PERROS-GUIREC and The Seven Islands

After a fine time in Ploubazlanec, we all decided to make an excursion to Perros-Guirec, where one can make a boat ride to the Natural Reserve of The Seven Islands, about 40 minutes offshore the city of Perros-Guirec.

Our party became larger, with Michel and Sylvie joining, so we were seven all in all. Perros-Guirec is a little more than an hour driving from Paimpol: the roads are very good, and the scenery is beautiful all the drive long.

For newcomers to the newsletters: best follow this trip on Google Earth by typing Key words such as "Perros-Guirec". This will give an easy geographic overview of how we move. The same key words can be used in Wikipedia: many of the places are so charged with history that Wikipedia has pages and pages with the most interesting details on each of them. "Perros-Guirec" is a good example on that.

We continue with documented photographs:
The city of Perros-Guirec, which the locals call "Perroz" lives mainly from summer-tourism. It is blessed with three splendid beaches, and we landed at the biggest and most amazing one: high quality sands, very safe for bathing and water activities. It is called Trestraou beach.

Trestraou beach is bordered by some nice buildings from the beginning of the 20th century, but in its center, there are more modern commodities, with restaurants and some pleasing shops.
The climate is definitely a little less compared to L'Ile-de-Bréhat, but not far away from that: luxurious vegetation all over the surroundings.

To go to the Natural Reserve of The Seven Islands, one takes the boat on the western side of the Trestraou beach. Here you see one of the tourist boats embarking. We will join on the next one.
When the boat leaves Trestraou beach, we see already part of the coast with the famous "Granit Rose", Pink Granite. Look how clear the water: one can see 10 meters deep without difficulty. The dark blue below the rocks are algae, mainly Laminaria species, below the turquoise color is a sand bottom.

And this is how it looks when reaching the open sea: a superb coast with millions of shells.... Only waiting for the low tide before collecting and be aware that the Pink Granites can be dangerous when you are not used to walk on them.
When arriving near The Seven Islands, four happy members of our party: in the back: Michel and Sylvie, in front Mona and Philippe. The latter is truly happy, as these islands are a heaven of wildlife, not to be seen elsewhere.

The view from still quite far: that is the first impression of The Seven Islands. The Breton name for this Archipel is the "Jentilez". On the left, with the lighthouse, the island called "L'île aux Moines", in English "The Monk's Island."
This Island is special to Michel, as his dad was the guardian, in charge of the lighthouse for many years. Even Michel spends quite some time on the Island as a child.

At sea, it was pretty fresh, with the wind blowing all the time. Here the Philippine ladies Sheila on the left, Mona on the right: they are used to the sea and boats since childhood, living in an Archipelago of more than 7000 islands; however, it is different in the tropics…
The birds where it is all about in The Seven Islands: Morus bassanus (Linnaeus, 1758) - In French the "Fou de Bassan", in English the "Northern Gannet".

The Northern Gannet is the largest of the gannet family: the SULIDAE and its range is restricted to the northern Atlantic. The wingspan reaches 180 cm in large
These fantastic seabirds live and breed in colonies, and we are now visiting the largest colony in France: the grey-white area of the rock here seen on the right of this island, are thousands of Northern Gannets. This is in French the "Ile Rouzic", in Breton the "Riouzig". Riouzig is the most eastern of The Seven Islands.

A closer look: this is the eastern side of the rock with the Gannet population: all these big birds are sitting in mathematical order on the almost vertical rocks.
A boat similar to the one we are on. At the time of our visit, we were only two boats. They stayed at a distance from the birds and/or other wildlife; so, our special P1000 Nikon was truly useful.
And this is one of the more spectacular photos of Philippe: I imagine this is a male visiting Madame who is sitting pretty on the rocks. Look how impressive, how big, yet all is in elegance in the Northern Gannets.
In front of Riouzig Island, there is also a small population of Puffins. Puffins are of course the love of everybody: they are super popular, and sheer beautiful with their tricolor beaks and strong white and black robes.

The scientific name is Fratercula arctica (Linnaeus, 1758). The species suffered a lot, made a big come back in France, almost from extinction, but then 3 consecutive disasters with ships sinking and losing oil were a big setback. They are now once more developing.

Remark that there are a lot of amazing postage stamps with Puffins. I am a great fan of the stamps and the birds themselves. They love to eat fishes as I do also.
After leaving Riouzig the boat spends an hour on the central Islands, where, on offshore rocks, there were quite some dozens of seals of different species. Here a few photos. This one is a large male.

And here a female scratching herself in the afternoon sun.
A close up of this big male: he looks a little sad, despite the very nice conditions he is living in safe, full of fish around and a great sunny day.

If I remember well, the trip took about 3 hours. When going back they made a tour to show us the tremendous strange formations of the Pink Granites, one of the fames of Perros-Guirec.
Many figures and faces can be seen in this rock. There is another Island nearby where much Pink Granites were exploited and exported to Paris, where this kind of beautifully colored stone was much appreciated. Antwerp Zoo aquarium has a couple of aquaria decorated with Pink Granites from Brittany. On the boat, we got a complicate explanation on the geological history of this granite. You can read more in Wikipedia of course.
Back on the route to Paimpol: a stop on an antique shop. We bought some more oyster plates.

The view on the road: ever changing Brittany, here a river, with a village in the background.
We finally found a kind of bar with local delicacies for sale. Philippe and I are playing with the idea to collect sardine boxes: their covers are amazing. We noticed it is already a popular subject of collection in France and some boxes are especially made in "collectors' edition".

Another delicacy: the "rillettes" of fish.
After half a day on the sea, the ladies discovered the local sausages, and it is with a watering mouth we all attack the one here cut by Mona.

Because of the many photos we cut this excursion in two parts, the next part starts with the visit to the Aquarium of Tregastel. Brittany is so fascinating and full of assets that each day seems too short.

NEW REGULAR AUCTION ONLINE

We now have 100 selected shells for auction. All starting at 1 euro. This auction ends on Monday 2 September at 2 pm CET. (Central European Time)

https://auction.conchology.be

AUCTION RESULTS

An exciting auction last weekend with some truly conchological items. The start was on Saturday, but by Sunday things became quite lively to end in a great climax at the end.

The most bidded shell was unexpected a Xenophora japonica with a shark tooth attached.
An excellent item for the coffee table, as the saying goes there are no sharks in the Philippines - apart from the two dozen I met in my dives, including a gigantic tiger shark - and of course, the one from this Xenophora.

This fantastic tiger went high: 325 euro, but still moderate regarding the deep blue. It went to an American collector, who did, in my humble opinion, a great buy.
And this wonderful Conus, with two different patterns of lines on both sides, and in excellent condition, went through 13 bids and ended at 185 euro. Well deserved. Not all agree on the name, but we applied the modern views of Monnier & All. Nice and good shells are extremely scarce on the market indeed.
From Gambia, extremely rare, even some modern material has been found, the Conus wolof in fine condition only but with a fantastic clouded pattern on the dorsum, in pair with a big size. This exceptional shell went to a clever collector in the USA who got a true bargain with this piece at 51 euro.

Sincerely yours,

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For Conchology, Inc.

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