



WEATHER.



WEATHER,



AND MORE



WEATHER

ABOARD SENGO



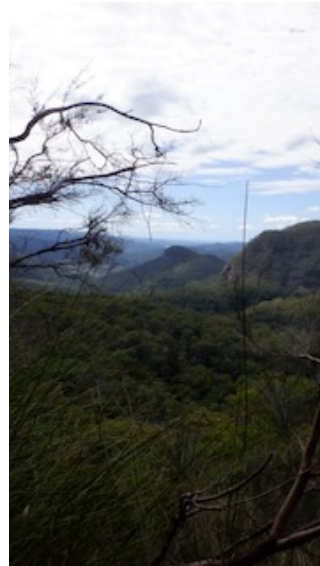
**IT WAS EITHER CALM
(IN WHICH CASE WE TOOK ADVANTAGE AND WENT FOR A WALK)**

OR

IT WAS NOT!

April was spent in limbo. We were still in the Broadwater for medical appointments, and we were still training for our next walk. The biggest challenge by the end of the month however didn't seem to be getting fit enough for a tough walk, it was getting the right outcome out of a bank! Living on a boat means you are not considered to be 'normal.' Institutions expect people to be widgets, or ants, easily slotted into the correct-sized and shaped holes, or part of the crowd with no individual traits and willing to follow what others are doing, and being told what to do, with no questions.....Very frustrating but at least with the bank there is no issue of being 'illegal' as there is with the AEC.....

As usual we weren't very social; catching up with just two boats; ***Ophelia*** and ***Anui***.



Paradise Point Gutter

1st April 2023. The anchor was up around 1030. Just under an hour later it was down again - near the Seaway, approximately where the anchor symbol is on our chart plotter. Two boats were already anchored in this area: a monohull; which was initially empty, but given the individuals that came back to it in dribs and drabs I suspect it is a 'touro' surf boat, and, a fishing boat; a medium-sized vessel that looked like it was cross between a tinnie and a pleasure boat.

To get to this spot we had run the gauntlet with a sailing Lagoon coming out of the Coomera River (under motor) who was clearly determined to overtake us, a multitude of jet-skis (which were everywhere), several fishing tinnies and little boats (some moving, some anchored in awkward places including one in the middle of the channel!), and bigger pleasure motor boats of various sizes and shapes, all going at various speeds both ways, the bow waves of which were sometimes horrendous. Once anchored our immediate surrounds were invaded by young kids and tinnies and a jet ski tour. Other craft of note in the area were para-gliders, small yachts (racing), and jet-boats!

It was extremely busy and rocky for several hours. But it was Saturday so I guess we shouldn't have been too surprised. The change of tide was 1218 but Andrew wanted a good inward flow to make water so we didn't put the water maker on until 1400. It went off at 1630, the anchor was lifted shortly afterward, and we motored back to our gutter; grey clouds and the coming evening had us copying the other vessels and the lateral marks by turning our lights on.

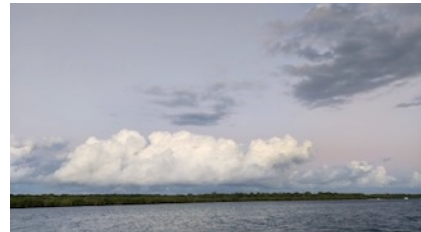
I filled in the time in at the Seaway by polishing, clove oiling, and generally cleaning the boat. The evening was spent reading.



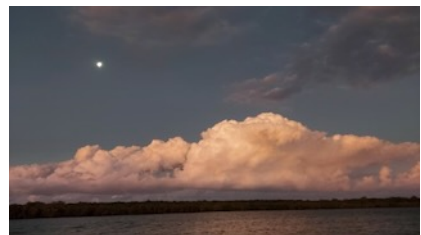
2nd April 2023. At 0714 a ray jumped out of the water beside the boat. The Sun was up. There were minimal clouds to the west and mixed clouds to east. A pigeon was cooing somewhere to the east. Rainbow lorikeets were calling from South Stradbroke Island. There was boat traffic to the south of us and I suspected the waterway would get busy soon.



There was supposed to be some rain in the 1300 tranche today, and because Andrew wanted to watch the Australian Grand Prix we went for our walk this morning. I had suggested we get to shore around 0800 but we didn't start walking until 0830. I decided we would repeat the route we walked two days ago and so we managed a wander for around 90 minutes. After a quick shop for eggs and apples we headed back to boat. The wind was getting frisky and the current strong. We were back on board before noon.



The walk had been a success by our standards; we had spotted eight dachshunds! The first one we said hello to was named Dash and she looked placid enough. The owner had just said she was usually very good but 'has her moments'. She decided after a sniff of my hand that she would bark at me - 'That', he said, 'was one of those moments!'



As we got back to boat we were visited by a dugong. And it was not just a quick breath, it was a slow presentation past the back of the boat and we saw the whole animal at once, playful like a dolphin. This individual visited us again later in the afternoon.

Today I managed, in between recreational reading, to clove oil the head, do some washing, buff the polish off that I had applied yesterday, and had a second go at cleaning Andrew's walking boots. I also cooked lunch. Andrew started watching the Grand Prix. After the first red flag we swapped to the AFL. We swapped back again before the end of the game to discover the Grand Prix ended with a third red flag! It wasn't satisfying watching on either channel.

We didn't get the expected rain but we did get a constant 20ish knots all afternoon.

Night time television viewing wasn't exactly stimulating: Border Security America followed by Border Security Australia.

Pine Ridge Conservation Park

3rd April 2023. As we were heading from Paradise Point back to boat I looked at the sky. It was now full with a potentially ominous grey as we headed into the secondary channel from the protection of the Sovereign Islands, and into the whitecaps. I turned to look south. Southport was faded out. It was getting wet. I suspected that rain was coming our way. 'We are going to get wet,' i said to Andrew at the very same time we came off the top of a wave, buried into the one in front and got swamped! That wasn't the direction I was expecting the water to come from! Ahh well, the chocolate bars we had got for our late morning tea will now be flavoured with salt!



We were coming back from our morning walk, a walk I would have preferred to start earlier given the forecast. Andrew didn't want to start early, nor was he particularly enthused about swapping a walk for yoga, so a later walk was offered. I knew it would be an uncomfortable return to boat, and the last third in particular was.



Today's wander was a variation on a theme. We headed to Pine Ridge Conservation Park as we had for the past two walks but instead of walking along one edge of the Park and then heading to Paradise Point, we walked a square circuit, covering all of parts we had walked previously (several years ago) and a bit more.



* * *

Putting the instruments on when we got back to boat we discovered the wind was blowing a steady 20 knots-ish. The prediction was for low to mid teens with gusting to mid twenties but clearly the predictions were low; we didn't see mid teens.

Birds seen in the Conservation Park: friarbird (sp? It was silhouetted), brown honeyeater, magpie, and a noisy miner. An osprey with a fish was spotted on way back to boat. It was a small fish - Andrew made

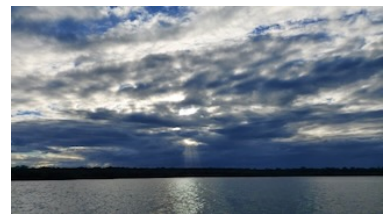


the flippant comment - 'he should put it back, it is undersized.'

Back at boat I continued to clove oil the inside of the starboard hull

I didn't expect to find myself washing the boat today but dew had encouraged dirt to run down the fibreglass that I had wiped clean yesterday making polishing all that much tougher... better to wash all the dirt away before having to polish it off. So I washed the deck at the front of the boat near the tramp, encapsulating the dirty water in a towel. The job provided some amusement as the 20 knot winds blew the soap suds out of the bucket and across the surface in front of me!

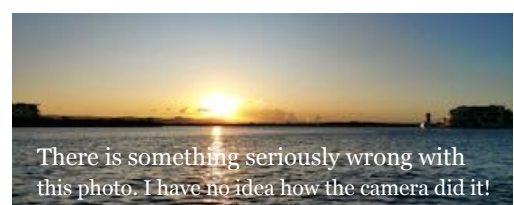
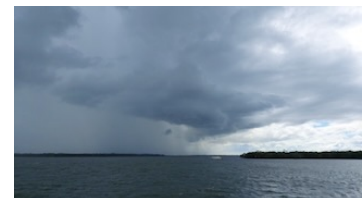
At about 1535 I had just finished the polishing of one aspect of the fibreglass around the tramp when I came in, washed my hands, opened the head top hatch and grabbed the phone to take a photo of the rain to the south east. As soon as I stepped outside however I ran back in. The rain was no longer just to the south east - it was upon us and I had to close that hatch! So much for airing the boat.



4th April 2023. At 1240 a rumble was heard above us. The bom.gov.au rain radar had indicated coming rain was close and I shut the back covers regardless, although given what I could see, the precipitation trajectory might just miss us. However whilst checking in the helm with the wind strength around 10 knots another clap of thunder was heard and the rain did indeed start.

The morning up until this point had been filled in mainly by reading. Breakfast had been late at 1030.

In the afternoon, after the rain had passed, we walked to Hope Island to pick up the car - it was after 1630 at this point and we couldn't dawdle. We picked up our tools from *Ophelia* and conducted a quick Woolies shop before heading back to boat. We were back on board before sundown.



The Goat Track

5th April 2023. Like on several previous occasions, today's planned walk was shortened, as by the time we started, and given the heat of the day, a long walk was neither feasible nor desirable.

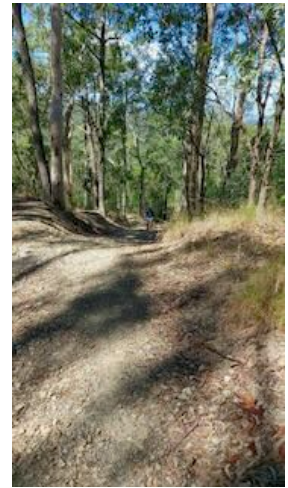
We had left Sengo early, before 0800 because we had an appointment at the bank this morning, the result of which we are still waiting upon (we were early). By the time we finished that task it was around 1100 and given that all we had with us for lunch was muesli bars and apples, the idea of having an early lunch at the Helensvale Town Centre food court was much more appealing.

We eventually got to the carpark next to the Nerang Velodrome and we started our walk in the Nerang National Park at 1210. We got back to the car around 1425...not bad as the average AllTrails user does this circuit in 2hr 12 minutes and we had taken a 20 minute break. Andrew had struggled a bit up the steep bit, but it was the middle of the day and it was hot and muggy!

Wildlife on the walk included one monitor, a pied butcherbird, a kookaburra, a rainbow bee eater and a group of noisy miners. There were no macropods seen today although given the time of day and the temperature (windy.com was predicting 28 degrees whilst we were on the track) I wasn't surprised. There were more bird calls around the denser, more shaded areas of bush, but individuals apart from those listed were not seen.

Originally the plan had been to do a big weekly shop on the way home but Andrew had pointed out to me early that I had forgotten the shopping bags and that combined with the fact we picked up a parcel from a friend (thanks H) and caught up with **Anui** on the way back to boat, the time before sundown was limited. Shopping would need to wait for another day

We were back on boat a little after 1700.



6th April 2023. We slotted a few things in today and we were exhausted by the time we got back to boat. The first task was to drop off our co-mingled recycling and the empty boat polish bottles to the transfer station. After that we joined the end of the peak hour traffic and headed south. We had a catch up with a friend (whom we haven't seen for four years) in Varsity Lakes but we had about an hour to fill in so headed to Wild Earth to get last minute necessities for our upcoming trip. The coffee catchup was next, then lunch at Robina before back to Varsity Lakes for my eye appointment, then back to Hope Island to drop off the car before walking back to Paradise Point.



7th April 2023. I was up around 0630. The newsletter was my early morning activity and by breakfast at 0800 I had also swept the stairwells. A fisherman came in and put his crab pot off to the front of us - it was lucky that I had seen him. Managing to catch his attention I stated it was far too close - we were likely to swing into it. But the tide is four hours away, he said. I will have picked it up by then, he said. I had to point out to him there were potential storms coming and we had no way of predicting where the boat was going to swing and I would hate to have that pot wrapped around my props. He agreed to move it. I initially suggested to make sure it was three times the boat length away -preferably four. In the end the pot was put down around 55 meters from our hull - close enough!



Lunch at 1100 was toast with sliced meat and cheese

The first drops of rain fell around 1130. Steeling myself I got onto the roof on my hands and knees and washed the flat surfaces thinking the coming rain would rinse the boat wash off. It didn't because the rain had stopped shortly after it started, and so two hours later I came inside exhausted and we still had a soapy roof. My afternoon snooze was probably due to bread rather than the 'housework.'

At just before 1700 it was getting quite dark. Earlier bouts of rain across the South East QLD coast had kissed us to south and north. This time the coming rain band wasn't going to miss, although, according to the rain radar, we weren't going to get the really heavy stuff. Thunder however rumbled in long dulcet tones for quite some time.

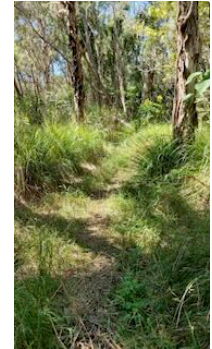
8th April 2023. On boat all day. It was windy, blowing over 30 knots at one point!. I spent the day on the March Newsletter, and finalising the final touches to the New Zealand diary notes, doing eye exercises, playing two card games with Andrew, and clove oiling the ceiling and one wall of our cabin. We watched AFL on television in the evening.



9th April 2023. There was no wind when I got up. By the time we got to shore the wind was at least in the mid teens. When we got back to boat after our walk, after a tough tinnie ride, the wind was blowing 20 to 22 knots! After the sun went down it was blowing less than 5 knots!

Boat jobs included polishing flat areas of fibreglass near the tramp (and buffing that and other fibreglass near tramp that had been left), finishing the March newsletter and publishing that and both NZ documents. We also managed to organise and gather most of the stuff we needed for our NT walk.

Today's exercise was a 9 kilometre jaunt that included traversing three 'sides' of Pine Ridge Conservation Park on top of our usual Paradise Point jaunt.



10th April 2023. Work, work, and a bit of television!

- Polish gunnel channels
- Washing
- Reading
- AFL: Geelong vs Hawthorn
- Clove oiled a few cabin shelves
- Put cleaned mattress-protectors back on



Binna Burra: Daves Creek Circuit

11th April 2023. The day looked good, the weather calm. Perhaps we could get off boat. We rang the car hire mob around 0700 to see if we could adjust our car hire from Thursday lunchtime to today. The lad who answered the phone told Andrew we would have to wait until around 0830 when someone arrived who could operate the bookings system to see if that was possible. I suggested to Andrew that we head across to shore anyway and that way if the car was available we would just pick it up, and if the car was not available then we would just take the walk from wherever we were at the time we got the notification.

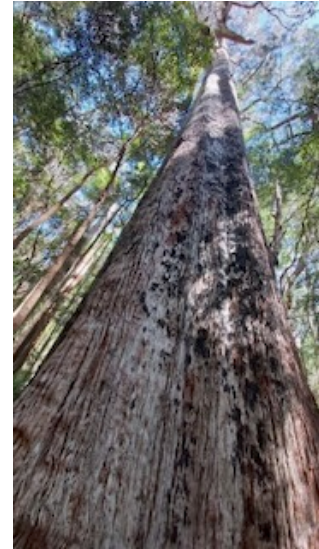
As it turned out, the car hire mob rang us back just as we got to shore, and the car was waiting for us when we got there.

We headed to Binna Burra. The Daves Creek Circuit was the obvious option; it is of medium length (12 km), and not too difficult (but not easy). By the time we arrived and had a cuppa at the cafe it wasn't until 1037 when we got on track. We were back off track at 1430, which included a lunch break at Numinbah Lookout, but no excursions to the lookout points, caves or on top of Surprise Rock.

We caught up briefly with **Ophelia** at Woolies on way back to boat... We were back on boat around 1700.

Birds: An osprey was spotted on the way to Paradise Point - but only one and on an adjacent house to the

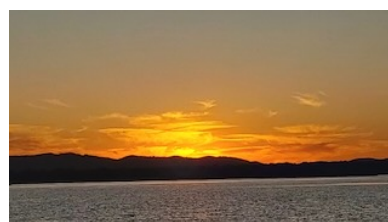
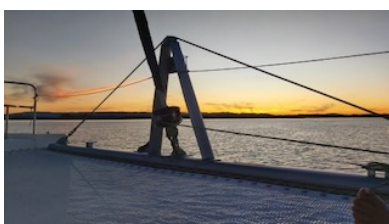




abode where we had seen three ospreys not so long ago. Other birds spotted in the area included pelicans, ibis, magpie, mudlark, whistling kite, sea eagle, and a pied oystercatcher. The usual geese were seen at the Wildlife Refuge along the road we travel, and a craven flew past.

Birds on track....brush turkey, log runner, yellow robin, white browed scrub wren, a small (unidentified) brown bird, bassian thrush, brown cuckoo dove. We heard a catbird and a pitta.

But the spot of the day was something entirely different. It had to be. It was large, it was distinctive and it was spotted at sixty kilometres per hour. Andrew didn't see it - he was concentrating on the road. I was initially stunned. My exclamation was 'What was that!'. Of course by the time I had finished the sentence we were long past. It was large and it was clearly dual coloured. Looking up 'pigeon' in the Morcombe app on my phone came up with only one option. It was a 'white headed pigeon'. I don't think I've ever seen one of those before.



Another short walk

12th April 2023. I woke up a bit under the weather and promptly took a couple of headache tablets, an immune system boost tablet, gut tablet, vitamin b complex, had half an orange and did a short immune boost yoga session.

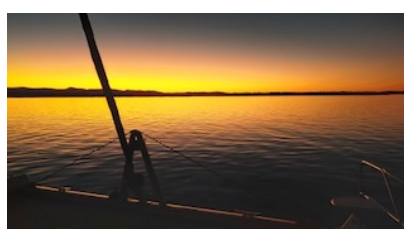
After having swapped the eye appointment to this morning I was now seriously considering cancelling it. We were also due to go for a longish walk. We needed the walk, but not at the expense of wearing me out.

In the end we went to the eye appointment, and we did get a walk, yet a slightly shorter one than I had intended. 7.8km on hard rocky tracks was better than nothing, a double-up (potentially considered) discounted as I didn't want to push it.

We also got a flat walk around a shopping centre and a couple of km getting back to boat after dropping the car off. All up it was still around a 13km day.

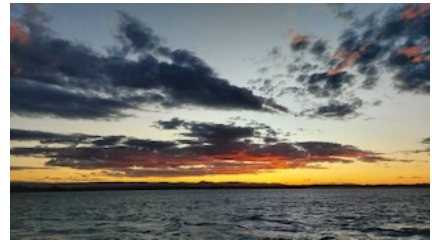
It was about 1700 when we got back to boat and we spent the evening watching television; catching up with all the currently published Alone Australia episodes on SBS On Demand. This sort of reality TV program is something that normally we are not interested in but as one of the contestants is an adventurer we met a few years ago in the Kimberley we thought we would see how he was going.

Birds for today. At Paradise Point; Pelican, and silver gulls. We heard rainbow lorikeets on South Stradbroke Island before we left, and at Nerang National Park saw noisy miners, drongos and a willy wagtail.



13th April 2023. I heard clucking sea eagles before I heard the lorikeets this morning. The sun was up before me but not by much. Before 0630 I had decanted the meat into the freezer

I started a basic rust run as well but it was windy outside and I was at risk of losing the rag so I retreated into a friendlier atmosphere. We had got a very impersonal email from the bank yesterday refusing our application. This was amongst other things, quite annoying. We had specifically gone into a branch because our application couldn't be submitted over the internet - to have an automated standard impersonal response come back was, I thought, just plain rude. I contacted the customer service lass I had been dealing with. Upon her investigation it seems the reason for listing the application as refused related to two existing liabilities. I was unhappy with this explanation - those liabilities don't actually exist!

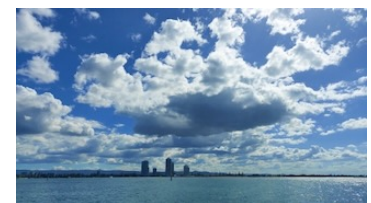
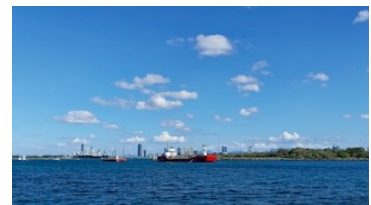


Making Water

14th April 2023. The truth is that my morning started at 0000 and continued until 0040 until I went to bed before getting up at 0550 and continuing the task I had been doing in the middle of the night..which was putting in an official email the repeated details that had been presented whilst applying for what we wanted from the bank, and stating the reasons why the liabilities should not have been considered in the application (and which ultimately led to its refusal). Having got the first draft out I took a deep breath and moved on to other things.

The bird on the boat this morning was a willy wagtail.

Our task today was to make water. We were going to be heading to Tiger Mullet Channel in a couple of days and we would be stuck there for at least a week. We needed to have water and the preference was to make it in clear seawater, not in a potentially muddy mangrove influenced mix.



The trip down to the Seaway starting at 0900 didn't go quite as smoothly as expected, although the action that created a minor panic in me had started out as an almost 'too good to be true' scenario. As Sengo had been in storage for two months at the beginning of the year and then had been sitting mostly in the same spot in the Broadwater for the past 6 weeks her sail had not been raised or checked recently. Given it had been safely in its bag and enclosed we not only expected latent water in the bottom of the bag to have collected after the rain we had had, but algae or mould to have taken hold in the non aired spaces. We were delighted therefore when a clear dry sail presented itself as we raised it up in minimal winds whilst travelling south (motoring). But the winds picked up as we were about to drop the sail, although only to around 7 knots, and I got the halyards stuck. Being already quite stressed, frustrated, and angry at the bank I was not in a good headspace to cope with this. It took Andrew coming inside and using the other winch to get past my breakdown point. That crisis alleviated, and the sail down, the wind really came up now..blowing to 22 knots as we were still motoring south. Great. Anchoring in this is not going to be fun. Fortunately the wind speed had dropped to around 15 knots when we did drop the anchor at about official low tide. Now all we had to do was wait until the clearer tide overpowered the outgoing Coomera River waters.

By the time we waited for a good flow and clear water and filled our tanks to close to three quarters full each, and returned back to our anchoring spot in the gutter, it was getting on to late afternoon.



A final rocky training run: Nerang National Park

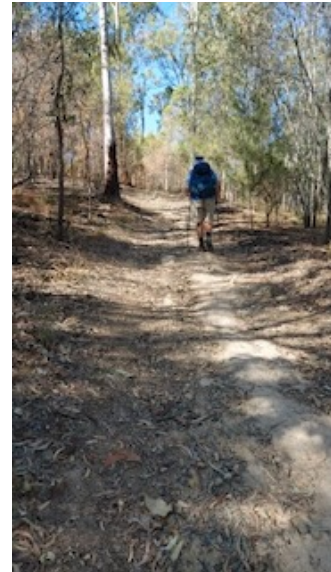
15th April 2023. We are back to a tinnie! The remaining pontoon went completely flat today and boy did we notice it getting back to boat.

We had headed across to shore and picked up the car at 0820...I distinctly remember Andrew saying 0800 when we had booked it, but the lass had put 0900 in the system which meant the hire place didn't quite have it ready for us when we arrived.

After a quick stop for muesli bars at Woolworths, we headed off to Nerang National Park. I wanted a walk of reasonable length for our final rocky training run; at least longer than the 7.8 circuit we had done recently. There is a 'trail' in AllTrails that is a 10.3 kilometre circuit but it has a tail section that is traversed twice that we have done before - a section which is uncomfortable and incredibly steep and in my opinion a serious risk for injury; something I did not want to do with only two weeks until we start our walk. Avoiding the really really steep bit meant we turned a 10.3 kilometre walk into 16.6 kilometres! This wasn't really a problem - the more practice we have on a hard rocky surface the better. In the end after including the walk to pick up the car, we walked a total of 20.79km today.

The remaining pontoon on the tinnie looked like it was a bit deflated when we got to it on the Paradise Point jetty - by the time we got back to boat it was looking rather sad. We needed to pull it off but it just wouldn't budge - no matter how much silicon spray, brawn and screwdriver scouring we threw at it. I ended up pulling a shoulder muscle on this task and with my stiff back from the walk, I needed several back stretches before I was happy to go to bed and know I would not wake up sorer for the effort.

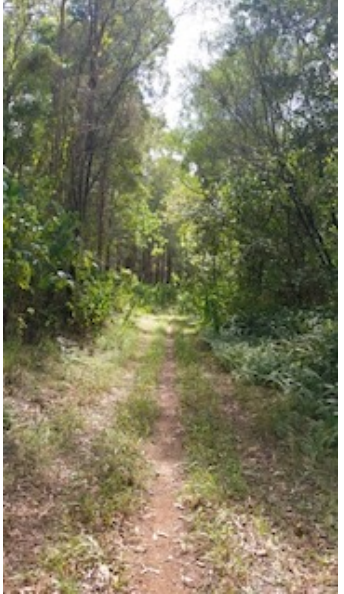
There wasn't a lot with regard to wildlife on our walk today; no macropods, a few





lizards skittled, a snake rushed off the side of the track when I went past. Several silhouetted birds were not easy to identify; black cockatoos were heard (and probably the cause of tree top debris on the track although Andrew was originally hoping we might find that koalas were the culprits), and the spot of the day was a pair of king parrots that flew across the track front of us just as we were nearing the end of the walk.

We saw several people on today's excursion; some walkers, some runners, in pairs and singles, including one dog with one couple (I am not sure if he was supposed to be in a National Park).





Binna Burra: Lower Ballanjui Falls (and a bit more)

16th April 2023. I had expected today's terrain to be easier on the feet..and a large portion of it was...but I wasn't expecting the sections of rocks and boulders along the track. From a track training point of view this wasn't necessarily a bad thing.

We started the track from the saddle car park at 0910. We were back four hours later. We were not dawdling and not racing and our time had included slowing to admire the birds, the lizards, and the insects along the track. Birdlife was delightful - in fact, within ten minutes we had seen a satin bowerbird (male), brush turkey, a pair of crimson rosellas, a white-browed scrub wren and a tree creeper (?). Other birds throughout the day included a yellow robin, eastern whip-birds (heard), and catbird (heard).

Lizards were prolific but, apart from one rather large monitor that I disturbed on the way back, most were really small. Andrew had mentioned he had read something somewhere about a species of lizard that was on the small size to the point of looking like 'baby lizards' but he couldn't recall the details. Most just scattered off the track as we approached but I disturbed one lizard I originally thought was a stick insect - the initial visualisation was long and thin and had a whole heap of legs coming off it. It turned out that a small lizard had caught and was originally holding a rather large cricket in its mouth. It got a fright when I approached and let its jaw slack - this allowed the cricket to escape and head for an area that almost looked like salvation amongst the vegetation on the side of the track. The lizard gathered its wits and went back to stalking the cricket



- at that point dinner was more important than the huge human standing over it!

Other weird behaviour spotted on the track included a Dragonfly bobbing up and down to a height of around 10 cm near the ground..it was the weirdest sight and I can't think of what it could be possibly doing.

We were passed by one lass within the first 2.5km and by a couple of runners coming the other way, but we saw no one else after this except when we got back to Koolanbilba Lookout.



I didn't take many photos today. Having walked almost half of this route a couple of weeks ago on another sunny day we didn't need to record the views or walk out to the lookouts we had visited before. Photos were mostly taken after Yangala Lookout - after the 2.5 km mark of the track.



Andrew was for some reason feeling a bit lethargic as we finished this out and back track to Lower Ballanjui Falls. I couldn't imagine why - the elevation was a lot gentler than that of yesterday at Nerang National Park. Some of it was also softer under foot and we were walking in the shade.

The track starts in amongst the rainforest, goes through a short disturbed area, back through rainforest/some box forest, along a drier patch (the vegetation change is very noticeable), back into a wetter forest and then into Picabeen Palm dominated habitat. Most of it is quite pretty although your focus needs to be where you put your feet and getting past a few trees that straddle the track, and under and around the vines that over hang it.



Our stop at the Lower Ballanjui Falls was for around twenty minutes before we headed back. To get extra mileage in we



headed for, after a cuppa break at the cafe, the Talliwall Circuit. This walk is listed as 5.4 kilometres but that is if you walk to the top of the Talliwal. We didn't do that out and back section - so our mileage here was only 3.7 km.

By the time we dropped off the car and got back to boat we had walked over 20 kilometres.

Because we couldn't get the second pontoon off the side of the Tinnie last night the first job we had to do was blow up the remaining deflated pontoon. By the time we got back to boat, about sunset (behind clouds) we found we had new neighbours. The monohull immediately to the south had been there last night but there was a Fontaine Pagot further to the south and what we guessed to be a Catana a bit to our north. The anchorage is getting busy - time to move!



Tiger Mullet Channel

17th April 2023. I was up at 0420, but then again I had gone to bed around 2000 last night. I let Andrew sleep as long as I could but got him up at 0550. The anchor was up a few minutes after 0600 (the monohull to the south of us had already left) and we motored north. The wind was blowing less than 1 knot.

There were a couple of monohulls in front of us (one we passed) that turned toward Tipplers, and several powerboats passed us- heading south. By the time we turned into Whalleys Gutter the wind was blowing around 8 knots and there was a magnificent frontal cloud coming up the coast (see photo). The anchor was down at 0729. High tide had been at 0725.

By mid morning it was blowing mid teens. The highest gust we saw on the gauges was 24 knots (that is not to say there weren't higher gusts but I don't think wind speeds reached the windy.com predicted wind speeds of around 30 knots). Gusts got to over 26 knots late evening.

Andrew spent the day mostly on the computer, catching up with world news and getting his regular dose of sport. I battled the wind with some polishing, washing, trying to organise some polish, chasing up our upcoming berthing details and we tried doing a final pack for the NT trip (which couldn't be done as some of the items were still drying on the line). I also had a chat to our bank. I have a lovely Customer Service lass trying to help us with an almost impossible dilemma - all related to the challenges of living on a boat.

Breakfast was cereal with banana when we got to Tiger Mullet Channel. Lunch was scrambled eggs with feta and smoked salmon. Dinner was creamy chicken and mushrooms.



18th April 2023. I was up at 0440 this morning. It wasn't as though I had gone to bed early this time, in fact I had stayed up almost until after 2300 and the launch time of Space Xs rocket (which ended up getting aborted at the last minute). And I had even thought when I went to bed last night that I could sleep in this morning. However, my body had other ideas. I had clearly consumed something not to my liking yesterday and I woke up scratching my skin, but the biggest annoyance was the midgie bites. I had discovered the midgie bites during the course of yesterday evening. Clearly I had been attacked sometime yesterday - probably when I was doing the washing in the sheltered back porch rather than when I was doing the bits and pieces of polishing in the 20 ish knots of windspeed. There was a couple of clusters of bites, and then there were spots where individual bites were found, in places I wouldn't have thought possible!

I was still dreaming and thinking about my contact with the bank and hoping common sense on their behalf would prevail so we can get on with our upcoming holiday with no hassles. But at least I have left the condition of upset and arrived at the condition of just being frustrated. To focus on something completely unrelated the easiest task to do this morning at this early hour was tidy up April's diary notes.

There was no interaction with the bank today - but I wasn't expecting any. I sent across three thought trains of various ages across to the Customer Service lass yesterday and left in her hands. Frankly I wasn't feeling all that well today (possibly the stress built up over this issue of the past few days) and probably couldn't have dealt with a phone discussion that needed to be logical anyway.

Today's tasks included a small load of washing, final gathering of my Alice clothes (yet to be packed), a bit of reading, and making lamb burgers for dinner. Andrew did a fry up for lunch, and organised the transport to pick up a small parcel from friends next week (The Boat Works has changed their courtesy car arrangements and the parcel should not have gone to our friends anyway - we had given the company a different address but this company did send the original box addressed incorrectly, not to Andrew, so I am not surprised there were issues)

Other jobs included a bit of fiddly deck fibreglass polishing.

I also rang a friend in Victoria. - to discover she was north of me in the Whitsundays - I would normally be jealous of this but apparently the weather up there was pretty ordinary so didn't feel so bad. We didn't see the predicted gusts to 31 knots here - the wind was blowing mostly a constant 20 ish knots all day

19th April 2023. I woke up to rain in the early morning. I knew the bucket was inside but I didn't get up to put it out to collect water. When I did get up at 0550 it was still drizzling and the bucket went out then. The sky was grey, the wind was cold and the rain, whilst not horizontal was coming in at a fair angle. The tide was dominant so the wind was abeam.

I feel I got nothing done today. We had no luck with our bank in trying to open an account - the customer service lass and her manager essentially suggesting we don't try again. They also however tried to give me information that I know would be false and I suspect that was because they couldn't, or wouldn't, access it. It just goes to show what a great position I was in when I did work for a bank - I had access to the Assistant's of all the bank department heads and, could have found out the information I was looking for in this instance. Ahh well. These things are sent to try us

So having an unsuccessful attempt at sorting our bank administration out I moved on to another area - health insurance. I thought, rather than get a phone call I would try to get some help with a chat function. After the computer cut me off three times I decided I didn't have the head space for this and gave up. By this time I was spent - mentally and emotionally - I didn't even get any of my eye exercises done.

I did however get my final packing done for the upcoming trip. And I did read a bit.

Andrew had a go at gluing the paddle board and pontoon but we gave up on pulling the other pontoon off

By the end of the day the bucket filled to about two-thirds....

Wind predictions for today were still grumpy but reduced so we didn't bother putting the gauges on. Breakfast was cereal, lunch was cheese and parsley muffins, dinner was fish stew.



20 April 2023. It was our Wedding Anniversary today. A week or so ago I was wondering what we would do that was quirky this year; last year we went up the Tower on the Gold Coast. This year we ended up doing nothing. The wind was up, as expected, so we couldn't even get to the top of South Stradbroke for a walk. So boat jobs were about as exciting as it was going to get. Andrew checked his gluing attempts - they mostly worked. I washed the bottom steps and polished the shiny bits of one of them. I also managed a long overdue inside rust run. We both read a bit but in the end our main activity for the day was SBSOnDemand - watching 'Alone 5' and starting 'Dark Matter'. We had something really fancy for dinner - left over dehydrated meals from the aborted NZ walk! Andrew had Sri Lankan Curry. -I had Dahl. Neither of which were especially exciting. At least we got desert - the Apple and Creamed Rice is quite nice!

21st April 2023. I managed a 'not so' fantastic job of polishing the shiny bits on the back port step today, using my left hand where I could; not a thorough job but at least it has some protection. Given the wrist issue and the fact I can't find the brace I have for it I didn't do much. I watched SBSOnDemand, and read a bit.

Andrew's big job of the day was making banana bread for lunch ..he normally doesn't bake!

There was a short bout of rain but the wind didn't get up to the wind speed gusts predicted.

The shock of the day was getting a phone call from a debt collector..for an invoice we hadn't actually received! This has happened to us before - but not with the same company. The software the contractors are using tends to count the date the invoice is started. If the job isn't quite finished and the invoice doesn't get finalised and sent, the computer doesn't care - it still counts the creation date as the date of dispatch. We had finalised the relevant job only two days ago so I was happy to pay the invoice, but they had to send the invoice to me first. It got paid along with our credit card when I did the banking in the evening.



22nd April 2023. It was windy but not excessive this morning...my guess was it was blowing mid teens when we woke up. There were grey clouds to the north. It looked like it would be cold outside so the back door flap was left down for some time

Given my right wrist is inflamed I have been avoiding most house work/boat jobs - which is frustrating because there are so many of them. I did managed to 'armour-all' some plastic, and wiped the top of the hatches clean (with water) using my left hand as the main worker. I also managed the dishes at night although there was one instant where I twisted the wrist the wrong way. Filling the kettle has been challenging - I have to keep remembering to pick it up with the left hand, as I do my cuppa. The book I am reading at the moment is huge (Tom Keneally's, The Great Shame) so that has to be handled carefully as well.

We had a visitor - we probably had a few - the swallows are the usual daily culprits but with the strong winds I haven't seen them for a few days. Our visitor today was a bit bigger, his feet clunky enough to make a clicking noise whilst trying to land on, and not slip off, the tinnie out the back. I think he is the first egret we've had on the boat.

It threatened rain on and off all day - indeed there was rain for the majority of the day over the current out to the east. We got very little, and only late; a few drops late afternoon, a few more drops when it was well and truly dark.

The wind started off mid teens this morning but by late morning it was blowing a constant - around 20. Then it was a constant mid twenties. The highest wind gust we saw was 28, but it could have got higher - we weren't checking the gauges all that often. We have friends who were rocking in almost constant gusts of mid thirties so I guess we can't complain.

Whistling kites, sea eagles and egrets.



23 April 2023. Whistling kites were the first birds I heard around 0630 this morning. But just after this I heard the bush birds in the mangroves - a chorus I haven't heard for a few days. At around 0630 the sun was trying to show itself from behind the clouds to the east; light rain again heading up the current.



The activity I undertook this morning was editing the existing text for April's newsletter - I can type without aggravating my wrist.

I didn't do a lot today. I put some more cleaning gear away, read a bit, a small session of yoga, and watched several hours of SBS OnDemand. There was nothing really to do. We couldn't get off boat and we were for all intents and purposes fully packed for the end of the week.

The Seaway had its highest gust of 33 knots at around 2300. I don't know what our highest gust was but we did see 27 on the gauges. The truth is we didn't really care. We were holding. We were comfortable. And for the most part the wind sounded worse than it was.

Wildlife spotted was minimal: there were some egrets and other birds on the sand flat at low tide but I didn't get the binos out to check the 'other birds' identities. For the most part the day was dry. We had a couple of bouts of rain after dark but they weren't enough to put much in the bucket.

Breakfast was cereal, lunch was nibbles of cheese, apple and nuts, and dinner was lamb chops and salad.



24th April 2023. I had a thought last night regarding transporting my good camera on the upcoming walk. It is probably more practical to transport it in the smaller bag around my waist rather than the larger one that I have been training with, and just take the lenses in a separate flexible bag, inside my pack, as I did on Cape To Cape. Given that the stock lens didn't work a few days ago it meant the panoramic lens is going to be the one on all the time, but that is probably not too much of an issue. We are walking *Larapinta* to see the landscape, not to chase a particular animal.

I was up after 0630. Andrew was up a little before this. The forecast was for 80 per cent chance of rain but at this time in the morning any bands of showers coming from the south east didn't seem to be going to get us, so I opened up some windows - the boat will be shut up for three weeks so any airing we can get is good.

At 0700 I heard a whistling kite calling outside.

I spent about an hour and a half of the morning



chasing my good camera charger. I eventually decided to retry the basic lens that wasn't working the other day.. and wah lah! It worked! This lens, or variations of this lens, has played up over the past few years, and this is the third unit of its kind! Given this, my options for carrying the camera have changed yet again, the smaller lens presents an easier, more accessible, option for carrying than I was thinking about last night. So I got the camera gear ready to pack and then made sure I had all the necessary accessories. I had charged both batteries a few days ago. One was in the camera. I knew where the other one was. I just couldn't find the charger. It wasn't with the other electronic chargers we were taking. It wasn't in my day pack. It wasn't in my duffle bag; the latter two I had turned out twice. In the end I found it, after looking in cupboards, boxes and shelving areas...it was packed - it was just packed in amongst my going out clothes!

Other, less frustrating, activities today included educational reading, utilising more boat wash before the rain came (it didn't come in any real form until evening, any daytime rain had skipped either to the north, south or east of us), watching SBSOnDemand, and put the final boat cleaning gear away.

Andrew spent the day on the computer between recreational and practical research, and cleaned the head. We also made water - the tide was surprisingly clear near top of the tide and once we come out of the water, we won't be able to make any more until after our yearly maintenance toward the end of May (we hope). The food dishes were done in two lots - we had been a bit slack yesterday and all plates and bowls had been used.

Breakfast was cereal with blueberries and yoghurt, lunch was a mixture of leftovers and pancakes, and dinner was fish curry.

Wind strengths during the day varied from the median of mid teens to high twenties, although the extremes were 9.5 knots and over 33 knots.

Physically I didn't have the best of days today - I was actually feeling better in myself in an overall general sense with no back ache or bad posture issues - but I did manage to kick the suitcase, twice, and cut my finger on the pulled off lid of a can of crushed tomatoes!

Back to Rocky suburbia! Our gutter at Paradise Point

25th April 2023. A mixed day, weather-wise. If all goes to plan this last ten day stint at Tiger Mullet will be the final one for quite some time, as will tonight's anchorage at Paradise Point. We didn't get up for any Dawn Service. We didn't get up at dawn. But we were both up around 0630. The sky was a mixture of grey and blue and the rain radar showed Southport to the south of us was getting wet, and as the morning progressed the hills on the mainland to the west of us were clearly being rained upon.

The sun actually came out above us however and I rolled up the entirety of the back covers as well the front middle panel - after a week of blocking the wind out - let there be light!

I spent the morning making two lots of muffins (for today's lunch and tomorrow's lunch) and enjoying some educational reading.

The anchor was up at 1200 to the drops of some very light rain. That however cleared up quickly and there were no drops on the clears around the helm station. Apart from some fishing tinnies and a couple of small recreational vessels there was very little traffic on the waterway.

On the way south we saw a sea eagle (with fish), whistling kite, pied cormorants, sooty oystercatchers, a Brahminy kite, pelicans, silver gulls and terns. We were also escorted for a very short time, by a small pod of dolphins, but I think they were more interested in eating than playing.

The anchor was down at 1340, further up the north end of the gutter than I had expected. Later as the tide went out and we watched the egrets, white-faced herons and oystercatchers gather to forage I realised that this is a better spot than the usual place we put our anchor; closer to the wildlife....but of course the small powerboat had been here for several months prior to its removal a week or so ago.

The afternoon was filled with on and off showers but the wind speed was mostly around the 20 knots - ish until around 1730 when the wind dropped significantly. We just hoped wind speeds would be low for tomorrow's lift out of the water - back at The Boat Works - up the Coomera River.

