



There was, as expected, a change in pH with depth of sample, changing from an average of 4.5 at the surface to 7.0 at a depth of 2m. The topsoil is likely to be more acidic in this area due to the high amounts of rainfall. Even if the rainwater is only slightly acidic then the topsoil can become more acidic due to ion exchange, while lower down, close to the basic bedrock, the samples are more alkaline.

Further work

The work could be improved if better maps of the area were available so that more streams could be identified and sampled both at the source and the mouth. The idea of using kayaks to sample the rivermouths was good as walking through the forest is very difficult.

Marine Ecology

This work was carried out by Fire 5 and Fire 2. During Phase one, Fire 5, accompanied by Chris Edge, did some exploratory diving. Then during Phases 2 and 3, Fire 2, led by Paul Trott, recorded several shore transects.

Both fires commented on the limited range of species found in their work, both on the inter tidal region and at depths down to 20m.

Although the time spent diving was very short it brought the reward of two rare species. Firstly, just below the thermocline at 15m, a nudibranch or sea slug was found. It measured about 8cm and has not been seen in British waters.

Then at 20m a large hydra was found; this had multiple retractile heads and was about 50 cm long. Again, Chris Edge, in all his diving experience, had never come across such a specimen before. Both the hydra and sea slug are the subject of further research.

Fire 2 looked at the variations in marine life upon the shore on both sheltered and exposed sites. The seashore had seaweeds that are found in British waters but these were few in number and variety. The exposed sites had fewer species, which was expected; this may be due to the scraping action of the sea ice on the shore during the winter months.

Medical report

- Conditions suffered
- Mild hypothermia (after a capsiz)
- Skin on fingers cracking
- Headaches
- Mosquito bites
- Blisters
- Migraines
- Cut fingers etc.
- Sprained wrists (from a fall)
- Medication used
- Waterproof tape
- Zinc oxide tape
- Neurofen I
- Paracetamol
- Melolin dressings
- Crepe bandages
- Finger dressings
- Finger tubigrip dressings
- Migraine tablets



Notes

In the mild hypothermia case the group eight man bivvy bag showed its true worth.

It was very interesting to note that two of our group who had previously suffered from migraines had migraine attacks whilst trekking.

Neurofen etc was useless. Only the swift application of special migraine tablets would suppress the migraine. One YE took two days to recover properly, showing the true disabling nature of the migraine in process. YEs who have suffered from migraines in the past should be told to bring migraine tablets with them.

Group first aid kits were deficient in the following:

- Melolin dressings
- Zinc oxide tape
- Finger tubigrip type dressings

Food and equipment report

Food generally very good all round. Some specific points could be raised: Alpen portions were too small.

Sardine rations were too small; tins of pilchards were better sized.

Boil in the bags were very good.

Sundries:

- Equipment:
- Tents:
- Tarpaulin:
- Primus stoves:
- Kelly kettles:
- Cooking equipment:
- Kayaks:

With 10 out of 12 in one group taking sugar in tea or coffee, sugar was always in short supply.

Arctic Conquest reliable as ever. Would help if all tents were thoroughly checked in the UK. One tent found to have wrong sized legs! Successfully 'adjusted' in field.

Lightweight tents were good for trekking.

By far the most valuable piece of equipment. Made life much more enjoyable.

Reasonably OK. Problems with local fuel - took a long time to prime and fuel dirty. Primuses worked well for only a few days before needing major internal cleaning.

It helped if fuel was kept topped up. Thankfully, most cooking was done on open fires.

Whoever services the Primuses will need to clean out all pipes from the fuel cylinder to pricker.

Very impressed with this boat from the start, so much so I'm buying one to replace my own sea boat. It was stable and robust, especially important to young people new to the sport, and lighter and more manoeuvrable than expected. The skeg design was very simple. On one or two boats the skeg rattled around inside the mounting. Any problems with the skeg were quick and easy to sort out. The skeg casing inside the back hatch was surprisingly unobtrusive.

Two types of backstrap were used. Nearly all the cheaper versions were broken by the end of the trip (those without the continuous webbing from one side of the cockpit to the other).

The compass mounted on the front hatch was good, although the plastic rims around the base of the compass all came off. The oval hatch was particularly good for access to the back hatch. Hatches were mostly watertight although one or two did leak periodically.

Spraydecks, paddles, cags, drybags etc: Good.

Lost equipment:

- Machete
- Tarpaulin (given away in Kovda).

John Ramwell



John Ramwell photographs