

Aboard Sengo



Based in the Broadwater

Mixing up medicals and bush walks

CHANGING THE CHAIN

Page 3

LAMINGTON NATIONAL PARK

Various starting Page 8

NERANG NATIONAL PARK

Various starting Page 18

Back in Australia and back on board. But it wasn't back to cruising. Because I wanted to continue my eye therapy we were relegated to sticking around the Broadwater for the next couple of months. To that end we sat, for the most part when the weather was reasonable, in our usual gutter anchorage, just south of the permanent little powerboat that had been moved there by Marine Rescue some months ago, and to the north of a procession of various boats who came mostly for one night. This of course meant that there was no making the place extra homely - the usual trinkets had to stay in their box, as putting them on the shelf would have them falling off when the tide was high and the bow waves excessive.

However, austere living room aside, we did give ourselves some pleasure and took the advantage of good weather and car hire to get training walks in for our end of April adventure - but not all of these went to plan, and changes in predicted weather severely truncated some longer planned-for walks. Birdlife was mixed and in some cases delightful; the family of ospreys that has taken residence at one of the mansions at Paradise Point a delight to see every-time we went to shore; of course, I doubt the owners of the house are going to be too pleased when they get back to occupying the property.

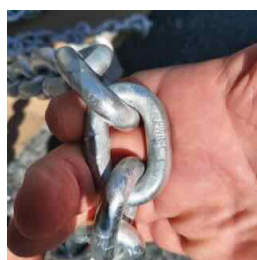


Working on the chain gang!

1st March 2023. Whilst it might be preferable to ease back into 'normal life' and let the body slowly get used to a time zone change, we had no option but to jump straight in this morning.

We were up early. At 0700 we were dropping the anchor and chain onto the stony ground below the boat, and at 0730 I was cleaning the anchor well, getting Andrew to give me a break toward the end of that time. The sky was blue, there were no clouds; it was hot. At 0830 Andrew headed off to chandlery to organise the chain, which had been waiting for us on a pallet since before Christmas!

The chandlery told us to expect delivery at or around 0900 (they said The Boat Works delivers chain around the yard for them as a favour, but we ended up paying for it). At 1020 it still hadn't turned up so we headed back to the chandlery to ask again. Apparently the story goes that The Boat Works fellow who was given the job was given two chain delivery jobs and didn't realise it. Once he had delivered one he thought the job was over. In the mean time we couldn't do anything or go anywhere not knowing when the chain was going to turn up. Eventually the chain turned up (and we got the other one removed) and we laid it out to mark it up. By the time we had loaded the lovely new chain it was 1140! And time for lunch, which was cold left over Thai from last night.



At this point I had moved my thoughts to the next job. We had booked a car at 1400 for a shopping run but we had to get to Helensvale so it would be a rushed job. I rang the office to see if I could adjust the booking - on the off chance the car would be available at 1300 for a three hour hire. It was, and we picked up the keys at 1257. We made it back by 1600 but we did take more than two hours so getting the car earlier had been prudent.

The next 90 minutes was taken up with putting stuff away and decanting luggage. We didn't however get any washing done; so we prepared to leave the slipway with two months worth of dirty clothes washing them would at least keep me occupied when we got back on the water.

At 1700 we caught up with **Roo Bin Esq**, whom we hadn't seen since we were in Tassie a couple of years ago! Of course we didn't have enough time together before they went home, and we went to bed... yesterday's long day and today's frantic one had worn us out.

Leaving The Boat Works - To Jumpinpin

2nd March 2023. The travel lift was at our front bow around 0615! We had fortunately been up long enough to have a quick shower and get the boat to a point it could be moved....almost. We were still putting water into a front tank; the hose was still attached!

The water and power pedestal was so close to the hull that there seemed like millimetres between the boat and the metal box...now that is what I call precision parking! I hadn't noticed how close the services were until this morning.



Once the hose was disconnected and boat loaded with everything we needed, we were sent on our way (we aren't allowed to be on the boat whilst it is being moved by the travel lift). The time was still before 0700 and the office was not officially open, but the one lass who was working extra time came and took our card and finalised our bill.



We had been under the impression we were going to be first lift (in), but we found that the 70 tonne lift was in the

way, and a mono powerboat came out of the water first. I suspect this was a late booking last night as the yard boys weren't expecting this impediment either. In the end, after checking that the engines were working and there were no leaks, we motored away from the boat works at 0736. We finally got



to have our breakfast as we traversed the Coomera', noticing the new houses that had been built or had replaced old ones since our last traverse, and the usual kangaroos under the sign near Hope Harbour.

The only boat in our normal end of Coomera River spot was the one that was dragged there several months ago by the VMR. We could have perhaps weathered the next few days at this anchorage but Tiger Mullet would be calmer so we tried for that. However, travelling against the tide, and with the delay in getting back in the water, meant that we would be pushing to get up Whalleys Gutter with enough water under the keels. So we decided to stop at Jumpinpin for the night and go in on tomorrow morning's high tide. When we got to Jumpinpin there were only five boats anchored along this usually popular anchorage. We anchored at our usual spot just outside the southern green mark.

With the anchor down we got around to menial tasks; a yoga session, emailing our insurance broker, organising flights and accommodation for a trip to Broome later in the year. Curlews were calling from somewhere nearby and I could smell the smoke of the fire I could see with the campers on the beach. I didn't get much done in the afternoon; I found myself with an awful headache and went to bed late morning, sleeping through 'lunch time.' I didn't really start to feel better until around

1900. My discomfort was probably a combination of dehydration yesterday and nerves today. We had a late lunch of scrambled eggs, feta salmon and avocado. Dinner was pumpkin and sweet potato soup. Andrew did the dishes.



To Tiger Mullet Channel

3rd March 2023. The smoke from the fire from campers on shore greeted my nostrils this morning. The wind was up from yesterday..it was blowing a full 12 knots! Curlews were again calling from the beach. The shiny new anchor chain was in its locker at 0645. It was out again at our usual Tiger Mullet Channel spot at 0715. Alto cumulous spotted the sky. It was hot in the sun. The breeze however, when it blew, was lovely.

It remained a mostly sunny day but the wind did pick up in the afternoon, as expected. It was back to normal today; I read a bit, started the washing, started the New Zealand writeup, and, occasionally, noted the goings on outside. A jet flew past mid morning and a white-bellied sea eagle was spotted soaring above us in the afternoon.

We spent the evening watching SBS on demand (after we had cleared the top of the



table -it is always a mess when we get back from a break). Lunch was a pear loaf. Dinner was chicken and coleslaw

During the day there had been rain to the west and north, and at one stage to our east, out to sea. We were mostly rain free and didn't get any until around 2100 and then it was only a few drops. In haste I had rescued the washing from the line but needn't have bothered - there was no more rain for the rest of the night.

The highest wind gust seen today was over 21 knots. The new anchor ball (Thanks J) went up, but got blown apart with the wind direction. Andrew readjusted the ropes so that wouldn't happen again. The only physical issue of note was that my big toenail from the right foot finally came off - a remnant from the 90 Mile Beach constriction; I didn't keep it as a souvenir and threw it overboard.

A split between domestics and entertainment.

4th March 2023. I was up at 0520. I guess I am getting used to getting up with the light but I note that a few days ago this would have been 0820! To amuse myself at this time of the morning I continued writing up the NZ notes. The wind was up.



The clucking of sea eagles penetrated the air at 0541. The instruments suggested we were getting over 27 knots. It was a windy day.

A windy day is of course, a perfect day for drying washing and I spent a lot of time with a bucket. In between, to give my arms a rest, I read a bit. I only have so much line

space so two plus months of dirty clothes is going to take some time.

The boat started to get a tidy-up as well today. Towels and vinyl coverings (put in place just in case there were any hatch leaks whilst we were away) were put away, as was one lot of dehydrated food that we sent back from NZ. Lunch was a salad. Dinner was black bean chilli.

5th March 2023. Washing!

To Paradise Point

6th March 2023. I woke up and it was bright. It was 0606. The sun was already up. The ocean could be heard as a constant rumble on the other side of Jumpinpin. A shore bird called constantly from 'up river' somewhere (west). A plane could be heard going overhead to the south east. The skies were blue with some scattered cumulous.

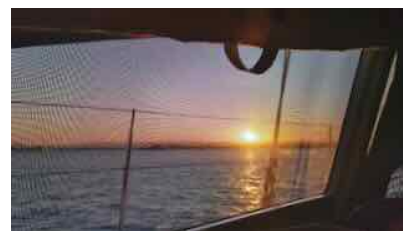


The anchor up at 0900 and we made it out of Whalleys Gutter with no hassles. Two (little?) pied cormorants were noted on a port marker, and the bow waves of two mono powerboats were negotiated with some discomfort once we got to the main channel. At 0945 I slowed the boat down opposite the channel to Tipplers. The mono in front of us was doing 5.8 knots. We were doing 7 knots. This wasn't a race and there was no point in trying

to pass the vessel in front with potential space constriction.

The radio had its usual chatter, including one fisherman extolling virtues of the fried chicken joints he can get at his local takeaway. Ahh - back to normal!

We put the anchor down in our channel anchorage at 1010 but it didn't seem to take. Upon lifting it again however there was a metallic scraping and the boat violently swung around and seemingly held well. So instead of bringing the chain in completely we let it out again. To make sure it held we would stay put for a while. My hopes for a short rest and then an excursion to shore were therefore dashed; given all the crap pulled up by dredges around here we needed to know if we were secure, so waiting for the change in tide was prudent. It would be mid afternoon at earliest now if we got to shore. Apart from a couple of very small items I finally got the last of the washing done this afternoon. This included not only our NZ stuff but the clothes from over the Christmas break with visitors, and, the dirty clothes for the time period just prior to that. The clothes are washed - now to the boat!

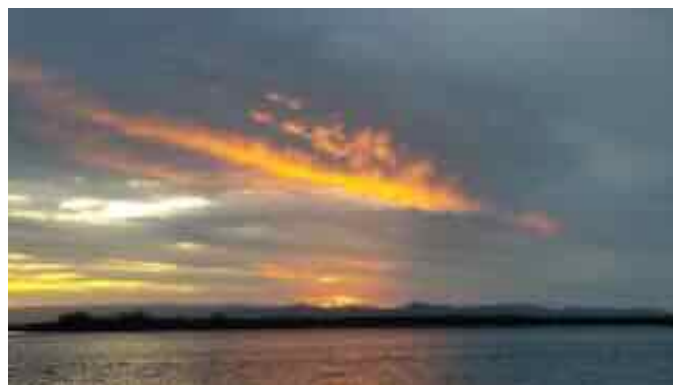


Bird-list: White ibis, pied cormorants, willy wagtail, pelican, silver gulls

Not tooth hurty - but gums could be a problem. A visit to the dentist

7th March 2023. It has been over 18 months since we have been to the dentist, the last occurrence was in Mackay in August 2021. The visit sticks out not for the dentist himself, or the historical art deco customs house building the practice was located in, but for the dental nurses who refused to get a Covid jab! I was certainly not going back to that practice, but then again, we may never pull into Mackay again.

Our dental visits over the past 8 plus years have been sporadic and are scattered around the country. We wanted to see if we could find a dentist near our doctor (doctors visits have also



been, apart from the past couple of years, sporadic and scattered around the country). Dentists, from what I have gathered can be hit and miss. Today's dentist was a recommendation. And I was quite happy with him. There were no major issues for both of us, although for one of us, there is a follow up appointment in May. We both got strict instructions however of how to look after our teeth!

After the dentist it was time to pick up the car again. Apart from a medical appointment on Thursday that we needed the car for, there was some good weather coming up and we wanted to take advantage and get some walking in.

Lamington National Park. Box Forest Circuit

8th March 2023. We were up at 0620 ish. We were off the boat at 0705. And we were driving at 0730. But by the time we got to O'Reillys, had a toilet break and a muffin however, I decided to change the plan. I had planned a 5.5 hour walk but given the lateness of the start, and that usually we take longer than the stated average in the AllTrails App, *and*, we wanted to get back to boat before sundown, a 4 hour walk sounded like a better option.

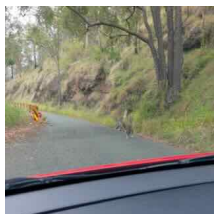
We needn't have worried. We were back at our hired vehicle just before the 4 hours were up and that had included lunch at an unnamed falls, chatting with other walkers, and stopping to admire some birds.

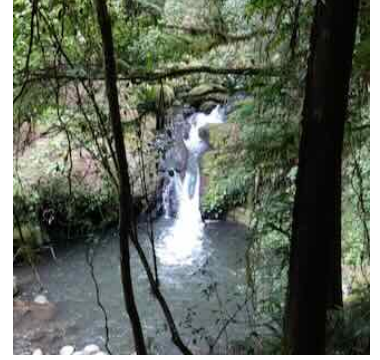
I can't believe it is about three years since walked through the trail head at O'Reillys. The first thing I noticed was the silence. Then bird calls and then background silence again. What a contrast to our New Zealand walking where even when you were walking in the 'bush' the atmosphere was thick with insect calls - and hardly any bird life!

The birds seen or heard were the usual culprits; eastern whip-birds (some females where answering the males), white browed scrub wren, yellow robin, log runner, brush turkey, bassian thrush. crimson rosella, corella (spp?), king parrot, brown dove. A catbird screeched in the background.

Other birds noted during the day on our travels were: a plastic owl, osprey, white bellied sea eagle, whistling kite, pied cormorant, darter, silver gull, plover (lapwing), black swan (family of four at PP), pelican, pied currawong, 'craven', mudlark, magpie, superb blue wren, thornbill sp?, White ibis, pacific black duck, domestic geese, purple swamp hens

Animals for today: Dragon (LNP), dugong (Broadwater), large skink (LNP), turtle? (Broadwater)





9th March 2023. Running around with domestics. The main task for today was my eye appointment - the first one since coming back. Around this we got Andrew some new walking shoes at Anaconda, had a chat to Camera House about replacing the camera clip for my binoculars, Andrew bought and then repaired the leaking fuel line in the tinne. We watched YouTube in the evening



Birds noted for today; darter, silver gull, pelican, black swans, black cormorant, magpie,

An attempt to make water

10th March 2023. Andrew was up at 0600. The anchor was up at 0615. At Andrew's insistence (he is usually reluctant to do anything in the morning) we were heading south. Not too far, just to the Seaway to make water. Sengo had swung around in circles for the past few days and the bridle had come off so my first task (as we were travelling) was to reign that in.

The anchor was down at 0700. At 0705 the generator went on. At 0720 the water-maker was on. And then it wasn't. It didn't want to make water, and after a couple of attempts ending in an error, Andrew called the technician. To his credit the technician made time with short notice to come and see us and we made our way to the Crab Island anchorage so we could pick the technician up at the Runaway Bay Fuel Dock. By the time he had arrived and we'd got him on board, he'd diagnosed a problem, and got the unit going (temporarily - we were too scared to turn it off given the rigmarole to get it going again so we made water

adjacent Crab Island), dropped the contractor back to the fuel jetty and got back to where we had started at our gutter it was 1255. And we were hungry! We had had breakfast early... we hadn't yet had lunch.

At 1620 I removed the hatch covers to clean them and in preparation to clean and polish the hull around them. It was now raining.

Wildlife today included a jumping stingray off Curragee, reef herons, and magpies on the spreaders!

11th March 2023. I actually got up after 0600 today. There was blue sky. But where was the expected rain? Apparently it was on its way. The Gold Coast forecast was still dire, although [windy.com](https://www.windy.com) seemed to indicate less expected precipitation than it had yesterday.

I brought in the now almost dry top hatch covers that I had rinsed yesterday - with the bit of rain that had fallen yesterday afternoon, and rinsed the remaining one. We did a short yoga session, I worked on the NZ writeup, organised a pen over Christmas and continued tidying up the back cockpit. I also washed a couple of dirty clothes, made salad for dinner, we watched YouTube hikers, and discussed next Summer's holiday.

It didn't rain much, in fact hardly at all, which was a bit annoying. We had stayed on boat because of the forecast rain but could have gone to shore for a walk. Normally the weather predictions aren't too bad around here but this was one day where the forecast, for us at least, was just not right.



12th March 2023. I thought I saw a flash of light at at 0320 this morning. And then I heard a rumble. That got me up. Fortunately the rain over us had just passed and was minimal, however a storm was developing just to our east. Looking at the bom.gov.au app there was potentially more rain coming from the west...but that was a few hours away. So I went back to bed.

Given yesterday's false forecast, I wasn't going to let today's predictions scare me. We desperately needed a walk. Yesterdays 100pc up to 70mm didn't really amount to much, the little overnight steady enough only to fill the bucket up. I didn't get out of bed until 0830 this morning and by the time we had breakfast and sorted ourselves out it was 1025 as we were walking off the Paradise Point jetty. We hadn't taken any normal rubbish across but Andrew got rid of the faulty fuel line that he had replaced last Friday (after getting new hose on Thursday whilst I was in my eye appointment).

The initial idea had been to walk to Runaway Bay Centre and back, around 7km. If we felt okay I was going to try to



convince Andrew to walk to Southport which would equate to 11km one way. I was prepared to get the bus back. However by the time we got to the shopping centre, visited Telstra, got some shoes and had a sushi lunch Andrew suggested we check the rain radar before making any decisions. There was a rather chunky, and long, patch of opal to the west. With the predicted trajectory the rain was coming our way. So instead of venturing further south we headed back to the Paradise Point jetty. It took us forty minutes (it usually takes 45), and the faintest of raindrops came down just as we arrived back on boat. Instead of hunkering inside however and waiting for the coming storm, I used the precipitation to my advantage, wiping the dirt off the top of the helm. By this time it was raining heavily to the south of us and Southport was soon to disappear from our view. Within minutes the front had passed over and the wind speeds had got up to 20 knots, but conditions soon quietened down. Rumbles were heard from 1400. There was a severe weather warning from bom.gov.au. at one stage and I put my electronics in the oven. The last time we were on boat sitting out a storm of this magnitude at this location was twelve months ago...and we had leaky top hatches then!

By the end of the afternoon I had also wiped down the top of the gunwales, written up some of the NZ trip and read a bit more of New Zealand's history. All this eye work made me tired and I went to bed at 2130. Andrew went to bed at his usual 2230..



Birds. The osprey was back out in front of a vacant Sovereign Island house, a white-faced heron flew past. We could hear whistling kites. Silver gulls along with white ibis were waiting for titbits at the feet of several people who were enjoying fish and chips at Paradise parkland. The pied butcherbirds were singing on shore and one flew past us as we returned.

Stress over H2O!

13th March 2023. I was briefly up at 0230 to finish off jotting down yesterday's diary notes. At 0330 I put the yoghurt on. After that I went back to bed and I slept until around 0830.

We moved early to Crab Island to await the water maker technician. It would have been nice for him to arrive in the morning when all was calm but he arrived around 1300, just when the wind was predicted to pick up. From the South! Against the tide! This is a horrible place for wind against tide: we rock around in all directions, the sea state is awful, the conditions are dangerous (and very stressful) to launch a tender, and we have traumatic memories of when *Neros* dragged into us.

Subsequently to say I was not dropping the tinnie to return the technician to shore in these conditions. The decision was made to use the fuel dock at Runaway Bay Marina to drop the water-maker technician off from the big boat. It was blowing over 20 knots in the pinch point where we had been anchored. Fortunately the conditions were calmer at the fuel dock, and the landing smooth thanks to the dock attendant who I had

called a minute prior to our arrival, to ask his him for some assistance. We were attached to dock less than a minute. Our timing was impeccable as two power boats were coming in just as we were leaving, meaning they had to wait until we had backed off and turned around before they came into the marina proper. I hardly noticed the docking, it had been the lifting of the anchor that had been the extra stressful part of the procedure!

In the Crab Island anchorage we are usually at extremes with the excessive movement forced by the wind over tide conditions. This is probably not ideal for the chain, hull and antifoul mix. So manoeuvring out of this situation is hard enough. However in the crazy machinations of the dance over the couple of hours that the technician had been on board, the bridle clip had managed to hook onto a second part of the chain and had come up tight to one bit of chain, with a loose loop, and no easy way for a fix. Not a good situation with my already highly stressed state of mind. Initial tools used to release this issue included a hammer but that was to no avail. In the end it was a loop of dyneema and the spinnaker line that held the chain tight below the bridle clip whilst we (J and myself) manoeuvred the chain out of the clip. Andrew was in the helm following our instructions to do pirouettes with the boat where necessary to get us out of this mess. After that I was too stressed to get any more stressed at docking the boat, although my phone call to the Runaway Bay Fuel dock probably sounded frantic.

Apparently there were a couple of dolphins off our port side when we lifted anchor. I didn't see them.

With the contractor dropped off and a safe exit out if the marina area past the two powerboats I thought I could relax somewhat (not completely because although the wind speed had temporarily dropped to around 10 knots it was increasing again and anchoring



in strong winds has its own challenges). However, the adrenalin spiked when we came around Sovereign Islands enough to see a catamaran in our gutter. And he looked like he was in our spot! Fortunately on closer inspection, there was plenty of room for us to put the anchor down behind it, in approximately the same spot as we normally do. It was after 1500 at this time. We got a good hold, as usual, and settled in for the evening. The wind settled down for the evening as well fortunately (it had been blowing to over 34 knots at one stage). But we were comfortable and I went to bed not worrying, for once.

14th March 2023. I was up at 0500. The meereest of light was emerging. Although I had jotted down points for yesterdays notes I filled them in properly at this time. I finished the notes at 0647. The ocean could be heard on other side of South Stradbroke Island. It was calm outside. But partly cloudy

It was back to boat normal again todaywashing, making muffins, yoga, polishing port gunwales, reading, (*Robert Ludlum's Holecroft Covenant* (I have read this but had forgotten it)), finalised details for xmas pen for boat, and for the Christmas holiday.

The anchor winch has been screaming at me for some months and Andrew finally got enough inspiration to deal with it today - until he couldn't. His ultimatum went something along the lines of he could have a go at it with jammed (seized) bolts, and we might be in trouble if anything went wrong with that interaction today, or we could wait a few weeks until we were in the yard, grab a professional and get them to take the risk. Given I had been putting up with an unhappy winch for some time, a few more weeks was probably not going to hurt.

Dinner was a mince mix.

Polishing and reading

15th March 2023. I finished polishing the port side gunwale today and started the starboard side. I also finished reading the *Holecroft Covenant*.

We took a look at the Tinnie tube which has deflated, cleaning it up and finding the leaks.

Lunch was quinoa and tofu. Dinner was left overs.

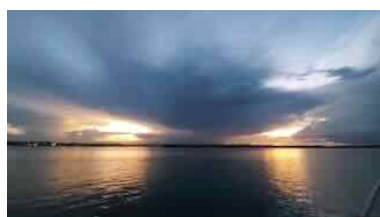
16 March 2023. At 1000 we started walking to pick up the car but got distracted... Andrew was due ish for a haircut and I haven't done it for ages. There was no queue for A's preferred barber at Paradise Point so he walked straight into the air conditioning. I was even allowed in as well! (There is limited space inside and only clients are usually allowed in).

We had got to shore a bit earlier than we expected. The morning job had been to put the hopefully now fixed bladder on to the tinnie. The idea was to swap it with the side that was working. Except it wasn't. When we went to blow the good side up the valve wasn't working! Typical. Fix one thing and get another problem. We couldn't get the 'not so good pontoon' off anyway so put the glued pontoon back where it came from, blew it up and heard a leaking sound. Andrews quick solution is to replace both. I will see if I can convince him to try the repairs again.

We finally got back to Paradise Point; the tinnie was piled high with vegies and there was a small delay before departure as we pumped-up the sagging pontoon. It took us over 30min to put the stuff away into the fridge when we got back to boat, 8 hours after we had left.



Notorious was camouflaged as we came back. She had anchored south of us this morning. I thought she had gone when we came back because she blends in so well. We still haven't met the owners, despite being anchored in the same anchorage as this boat many times over the past 8.5 years. The closest we got was a text conversation a few years ago when I



thought she was dragging.

We spent the evening reading insurance pds's!

Back to Binna Burra

17th March 2023. The sun came up over the top of South Stradbroke Island at 0600. By this time I had put the yoghurt in the fridge, filled my water bladder, washed yesterday's dishes, and chased two swallows off the boat. On the way to Paradise Point we noted the ospreys at their usual spot on the vacant house, silver gulls flew overhead and two pelicans guarded the jetty.

We were at the car and heading out at 0635. The roads were initially very quiet. Notable wildlife along the drive included an eagle being harassed by smaller birds



The day was predicted to be very hot so instead of choosing a longish walk I opted for the Talliwall Circuit. Once around is only 5.4 kilometres and easy. I had initially wanted to do a more challenging walk but given the temperature predictions and the humidity we decided to keep it simple. Andrew also managed to roll his ankle so the prospect of going around again after a cuppa was given up for somewhere cooler (it was by this time 33 degrees outside in the hills and 38 degrees in the lowlands). We headed into an air-conditioned shopping centre and did a couple of laps of that. 5 plus km up the hill. 3 plus km around Robina Town Centre and then 2 plus around Runaway Bay Centre and getting back to boat. My phone tells me we still walked over 10km.

Bird list: Golden whistler, eastern whip-bird, yellow robin, brush turkey, 'cravens', noisy miners, white ibis

We watched AFL when we got back to boat, surprised we had reasonable reception for most of the game

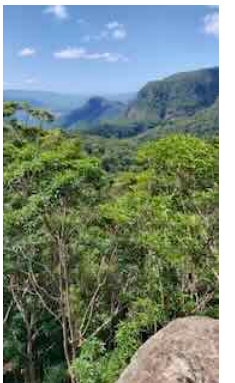
Binna Burra again

18th March 2024. The first thing I did this morning was decant some, but not all, of the meat we had got yesterday into containers and into the freezer. It had been too hot, and we were too drained, to do anything when we got back to boat after 1700 yesterday.

The weather for the coming few days looked good and we extended the car hire, and this morning we headed back to Binna Burra. The day was cooler than yesterday and a longer walk was definitely the plan but in the end, after finding the bottom entrance to the Ships Stern circuit we only ended up walking around five kilometres. At the start of the trail I had changed my expectations to just over 10 kilometres (it was 5.3 km one way to the falls) but when we got to the Yanghala Lookout at mileage 2.5 kilometres I found my body had had enough. We still got some walking in - on a completely new track.

Birds seen: brush turkey, crimson rosella, pitta, pale headed rosella, gerygone, pied currawong, pied oystercatcher and white ibis

I occupied myself with the newsletter most of the evening.





Bush bashing to Araucaria

19 March 2023. A longer walk. And a walk we hadn't done before. Something a bit different. But not that different. In the end I didn't have a very happy husband this afternoon. He had been hit with twigs, scratched with vegetation, caught with vine hooks (including across his neck) and had hit his head twice on tree trunks hanging across the track at head height. True I had also hit my head twice under these circumstances and we had resolved that perhaps wearing a brim was not only not needed in rainforest, it was downright dangerous. Brims obscure one's view from above one's head at the same time we need to watch where our feet go (this unmaintained overgrown track was littered with debris (vegetative and geological), and prone to holes, and criss crossed with plants of all species from ankle to head height (including vegetation that stung!)). Quite frankly, having one's attention at three different focal points was exhaustive!

We knew when we started this track it would not necessarily be maintained - the majority of the track the same as the access track to Mount Hobwee which we have walked to before. There were lots of ground obstacles (logs) as well as those above ground as mentioned above, including two large fallen trees that were more of an injury hazard than the rest. I did report them to Parks when I got back to boat. They were sending staff out on a maintenance run a couple of days later.

But in the end the final lookout was just not worth it. There was no view (or not much of one). There may have been a great view once but the vegetation has since grown up and the viewpoint is not big enough to put any facilities in. The Joalah lookout view point along the Border Track has a better outlook and would still give you a ten kilometre round trip walk.

The view from the Orchid Bower is lovely - but this is where Andrew first hit his head, hard enough to hear his neck crack, so his opinion of this spot is not inclined to be positive. We got back to the car bruised, scratched and disappointed.

Bird spots weren't all that impressive either; Blue face honeyeater, Willy wagtail, ???pigeon, bassain thrush?. There may have been others but our minds were not in a mood to remember them!





Domestics

20th March 2023. I had gone to bed at 2300 and at 0000 woke up for a toilet run. At 0200 I got up for the noise. The wind was blowing 25 plus knots. From the south and with rain! Windy had predictions of light winds in the 7 to 10 tranche but clearly that was not what was happening now. Although Windy also had this tranche gusting to 34 (big extremes)...I saw only up to 27



This 'house boat' is being moved by a small Tinnie!

Today was spent polishing (the rest of the starboard gunwale), washing (socks and pillow cases), airing the mattress topper, a short session of yoga, and working on the newsletter. We had a late lunch and pumpkin soup for dinner.



Nerang National Park

21st March 2023. It was windier than preferred but according to [windy.com](https://www.windy.com) blowing about as expected. We had planned to up anchor and head down to the Seaway this morning but I wasn't happy doing it in the presented conditions. We still had water....we could ration and wait.

Yesterdays conditions had been, eventually, almost perfectly calm and great for a trip to the Seaway except by the time we thought about this and checked the tides it was too late to start.

Because yesterday had been calm it had also been a great day to go for a walk, but after battling the bush the day before Andrew wasn't really in the mood.

So I was itching to get out today despite the wind. **Notorious** left the anchorage whilst I was baking muffins for breakfast. **Ophelia** turned up to anchor in front of us soon after although we didn't see the boat until we were about to head to shore.

By the time we left wind was blowing mid teens but the sea state was flat. We got to shore dry around 0840. I didn't plan to get back to boat until late afternoon when the wind was predicted to drop.

I had given Andrew a choice this morning..a long flat (essentially paved) bike track, or a slightly up, shorter but more appropriate terrain for our training, track. He chose the short but harder track. It took us the average time listed in AllTrails to complete, and we came out with no issues. We started at 0930. We finished at 1045.

Lunch was at a place called *Cut and Grind* (a combination of hairdresser and cafe!) before I convinced Andrew to go for more of a walk. We drove a fair way to get to Logan to the start



of the bike trail but we turned around one kilometre along, my legs starting to feel a bit tired.

When we got back to boat around 1630 it was blowing under 10 knots. The sea state calmer than the morning and very comfortable. I spent most of the evening writing up NZ. The wind picked up in the late evening and at 2300 we noted 27 knots on the gauges.

Not many bird calls were heard today, and insects dominated for a while. There were more birds at the bike path than at Nerang National Park.

22nd March 2023. 0615. And a gust blew to 23 knots. Seaway was blowing to 13! Yesterday windy.com had the wind predicted to die down this morning. Windy had got it slightly wrong and didn't have the rain come in last night; expecting it this morning. Outside was overcast but no obvious rain. Windy's predictions have gone up for this morning. It just shows the forecasts can be misleading.

Like yesterday the original idea had been to up-anchor early and head down to Seaway to make water. Just like yesterday I wasn't going to do it in this wind!

There were a couple of bouts of low wind, but they didn't really last and it rained on and off all day. Mid afternoon the wind started to settle although short showers visited occasionally. **Ophelia** popped over for a cuppa and to pick up some stuff we were donating. The rest of the day was spent reading mostly. And editing my NZ newsletter, washing our head floor. Breakfast was grilled mushrooms, lunch was small flat bread and we had nuts for dinner.

I went to bed not long after 2130. Andrew about an hour later.

Making Water - finally

23rd March 2023. The anchor was up at 0615, just as the sun was showing itself above the cloud horizon east of South Stradbroke Island. **Ophelia** had left.

At 0710 the anchor was down near the Seaway. By 0810 I had polished the top of the helm station and wiped dirt away from around most of our top hatches. I had also started to give the flat surfaces of the the helm station a wipe down but because we hadn't yet rolled up the covers it was too hot to continue ...

By 1020 the living area had been swept, the front cockpit floor wiped, we had managed a grazing breakfast, of sorts, put fuel in the tinny and we had listened to our usual daily dose of UK politics. Andrew had also managed to determine which walk we were going to do after my eye appt, and I had done some eye exercises

At 1035 we were preparing to pick the anchor back up again. At 1145 it was back down in its gutter after one false start and avoidance of all the crab pots that had turned up in the past few hours. At 1210 we were on shore driving south. At 1245 I was waiting for my eye appt. Lunch was around 1400 and a commercially cooked roast.

The afternoon walk was labelled 'wetland' in the AllTrials App but Andrew commented 'drainage mitigation' may have been a more appropriate term. For quite a while on this short stroll we saw nothing (apart from children being picked up from school) but soon we started our bird count. It wasn't until after we had truncated the circuit that we saw some lesser seen species (lesser seen for us anyway).

The bird list for the day is as follows: Magpie, mudlark, pacific black duck, wood duck, moorhen, osprey, pied cormorants (being their usual decorations on port and starboard marks as we headed back to our anchorage), white-faced heron

Nerang National Park

24th March 2023. 17 plus km turned into 7 plus km this morning. We needed the longer walk but waking up with a fuzzy arm (I had been sleeping on a nerve which may have been an indication my back was out) and a slight tickle in the throat, I figured doing a longer walk and taxing the body with a latish start (it was after 0700 and Andrew was yet to get out of bed) in 29 degrees Celsius was not the smartest move.

We started the walk at the velodrome. Last time we started a walk in this area we parked on the side of the road. This time there was a proper car park, and access to a toilet (one, the toilet block was closed) before we took off into Nerang National Park. This end of the park is where the mountain bike tracks are concentrated but our route stuck mainly to the larger dirt roads. We saw one group of four mountain bikers, and a single, just as we were resting from the biggest up of the day, and two runners! More importantly we saw three macropods, one monitor and heard several small lizards in the undergrowth, and pleasantly, birds in the bush. The track took us around the average time suggested in the AllTrails app which wasn't bad as we had two breaks. We were back at the car early afternoon.

Before we headed home we popped into Robina Shopping Centre to pick up a clip for my binos, dropped half a boot load of co-mingled recycling off to the Transfer Station, and had hoped to drop three bags of books off to the RSPCA op shop and rehoming centre in Labrador. This location was chosen for two reasons, one we could donate to a good cause, and two, they often have felines looking for a new home. We are not quite ready to become pawrents again yet, but we would have said hello. Unfortunately the op shop here is now permanently closed. RSPCA have other op shops...one of which I discovered was in Robina...where we had just come from!

We returned back to boat. Thankfully nobody had stolen the deflated pontoon that was still folded up in the tinnie (the flat pontoon had dislodged itself from the boat just before we reached the Paradise Point jetty).



25th March 2023. Activities planned today were for this morning only.



Essentially the car had to go back to the hire mob by 1100. But before we did that we needed to empty the boot. Whilst we had emptied all of our recycling yesterday, three bags of books were still there. So this morning after getting to shore shortly after 0900 we drove off to find the Animal Welfare Op Shop in Coombabah. It wasn't hard to find, in the shopping centre where the manager of the IGA had abused me three years ago...not that I want to recall that incident. In the end I deposited three bags of books, and came out with five individual books...I needed something to read but it was a net loss in the bookshelves and that was important - they had been overloaded.

We had grabbed some more comingled recycling this morning as well and we got rid of that on the way back to drop the car off. It started raining just as we passed the Helensvale Market so we didn't explore that but we could have. The rain didn't last long. In the end we dropped off the car early and then caught up with friends H & L for a cuppa at Paradise Point...before heading back to boat early afternoon.

The afternoon was spent on more NZ writeup, recreational reading (now I have some new reading material) and an early (ish) dinner. I went to bed around 1930 which I suspect had something to do with a reaction to bread



Shining Light nudged past in

the afternoon with some news.

A day of domestics

26th March 2023. Today was spent entirely on boat; washing, polishing (side angled sections) and recreational reading (finishing the book ~~I had~~ started yesterday)



27th March 2023. The social catchup today was



brunch with **Koolsid!!!** Whom we haven't seen for over a year. This was terrific but afterwards (after a quick Paradise Point circuit) it was back to boat and boat jobs; including polishing the side and top bits of hatches. Recreationally we read, watched a movie, and did the dishes. From an organisational point of view we organised some car hire for Christmas. Andrew finally got enthused to fix his paddle board and we spent some time chasing a product we thought we had but didn't, so that idea went by the wayside. The good news however, whilst looking for this mythical product, he found his foldable glasses!. A very large powerboat came in and anchored to our north for the sunset; it left in the dark (some businessmen sealing a deal, no doubt).

Birds seen included the local swan family (four), pelicans and gulls on a disappearing sandbank in the middle of the Paradise Point anchorage. I didn't notice the ospreys on Sovereign Island as I had for the past couple of days, but then again we weren't looking.

The animal spot of the day was a baby bull shark (with its black tips) stalking the back starboard step).



28th March 2023. The sun was well and truly up when I got up after 0700. Andrew had been up for some time.

We had one task that had to be done today and that was pick up the hire car. Until then though, tasks were flexible. Andrew managed a few boat maintenance jobs and organising contractors for our annual maintenance. I managed some banking, sorting out the problem I have been having with Computershare, polishing some smaller bridge-deck side areas and hatch tops, and recreational reading. As it was a hot day I was exhausted by lunch time and changed the schedule for our walk today from a Paradise Point saunter then walking to the car hire place, to just a walk to the car hire place and then a wander around Bunnings. We needed a product from Bunnings and I needed some items from a car mob. We also picked up supplies from Woolies on the way back to boat for tomorrow's lunch.

It was late when we started but we did manage to get cheeses and chive muffins made for tomorrow's lunch



Another shortened walk....

29th March 2023. At 0755 I was waiting for Andrew outside the toilet (the single one) at the velodrome at Nerang. I had tried to use the facilities - there was no toilet paper and the faucet was stuck! Andrew was still getting ready at the car park.

Just like last week where a 17plus kilometre plan had turned into a 7 plus kilometre walk, this week the 17 plus turned into a little over 4!. When we checked yesterday, bad weather wasn't forecast for today, but the forecast had changed. And the rain band that was heading to Boonah, instead of fizzling out like last night, kept coming.

We had started early and we were heading toward the Paradise Point jetty in the tinnie at 0645. (We were heading away from it again at 0945)

I had felt the first drop of rain on my knee just as we started the walk, a little after 0800. By the time finished about an hour later the drizzle was steady. It was just drizzle...but the rain radar indicated it was potentially going to get heavier. We didn't want to take the chance of getting caught out in horrible weather.

We had also found a deteriorated hatch hinge this morning so instead of guaranteeing ourselves a soaking we just guaranteed ourselves the look of partially drowned rats. And we were back on boat around 1000

The tinnie ride back to boat had its challenges and for a few moments getting wet with the rain was going to be the least of our worries. A large powercat was coming up the main channel. We were coming up the smaller channel. He was making one hell of a wave, wreaking havoc on a race yacht being towed. Of course a small pod of dolphins rode across the waves at the stern of this boat and were probably having a lot of fun. We on the other hand were waiting for disaster. Andrew managed some magnificent moves and we didn't even get a splash!

Just after 1100 I felt tired. I am not sure if it was something I ate or my posture but I went downstairs for a snooze. But I didn't stay long. A pod of dolphins was going past hanging around long enough to perhaps indicate they were chasing fish. Most of them moved on but one had a fun time under Sengo exploring and making noises for the next ten minutes or so, popping up to say 'hello' with each pass. On one pass it had its beak open with a fish clearly wedged in it. Andrew asked if this was our 'hitchhikers' (Douglas Adams) moment...'So long. And thanks for all the fish!'

At 1345 we heard strange honking outside the boat and strange scraping at the back. The honking was a pair of flying interacting white bellied sea eagles. The scraping was the footfall of a large pied cormorant on the back edge of the solar panels. We didn't know the pied cormorant was there until we went out the back to investigate the eagles; the cormorant flew off when we got too close.

A Long busy day

30th March 2023. I had wanted to be on shore earlier than we eventually made it, but by 0900 we were in the car and heading out for the day's running around. Our first job was to drop off some tools to **Ophelia** who found himself with a mechanical problem at a marina well south of where he expected to be, without the tools to fix the problem. Our next task was to head to a bank to make an appointment for some help setting up an account, then off to Spotlight for some pure silk - they didn't have any - before a quick run to Wild Earth before my usual medical appointment at 1300 followed by a visit to the optometrist. We then headed back to Hope Island to drop off the hire car and walk back to the jetty before motoring back to boat. We were back at boat around 1700. It had been a long day

Medicals!

31st March 2023. It was a magnificent day and perfect for a walk. Except that we had medical appointments scheduled. But just because they were scheduled - didn't mean we got them on time.

We had booked in for our fifth Covid jab - at 1200 and 1215. We had also booked in for hearing tests - at 12.30 and 1340. We got to shore around 1125 (I had spent the morning washing some clothes and wiping down some deck area ready for the next polish) and with plenty of time for a cuppa we settled in at the Aritisan Bakery around five minutes later. The lass in front of me had such a large order that I asked the cashier whether, given we had doctors appointment in half an hour, we would get our order on time. She assured me we would and I don't think she truly understood my concern; I think she thought I wanted a quick turn around on a takeaway order -we got our cuppa in paper cups!

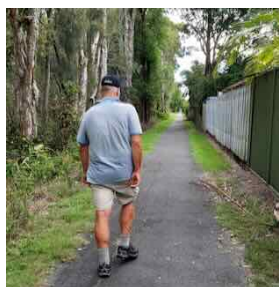
None the less we enjoyed our refreshment sitting down before heading to the surgery. We were of course early but I was assured we had no paperwork to sort out as the 'hearing fellow' would organise his own. The waiting room was very full so we sat outside.

I went back in twice to ensure the staff knew we were outside and at about 1225 one staff member finally realised we hadn't had a covid jab here before and we needed to fill out a form. Terrific. And what did she think I meant with my earlier questions?

At this point we were five minutes from the first hearing test. We were twenty five minutes late for the first covid jab. The nurse was not on staff today - she was sick. Therefore the doctors were doing the jabs, in between their patients, and, we found out later after we had our hearing tests together, an emergency as well. The doctor who normally sees Andrew got the job of giving us our needles - it is clearly not his day job. I am not even sure if he put Andrew's bandaid on at the right spot.



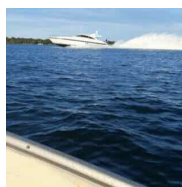
By the time all this had taken place and we had waited almost the obligatory 15 minutes in the waiting room it was after 1400. By the time we found a cafe and had lunch it was close to 1500. I wanted a walk. We weren't going to get a long walk, or indeed one that would challenge us, but we did manage a 1hour 25 minute circuit by heading along Bayview Street toward Runaway Bay, turning right up Columbus Drive and taking the north side track of Pine Ridge Conservation Park to Oxley Drive (past the No Moo 4U gluten free 'icecream' truck) before turning right, through the back roads onto Paradise Parade and back around our usual Paradise Point circuit.



On Paradise Point jetty we had a quick chat to a couple delivering a catamaran to Thailand, before getting back to boat (dry despite the wave - see photo) just before 1700.



Today's jobs on boat included wiping the next area for boat polish and washing some underwear. And for all intents and purposes, I finished the NZ write up!



Black swans, sea eagle, brahminy kite, ospreys, whistling kites (heard), terns, intermediate heron, silver gulls, swallows, rainbow lorikeets, willy wagtail (heard), magpie, noisy miner.

