

Aboard Sengo

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September 2019

Breaking in Barra

A successful fishing trip

4

Baza's on Banksia

A new bird for our list

13

To the Manor Born

Up close and personal with meerkats!

17

Saturday afternoon :race day



No northward progress....

Just waiting for everything to fall
into place



Sunset over the Burnett River

Three days at Burnett Heads turned into weeks and at the end of the month, apart from a quick trip up to the marina to refuel and a couple of days on dock, we found ourselves back where we started the month, anchored upstream from the Sugar Sheds in the Burnett River. Weather was involved but ... the significant issues delaying our trip north related to three holding tanks – and the most concerning one of them was biological!

Hanging off the pick upstream of the Sugar Sheds is easy. The river is wide and the holding is good although admittedly in strong winds, depending on direction, the wind over tide dance can be a tad uncomfortable. Access to the shops is not however all that convenient. To get to the Burnett Heads IGA we take a tinnie ride down to the boat ramp – a distance of around two nautical miles. To get to Bundaberg there is a bus stop within a reasonable distance, although we only found out the location towards the end of the month, and access relies on you being able to walk from the small beach near Coates Road where you can leave your tender (and access to that is to preferably wait until the water level has reached sand – muddy legs are not a good look). Early on we hired a car, although that was mainly to catch up with friends inland, and for our second vet visit we had the kind hand of a fellow cruiser.

The delay in our northerly migration did however mean we got to catch up ***The Southern Cross*** again, a boat we didn't expect to see as they'd been in the Pacific, but due to weather made landfall back in Australia at Bundaberg Port Marina and not Southport as originally planned. ***The Southern Cross*** is for sale so the next time we see its crew it is likely to be land based (for them anyway). Other social interactions included time with ***Zofia***, ***Eagle Hawk***, ***Anapa***, a mixed group of cruisers at the Friday night Bundaberg Port Marina BBQ and ***Annecam*** (who went above and beyond the call of duty for which we are very grateful).



Nightly cane fires



Do I have your attention?

The daytime temperatures for all of September were above Andrew's theoretical limit of 24 degrees average; sometimes into the 30's - where hot days were draining and cane fire smoke stifling. Because it was that hot and mainly cloudless, I put most of the hatch covers on that I'd made in March (whilst waiting out the rain in Tasmania) in order to block out the penetrating sun. They made a big difference to the heat under roof. Sengo got no rain in September which means her decks were covered in ash and Bundy (black) snow... and despite a quick clean on dock, at the end of the month she was not a white boat!

Croc count: It has been a long time since I noted a Croc count on an Aboard Sengo newsletter. This month we saw 4 - albeit all were in captivity (2 saltwater; 2 freshwater)

1st September 2019. Stayed on boat.

2nd September 2019. In order to get inland in a few days time we needed a car. The Bundaberg Port Marina used to hire out cars so we headed across to the marina to see if the service was still available. Unfortunately it was not – but staff did give us details of the company they recommend. We caught up with a team member from Leopard Australia, got driven to Bundy and took the opportunity to get some (crappy) cat food for Tiger's daytime feeding. In the end we hired the car for three days instead of two and drove it back to Burnett Heads, after a supermarket and hardware shop in Bundy and a check of the post office in Burnett Heads. After an early dinner we continued to 'contemplate' our major plumbing problem(s), giving up on one of them, but with a bit of persistence fixing the other one.

3th September 2019. Light winds were predicted for this day. The plan had been to get to shore around 1000ish when we had surmised that the tide was just above the mud, do a rubbish, recycle, op shop, post office and shopping run and then make sure we were back to the tinnie by about 1500, when, give or take, the tide should be in about the same position. Of course it didn't happen like that. It was blowing 25 knots at 0900 and the wind didn't die down until before lunch; which meant when we actually got to shore it was high tide. In one respect this was quite convenient; we had two full trolleys plus a lot of bags to transport and it meant we weren't carrying the stuff quite as far...but..... it also meant that the tinnie was quite a way up the beach and we prepared ourselves to be dragging it back down when we got back. We stretched the tie off chain as long as we could (had two chains joined together) and pushed the tinnie back into the water as far as we could but it didn't make a lot of difference. Of course instead of six hours, we now had three in which to get to Burnett Heads and Bundaberg and sort it all out.

We managed to get back to boat at about the right time but a few minutes earlier would have been useful; whilst we did get to drag the tinnie down over sand to the water, we had reached the change in soil and launching it from there meant sinking in squelching mud! Back on board Sengo we mulled around; the crisis activity of the previous nights still needed to be dealt with but I was mentally tired of it; we would take the night off.



1st September

Local cane fire



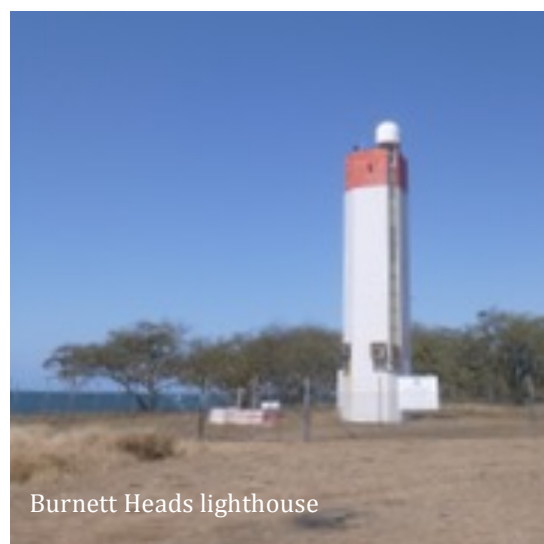
2nd September

Near Burnett Heads boat ramp

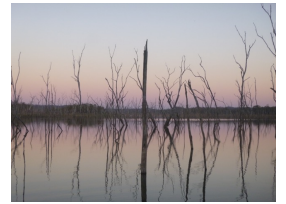


3rd September

Photos never really convey how rough it is!



Burnett Heads lighthouse



Lake Monduran

4th September 2019. The day was hot (Bundaberg got to 33.6). The sky was blue. And Andrew got his first bite within 10 seconds of throwing in the lure. Unfortunately it was a catfish. The first Barramundi bite went to Jamie within five minutes of this but the fish jumped off and disappeared after a couple of seconds; it would have been a monster had it stayed on the line.

On this magnificent day we were in the company of Jamie Bein; Lake Monduran Barra Charters. Barramundi are fickle things; we could see they were in the water, but not all were biting. However Andrew hooked and pulled in two decent sized fish. I pulled in a much smaller beastie – apparently around a year old. I will admit I didn't actually hook it – Jaime gave me the bite to lure in, however my sore wrist can attest to the short, but powerful pull. A great day as usual was finished with dinner with R&J. A point of interest on the drive home was the bushfire on the side of the road (we had been passed by the fire engine) Flames were within meters and looked eerie in the dark of night. When we finally got back to the tinnie we had to man handle it down to the water but we got in just before the sand turned to mud.

Belated action and mistaken directions.

5th September 2019. It wasn't until after lunch that we got to shore, due in the main to the tide. Whilst we had the car, I figured we should use it, and another big shopping trip to Bundaberg seemed sensible. We stocked up at Hinkler Shopping Centre and then decided on having a look at Stockland, but hit the wrong search button on directions in Andrew's phone – and ended up at Moore Park Beach – 19 kilometres out of town! It was unfortunately a short visit and not a thorough one, having started late in the day and conscious of the tide we needed to get back to the tinnie by mid afternoon. The 'job' of the day was to continue the stowing away of items left over from a previous clean up attempt



6th September 2019. Another hot and windy day. The local fire danger was listed as Severe, Bundaberg registered 32 degrees and their highest official wind gust was 29 knots. We saw 25 but as usual the wind gauge wasn't checked when the wind was blowing its hardest. Our job for the day was to unblock the other toilet. It was fiddly and time consuming and to some extent only partially achieved – but we made progress.

Elsewhere bushfires were burning over the state (and in NSW) in described 'catastrophic' conditions. Remembering Black Saturday we were empathetic with those threatened by fire, and very glad we were no longer in a similar situation.

7th September 2019. Everything looked like it was falling into place. We had deliberately extended the hire of the car to a week, even though the weather was not going to let us use it for at least one of the intervening days. The reason: the hope was that we would have dealt with our major maintenance project and be able to go fishing with friends on Saturday. By the end of Friday things were looking good. The maintenance was as complete as it could be for the time being and the weather for Saturday looked perfect. The tide was going to be the only hassle but I was prepared to get a bit muddy for that. On Sat morning I sent a text across to confirm we'd be coming.

However ..around an hour later I sent a text across to say we weren't. (the matter that the second text was got too late and catering had been organised by the time it was read will have to be made up at a later time). Tiger's plumbing system was inexplicably behaving the opposite to what it was at Canaipa Point (see Aboard Sengo August 2019). He ended up at the Bundaberg Vet, the slightly closer Bargara branch was due to close at 12 and didn't have a vet on duty when I

rang. We ran the gauntlet of around a dozen dogs and two dozen people in the car park, (there was a Red Collar dog adoption day event in progress) and arrived just before 1200.

And of course by the time Tiger got there he looked fine. It is always a challenge to fill in a medical history in a consult time and get a consult as well. He was prodded and poked and his gums checked (I was told -I was outside getting the tablet in order to search for the last blood results – Andrew was outside talking to another waiting husband whilst both of them were enjoying the sausage sizzle!). Fortunately nothing more intrusive than a tablet was administered on this visit (I was now left with two weeks more of this).

When he got home of course similar symptoms to this morning occurred - once (I rang the vet to check how long the medicine would take to clear up the problem) and then he threw up. Inside the result was a large fur ball (expected) – and a piece of plastic! We try ever so hard to remove plastic around the boat – he has an addiction. We are now wondering whether a reaction to this started the whole issue in the first place. Fishing and catching up with friends will have to be delayed and I suspect Tiger was probably grateful to have us at home and focusing on him instead of boat problems.

As it was Saturday members of the sailing club were out enjoying the afternoon. We came back to boat to discover a turning mark just downstream from us. There were some great buzz by's.



8th September –day on boat – far too windy to go anywhere!



9th September 2019. Whilst there had been several days in the last few that we hadn't utilised the car because of the wind, today we didn't really have a choice – not unless we wanted to extend the hire. Apart from catching up with friends, we were not concentrating on exploring this area any more at this time so there was no point. The wind was mild when we headed to shore; I was dropped off at the beach and drove the car around to the Burnett Heads boat ramp to pick up Andrew. This location would ensure we could get back on boat and load our yet to be purchased shopping. What it also would ensure however, given the wind angle, was a wet ride. The beach was adjacent our anchorage; the boat ramp was 2 nm down river and when we did get back to boat the wind was blowing, as expected, rather strongly.

The trip back to Sengo however was briefly interrupted. Getting the odd splash as we headed out of the harbour was nothing to the drenching I sustained when we slowed to a hail from a boat in the channel. The returning Hamilton

Island Race boat (Thirlmere) needed to pick up some sails from the sail maker before heading south (why you would want to in this wind is beyond me – yes I know – time lines). They had docked earlier in the day (we had seen them when we briefly dropped into the marina offices on the way to Bundaberg this morning) but had clearly left the pen and now, despite the horrible wind (I wouldn't be docking in this) couldn't get onto the jetty because of the tide – a whopping 2.7 meter draft a bit too deep for the current situation. So, we were asked to assist (I do hope they appreciated it). We took one of the crew to shore whilst the other one did circles in the channel and waited until the repaired sail was collected. Andrew then delivered the crew member and the sail back to the boat mid stream. Job done (I spent the time on dock chatting to another boat) Andrew picked me, and our shopping, up, and we battered through waves and wind to get covered in salty water before alighting Sengo. In the positive – I don't have to add salt to my next batch of cooking; the bulk flour I'd bought at Nanna's Pantry was in paper bags – the wind and the Burnett River had salted it for me

In some ways it had been a bit of a rushed morning. The car was due back at the hire place at 1200 and we had to make the time; we were going to be dropped back to Burnett Heads and we were slotted in between other such appointments. We also had to time the tides to get to shore in the first place, so we were on shore around 0800. We visited Tackle World and the chandlery in town before a coffee at the river café, a visit to *Nanna's Pantry* (bulk and health foods – I wish I had discovered this place earlier), and a perusal of three op shops (where we finally found a replacement bag for the box around the pump we use to blow up the tinnie pontoons. (The pump was bought in Cooktown in October 2016 and the cardboard box has seen better days – there is only so much tape you can apply before the effort becomes fruitless). A final shop at Coles and Woolies at the Hinkler Shopping Centre was had before we gave the car a wash (for which the owner of the car hire mob was grateful). The car had been parked under trees for its time with us and there was a bit of vegetative (and avian) pollution.

The wind continued all afternoon and by the end of the day we had seen over 32 knots on the gauges.



10th September. Windy. I attempted to wash the yellow tarp again and left it to soak for a couple of days in the green bucket. I had first tried by tying it up on front of the boat and hosing it down – but I was fighting with the wind and the effect was only partial. The wind had turned to east and was turning the tarp into a sail so I had to look at another way of getting the (cat) urine smell off. I mentioned to Andrew that now that the wind was East, anchored out the front of the VMR would be uncomfortable and we knew of at least two boats there who would probably consider moving... And lo and behold the next thing I see is one of those boats (**Zofia**) buzzing past the back of us. Jobs for the day: bread making, working on the remaining plumbing problem, washing dishes, and decanting the dry goods bought at Nanna's Pantry.

Zofia anchored downstream of us. Sundowners with **Zofia** and **Annecam**

11th September 2019. Shopping with the girls. Whilst Andrew was playing with the plumbing, I was out enjoying myself, taking advantage of **Annecam** and **Zofia's** company in Bundy for a few hours. It was quite a windy morning and I was very happy to be picked up, rather than lower the tinnie in the conditions. When I got dropped off mid afternoon, after getting soaked on the way back to boat, I found mixed progress; Andrew had unblocked a couple of recalcitrant toilet hoses but Tiger had only partially unblocked his.

12th September 2019. In some ways the winds were perfect for journeying north today, and indeed one of the boats in our anchorage did just that, heading to Lady Musgrave Island to take advantage of the next few days of calm weather. However, we couldn't go anywhere until Tiger was back to normal. We spent the day reading or undertaking minor repair works; I made yoghurt, beef patties, chocolate brownies (the latter two for dinner off boat) and did a temporary sew job on the zip of our back door. After five days I consulted the vet as to Tiger's current situation; the verdict – laxative (we've gone from one extreme to the other). A small amount had an almost immediate effect. Now we had to wait and see whether he needed help on the morrow or whether his system would now right itself. Dinner was with **Annecam** on shore.

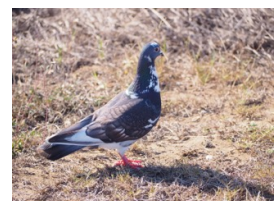
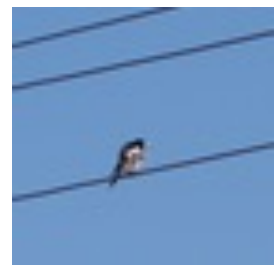
13th September 2019. The IGA might seem like a strange destination for a walk but we were desperate for exercise. It was only three kilometers away but it was windy, which added an extra dimension to the stroll. We took our shopping trolleys, filled them up and got the courtesy bus back to the marina.

The day had started with a plan –it was simple and it was short. In order to be prepared for our journey further north we were going to fill up with fuel at the fuel dock at Bundaberg Port Marina (we have been using jerry cans of late) – so we timed it so we arrived at the fuel dock at slack high tide and with little wind. Except someone else was on the jetty, had been so for over an hour and hadn't yet filled their fuel or water tanks –despite the notice on the bowser pay station to move on

after filling up! So making a call to the office we hurried the process along, circled around until the other boat departed and grabbed the assistance of the crew member helping them off to help us on.

Surprisingly one of the end berths was free so we asked if we could have it for the next two nights. We were informed that only one night was available so we declined. However by the time we'd picked up unleaded fuel – in jerry cans on shore - the staff had shuffled the bookings to allow us on. BUT in the intervening 20 minutes a small power boat had moved (temporarily) onto the berth we wanted. Now it was us stuck on the fuel dock! We were asked to stay there until the power boat had moved from our jetty. Of course during this time someone turned up wanting fuel!

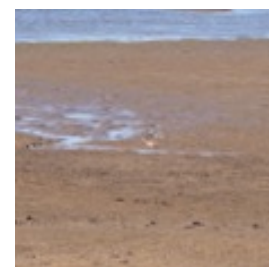
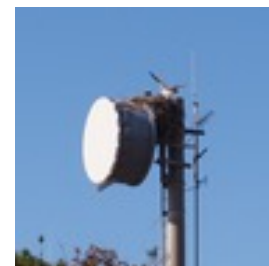
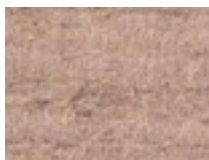
The upshot: the powerboat was manhandled along the dock, we came in, and despite 8 knots on the nose and an outgoing current, we had a perfect landing.



We took the opportunity to do some washing before our wander off to the Burnett Heads IGA. We finished the day at the Friday night cook-up at Cruisers Cove with four other boats.

Birds seen on our IGA saunter. Richards pipit (the undeveloped land is a great spot to see these little birds –the area will be wrecked when the land is developed). Rainbow bee-eater, galah, pied butcherbird, Australian magpie, whimbrel, Rock pigeon, ospreys, silver gulls, great egrets.

Back at boat a Brahminy was being chased by three silver gulls and sometime during the day there was also several pied cormorants, black cormorants and flocks of terns that passed us by (I am still not quick enough to identify most species)



14th September 2019. A busy morning. By 1015 I had: got breakfast, done two loads of washing and (partial) drying (with the help of the mechanical machines) and given Sengo's top decks a clean – the majority of the red has been removed but the black snow will take us a good two days of scrubbing. The vet was called to check Tiger's progress and at 1020 I sat down to a cuppa and took a breath.

After a cuppa I dropped the anchor! When I was pulling it up on Friday morning there was a section (around 1.5 – 2 meters long – I didn't measure it) that had gained some growth. Normally if you pick up weed in a turning river you can just man handle it off, however this stuff had not only stuck, it seemed to have dug in. I didn't get a photograph of it so I can't confirm whether

it was animal or vegetable, but clearly, conscientiously – I couldn't leave it there- I did not want to be responsible for transporting any more foreign matter to the reef than I needed to. So I spent an hour with the scrubbing brush scraping off the invader. I was lucky – and grateful – that it wasn't over more of the chain than it was – but then again we were only in a meter or so (plus spring tidal range) of water. The early afternoon was spent on a basic tidy up of the boat. Mid afternoon I had a rest, funnily enough after all that broom work I was starting to feel tired. Late afternoon was spent catching up with **Annecam**.

Back in the Burnett.

'No wind' is great for getting off dock – but not for sailing.

15th September 2019. I was up at 0400. I had gone to bed just before the end of the AFL semi final (we had turned the match on at quarter time) so not too early, but I knew there would be things Andrew hadn't completed for prep for our departure today and although we hadn't exactly discussed departure time, it needed to be close to sun-up for the expected distance. The plan, if the skipper didn't mind the motor on some of the time, was to head to Lady Musgrave Island – a distance of around 55 nautical miles (11 hours at 5 knots) and a requirement to get to the entrance of the reef and settled

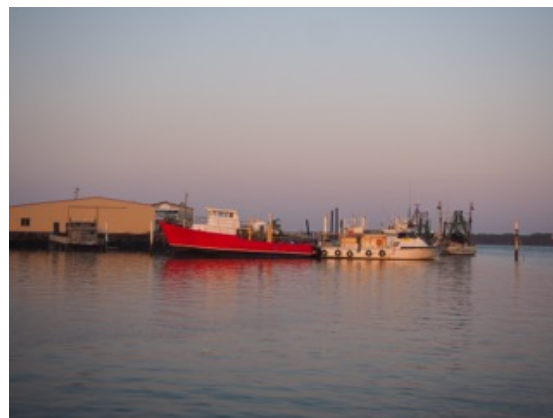
inside before the 1530 to 1600 cut off time for the sun, or at least preferably before 1700 at one of the alternative outside reef nearby anchorages for a transfer to the lagoon the next morning. I wasn't however going to be able to pull Andrew out of bed before first light, and we wouldn't have left dock in the dark anyway so I proceeded to wash the dishes and pull the plants down from the helm station. The marigold seeds that came from the flowers last season are starting to sprout –as is a tomato plant; I am going to have to do something about getting a small frame for that one quite soon.

Tiger of course, was awake at this early hour as well and he seemed okay – a bit more laxative perhaps is in order, having not gone to the toilet in two and half days so maybe

However, like usual, the wind predictions have stifled us. The 0500 MetEYE predictions gave us less hope than the previous days guesses and the update after 0500 wasn't much better. If we didn't want to motor all the way then we weren't going. Given that there was no wind in the morning we decided to fill in our time, and utilise the facilities at the marina for as long as we could. I got a load of towels washed (washing machine) but not dried as I ran out of time. I unpacked the hose I had so diligently put away the night before and proceeded to give the cushions, walls, and mesh of the front cockpit a good clean. In the process I got the bean bags wet, so they became the next project.

We got off the dock around 0900 and had the anchor down back at our Burnett River anchorage upstream

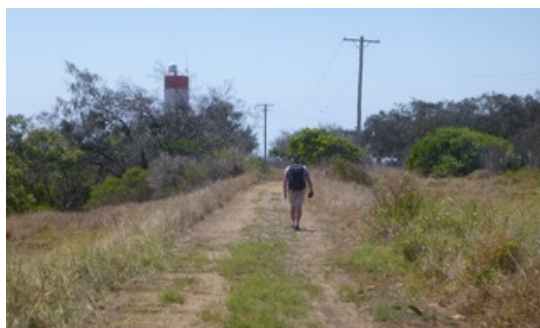
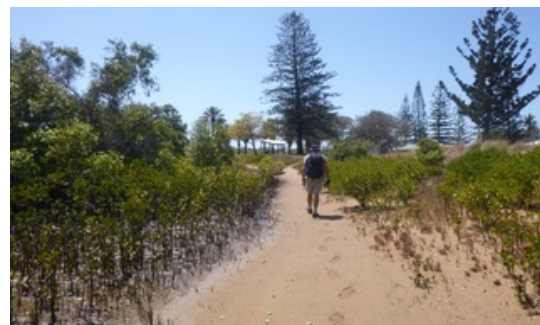
from the Sugar Sheds not long after. I read for a short while (Andrew was doing some research on the internet) but soon headed down for a sleep – the 0400 start had caught up with me. After lunch the wind picked up but was not strong. It had also changed to northerly so perhaps it was just as well we stayed at Burnett Heads.



Third time lucky!

16th September 2019. Unless by prior arrangement Andrew is generally a late starter, and expecting the wind to pick up late morning, and going by his usual pace, I had given up on the idea of a morning walk, and was instead washing and clove oil-ing the inside of the outer layer of his bean bag. When he suggested he was still in for a walk I put a temporary stop on that job and we headed to shore...eventually. Initially we got a few hundred meters away from Sengo but the tinnie engine wasn't happy. We turned around, got back to boat and it sounded fine. So we circled Sengo and headed back downstream and the same thing happened. This time we got back to Sengo and tied up....the eventual diagnosis: air in the fuel line - and fortunately a loose clamp was found as the problem and (thankfully) easily fixed.. However after our two false starts it was 1100 by the time we got to shore.

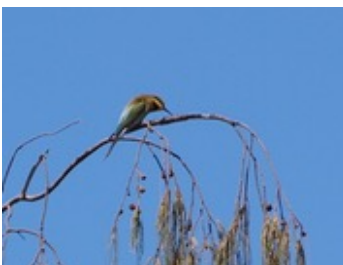
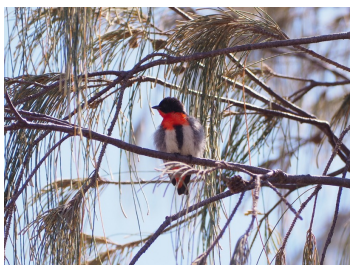
To stretch the legs we followed the coast from the Burnett Heads harbour on a mixture of mown tracks, sand behind mangroves and official walking paths. We went around the majority of the lagoon/harbour (including a short stint along the rock wall) past the lighthouse, along the Edna Strup Walk and back to town past the South Head Park Wetlands (which weren't wet anymore and whose interps boards were clearly very old and decrepit (unreadable)). Lunch was at the Delicious Café (for sale) as the other café



closed on September 1st and we didn't want the pub. After a quick IGA shop it was back to boat arriving back at Sengo around 1530.

Bird list: Magpie, galah, mudlark, willy wagtail, mistletoe bird (male and female), bar shouldered dove, peaceful dove, crested pigeon, rainbow lorikeet, rainbow bee eater, Brahminy kite, reef heron (white), pied oyster catcher, welcome swallow, short tailed sand piper, lapwing, white faced heron, royal spoonbill, black faced cuckoo shrike, noisy miner, singing honeyeater, Richards pipit, whimbrel, noisy friarbird, glossy ibis, white ibis, osprey, pied cormorant, black cormorant, silver gull, pelican, martin (species?), darter, red capped plover, tern (sp?).

And the mammal(s) of the walk – the local kangaroos. I don't know how these animals are going to fare – there is quite a bit of land for sale around Burnett Heads and an RV resort going in over 33 hectares – their range is going to be severely depleted.



17th – 19th September 2019. Between the northerly winds that were in the 25 plus knot range I wrestled with the bean bags. Finishing off Andrew's grey outer was the first task although this item needs extra attention as the zip has broken (they deliver the bean bags with no tag on the zip. In theory all you need is a paper clip to get the zip open – but that doesn't take account of it being seized with the salt and weather). My outer was next and didn't get as much attention, but wasn't quite as dirty either. It wasn't just a simple case of washing them. I started with the cover inside out and washed the wrong side of the material. Then I clove-oiled this before turning the cover the right way and repeating the process. All in all I went over the covers four times before turning my attention to the innards. The innards consist of a large mesh bag filled with annoying static polystyrene balls. (this is how they came – if we ever replace them they will be appropriately recycled and replaced with something a bit more environmentally sensitive). In order to wash the inner bag I needed to decant the balls – this I managed to do into 8 large garbage bags. After the bag was washed and dried I re-canted the balls back again. Yes, there was some spillage – but all was accounted for – nothing went over the back). It was after 1630 when I had finished that job (for one of them). My bean bag is back out the front. Andrew's inner needs cleaning and his zip on the outer needs fixing. Add it to the list.

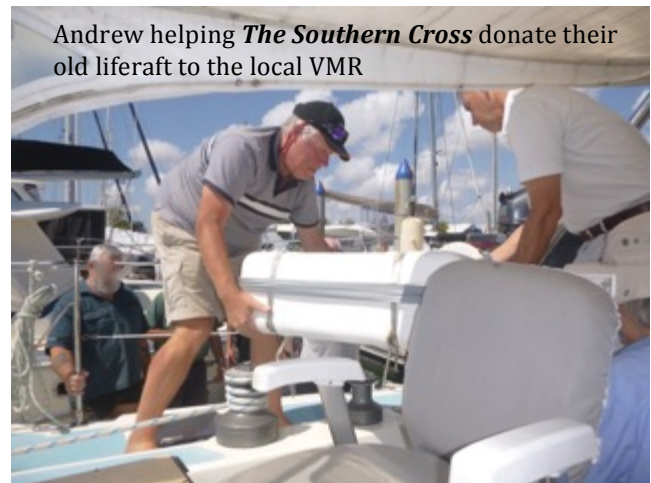
Other jobs that got done over the past couple of days included finalising the second plumbing issue.

20th September 2019. During yesterday's bean bag exercise I had been contacted by **The Southern Cross**. They were in the marina. We didn't expect them to be. And neither did they expect us to be here. Our plan had been to leave a few days previously and they had been told by another cruiser we had headed north. Today had been another day of potential northerly travel but as Tiger's system was still not right we decided to stay.

Having decided to stay I threw myself into the task of getting the second bag of beans sorted and cleaned. And to catching up with **The Southern Cross**. Because yesterday I'd been in the middle of a job and needed to complete it before sundown (before the cold air started coming in), we didn't

have time to unhog tie the tinnie and go for a visit. However, this morning we made time and spent a couple of hours catching up on the last couple of months travel; noting their restricted itinerary and that some areas in the Pacific may not be as friendly as they are supposed to be at the moment.

The bean bags got completed and restored to their travel place of the front cockpit.



Andrew helping **The Southern Cross** donate their old liferaft to the local VMR

21st September 2019. After ringing the vet with concerns for our feline crew member and booking a time in to get him rechecked (and possibly cleaned out) at the vet on Monday we spent the day milling around boat. The job of the day was to polish the kettle = which doesn't sound like much but it was actually a job on the 'list.' Lately I've been caught up with lots of jobs that aren't on the list - which means the list jobs get neglected and the list gets bigger.

22nd September 2019. This day was spent just waiting. Tiger had bouts of energy and didn't look particularly hang cat-tish but you could tell he was not completely happy. He had after all been clogged for several days. Nothing was planned for the day so we mostly read and when I got a modicum of enthusiasm I headed for the starboard engine well. It is about time both engine wells were cleaned out and I managed about an hour of contortions before emerging to get ready for afternoon drinks with **AnneCam**, **The Southern Cross** and **Eagle Hawk**.

23rd September 2019. We didn't quite know what to expect. Tiger was back to the vet for an ultrasound and I had been told I needed to leave him there a couple of hours. I had automatically assumed they would put him under but fortunately the plan was to avoid that, and only to apply a sedative if he got out of hand. Apparently he was the perfect gentleman, but considering he was severely constipated he probably didn't have the energy to be argumentative. If he'd been given a general during the process I was going to get his teeth cleaned as well, but as the vet had examined his mouth a couple of weeks ago and not said anything perhaps it was not needed. I completely forgot about his claws but again they'd been attended to in the previous four weeks. The upshot of all this was he was left for three hours, and I went shopping with *Annecam* and *Eagle Hawk*. Andrew stayed on boat.

Tiger went to bed shortly after he got home. He emerged around 2230 but we were going to bed then and despite an invitation he didn't join us. Andrew made comment that he looked exhausted. And clearly he was – I got a full eight hours sleep before getting up around sunrise when Tiger emerged to greet me. Poor little Tyke

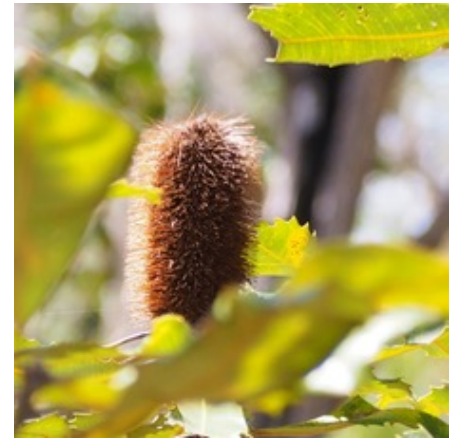
24th September 2019. We spent the day on boat keeping an eye on the cat. Despite a reasonable prognosis (with a caveat) and a supposedly empty plumbing system, Tiger was not his usual self. I'd had a full night sleep – which was very unusual – and he wasn't that enthusiastic with food – I had to put it under his nose to get him interested ; even when he was severely clogged he was enthusiastically eating (albeit in little bits). So we let him rest and mulled about.

25th September 2019. I got another full night's sleep – Tiger was clearly out of sorts. So back to the vet it was, except that by the time we organised it, we really couldn't get there until 1600 due to the tide. What that did enable us to do was however have a final catch-up with *The Southern Cross* before they headed south to become one of the boat-less.

26th September 2019. The vet visit was stressful for both Tiger and myself. The upshot, apart from a very grumpy (and hissy stressed feline) was that fortunately all his normal bloods are very much on par with last month (in the normal range). His pancreatitis result is still being tested (it was very high last month) but the reason for his unseasonal behaviour for the previous two days was a very sore tummy – which if you think about it, was probably a result of an ultrasound and a release of pressure from his plumbing after the enema. He came home drugged up on opioids; it is very funny to watch a stoned cat. The first good sign however was that he went straight for his food bowl when he got back to boat (an attack of the munchies perhaps?), and after downing more than he'd eaten for a couple of days (with enthusiasm), he went out the front and sat on the ledge next to the top step. It was fully dark by this time (we had got back just before dark) and he was still there an hour or so later. When he did come in he sat on the couch sphinx-like and as unmoving as a statue, again for another hour or so.

Overnight was out of the normal routine as well; you can't have a stoned cat walking around where he can hurt himself. So, like his little Elizabethan Collar episode in February 2017, we had him locked downstairs with us overnight; I being extremely uncomfortable on the couch until I knew he had found his bed and wasn't going to scratch the door down. He still didn't get me up overnight but I did hear him get up and eat several times. A very good sign!

The 26th was spent on boat making sure Tiger was okay. He had regained his appetite (that may have had something to do with sugar in the food – not ideal but it meant he was eating and putting on weight – having been lighter than we expected when this episode started and lighter still when last weighted on Wednesday). Not many boat jobs were done. We did soak some paper towel in vinegar to place on the engine blocks (it is a bit hard to fill the engine bay with vinegar high enough to cover them otherwise, and probably not a good idea), and I continued sanding the chopping block project started last month – for a short while anyway until the wind got a bit cold. Mostly we read. And Tiger seemed almost back to his old self.



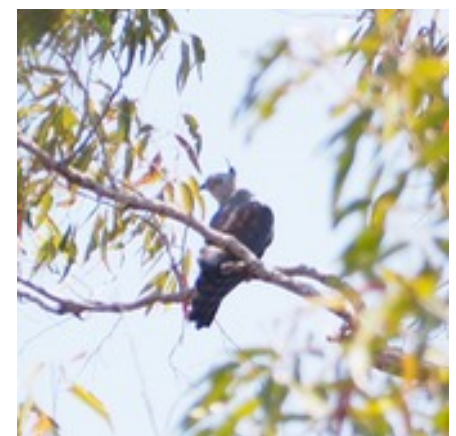
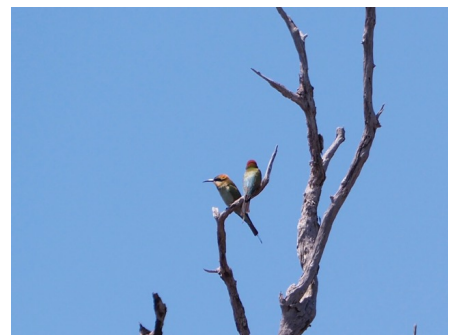
Banksia Track

27th September 2019. Overnight had been a normal night in terms of sleeping arrangements. Tiger did not bother me but he happily greeted me from the lounge area rug when I emerged around 0430. I had been concerned I hadn't been bugged but the purr and nudge I got on appearance reassured me all was relatively well; and around an hour later I got the usual treatment; purr, tap, jump and sit on hips until I move - he must be getting better.

The forecast was for 27 degrees, mostly sunny and zero chance of rain. And we were desperate for a walk. Tiger was now well enough to leave on his own for a few hours.

* * * * *

Clearly there was some moisture somewhere because a) the trees were still alive (some of them were even green) and b) the mozzies were out. The boardwalk, the first 400 meters of the Banksia Track, was however suspended over dry land! How lush and primordial this place would look with a bit more water on the scene. The boardwalk has seats built along the sides for people to just sit and watch birds - but the pickings would have been slim today. Having said that, there was always a background chitter of noise on our two-hour stroll, but the noise (and activity) was more prevalent on the eastern section of the loop track. The vegetation here too was more concentrated, wetter, with livistonias and swamp-gum-like species, whereas the western section of the track was dominated by low banksia scrub, trees barely to three meters, and very little shade.





BUT it was on the western section of the track that we saw our spot of the day. In fact, it really was our spot of the century as neither of us had ever seen this bird before...The Pacific Baza flew low over us, his gorgeous stripped wings and tummy an umbrella of shade, and being unfortunately hampered with pack on my back and binoculars hanging off one shoulder, I was in no position to get a photograph of him. He did however land, albeit not particularly close; and I did the best I could from a distance.

* * * * *



The roadside scenery on the approximately 70 kilometre drive from Burnett Heads to the community at Woodgate Beach varied greatly. As in other places some landholders are swapping cane fields for macadamias (some plantations clearly older than others) but there were also fields of vegetables, including chillies, paddocks occupied with livestock, roadside reserves of bush breaks and areas of national park scrub. Road warning signs included symbols for emus and horses (separate signs) and traffic tended to be in a hurry - we were overtaken by several cars, none of which would have gained much in the transaction.



Non avian members of the animal kingdom spotted for the day; a monitor crossing road to Woodgate Beach, dead kangaroos (also on the road to Woodgate Beach), and cows in paddocks. There was also the skittering of small reptiles in the vegetation on the side of the walking track and a thump that could have been macropod related. (Holiday makers with their dogs plodded along the beach)



The bird list for the day (includes species spotted outside the walk): White browed scrub wren, yellow robin, Torresian crow?, Leaden flycatcher, Pacific baza, variegated fairy wren, Rufus whistler (male), rainbow bee eaters, striated pardalote, white ibis, straw necked ibis, cattle egrets (on cattle), hobby, white bellied sea eagle, Martin (sp?), welcome swallow, blue faced honeyeater, noisy minor, black faced cuckoo shrike, willy wagtail, mudlark, Australian *maggie*, crested pigeon, feral pigeon, grey fantail, silver gull. And a striated heron on Sengo's deck in the evening.

Banksia Track is at Woodgate Beach and is a 5.4 kilometre loop walk in part of the Burrum Coast National Park.

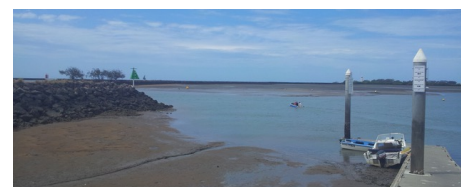


28th September 2019. This weekend last year we were tied to the marina dock in Rosslyn Bay having deliberately extended our time tied up so we could watch the AFL Grand Final on our television, rather than cope with the tiny screen of the tablet - which we would have had to do anchored off Great Keppel Island. This year we are on anchor and not quite so far north, but as the winds were light and the tide more likely a factor in our direction and stability, we thought we'd try the TV again. We always had the tablet as back -up.

However, we spent the morning off boat. We picked up **Anapa** and headed to shore to visit the monthly Bargara Community Market. Three of us were dropped on shore and Andrew headed downstream to the boat ramp at the harbour...we knew we were going to be getting back toward low tide and that it would have been an impossible task to get back to boat from the mud at the local beach. Our return to boat, after a wander around the compact market, a cuppa at Bargara township, and a quick supermarket shop, proved a bit more complicated than thought. Despite the fact the dock for the boat ramp at the harbour is 'floating' it has issues at very low tides. If we had been able to tie the tinnie up at the bottom of the long section as per normal the extraction would have gone without a hitch - however a little powerboat was already there when Andrew had arrived and our tinnie had to be secured further up the dock. This meant when we returned, it was partially resting on the substrate and partially hanging from the dock lines. We could see someone had used our boat as a stepping-stone as a set of foot prints were sunk into the mud beyond. I got down to see how soft the mud was and sunk further with every step. T joined me and took the lead -and got the mud bath up to his knees - and we manoeuvred the tinnie out to water (which was surprisingly simpler than I thought; it slid over the squelchy mud with comparative ease) before she was dragged around the back of the other craft and to the front of the dock so the passengers could embark. Andrew took **Anapa** home and I drove back to our car parking spot, bracing myself for a similar experience - this time it would be with luggage! I was fortunate when I was picked up - I was able to manoeuvre out to close to the water via rocks and there was very little sinking of the feet. The trolley got minimal mud on its wheels but the wind had picked up (unexpectedly) and Andrew had been soaked on the journey back to boat from the boat ramp. Hence he was a smidge grumpy, and getting grumpier as it was early afternoon and we hadn't yet had lunch. It was also nearly match time.

Grumpiness dissipated as we sat down to watch the game. Of course the start of the match corresponded with the turning of the tide so there was a bit of signal interruption for a short while. However, we were delighted that all had settled down by half way through the first quarter, and with no more loss of signal, and a fairly convincing final score, we were happy that the Victorian Team won.

Jobs done: made liquid soap from the left overs of soap bars.





Macca

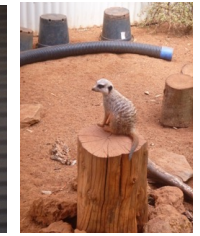
Bowled over by Meerkats!

29th September 2019. In November 2016 we visited a crocodile park/zoo in Darwin on the assumption there were meerkats on display. There were not (they'd been taken off for enclosure renovations). I was very disappointed. Today we visited *Snakes Downunder Reptile Park and Zoo*, largely on the basis there were meerkats on display. This time I was delighted!

Snakes Downunder is a privately owned compact reptile zoo on the outskirts of Childers, around an hour's drive from Bundaberg. The focus is on reptiles although there are a few warm-blooded occupants; emus, kangaroos, koalas and meerkats! The park is only open from 0930 to 1500. Within that time there are four keeper talks and if you are in the right place at the right time you may be temporarily adopted by a keeper and given more interps on the individuals in other enclosures. We managed to tap into the information and company of an employee who clearly loves her job (she'd have to love reptiles – she did the crocodile presentation). The garden provides fabulous habitat for lots of birds that flutter around within easy sight and there are many free ranging local lizards; who fuss round in the undergrowth or amuse by emerging from the vegetation

We didn't go into the area with the emus (a relatively new addition I believe) and kangaroos (you can purchase roo food from the kiosk) because a) it wasn't what we'd come to see and b) we've done so many before. But we did look at everything else.

The zoo isn't big but does provide picnic tables in the shade for people to rest and enjoy their lunch. The two snake talks



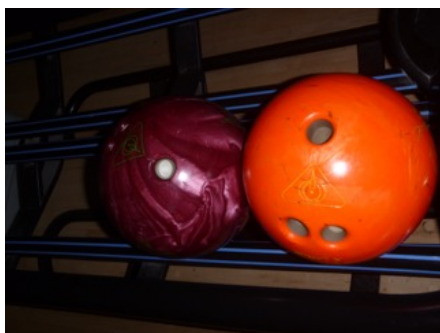
were fascinating and I finally got to see what I used to know as a small-scaled snake - which is the world's most venomous snake. The most dangerous however is the eastern brown snake, because of the risk with its proximity to humans. And I now know that the king brown isn't actually a 'brown snake'!!

You can, if you want to, hold a python (or which ever reptile they bring out) (which I did) and pat an alligator (which we didn't). This little beastly was a bit bigger than the crocodiles you got to hold in Crocodylus Park and it was held by a keeper.

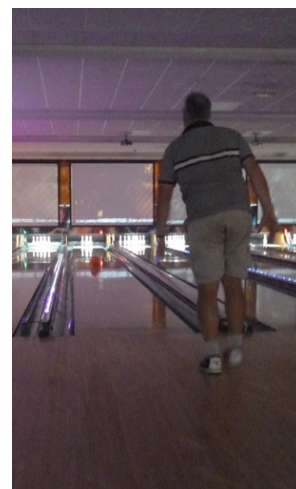
But the highlight was the meerkats (my favourite animal (apart from Tiger of course)) and I managed to get the last spot with the Meerkat Encounter. (This has to be pre arranged and I was surprised it was available with school holidays). Of course you pay extra for this and you are not allowed to touch them but in effect they, sort of, touch you. You sit in their enclosure with a towel on your lap and small bits of food are put on the towel. The expectation is that you will get the three girls all munching away. Because I was the third and final participant for the afternoon (each individual session only goes for about 10 minutes) we had to get a little creative to get their attention. There is also a male in the enclosure. During this time he is usually distracted at the other end by another keeper however somehow (must have been a long day) in a twist of events he got bold and I ended up, for a very short time, with the male on my lap and the girls roaming; so I got to 'baby sit' all four. Your hands are kept safely under the towel as well but it is an amazing experience to have these gorgeous, personality-filled, individuals climbing and chittering away on your lap.

We left the park shortly after this and headed back to Bundaberg but after a short visit to Bunnings (to get a climbing frame for tomato plants - this is going to be interesting!) we had to find something to do. Officially, at Burnett Heads, it was just on low tide. The 2-meter mark (where we can get into the tinnie from sand without sinking into the mud) was around 1815. Sunset was officially 1749 and last light around 1811; the timing was going to be tricky but there was no point heading back now. We did pop in to see what was on at the Readings Cinema opposite Bunnings but the only movie time suitable was in half an hour and we had no desire to see 'Dora and the Lost City of Gold'. So Plan B was enacted. We went Bowling.





It has been a long time since either of us has been bowling but Andrew (pre Trish) used to play regularly. The alley was a bit noisy (video clips playing in the back ground) but it was a great way to fill in time. The scoring system is modern – it is electronic – and the graphics tell you which pins you have knocked over and which are still standing. If you miss the lot a graphic comes up with a caricature saying ‘Oh Dear Missed.’ Cheeky system! We discovered there were gutter guards and we played the first two games with these in. We should have kept them on for the third game but I looked forward to the extra challenge – my score however was abysmal because my arm and shoulder were getting tired and most of my bowls eventually went into the gutter.



After three games we headed back to boat. The timing had been pretty good and whilst we had to manoeuvre the tinnie down the beach it was sand we were stepping in, not mud. We got back to boat just after 1800.

Whilst there were many birds in the gardens of the Reptile Park the best bird spot of the day (and incidentally the first bird spot of the day) was a pheasant coucal on the road reserve on Port Road.



The only reason I got ‘Great Game Trish’ was because my score was better on my second game than my first. Andrew’s score dropped progressively and my final score on the third game was abysmal – but it least was better than what GWS scored in the AFL grand final!

30th September 2019. It seems that standing around in the hot sun for several hours (getting possibly a bit dehydrated) and then playing three ten pin bowling games using muscles not elasticised in years may have been a bit too much for me. And as we didn’t get off boat today (the tide was only going to be suitable before lunch time and the wind too strong to contemplate the greater tinnie distance of the Burnett Heads boat harbour) I had no distractions to wave off several bouts of lethargy and had a couple of nanna naps to regain some energy.

I did get some things done but not the tasks that really should have been attended to; the weather was just not conducive. However dishes were done, plants were watered, the tomato trellis was put in place, salt soaked clothes were rinsed and hung out to dry (before being rescued from the wind), and I updated Aboard Sengo September 2019 newsletter....Early morning mechanical noise was a curiosity but Andrew surmised the port was getting ready for a ship, which did indeed arrive before lunch.

The forecast was for 31 degrees and winds increasing to 15-20 knots from 1300. The stronger winds came in early and from late morning with the wind against tide we swung in constantly jiggling circles at various degrees. By the time I emerged from my second slumber around 1730 however the wind was still blowing but the water was relatively calm. The predictions for the 1st of October have dropped from 95 pc to 80 pc rain. The tide timing is better to get off boat but the predicted winds are not. We still haven’t heard from the vet with regard to Tigers blood results so we sit and wait.



This Altocumulus cloud was spotted by Trish Ebert over Platypus Bay, Queensland, Australia. The ridges running side-to-side, which are aligned perpendicular to the wind direction, mean the cloud is of the variety 'undulatus'. But a cloud can be more than one variety at a time, and this one also shows bands receding to the distance, which flow *with* the wind direction. This means it is also of the 'radiatus' variety because the extended bands of the cloud appear to radiate from the horizon due to the effect of perspective. The cloud goes this way. The cloud goes that way. Don't let anyone tell you that you have to take one path in life.

(CAS symbol)

Prescribed to Trish Ebert by the Cloud Appreciation Society...

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I didn't get the email until 1st October because they are generated from England. However this cloud was spotted whilst we were having morning tea after our whale rescue on 28th August 2019. It was the Cloud Appreciation Society's 30th September 2019 'Cloud -a- Day.' The above is a *representation* of the email. I didn't know how to copy it across as it was, and apologies to CAS for not being able to transfer the symbol.