



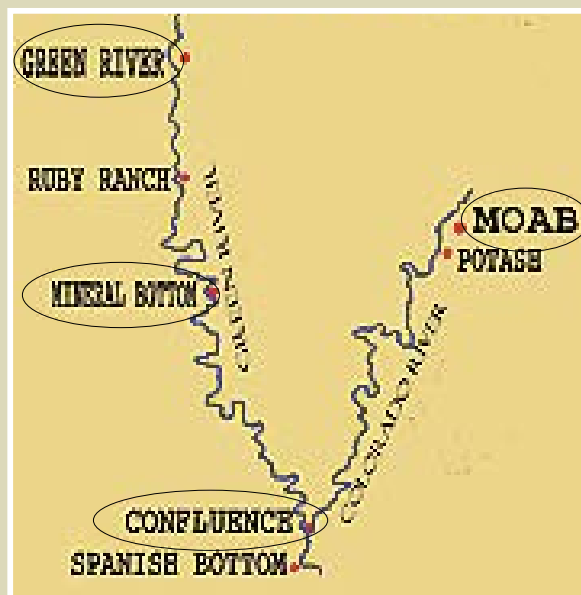
## RMSKC'S KAYAK CAMPING IN UTAH'S RED ROCKS COUNTRY

Over the years, the club has done four trips, on two rivers, all with easy-going leader Tim Fletcher. Here's the history:

In 2016, we paddled the lower portion of the Green, called Stillwater Canyon, from Mineral Bottom (west of Moab) to Spanish Bottom, past the Confluence. Read about it in Issue 24-2b of *The Mountain Paddler* on our website.

In 2017 we went down the Colorado from Moab to Spanish Bottom; see the 25-2b issue.

The paddle we did last year was on the upper portion of the Green, known as Labyrinth Canyon. That trip put in at Crystal Geyser south of the town of Green River, and took out at Mineral Bottom. This is the only section that doesn't need a jet boat shuttle back up the Colorado River. You'll find that account in *Mountain Paddler* 26-2b.



The Green River in Red Rocks Country, where not all the rocks are red and the water isn't usually this green

**NEW IN 2019:** We enjoyed an easier launch because the put-in at Mineral Bottom had a section of the bank scraped out by a backhoe to make the slope more gradual than last year.

### KAYAK CAMPING ON THE GREEN RIVER, 2019

**SIMILAR TO PAST TRIPS:** The lower portion of the Green this year was a lot like all our other Utah river trips. We had easy paddling, with hot days and cool and starry nights, the water was too silty to filter but good for cooling off, WagBagging got old, the wind caused problems, but only after we were off the water, service from Tex's Waterways was seamless, the camaraderie was wonderful, and a fine time was had by all.



Jetboat pickup: never a hitch, always exciting



**ALSO NEW THIS YEAR:** It had been a wet spring, so the mosquitos were worse than previous trips, and the high water meant that some places we'd camped, and some islands on the maps, were completely missing. The good news was it seemed there weren't as many shallow places to avoid, or maybe we were better at watching for them?

Bernie drove from California in his new Tesla. It was amazing: he used his phone to start it, and it could turn itself on to run the air-conditioning if the storage batteries needed to be cooled. The best part: charging for 2100 miles cost him \$158.

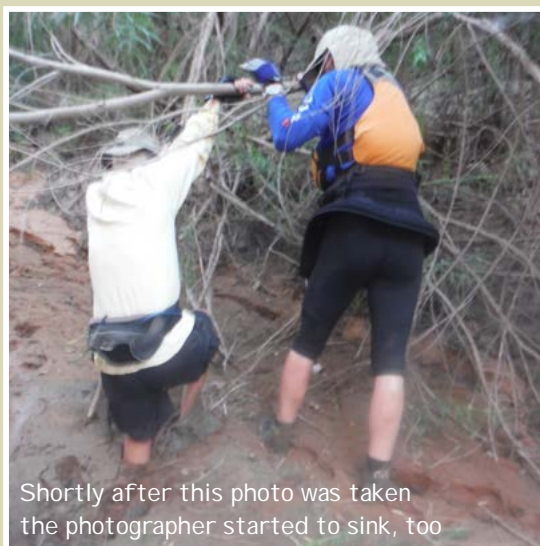
Marsha planned a birthday celebration, with hors d'oeuvres and a blow-up doll reminiscent of indecent ones seen on an earlier trip.



Naked Kayak Man,  
a gift to be remembered



Charging the Tesla



Shortly after this photo was taken  
the photographer started to sink, too

Although the waterfall wasn't running, Water Canyon was wetter than before; we almost lost people in the man-eating mud. On the hike back out, everyone picked up sticks and brush to make a bridge over the worst of it.



John and Tim  
trying to climb up to the lip of the dry waterfall



**PEOPLE NEW TO RIVER CAMPING:** Participants Bernie Dahlen, Dick Dieckman, Marsha Dougherty, Tim Fletcher, Jud Hurd and Sue Hughes had done the Green before. The other members of this summer's trip were first-timers John Anderson and Annabel Saunders. They are both excellent BCU-certified kayakers we remembered from Powell Houseboat, 2017. They live in Westcliffe and have hard-to-board animals, so they don't join club activities very often; we were super-glad to paddle with them again. They wrote this impression of their week on the river:

We are new to this type of trip. We've camped from kayaks on islands in Long Island Sound but not on a river. We've packed donkeys in the wilderness and run long distances in the desert, so this trip represented a combination of those experiences.

The bonus was having Tim do the organising<sup>1</sup> (Thank you, Tim), Sue guiding us on what to bring (Thank you, Sue), Clark lending us a plastic, higher volume boat (Thank you, Clark) and having the companionship and guidance of a whole group of experienced and entertaining people to travel with. You guys and women rock!



John and Annabel  
with their donkeys in the Westcliffe holiday parade

The scenery was spectacular and ever changing; with little effort we glided with the flow. The perspective of being on the river was a huge enhancement to the experience of the high desert, as we were constantly surrounded by greenery. The temps got up to 109° but most of the time you would not have known that on the river with some cool-down splashing, swimming and shade from the huge cliffs. The first night everyone was too hot but the second night, being positively chilly, caught us all off guard. The third night we went to our tents with woolly hats and blankets, which we did not need.

#### Excitement?

- On the first evening, a bat flew around and between us, almost touching us with each pass. It could certainly sense where the mosquitoes were thickest!
- A 'mild' sand storm on the last day blew away a tent, but it was rescued and re-erected with no harm done.
- Spotting granaries and a golden eagle on the cliffs. [Annabel is in the blue boat in the photo on the right.]
- A great blue heron or two around almost every bend and on every beach.



A two-story granary



Granaries are always in hard-to-reach spots

<sup>1</sup> They're Brits; that's how it's spelled in the UK.



- Getting nibbled by fish when we waded in for a cooldown. Apparently this costs \$75 for twenty minutes at a spa!
- Getting stuck in the mud on the way up to the waterfall at Water Canyon. Ingenuity and perseverance prevailed!
- Losing my watch on a beach where we camped and having it handed back to me on the jet boat by the couple who camped there the following night.
- Natural silence and dark, starry nights with shooting stars.



John and Annabel by the ruins in Jasper Canyon



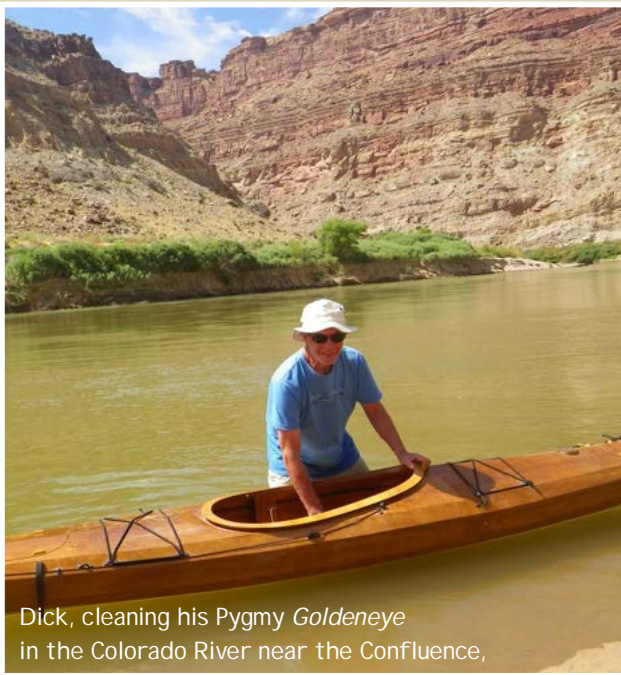
A fun part of every trip: visiting during the cool of the evening



Some of the grass was an amazing green



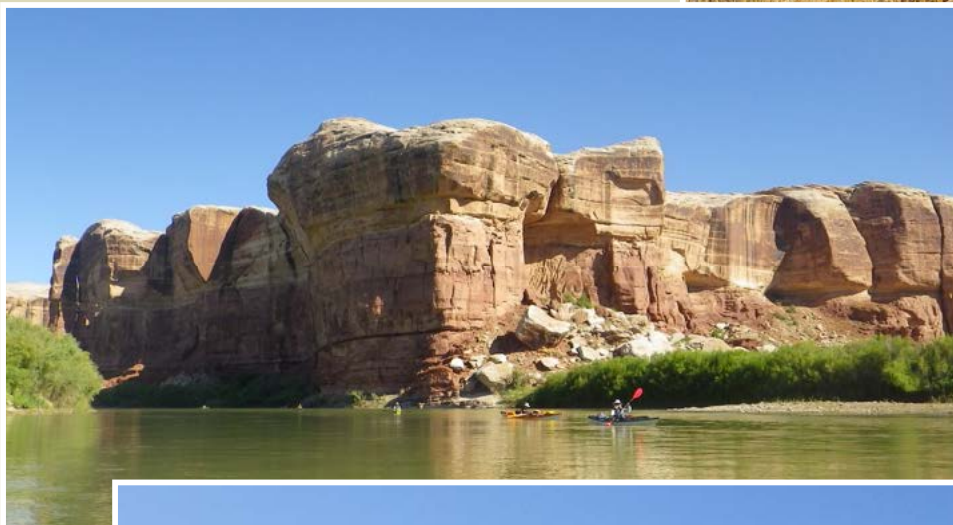




Dick, cleaning his Pygmy Goldeneye  
in the Colorado River near the Confluence,



View from  
Jasper Canyon



Paddling past the Sphinx, near river mile 27