

1981 CSY 44 Walkthrough, 5' Draft
PANAMA TO ROATAN - THE LESS TRAVELLED ROUTE

PREPARATION AND OVERVIEW

By the time Soggy Paws was ready to head North from Panama in the Spring of 2001 we had been out two and a half years from Florida, having completed two thirds of a clockwise circumnavigation of the Caribbean. As avid divers, Stacy and I were looking forward to less crowded anchorages, clear water, live coral and large sea creatures. Since we would have an additional crewmember aboard we decided to stop along our way at some of the islands and cays for which there are no cruising guides. Here's what we found on our 4 week trip north from Panama to Roatan, Honduras.

The best time of year to make this trip is April/May, after the winter trades slow somewhat and before the summer hurricane season starts.

Good sources for weather info are the cruisers' Panama Connection net at 1330Z on 8107 while in Panama and the banks and when further north the Northwest Caribbean net at 1400Z on 8188, both USB daily.

Chart coverage is somewhat sporadic in that some of the islands and banks have detailed US charts and others do not. Regardless, in comparing the charted positions of the various navigation lights on the islands with our GPS (accuracy less than 10 meters) we found all to be considerably in error (as much as 780 yards off). There is a wonderful set of charts available through the Colombian Navy in Cartagena that gives good coverage to all the possible stops. We did not purchase them and do not know their accuracy. Because of the inaccuracy of the US charts for the area, we recommend careful eyeball navigation and a good set of polarized amber sunglasses to cut glare and enhance shallow area colors.

There are a number of choices from where to start the journey depending on how far east you are willing to go, what the winds are doing and how weatherly your boat is. Obviously, the further east you start the better chance you will have to sail north against the NE to E trades. The starting point options for us included Colon, Portobelo, the San Blas Islands, all in Panama, and Cartagena or its offshore Colombian islands to the west, the Rosarios or San Bernardos. We chose Portobelo to start from because we were there, it was only 36 hours to our first stop and we did not have the time to go further east. We had already spent considerable time in the San Blas Islands and Colombia. A more easterly starting point would make sense for anyone wanting to sail further north than the San Andres/Providencia area on the initial jump.

From the start we had planned to stay well off the Nicaraguan coast, due to its inhospitable reputation. We also wanted to round Cabo Gracias a Dios by the widest margin possible to stay well away from the border between Nicaragua and Honduras where cruisers had been problems with suspected pirates and drug runners in the Media Luna and Vivorillo Cays. We felt that any of the Colombian islands and cays would be far enough off shore to be safe for us, especially since almost all have Colombian military bases.

We picked Serranilla Bank with its Colombian Marine base as our final safe refuge before making the two day jump from the Colombian banks to Honduras. Serranilla Bank is about 200 miles off the cape and would allow us to clear the border by more than 150 miles. An additional incentive is the wide deep channel just west of Rosalind Bank with a strong northwest current

that would carry us safely through the shallow banks and into the northwest Caribbean.

By the time we were ready to leave Portobelo in late April we had picked up two additional crew. A long time Navy friend, Dave Whall, had flown down from Florida to join us for the trip, and Stacy had finally convinced a Panama Canal Yacht Club kitten, we named Radar, to come aboard as official ship's cat. If ever there was a boat that needed a cat aboard it was Soggy Paws.

PORTOBELO, PANAMA:

After two months in the San Blas Islands we had very much enjoyed our two months in Portobelo. It has a fantastic history including early Age of Exploration Columbus visits in 1502, two hundred years of annual Spanish gold and silver trade fairs for the plate fleets heading back to Europe, sea battles with famous English sea captains like Sir Francis Drake and attacks from famous pirates such as Henry Morgan. One of Columbus' ships was sunk in the harbor, and Drake's lead coffin lies on the bottom just offshore.

There are three major Spanish forts to explore and several others, little visited, hidden in the jungle. Old buildings and rusting cannons are everywhere. Deeper in the jungle is the old Camino Real Trail from Panama City, over which the treasures of the South American Inca were carried by mule train by the Spaniards to the waiting plate fleets.

Several hours down the road to the east is the old port of Nombre de Dios, a harbor full of old shipwrecks, where the first 50 years of plate fleets were loaded up. While we were in Portobelo we spent a day riding horses back into one of the valleys, took a half day hike up to a ridge to the west to see some old ramparts with cannon and a great view of the harbor, visited all the forts, explored several rivers by dinghy and snorkeled around the mouth of the bay. Although we did not have a chance to do it, the scuba diving just off shore is reported to be wonderful.

We did take a strenuous but fantastic 3 day hike into the jungle along crystal clear mountain streams into an old growth tropical forest area known as the Bruja Mountains. Bruja means witch in Spanish. It was named after the old escaped slave stronghold on top of Cerro Bruja (a 7 day hike further into the jungle) where primitive rituals and their far away location reportedly kept escaped slaves safe from the Spanish. It is a very remote area but also very beautiful and well worth the effort. Many of these adventures were suggested to us by a former American cruising couple who live in Portobelo on the water, Pat and Dick Mc Gehee. Pat has written an excellent history of the area called "The Portobelo Chronicles". Our guide for the horseback ride and the 3 day hike is another local, an expatriot Finn named Hekki Rasmussen. Both are great resources for information about the area. Transportation to Colon or Panama City for shopping is easy via the local inexpensive bus system departing hourly from town for the 1.5 hour ride to Colon. From there it's two hours to Panama City in a luxury express bus with movie for \$2 US. There is a large modern grocery store only 45 minutes by bus from Portobelo at the main crossroads.

CAYOS ALBUQUERQUE, COLOMBIA

Approach and Anchorage: We started our trip at 0630 on 1 May 2001. The trip north to the Albuquerques is 211 miles from Portobelo and took us almost 36 hours, motorsailing into northeast winds and seas. The current was generally from the east necessitating heading up

even further in order to stay on track.

Proceed from the south to GPS positions

12-08.00N/81-54.00W
12-09.97N/81-54.39W
12-11.26N/81-53.11W
12-11.34N/81-51.84W
12-10.01N/81-51.15W
12-09.76N/81-50.70W

and then east to the anchorages indicated below.

The approach across the reef and down to the two islands should be done with good, preferably afternoon light as you must cross the outer reef from the northwest and then proceed several miles southeast to a protected anchorage just west of the two islands.

If you anchor west of the two islands several hundred yards you can find 30' in sand and coral at GPS 12-09.71N/81-50.56W.

If you go a little further east between the two islands you can find 20' in mostly sand at GPS 12-09.75N/81-50.45W.

We were able to see well enough with good amber polarized sunglasses during our arrival around 1700 to get down to the islands. There is another approach to the islands from the west but we did not attempt it as it was late in the day when we arrived and we had no information about it. It looked fairly clear from the anchorage the next day and would be worth exploring in good light as it would save some time upon arrival from the south.

If one should arrive late there is an anchorage spot in 30' at GPS 12-11.34N/81-51.84W that can be reached in the dark, just inside the northwest entrance through the outer reef. Bill and Soon on Gaia, who came in several days behind us, anchored there for the night and then moved south behind the islands.

Information: The Albuquerque Cays is a roughly circular shallow coral reef area about four miles in diameter with two small palm studded islands along the the east side. The area belongs to Colombia which maintains a military presence there. Nine Colombian marines occupy a small but very neatly kept base on the northern island where the working navigational light is located at GPS 12-09.92N/81-50.40W.

They are reprovisioned and change personnel every 30 days. They will want you to come ashore and visit their commandante so he can view your ship's papers and record basic information in their handwritten log. He reports to San Andres daily using their HF radio so they can keep track of boat movements throughout their islands for both your and their security. They are very friendly and accommodating, but there is no fuel or provisions available.

There is a sizeable fishing camp on the southern island with at least eight outboard powered boats which catch lobster, fish and conch in the area. We were told that we could obtain seafood from them though we did not.

The snorkeling is excellent both inside and outside the barrier reef to the east. Water visibility

was nearly 100' while we were there. Inside the depths are shallow, generally less than 8', with lots of small reef fish and live coral.

We found one dinghy cut through the reef just about due east of the northern island.

Dinghy Cut 12-10.12N 81-50.03W.

Outside the reef the depths slope gradually into 20-30ft until a deeper drop about a quarter mile offshore. There are lots of spectacular coral formations and small caves but very few lobster and large fish. We towed behind the dinghy for several miles north along both the inside and outside of the eastern reef. We did not have time to explore the western reefs but they sure looked great from the boat. I'm sure the fishermen could give you plenty of information if your Spanish is good.

Overall the Alberques make a convenient stop with excellent snorkelling and a secure anchorage without having to spend money to check in.

We did NOT stop at another bank area 25 miles to the northeast, Cayos del Este Sudeste. We were told it also has Colombian military.

SAN ANDRES ISLAND, COLOMBIA:

Approach and Anchorage: From Cayos Albuquerque to San Andres is a pleasant 29 mile day sail. We mostly motor sailed close hauled against light northeast trades and only slight current. Proceed from the south along the eastern shore to the entrance buoy. From there the entrance channel is well lit and buoyed the couple of miles to the anchorage off Nene's Marina. It is well protected in mostly sand with grass in about 10 feet of water. Use red right returning going in.

Entrance Bouy:	12-32.12N	81-41.24W
Anchorage:	12-34.63N	81-41.75W

Information: All cruisers must use one of several agents to check in and out at San Andres. We used Rene Cardona of Serrana Agency who can be reached on VHF 16. The normal fee is \$40 US, everything included, 7 days a week. However, if you also stop at Providencia it will cost you another \$40 US to check in and out. While we were there, Nene's Marina dock diesel was \$1.10 US/gallon, gasoline \$1.60/gallon, potable water about \$.35/gallon in 5 gallon jugs and fresh water for washing was free. This is the only stop between Panama and the Bay Islands in Honduras to take on a big fuel stock. It was a tight fit, but we were able to get Soggy Paws in alongside the small fuel dock to fuel and then off again in a rising wind that was pushing us on the dock. Nene's does have several slips available from which you can also fuel using their extra long hose. Provisioning was good and there was at least one well stocked hardware store in town. The other Marina along the waterfront, Club Nautico, seemed more for local members. There were no cruising sailboats at their docks. Although there is some sightseeing to do around the island we spent only one day and then moved on north in order to take advantage of a short weather window.

Our main reasons for stopping at San Andres were for fuel and final provisioning before heading north where there were no facilities until we reached Roatan. Therefore we spent little time exploring what seemed like a fairly touristy island.

LOW CAY, PROVIDENCIA, COLOMBIA:

Approach and Anchorage: It is 69 miles north northeast from San Andres to Low Cay, a small island on the north end of the reef surrounding Providencia. We left San Andres around 0700 and arrived at Low Cay at about 1900. During our trip we had winds to 20 knots from the north and up to one knot of current against us.

Proceed from the south along the western shore to the approach waypoint, then to the first anchorage, approachable at night. A better anchorage, just south of the island in 10ft, is approachable in good light through GPS 10' to GPS.

Initial Approach:	13-28.82N	81-24.89W
First Anchorage:	13-31.15N	81-20.16W
Better Anchorage App	13-31.31N	81-20.39W
Better Anchorage:	13-31.39N	81-20.36W
Low Cay Light	13-31.53N	81-20.32W

Information: Low Cay is a small island about 9 miles north of the entrance to Catalina Harbor, Providencia. It is remote enough not to require formal check in, and is often used by cruisers on their way north. The charted light on small Low Cay just north of the anchorage was operating while we were there (we took our handheld GPS and checked its position. Both anchorage spots provide great protection from the northwest clockwise through the south.

There is a coral reef partially awash and in some places above the high tide line extending both east and west from the island. The snorkeling inside the reef is quite nice with lots of coral, small reef fish and visibility in the 30-50' range. We saw only a few conch and lobster and not many large fish. One of the reasons we had to decided to stop at Low Cay was to try to find the shipwreck shown on the chart as the Jackdaw (1835). It looked to be about one mile east of the light and outside the reef. There are two breaks in the reef through which a dinghy can travel. The one west of the small island is at 13-31.56N 81-20.73W and the one to the east is at 13-31.34N 81-19.79W. We used the dinghy to tow a snorkeler for about three miles along the outside of the reef in 15' of water inspecting the bottom. We encountered visibility approaching 100' with lots of pretty coral formations but no crustaceans or large fish.

We did not find the Jackdaw, but we did find a very interesting modern steel freighter in about 20ft at GPS 13-31.13N 81-18.85W. It was about 300 feet long and had been laid completely open and scattered over the bottom, probably by a major storm in the last few years. Everything was still there including the engine, shaft, propeller, anchors and chain, a deck crane and all the interior and deck fittings. Most interesting was the cargo which included truck frames and two complete tracked tractors sitting upright on the bottom complete with intact cabs and scoops. This wreck makes a great snorkel in calm weather since the water is very clear and the depths are shallow.

We did not go into Providencia because of time constraints and the \$40 US check in fee. We understand it is a good stop for sightseeing but there is not much in the way of provisions. A fellow cruiser who went in only to fuel told us that he was able to stay 24 hours without checking in so that he could obtain a small amount of diesel fuel from a local fisherman. If you should want to go into Providencia you will most likely check in with a Mr Bush who is often on the Northwest Caribbean SSB net in the morning.

Low Cay makes an excellent stop for rest, snorkeling and waiting for that perfect weather window for heading north.

QUITA SUENO BANK, COLOMBIA:

Approach and Anchorage: The trip from Low Cay to our first anchorage at Quito Sueno Bank was 53 miles. We experienced light wind from the east northeast, relatively calm seas and little current. As we made our approach we noticed several large fishing vessels laying out buoy strings which we were careful to avoid. Although we arrived around 1600 in the afternoon we were able to get into the better anchorage indicated below about an hour before sunset. Rose or amber polarized sunglasses are a must for navigating this bank where deep blue channels wind between numerous shallow reef and isolated coral/sand areas. The difficulty lies in determining how far out of your way you have to go to get over shallow areas without running aground or whether or not you can get into that inviting looking anchorage. No land is visible, but three rusting freighters can be seen off to the east on the outer reef.

Approach from the south to Approach #1, then to Approach #2 then to an outside anchorage approachable at night in 30ft. A better anchorage can be found in 15ft behind a small reef to the east. Use care and good light making the approach to the better anchorage as there are numerous coral heads all around after you leave the outside anchorage.

Approach #1	13-30.92N	81-21.22W
Approach #2	14-18.00N	81-14.00W
Anchorage	14-18.58N	81-13.48W
Better Anchorage	14-18.69N	81-12.79W

Information: The bank itself stretches for 25 miles north-south and about 7 miles east-west. It belongs to Colombia but it appears that several other countries have negotiated fishing rights to the area. It is known locally as a graveyard of ships. If you look on a chart of the area you will see that the eastern edge of the bank is covered with shipwreck symbols. There is no land but there are at least four large steel freighters aground on the eastern outer reef. Some of the deeper water on the bank drops to almost 50'. Many of the shallower areas including the first hundred yards behind most of the eastern outer reef have deep sand with good holding before it drops off.

We found a few lobster and many many conch on the bank. Again we spent time towing a snorkeler behind the dinghy but did not have the time to thoroughly search for the many shipwrecks in the area. The weather did not allow us to go outside the eastern outer reef. During the week we were on the bank we stopped at three anchorages: the first is mentioned above on the western side of the bank about midway between the north and south extremities; the next to the east just behind the eastern outer reef and the final about a mile and a half south of the light at the north end of the bank.

Our first anchorage in 15ft, just behind a small awash reef, was a bit rolly but tolerable in 15 knots of easterly wind. There was a nice coral drop along the eastern edge of the reef into 35' with large overhangs and caves. We saw a few lobster, some large snappers but no conch here. Visibility ranged up to 50ft. Next we moved east toward the largest aground shipwreck on the horizon. After a couple of enjoyable hours threading our way through the reefs we arrived at our second anchorage at 14-18.71N 81-08.35W.

We passed up several other great looking spots to get to the outer reef. The spot we chose was in 11ft in deep sand about 400 yards west of the outer reef with the largest aground wreck 3/4 miles to the east. It was a spectacular location with a cut through the outer reef just a couple hundred yards to the north. The white sand dropped off to 30ft just off our stern and there were miles of open ocean all around. We snorkelled daily in the exceptionally clear water. This location had the most conch of anywhere we have been in the Caribbean. But maybe not for long, as there were 4 large fishing vessels dispatching 6-8 small boats each hunting for whatever they could find on the reef. They were around the entire week we were there. Water clarity was exceptional in this area.

After waiting for several days for the wind to ease off from its daily 20 knot strength we finally had to move on. We spent most of the day moving slowly north along the inside of the outer reef until we were blocked off by the coral and had to turn west and then back north to our next anchorage at GPS 14-27.40N 81-08.57W.

This spot was about 1.5 miles south of the operating navigation light. Along the way, especially in the first four miles, the going was beautiful and easy. We found many sandy tranquil anchorage spots and cuts through the outer reef. We generally stayed roughly 1/4 mile west of the reef just off the sand drop in the deeper water so we could observe closely the grounded freighters and best anchorage spots.

After that the travel became more difficult and soon we were cut off from going north by shallow banks and reefs. We had to run west for a while until we were about 1.5 miles west of the outer reef before we could turn north again. Finally, we were able to cut back toward the eastern outer reef for our night's anchorage.

The navigation light at the north end of Quita Sueno Bank was operational while we were there and is located at GPS 14-28.89N/81-07.20W. Early the next morning we followed our track back out through the reef to the west and headed northeast for the overnight passage to Serranilla Bank.

Quita Sueno Bank is a seldom visited area that would make a wonderful stop for a couple of boats for up to several months. We will certainly go back some day to more fully explore this pristine area.

Another bank that we did not stop at due to lack of time was Serrana Bank which is about 60 miles to the east. There is Colombian military and a navigation light at South West Cay.

SERRANILLA BANK, COLOMBIA:

Approach and Anchorage: From Quita Sueno Bank we took 24 hours to move northeast toward our Serranilla Bank via the approach waypoint and then to a waypoint alongside Beacon Cay.

Approach	15-45.18N	79-51.56W
Beacon Cay	15-47.99N	79-51.13W
North Side Anch	15-47.90N	79-50.83W
South Side Anch	15-47.77N	79-51.08W

From the point alongside Beacon Cay, the side of the island you choose to anchor will depend on the local wind conditions. Both sides have spots with good sand bottom in 15ft.

The island is small and oriented southeast-northwest so that any significant wave action wraps around the island. On the chart this cay appears to have good shelter on the northeast side due to the presence of a shallow reef to the east. However, the reef is too broken up and deep to provide much protection.

With winds from the northeast through southeast at 15-20 knots we were unable to find a comfortable spot despite moving several times. Most of the three days we were there we had 2-3 foot seas rolling through the anchorage.

Information: Serranilla Bank is an 18 by 25 mile area comprising four small cays and other shallow areas on the southeastern side of a large bank of coral and sand.

It is the farthest northeast Colombian bank. Like all the others it too is occupied by nine Colombian marines. The preferred stop and the location of the marine outpost is Beacon Cay where there is an operating navigation light atop a real concrete light house.

As we experienced at earlier stops at Colombian held islands, the marines were very friendly and kept a very neat and orderly island. They welcomed us with coconut drinks and only asked for basic information to record our visit in their handwritten log. While we were ashore visiting with the marines they told us that the other small cays on the bank had even worse shelter and were nothing more than piles of coral rubble and sand. So we did not take the time to visit them.

As we prepared to leave on the morning of the fourth day there we were hailed by the Colombian Coast Guard vessel preparing to change out the marines ashore. They told us in Spanish that they would like to perform a drug inspection before we left. With some trepidation we agreed. Their visit which lasted almost an hour was very professionally done including taking off their shoes while aboard. We thoroughly enjoyed talking with them and observing their inspection procedure which included holding the rest of the crew on the bow while I showed them below. We were finally released and by 1000 were on our way to Swan Island.

After discussing the route west with the marine officer on Beacon Cay we had decided to proceed directly west with good light across the bank keeping the visible and dangerous West Breakers off our port beam about a half mile.

Serranilla Bank would have been a great stop had the weather been more benign. However, with anything over 15 knots of wind the anchorages become somewhat roly and therefore uncomfortable. We had only come this far northeast in order to clear Cabo Gracias a Dios by as much as possible and to see the bank. Next time we may try Serranna Bank instead.

SWAN ISLANDS, HONDURAS:

Approach and Anchorage: From Serranilla Bank we proceeded west and then northwest through the deep channel between GPS 15-56.10N 80-36.01W and GPS 16-46.93N 81-10.42W along the western side of Rosalind Bank. This kept us almost 150 miles off the dangerous Cabo Gracias a Dios. As advertised on the chart the current boosted our speed up to two knots during most of this trip.

At sunrise on the day after leaving Serranilla Bank we were greeted by a gleaming white vessel, the US Coast Guard Cutter Adventurous, approaching off our starboard side. When I called to say hello, among other things we were asked what our last port of call was. I knew that my answer mentioning Colombia was going to cause a problem. Sure enough after a short pause we were asked to prepare for a boarding, our second in 24 hours. Again it was quite a pleasant experience. We did not even have to change course or slow down as the big bright orange RIB came alongside and dropped off the inspection team. This time Stacy, David and Radar got to stay in the cockpit while I answered questions and showed our visitors below. We felt very safe when we learned that this area is well patrolled by the US. After an hour the team left us to continue on our journey.

We had planned to approach the western Swan Island anchorage from the southeast but while underway learned on the SSB from friends that a southeast wind had come up making that anchorage untenable.

From a point about a half mile east of Little Swan, GPS 17-25.11N 83-52.89W, we skirted the north coasts of both islands looking for a suitable anchorage without swell. We finally settled on James Bay which is located at the far northwestern corner of Great Swan Island.

James Bay: Approach this bay from GPS 17-24.95N 83-56.37W at the entrance to the bay to our anchorage at GPS 17-24.73N/83-56.37W. Between these two points there are several coral heads in the 50 yard wide channel leading into the bay. Proceed slowly in good light until you reach the sandy area in about 8-10ft. Here there is just enough room for one boat to anchor comfortably. Snorkel in the clear water to check out the proximity of nearby coral heads. In reasonable weather other boats could anchor in about 30ft near the approach waypoint and maybe a cat or shallow draft boat closer to shore in the sand. Every other spot along the north coasts of the two islands including Fowler's Bay just to the east of our anchorage had too much swell or no good anchor spot.

Information: The Swan Islands consist of two islands roughly 4 miles long east to west. The Honduran Navy maintains a presence here with one officer and 4 enlisted. They are quite friendly and interested in showing you around their island. The islands were devastated by hurricane Mitch in October 1998. Not much is left standing except some of the concrete buildings that were built to house personnel involved in the Contra war in the 1980s.

The navigation light on Great Swan is in pieces on the ground and not operating. It's base is located at GPS 17-24.53N 83-56.45W.

Both the boat dock and 5500ft airstrip are in use.

Like the Colombians the Hondurans want to get some basic information from you to record your visit. They have both VHF and HF radio. They answer up on VHF channel 16 to Isla Cisnes" which means "swan" in Spanish. There is also about 120 cattle on the island left over from the Contra training era. Their ownership was in litigation while we were there as the previous civilian caretaker of the island had been recently murdered in Guanaja. His wife claimed ownership and still has a house and truck on the island.

The Honduran officer told us that the diving and snorkeling was quite good around the island but that Mitch had chased away most of the lobsters and fish. In James Bay the snorkeling was only fair as most of the coral was dead and there were very few fish.

The Swan Islands are an interesting stop. Although adequacy of the anchoring is somewhat dependent on the wind direction, with perseverance a suitable spot can be found. It's location is convenient to break a trip from Cabo Gracias A Dios to anywhere in the northwestern Caribbean.

We left the Swan Islands on the morning of 25 May and arrived at Guanaja almost exactly 24 hours later. We made the short day hop to Roatan on 29 May in time for our friend Dave to catch his plane the next day. The approach to Guanaja, Roatan and the rest of the Bay Islands is well covered in Nigel Calder's Cruising Guide To The Northwest Caribbean and Julius Wilensky's Cruising Guide to the Bay Islands. If you make this trip north from Panama take the time to stop along the way. Your effort will be well rewarded.

Alternate Route & Vivarios Waypoints

Nov '96 - From Hi Twin (KE6KEC) via Ham Net: (Nov '96) Trip through **Edinburg Channel...** from Providencia outer bouy...1st WPT 14°54.25N 82°40.00W (this is slightly n of Ed Reef, S of Cock Rocks). Went thru at 2am, on a heading of 325°, should never see less than 60'. Next WPT off Bobel Cay 15°05.00N 82°44.50W. WPT 3 keeps you off Banco de Cabo 15°20.00N 82°56.00W. Next waypoint keeps you off Banco del Falso WPT 15°30.0N 83°07.0W. Finally, anchorage at Vivario is 15°49.73N 83°18.43W. Anchorage at Vivario probably OK to go in at night, shallows gradually and you can feel your way in, very protected w/ NE winds. Prov - Vivario distance is 186 Mi.

Island Time anchored in another spot at Vivarios 15-50.01N 83-18.27W. Room for several boats here and plenty of depth (one boat was 6.5' draft).

Becerro Cays and Cajones (aka Hobbies) near Vivarillos, s/v Valentina 2006

We left the Vivorillos and headed to the Becerro Cays. We stayed there a couple of days. I (Kay) shot my first hogfish there, so it is a special place for me. We anchored at N15-55.150 W83-16.174 It does not have a lot of protection, the Hobbies is much better. But this is worth a stop.

We then headed for the Hobbies and anchored at N16-01.839 W83-06.209 The wind changed directions, so we moved to N16-02.445 W83-06.373

If you are fishermen, you will love it here. There is good protection behind the reef. As always, just make sure someone is on the bow when approached watching for coral heads in these areas.

Not sure if there was any damage, since the hurricane came through here in Aug/Sep 2007. Just make sure you have provisions, you will stay here longer than planned.