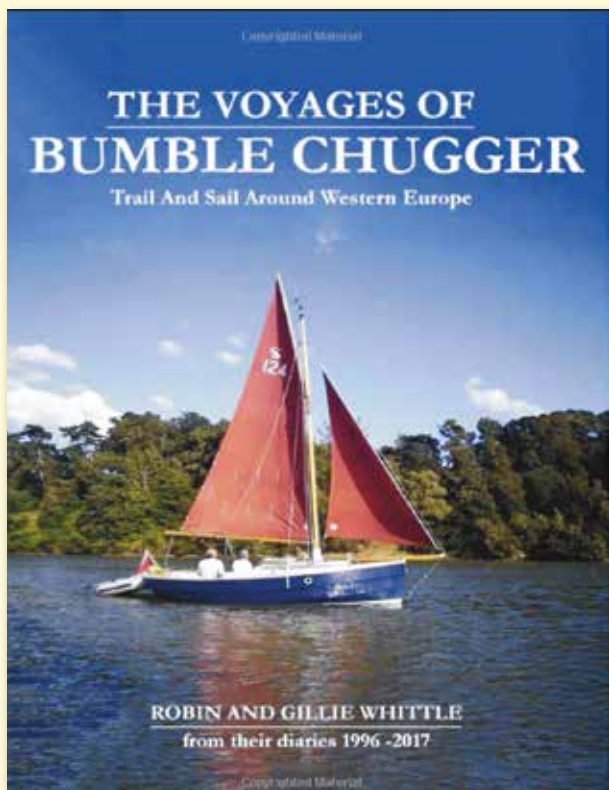


# The Voyages of Bumble Chugger: Trail and Sail Around Western Europe

by Robin and Gillie Whittle



## Book Review by Chris Forrest

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**WOULDN'T IT BE GREAT IF, WHEN YOU** bought your trailer sailer, it came with not only some sort of instruction manual but also something we might call an 'inspiration manual', a compendium of ideas for interesting cruises for boats like yours to help you assess whether X would be a good adventure or Y would suit you better? Where to launch and recover from? What sort of things to watch out for? And so on.

That's why we all love the DCA rally programme and this wonderful Journal. Cruising guides and pilot books are also useful but they seem aimed at bigger boats and organised by region so you'd need a shelf full to pick and mix the best routes for a trailer sailor.

When I saw the *Voyages of Bumble Chugger* and noticed in the blurb that Gillie and Robin had sold their 505 dinghy and bought this Cornish Shrimper 19-footer for their 60th, trailer-sailed her for 25 years and this self-published book was a compilation of their greatest hits, I sent off for a copy because the coincidence with Anna and I buying our 19-foot Bay Raider Expedition for our 60th birthdays was too good to be true.

This A4-sized book thumped onto the doorstep, the thickness of 4 Journals. In all I counted 42 trip reports. Most pages are illustrated with 3 or 4 photographs, maps and drawings. It's exactly what I'd hoped for; a bona fide Inspiration Manual! Robin and Gillie have

ticked off most of our bucket list. The classics are here: Mull, Skye, The Clyde, Broads, Scillies, Brittany, Scandinavian and Dutch cruises. Plus many others that got me thinking: a canal trip from London to Bristol and Pembroke then back along the South Coast, another from Woodbridge around the coast and upriver to Cambridge. Hmmm.

The cruising content is presented chronologically, starting with their first sailing trip in 1997 through to a holiday in Ireland in 2017.

Gillie writes very honestly about the good, the bad and the ugly (Regents Canal is off my list). They're also braver sailors than us. Within weeks of owning *Bumble Chugger* they are tackling cross-Channel night passages. Nothing seems to faze them. With their positive energy Robin and Gillie seem to make friends everywhere and are clearly great company; Robin looks to be laughing in over 50% of his photos.

The only downside of this charming, self-published book is the cost. It's £20 plus £5 p&p but that's only 59p per trip and IMHO this sort of inspiration is priceless.**CF**