



IMPERATOR PUBLISHING

Imperator Publishing are pleased to announce the simultaneous release of two remarkable books from the same household : *A Family Outing in the Atlantic*, by author and artist Jill Dickin Schinas, and *Two Gulls and a Girl*, by Jill's ten year old daughter Roxanne Schinas.



Two Gulls and a Girl, by Roxanne Schinas, is the story of a seagull colony and of two chicks which the author kidnapped and hand-reared.

With 89 black-and-white photographs.

Foreword by Richard Williamson.

ISBN 978-0-9560722-0-7

RRP £12.95

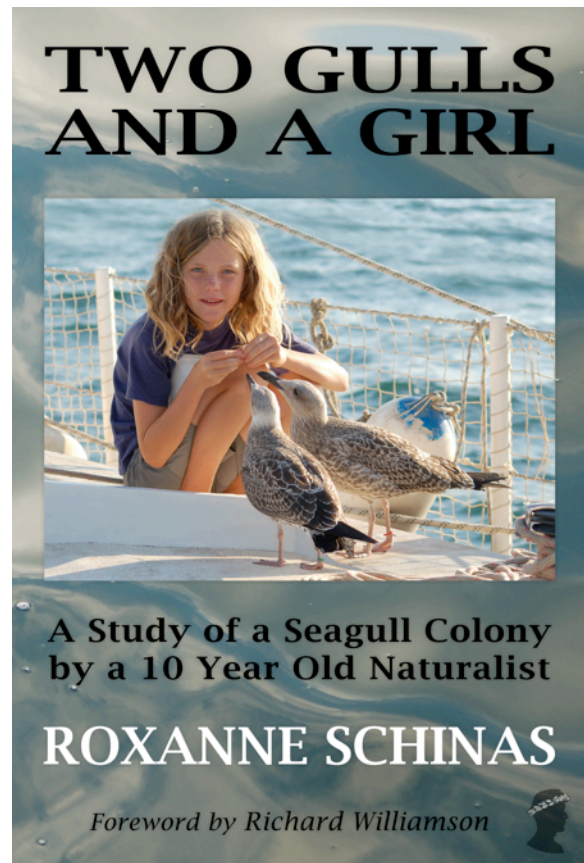
A Family Outing in the Atlantic is the story of an epic, seven-year-long cruise made by a young family aboard their sailing yacht.

With 31 illustrations.

Foreword by Tom Cunliffe.

ISBN 978-0-9560722-1-4

RRP £18.95



If she had been born into a conventionally minded family, living in a house in an ordinary English town, Roxanne Schinas would never have had the chance to write her book. But as it is she happened to be born to a couple of eccentrics, living on a yacht and travelling wherever the whim and the wind take them.

Jill Dickin Schinas' book is all about this unorthodox lifestyle. Born and brought up in a typical suburban household, Jill spent her childhood messing about in boats. In her 28th year

she happened to bump into Nick, another sailor but one who had accidentally stumbled upon the life of the ocean hobo. Nick Schinas had spent the previous six years sailing around the world - and he had it in mind to continue sailing around the world ever-afterwards.

A Family Outing in the Atlantic describes a seven year long “outing” during which Jill and the skipper met in the Atlantic, got married on the Amazon, had their two older children whilst living and working in the Caribbean, and then set off for Cape Horn.

Along the way the little family made many detours and enjoyed, or endured, various adventures, but this book is no mere travelogue. Woven between the tales of ocean storms, shoaling turtles, and West African natives in grass skirts is a vivid picture of an alternative and very independent lifestyle. For a family making their way across the Atlantic there are no schools, no supermarkets to pop into when the larder is bare, no newspapers or TV, no rules – and, as often as not, no one to turn to when things go wrong. Fortunately, however, in the time of their greatest need the Schinas family happened to be within hailing distance of the Falkland Islands. Their capsizing in hurricane force winds and their rescue by the RAF were widely reported in the press (11th Jan 1996), and Jill’s book closes with her own version of accounts.

In the words of Tom Cunliffe, who penned the foreword, “*Casting fate to the ocean winds without visible means of support in the third millennium demands a lot more guts than ever it did thirty years ago. Keeping going, despite producing three fine children and surviving a capsizing off the Falklands that ended on the winch cable of an RAF helicopter, shows the true spirit of seafaring... The Schinas family are talented people... but the overriding feature of all their lives and the guiding spirit of this book, is their self-sufficiency and courage to make their own choices, come fair weather or foul.*”



Beautifully illustrated with the author’s own ink drawings, *A Family Outing in the Atlantic* will keep arm-chair travellers amused and entertained, and at times will even put them on the edge of their seats, but it is also a veritable handbook to the cruising lifestyle and, as such, is essential reading for anyone dreaming of setting off over the horizon.

Jill Schinas is also the author of *Kids in the Cockpit*, a pilot book for safe and happy sailing with children (published by Adlard Coles).

Their Southern Ocean disaster did nothing to deter the Schinas family from continuing their gipsy way of life, and so it was that Roxanne Schinas was born aboard the boat, crossed the channel at the age of two weeks, and had reached South Africa before she was one year old. Like her older brother and sister she has never known any home other than a sailing yacht, a caravan, or a motor-home. She has seldom had the chance to sit and watch telly, and

she has never been to school. While other girls and boys spend their days sitting at a desk, 11 year old Roxanne spends hers running wild.

This is not to say that Roxanne Schinas is never given any lessons, but like the young Gerald Durrell she has perfected the art of vanishing at the first opportunity and disappearing into a convenient patch of scrub, or onto the beach, or even into the sea. Even before she read of Durrell's adventures Roxanne was emulating them, with a never ending series of "pets". Spiders, locusts, cicadas, beetles, praying mantises, fish, toads, mice, crabs, crayfish, a large terrapin, a tiny tortoise... all these and more have found temporary residence in Roxanne's small cabin while she studies their antics. Like Durrell, the child *scrutinises* nature – she will happily spend days lying on her belly watching the behaviour of ants, for example – but unlike him she never keeps an animal indefinitely, and she re-releases her study animals at their exact point of capture. She is acutely aware of the threats now facing the world's flora and fauna.

At the age of eight Roxanne Schinas won the RSPB's Nature Diary Competition in the 8 - 12 year old category with her observations of the insect life inhabiting a patch of waste between two tower blocks.

In the spring of 2008 the Schinas family were hanging out in Spain, and Roxanne found herself anchored off an island which just happened to house a colony of seagulls. So far as her family knew, as she patrolled the islet, mapping the position of every nest, she was just making a study of the breeding habits and behaviour of the gulls - but she returned to the boat, one day, carrying a fluffy newborn chick and an egg! Concerned that the parents would reject their young if they were belatedly returned to their nests, Roxanne's mother grasped the opportunity for blackmail: "You can keep them," she said, "on one condition: You have to clean and feed them yourself, *and you have to write about them every day.*"

"That's two conditions," Roxanne observed - but she swiftly agreed, before there could be any misgivings, or revisions to the plan.

The result was a study of unimagined length and depth, and the final product is *Two Girls and a Gull*.

Roxanne Schinas is a brilliant observer and a talented story teller. This work is no childish offering; the author's fascination with nature and her diligent attempts to study and understand the gulls place it on a par with the work of professionals. In the words of Richard Williamson, who wrote her foreword, the book "is quite remarkable ... [and is] compelling because her enthusiasm is compelling."



Two Girls and a Gull would make a wonderful and unique gift for an adult or a child, pleasing those who are already interested in the study of wildlife and perhaps inspiring others to open their eyes a little wider. However, no one need fear that reading this story will encourage a child to want a pet gull. On the contrary; Roxanne's tale makes it very clear that such a thing would be well nigh impossible for anyone whose family were not willing to go along with the scheme, making space for two very messy creatures and taking up residence, for three months, on the edge of a seagull colony!

Illustrated with 89 black and white photographs and 3 drawings.



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Both books are available from Amazon and other online suppliers, and can also be ordered through any bookshop.

If you would like more information about the Schinas family, please contact **Imperator Publishing** or take a look at the Schinas family's website: www.yachtmollymawk.com