

# Burlington, Juniper Island, Shelburne Bay

**Date:** 9/20/2004

**Distance:** 11 miles

This was perhaps the most glorious day either of us can ever remember being out on the water. The sky was blue, the wind calm, and the air warm and we had the lake to ourselves, it being a Monday in late September. After a quick look around Burlington Harbor, where we were dwarfed by the incoming ferry and outgoing tour boat, the Ethan Allen III, we headed straight out to Juniper. We were a little disappointed that the Lois McClure was not in port, as we passed by her dock at Perkins Pier. We are still hopeful that we will catch up with her before the season is over. Despite its checkered history, Juniper is a beautiful island with layers of "paint can" rock comprising its steep shoreline. "Paint Can" rock is my less than elegant but very functional name for the gray slate rock drizzled with white calcite that one sees in great abundance along the Vermont side of the lake.

Juniper is privately owned and there were people at the boathouse on the southeast shore so we did not stop dispute the fact that it was time for lunch. "Let's have lunch on Rock Dunder" said I naively!! It was impossible to get within 100 yards of Rock Dunder without being offended by its stench. Indian gods notwithstanding, the gulls and cormorants had taken over and we were not going to challenge their habitat. So we had yet another floating lunch sharing Margy's lunch because mine was securely stashed away in the front waterproof hatch of my kayak. How useful! It was still so calm that the ferry far to the north looked like it was floating above the water and the distant northern horizon was hard to distinguish because the blue gray of the water matched exactly the blue gray of the sky. The contrails of the jets flying overhead reflected perfectly in the water.

Burlington was spectacular from this distance and depending on where you were, you could frame it with Mt. Mansfield, or Camel's Hump in the background. We could have floated out there all day but we did have miles ahead of us and a deadline with which to get Margy back in time to go to work. As we approached Red Rocks I was wondering what the big deal was about this point of land. It was not until we got within 10-20 yards of the shore that I begin to appreciate the sheer beauty of the rocks. Despite many visits to Red Rocks Park by land I had never really seen the rocks for which the place is named. They are beautiful and we now have far more than enough pictures to prove it. As we paddled down Shelburne Bay hugging the west facing shore we passed the opening to the now infamous Potash Brook. There was a fairly large flock of Canada geese hanging out there, at least until we arrived, probably because of the nutrients flowing from the brook. Likewise there was another group of geese at the opening to Monroe Brook further down the shoreline. Clouds suddenly appeared from nowhere although the wind did not pick up and we ended this beautiful day under the cover of gray sky but the memory of the incredible beauty of the morning will get us through many a dark winter day.