

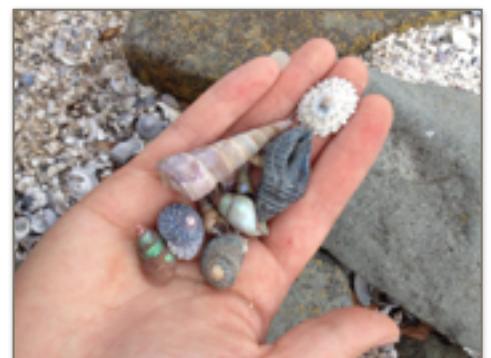
Jan 23



Packed my tent, our sleeping bags, camping stove and everything else, we reached Cockle Creek which belongs to Southwest National Park around 4:30 pm. A lot of people were camping there, probably as Australia Day was approaching.



We took the Fishers' Point Track after setting up the tent and having some bread with dips. There are forests and beaches along the track. You can see various kinds of shells scattered in the white sand as well. I also observed green beetles and tiny blue beetles. Transparent jelly fish were pushed up on the bank and each shaped in a U-curve.





There were just the three of us along the track in the evening, surrounded by quiet and graceful nature. The sun goes down around 8:30 pm so during the whole 2-week journey we always tried to settle down somewhere before that time.

It was my second time camping but that night was the first time I slept in a tent.

Jan 24



We took the South Cape Bay track, which is listed among the 60 Great Short Walks of Tasmania. As the list suggests, it did take us 4 hours return. The end of this track is South Cape Bay. Amazing ocean view and strong waves.

Facing the Antarctica, I stood on the cliff and gazed into the blue, majestic and endless horizon, I felt myself so small, so great to reach this spot, yet so alone. Yes, we were standing at the very edge of the Oceania.



Jan 25



After a second camping night at Cockle Creek we left there in the morning and drove a bit north to visit Hastings Cave and Thermal Springs. Well, I've seen wonderful caves in China so didn't visit this one. I just took a dip in the thermal spring pool which was way different from our expectation. We thought there could be natural thermal spring pools but it was just a small swimming pool suitable for families — a place for kids to play and splash. Still, spending only \$5 to enjoy the comfort of warm and healing pool water followed by a hot shower sounded good.

We passed a town named Dover, bought some supplies and then took a short stay overnight at a nice camping place with shelter, camping place and cool stream in Hartz Mountains National Park. Our beers and ciders cooled down and drank well, thanks to the stream!

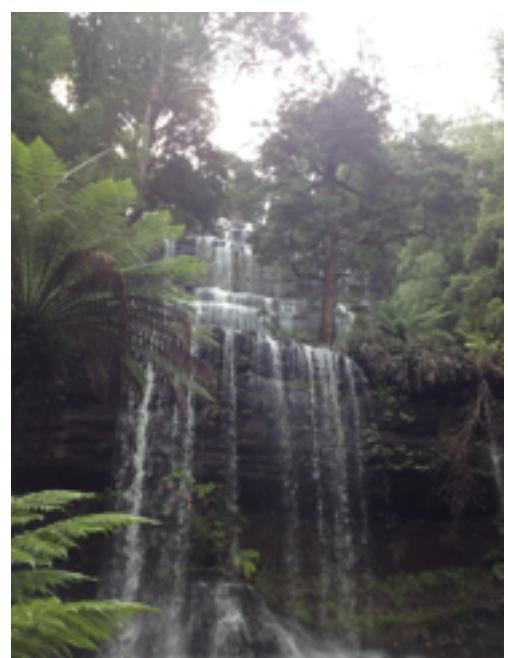
Jan 26



The weather was windy and a bit rainy. We decided not to take a long track in Hartz Mountains National Park. Instead, we visited Lake Osborne. A shiny pearl carved by glaciation 18,000 years ago.

We reached Mt Field Nation Park in the afternoon and took the Russell Falls track. There are two falls on this track!

In the evening we camped up on the shore of the Meadowbank Lake. The facility is a bit crude, but the view of the lake is awesome.



Jan 27

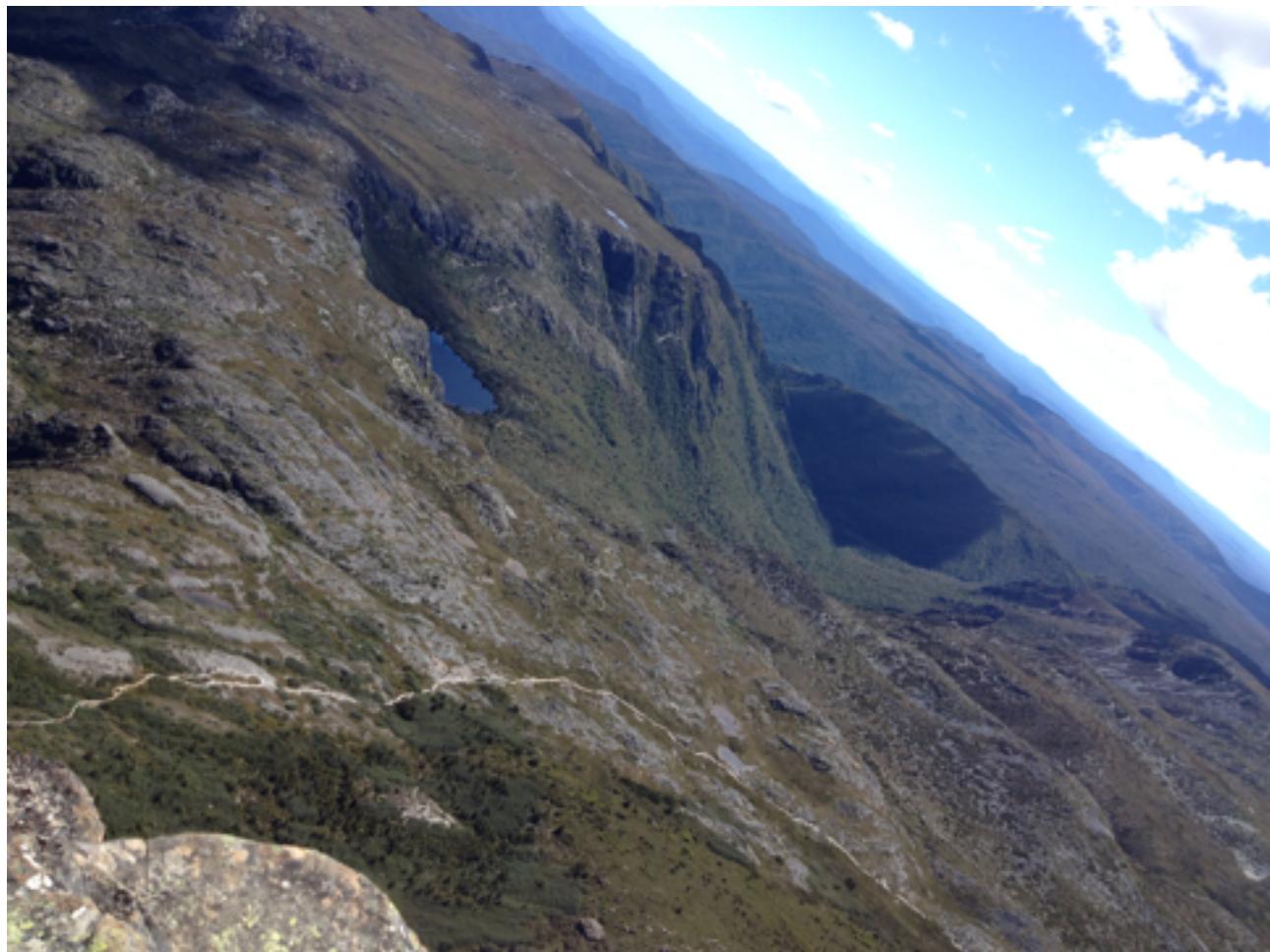




We reached Lake St Clair which belongs to the Cradle Mountain-Lake St Clair National Park and took the Mt Rufus track. Animals such as lizards and echidnas can be seen.

It was our first steep and long walk, but felt not as wonderful as the Cradle Mountain Summit track on the next day (Partly due to the cloudy weather)! Didn't see much of Lake St Clair because we didn't take the track which goes around the lake.

Jan 28



We arrived at Cradle Mountain. Our first choice, of course, is the Cradle Mountain Summit walk which is said to be 8 hours return. It was a beautiful day and the scenery along this track was just awesome. At the same time, it indeed was a slightly harder trail, especially when just reaching the summit there is a one-hour rock climbing challenge, which could be a little dangerous for some people. However, it was great fun for us despite I got sunburn on my ears and nose afterwards. I didn't apply sunblock so well. When you are at the top, enjoy great sunshine and the view. The tracks from which you came up look like thin strings.

There are several lakes among the mountains. Just beautiful. People can really take good pictures and don't have to worry about the pictures are less fascinating than the actual scenery.





Jan 29



Left the not free but still economic camping site with full facilities named Gowrie Park Village, we passed the town named Sheffield and stayed for a few hours. Sheffield is also referred as "the town of murals". You can find so many vivid paintings on their street walls. After that we also stopped by Launceston. I've been there by myself in Nov 2014 so didn't really do much there this time.



Then, we reached Bay of Fires at almost 8 pm. No long tracks around this area. The wind was wild and crazy with moist sea taste that night.

Jan 30



After a short visit around the Bay of Fires we went to a zoo named East Coast Natureworld which locates just beside the Tasman Highway. They have a wide range of birds, especially for parrots. Kangaroos are running around and you can also see the famous Tasmanian devils. Other rare animals

such as Golden Possum are also taken care of. These zoo animals are surely being less afraid of humans than the wild ones.

We reached the Coles Bay & Wineglass Bay area in the evening. Weather was windy and rainy. The camping site doesn't have much facilities except for a small smelly toilet. The ground is way too soft and dirty. During the night my sleeping bag got wet on the side that was close to the tent.



Jan 31



It took us some time to shift from the crappy camping site to another one which locates near the visitor centre of the Freycinet National Park. A bit of expensive. The weather was still cloudy. We even played cards and cooked for two hours under the shelter of the public barbecue.

For the rest of the day places we covered include:

Sleepy Bay. Climb over the rocks and the waves there are amazing.

Cape Tourville Walk. A lighthouse locates at the end of this walk.

Wineglass Bay Lookout. Not so attractive any more under such gloomy weather.



Feb 1



We did two things this day:

Walked the Wineglass Bay - Hazards Beach Circuit, 4 hrs. We saw dead jellyfish on the sand as well, but this time they were blue jellyfish.

Left the Freycinet National Park and headed to Triabunna for Maria Island.

Feb 2



Triabunna exists for one reason: the ferry to Maria Island leaves from here. Since we didn't book for the ferry tickets in advance, we were told the tickets at 8 am were sold out. Therefore, this day we spent quite a lot of time here before the 3:30 pm ferry.

Anyway, we walked around this little place. We walked along the streets to see old buildings. We took the short Pelican walk by the riverside. To be honest it was a lovely small town. I noticed a real estate priced a little bit over \$210,000. By the way, the food from a fish & chips cart outside of the free camping site behind a hotel was reasonably priced and yummy.

We reached Maria Island at almost 5pm. The price of a ferry ticket is about \$40. We took a short swim on the beach close to our camping site.



Feb 3



We began to explore Maria Island National Park. In the early morning we more or less followed the Fossil Cliffs circuit. Sadly we were late to see the sunrise — it took us longer than we expected to reach the top of the slope which blocked our view of the horizon.

Then a longer walk began. We reached Painted Cliff around 11 am. Then we kept walking south. Around 4 pm we decided to stop at the conjunction of the

northern and southern parts of this island where there is a crossing with routes accessible to the bays on both sides. We all went swimming naked



with the medium sized waves on the beach at Riedle Bay. No swimming suits, no underwear. First time in my life. Feeling awesome and free!



Maria Island proves to be a good place to observe Australian wild lives: grey gooses, kangaroos, wombats, wallabies, possums, ants' nests, snakes (lucky we only saw one), etc. Don't feed them and keep them wild!



Feb 4



I didn't do much but just walked around a bit and relaxed in the tent till we took the ferry back at 4:30 pm. We headed to another camping site which is about 30km from Port Arthur. The owner Harvey is a kind and helpful guy. His dog is named Ben. The free showering facility at this camping site is modern, clean and comfortable — way above the average standard we've seen! Camping fee is only \$5 per person.

Feb 5

I don't have many stories for Port Arthur. It is famous as a historical tourist attraction. Let the old buildings talk for themselves!





Feb 6



On the last day of our trip we continued to explore the Tasman National Park. Blowhole, Tasmania Arch, Devils Kitchen, all coastal landforms. You can't stop marvelling at the wonderful work of the nature.

The Devils Kitchen is of a similar origin to The Blowhole at Pirates Bay and Tasmans Arch – all are former sea caves, or tunnels. The Blowhole has retained much of its roof, Tasmans Arch has lost most of its roof, and the roof of the Devils Kitchen has completely fallen in.

