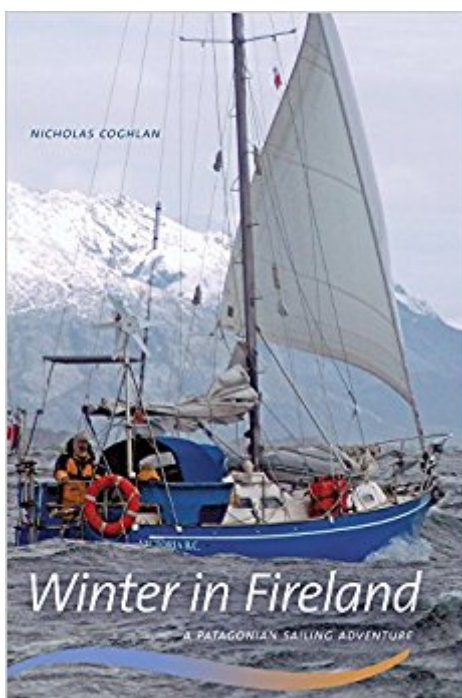




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# Winter In Fireland: A Patagonian Sailing Adventure (Wayfarer)



## Synopsis

After tough assignments as a Canadian diplomat abroad, Nicholas Coghlan and his wife Jenny unwind by sailing *Bosun Bird*, a 27foot sailboat, from Cape Town, South Africa, across the South Atlantic and into the stormy winter waters around Tierra del Fuego, South America. Coghlan recounts earlier adventures in Patagonia when, taking time off from his job as a schoolteacher in Buenos Aires in the late 1970s, he and Jenny explored the region of southern Argentina and Chile over three successive summers. This time, as they negotiate the labyrinth of channels and inlets around snow-covered Fireland, he reflects on voyages of past explorers: Magellan, Cook, Darwin, and others. Sailing enthusiasts and readers of true adventures will want to add Coghlan's world-wise narrative to their libraries.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"After tough assignments as a Canadian diplomat, Nicholas Coghlan and his wife Jenny decided to sail from Capetown, South African to Tierra del Fuego, South America as they reflect on the great voyages of Magellan, Cook, and Darwin." *Prairie Books Now*, Summer 2011 "This engaging travel memoir describes Coghlan and his wife's first trip to Patagonia in 1978, as well as their second voyage 25 years later in which they sailed from Cape Town to the Beagle Channel and the Strait of Magellan, skirting Tierra del Fuego to Puerto Montt. Along the way, he relates the experiences of past adventurers including Bruce Chatwin, James Cook, Charles Darwin, Ferdinand Magellan, Allen Gardiner, and Joshua Slocum." *Reference and Research Book News* "For anyone considering

venturing to this part of the world, or simply those that love armchair adventuring, this is a 'must-read.' Not only does Nick Coghlan paint a vivid picture of the tenacity and slight insanity required to attempt winter cruising in this part of the world, he also delves into the rich maritime history that the likes of Chatwin, Cook, Darwin and Magellan left behind. Nick and his wife Jenny, experienced cruisers with a circumnavigation under their belts some 20 years previously, sail from Cape Town to the Beagle Channel and the Strait of Magellan, skirting Tierra del Fuego (Fireland). Progress is slow in their 27 foot sailboat, and their days are dictated by constant weather concerns, tricky navigation and the harsh yet beautiful terrain surrounding them. Both enjoy exploring and hiking ashore, giving the reader a full picture of just what it's really like to adventure in Patagonia."

Sue, [www.noonsite.com](http://www.noonsite.com)"[Nick Coghlan] combined the two qualities that make "Winter in Fireland" a gripping read - an irrepressible spirit of adventure which took him into the most daunting situations, and an ability to describe his experiences in lucid prose. This book, following on his previous publications about Colombia and Sudan, places him solidly in the company of the best travel writers - those hardy souls who have explored the world's nether regions and lived to tell the tale." Paul Durand, Just Ottawa. [Full review @ [http://www.justottawa.com/index.php?option=com\\_content&task=view&id=241&Itemid=40](http://www.justottawa.com/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=241&Itemid=40)]"This rugged region at South America's southern tip has lured hardy adventurers and sailors for centuries. Don't miss reading this tale of one couple's voyage in Bosun Bird, their Vancouver 27. Packed with carefully documented history and as much about adventures by land as by sea, it's a volume you'll want to keep permanently on your bookshelf." Lynda Morris Childress, Cruising World"

Coghlan will describe the day's sail, mentioning the landmarks, telling what happened to previous explorers, then talk about the interesting people who make their living on these forbidding waters at the bottom of the world." Chas. Hague, Good Old Boat Magazine."This book, following on his previous publications about Colombia and Sudan, places him solidly in the company of the best travel writers -- those hardy souls who have explored the world's nether regions and lived to tell the tale. [In Capetown, South Africa, Nick and his wife Jenny] conceived of the ultimate sailing adventure; around the tip of South America, through the Beagle Channel and the Strait of Magellan, then into the Pacific. This region, the 'Roaring Forties', is beset by ferocious storms, numbing cold and unpredictable currents: the most difficult sailing area in the world. .... He talks of 8-metre waves and 50-knot winds, sudden squalls and always the freezing, wet cold. This is not hospitable territory.... On March 1, after re-supplying and re-fitting, they depart Puerto Montt and the Chilean mainland, heading out into the Pacific.... A perfect ending to a gripping adventure, written by a colleague who has mastered both sail and pen." Paul Durand, former Canadian Ambassador to Chile (and to Costa

Rica and the Organisation of American States) and former Director General for Latin America at the Department of Foreign Affairs in Ottawa, bout de papier, January 2012"Leaving in 2005, they crossed the South Atlantic via Namibia and lonely St Helena, making a spectacular landfall at Rio de Janeiro. In ever heavier weather they then battled south down the coast of Patagonia through the Roaring Forties, to Latitude 55 South. They wintered over at tiny Puerto Williams, Chile: the southernmost permanent settlement in the world, on the shores of the glacier-lined Beagle Channel and only a few miles from Cape Horn. Setting off north again through the lonely Chilean Channels towards warmer climes, with sea-ice still choking many bays, they sat out winds of up to 90 knots and saw scarcely a soul in four months." Sail-World.com, January 21, 2012"Winter in Fireland: A Patagonian Sailing Adventure recounts the sailing journey of author Nicholas Coghlan and his wife Jenny aboard their 27-foot sailboat, Bosun Bird, from Cape Town through the winter waters of the Beagle Channel and the Strait of Magellan, dancing along edges of Tierra del Fuego (Fireland). Their adventure involved braving stormy waters, navigating channels and inlets, and encountering the whims and wonders of other cultures. Reflections on a lifelong love of sailing and incredible nautical adventures past and present fill this treasury for armchair travelers and sailing enthusiasts alike." Midwest Book Review, The Nautical Shelf, January 2012"In this adventure our captain takes his boat, and then his reader, from acquisition through renaming and refitting to the completion of a dream... In addition to relating stories about many of the people met along the way, the author includes or references considerable material explaining reasons for most of the names and places also encountered.. I definitely finished this book with the understanding that cruising is considerably more of a tension filled adrenaline sport than common usage of the term would otherwise suggest. And that's surprising as everything untoward which happens in this journey is quite ably handled by the author and his wife. I've read this book cover to cover, including the appetizing selected bibliography and some of the quite serviceable index. I'd read it again, and I'd urge you to read it too." Garth Miles, Currents Magazine, March 2012"Winter in Fireland chronicles Nicholas and Jenny Coghlan's journey from Cape Town, South Africa, to Tierra del Fuego or 'Fireland.' The Coghlan's first traveled to Patagonia in 1978 while teaching in Buenos Aires. From 1985 to 1989 they circumnavigated on their boat, Tarka the Otter, after which Nicholas joined the Canadian Foreign Service, and served at various postings around the world. In Winter in Fireland Nicholas and Jenny revisit Patagonia, this time aboard their cutter-rigged Vancouver 27, Bosun Bird. Coghlan weaves their personal journey with the history of the region. A talented writer, Coghlan's book follows in the wake of Bruce Chatwin, James Cook, Charles Darwin, Joshua Slocum and others who were captivated by Fireland's allure and primal beauty." Ocean Navigator, May-June 2012"Looking for a

good cruising adventure to read during the winter months? Try Nicholas Coghlan's *Winter In Fireland* on for size. Nicholas & his wife Jenny revisit Chile & Patagonia aboard *Bosun Bird*, their 27 foot yacht. Their adventure takes us through their purchase & fit out in Cape Town, the coast of Argentina through the stormy waters of Tierra del Fuego & up the coast of Chile. It is a tale of their journey, filled with trials & tribulations, as well as reflections on the journeys of past explorers & adventures, told with humour & insight. Interspersed with photos this book is perfect for the armchair sailor and would be explorers." *Cruise News*, May 2012 "[Winter in Fireland] is a story by adventurers for adventurers. For someone planning their own trip south, this book would be useful as both a beginning resource and for its annotated bibliography that lists several books of sailing around South America. For others it will be an escape into worldly travel urges likely to inspire fantasies of visiting Patagonia for ourselves. Coghlan writes with the crisp syntax of a Captain's log and peppers his account with honesty and dry English humour." *Marina Parapini, Pacific Rim Review of Books*, Vol. 8, No. 2 "It is informative, enjoyable and interesting, even if you are not a sailor. The narrative gives a fascinating insight into the motivation, preparation, challenges, hazards, setbacks, uncertainties, and to a large extent skills to improvise when large or small and unexpected calamities materialize." *Winesworld Magazine*, March 25, 2013 [Full article at <http://bit.ly/1iTq3kw>]

Sailing adventure of Nicholas Coghlan across South Africa.

I read this book as a fellow sailor and small yacht owner. This is another in a line of books about traveling through the Chilean deep south (Hal Roth et al). What makes this tale stand out is the lucid prose of the author. I found the book a real page turner and read it in half a dozen sittings. The tale is told with honesty, humour and insight and shows the amount of resilience, courage, sailing skill and experience that is required for such a voyage in high latitudes. The author has read around his subject and provides many parallel quotes that are relevant to *Bosun Bird* and her crews adventures. If I met Nicholas Coghlan I would ask him "Why didn't you tell the skipper of the yacht that was following you through the channels that there wouldn't be any diesel fuel available at the small settlement in the anchorage that *Bosun Bird* was anchored in? " "What was the reason behind this omission? ".... Such withholding of information makes Coghlan as quirky and foible ridden as any of the other adventurers that he describes in the book.--- A great and riveting read.

This is a great book, lots of detail about the places they visited on their 27 foot sailboat, a real adventure story!

A great adventure outlined with humor and in detail. Look forward to their next adventure.

This was a very informative and enjoyable travel log of the sailing journey into Southern Chile. Especially since I intend to sail there this year

Well told in a low key fashion, plenty of sailing specific writing but really more of a lifetime adventure narrative.

In this book the author describes a voyage he made, supported by his wife as crew in a small sailing yacht from Capetown to Puerto Montt in the south of Chile via the Patagonian and Chile channels. The trip included a planned break during the severe southern winter at Puerto Williams, Tierra del Fuego, hence the title. For me this book was a very compelling and enjoyable read on several levels. The author has written a very informative account of a journey well off the beaten track and including several months spent sailing through one of the most challenging and inhospitable areas of navigable water on the planet, parts of it, even today, still uncharted. Few people chose to sail here and the book gives a fascinating insight into the motivation, preparation, challenges, hazards, setbacks and uncertainties that are involved for those who commit to a small boat voyage of this type. It was easy to get a sense of and appreciate the adventure in this voyage. The author has used few sailing terms and gives ample explanation for non sailors. The narrative was made compelling and authentic for me by descriptions of the raw fear and doubts about the whole venture he feels when facing particularly challenging sections of the route. I also liked this book because it offers much more than simply an account of a sailing adventure. The author has put his own journey which takes his boat and crew through modern day Brazil, Argentina and Chile into the context of his early experience working in Argentina in the late 70's as well as several centuries of history of the region. Informative and entertaining references and asides occur throughout the book to the history of the area including its exploration e.g. the Beagle and Darwin and naval encounters e.g. the Falklands War. The author shares many interesting personal insights and observations of people and places along the way. So overall, a very enjoyable book, well researched, well presented with ample photographs and route charts. A good bibliography recommends further reading covering adventure and history of the region.

WINTER IN FIRELANDA Patagonian sailing adventure Reviewed by Paul Durand Recovering

diplomatl first became a fan of Nick Coghlan's writing when reading his dispatches from our embassy in Colombia in the late nineties. In these reports, he combined the two qualities that make "Winter in Fireland" a gripping read - an irrepressible spirit of adventure which took him into the most daunting situations, and an ability to describe his experiences in lucid prose. This book, following on his previous publications about Colombia and Sudan, places him solidly in the company of the best travel writers - those hardy souls who have explored the world's nether regions and lived to tell the tale. The voyage starts in Capetown, South Africa, where, in 2003, Nick and his wife Jenny had begun a two-year posting. There, they conceived of the ultimate sailing adventure; around the tip of South America, through the Beagle Channel and the Strait of Magellan, then into the Pacific. This region, notorious as a sailors' graveyard, is beset by ferocious storms, numbing cold and unpredictable currents: the most difficult sailing area in the world. In addition to the challenge, they were motivated by a certain amount of nostalgia, having worked in Argentina immediately after graduating from university in the UK. While there, they travelled extensively in the region and were particularly attracted to Patagonia and Tierra del Fuego. In South Africa they purchased and fitted-out the 'Bosun Bird', a Canadian-designed Vancouver 27 with a good reputation for rugged seaworthiness. At 27 feet, she was small - the minimum for this type of voyage, but similar in size to their previous boat, 'Tarka the Otter'. After extensive fitting up, they weighed anchor in Capetown in September, 2005 and began the first leg of the journey, across the Atlantic to Brazil. As the real journey begins, Nick's sailing expertise comes to the fore. He explains, with the easy ability of one who knows his stuff, sailing tactics, gear, and various levels of marine history and lore (fans of Patrick O'Brian will be relieved to know that they don't have to acquire a whole new nautical vocabulary in order to enjoy this book). South America is familiar territory, and Nick puts the trip into historical and personal context as they make stops along the way. This provides depth and colour, because they are following in the footsteps/wakes of fascinating characters, such as Drake, Magellan, Cook, Slocum, Chatwin and an assortment of pirates. The history here is remote but consequential; he describes British and German naval confrontations during the world wars; Chile/Argentina border jostling, and the Falklands war, along with other interesting personal and historical anecdotes. With well-warranted apprehension, they keep pushing south; through the Roaring Forties into the Furious Fifties, and eventually entering the Beagle Channel, with the Big Island of Tierra del Fuego to the north and a succession of Chilean islands down to Cape Horn to the south. He talks of 8-metre waves and 50-knot winds, sudden squalls and always the freezing, wet cold. This is not hospitable territory; and now, five months out of Capetown, the fun has just begun. In March, they arrive in Puerto Williams, Chile, the southernmost town in the world (to the

chagrin of the Argentines, who long claimed that honour for Ushuaia, several miles to the north) and prepare to hunker down for the worst of the winter before proceeding across the bottom of the world and into the Pacific. There is a compelling account of the tragic demise of the Yahgan tribes who were hunted, then proselytized, to near extinction, and the missionaries whose futile attempts to 'save' them usually ended in disaster. Finally, on August 20, as winter eases and conditions improve, they slip their moorings and begin the 1200-mile journey through the rest of the Beagle Channel and the Strait of Magellan, up the Chilean coast to Puerto Montt. It's an arduous journey, requiring all the sailing skills of the two, but eventually they arrive at their final Chilean destination, having traversed the world's most treacherous waters. On March 1, after re-supplying and re-fitting, they depart Puerto Montt and the Chilean mainland, heading out into the Pacific. In the words of the author, "On a brilliant afternoon, we set our course to the NNW and Robinson Crusoe Island, six hundred miles away. The sun sank slowly, the wind picked up, South America faded into the night". A perfect ending to a gripping adventure, written by someone who has mastered both sail and pen.

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