorie A. Chan and William T. Parry. Here attractively written explanations of the geology are accompanied with diagrams and pictures which will answer much, and maybe more than you want to know.



The author,
up-river from their camp



Joy in her orange Avocet

There were obviously other conversations:
What are you cooking?
What equipment, kayaks, clothing work best? How did you sleep? What's the forecasted weather? Will you come back?

That last answer is, "Yes!" I hope to return to Lake Powell again and hopefully with RMSKC. Thanks for being there and welcoming me, the newbie, to the group.

CONCRETIONS, A BIT OF LAKE POWELL GEOLOGY

By Joy Farquhar

I mentioned my fascination with the geology of Lake Powell and the concretions found there. I did a little more research using the book I mentioned, *Mysteries of Sandstone Colors and Concretions in*

Colorado Plateau Canyon Country by Marjorie A. Chan and William T. Parry. The information I'm using here is found in or copied from that source.

It turns out that the largest concentration of the concretions that we saw are found in that 4 Corners area. They are also called iron nodules, iron sandstone balls, or moki marbles. They range from baseball to pea size; pictures show them in many areas of Lake Powell and nearby.

The Jurassic Period, 144-206 million years ago, was their beginning. (Utah was closer to the Equator then.) The sandstone we see was a result of the largest dune event to ever exist in North America. In some places the dunes were up to 2500 feet deep. The concretion association to the sandstone is complicated but fascinating.

Briefly, by chemical processes the red pigment, hematite, was leached from the weathered granite by "reducing water" over millions of years. The iron was concentrated and came from the same red sandstone that has been bleached. We see the result of bleaching when we look at the various colors there: white, yellow, green, etc.

The hematite cemented around the quartz sand grains hundreds of feet underground. About 25-6 million years ago the iron concretions occurred. When the Colorado Plateau uplifted 80-150 million years ago and weathering and erosion occurred, these more weather resistant concretions were exposed.

Sometimes they are not spherical, but can be seen as columns, pipes or wavy flat sheets. Scientists are still studying the "why" of the spherical concretions. Suppositions include that they may have formed around "some seed or nucleus which altered the local chemistry to precipitate iron in a uniform (spherical) shape." They were there at our campsite!

These concretions were not unknown to early peoples here. They were found in Puebloan villages ranging in size from pea to large nodules. They had many uses: as coloring agents, pictographs, ornaments, grinding tools, for cooking and for ceremonial purposes by medicine men. (Years ago I was given a "moki" by a native women owner of the trading post on Highway 20 near Concrete, as a good luck piece for my travels, a bike trip across the U.S. It had traveled to her from her Navajo family in the Southwest. I have kept it as a valued gift.) Special permission is needed to remove any rocks or concretions from these protected areas.

So this book is a valuable resource! Many other sources are included and may be helpful to learn more.



The author with a concretion



On a 2013 trip to Lake Powell, Brian Hunter practiced rough water self rescues

BRIAN HUNTER'S ACCOUNT: October 11, 2014, gave us perfect driving weather for our self-supported Lake Powell trip. We stopped in Fruita for lunch a little

before noon where gas was just \$2.99 a gallon; I can't remember when I paid less than three dollars a gallon. The ride to Bullfrog was beautiful and uneventful.

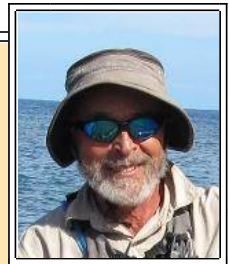
Lake Powell is known for sudden and ferocious winds that can be made worse when they funnel down the deep canyons. We were expecting high wind in late afternoon but it was already blowing in the low to mid teens at launch time. After a short pow-wow the group decided to give it a try. We were paddling in a tail-wind which quickly got much stronger with white caps forming everywhere you looked. The bow of my Kodiak was constantly awash. I had almost 90 pounds of gear not including the three gallons of water behind the seat making the kayak handle the weather much better. I was glad I had a rudder which made the kayak easier to control than a skeg would have done. The wind and waves continued to build so the group hauled out just a mile from the Marina to see if the wind would lay down. We ended up making camp still within sight of Bullfrog Marina because the winds were averaging 25mph gusting to 30. In those strong gusts, the whitecaps were tearing off and flying downwind.

We must have paid our weather dues on that first day because the rest of the trip we had decent weather. In October the water is too cold for a comfortable swim and the days and nights are on the cool side.

My first three trips to Lake Powell were on a house boat and I yearned to experience this wilderness self-supported. I was not disappointed; every time I go to Powell I see the same things differently. I am always filled with gratitude and awe at the rugged grandeur and spiritual nature of the water and canyons.

Every time I visit the water levels are different which means the camp sites from the last trip may be too high to climb to or under water. That's what I like best about Lake Powell: it's the same but always different! There is always the potential for a new challenge that will highlight each trip.

INFORMATION FOR FISHERMEN, FROM JAY GINGRICH: It is noteworthy that Utah has published warnings about eating striped bass from Lake Powell, due to mercury accumulation. Stripers are voracious predators and are higher on the food chain than smallmouth bass. A significant amount of the mercury comes from the Navajo coal generating station at Page, Arizona.



FROM THE EDITOR: This is the twelfth account of a trip to Lake Powell in the RMSKC publications archived on our website. Search "Lake Powell" in the *Index of Publications*, and then look for other articles that interest you in either the *Current Publications* or *Earlier Articles* sections.

Photos by Anne Fiore,
Joy Farquhar, Sue Hughes,
Brian Hunter, Jud Hurd
and Dave Hustvedt