

In June/July of this year, I had a two week holiday in Tasmania with my husband, Chris.

Before we left, I mentioned to a couple of you that I had hoped to have a break from fungi.

I thought that because it was Winter and it being so cold down there, there wouldn't be many about.

I wondered why you laughed.



Just in case I did find some, I packed my copy of the new book on Tasmanian fungi.

I'm glad I did and no wonder you guys laughed.

We found fungi absolutely everywhere!

Quite a few people we met during our trip mentioned that this book was a best seller and Genevieve has said that it is almost sold out.

If you want to get a copy, I suggest you get it as soon as possible.



Anyway, our holiday pretty much straight away turned into a fungi photography foray.

Together, Chris and I photographed over 800 instances of fungi during the two weeks.

An instance might be a single fungus or lichen, or a group of them in the one location.

In November, I'll be giving a talk about the fungi species we saw, but tonight, I thought I'd give you a bit of background information about the places we went to and some of the challenges we faced with our photography.

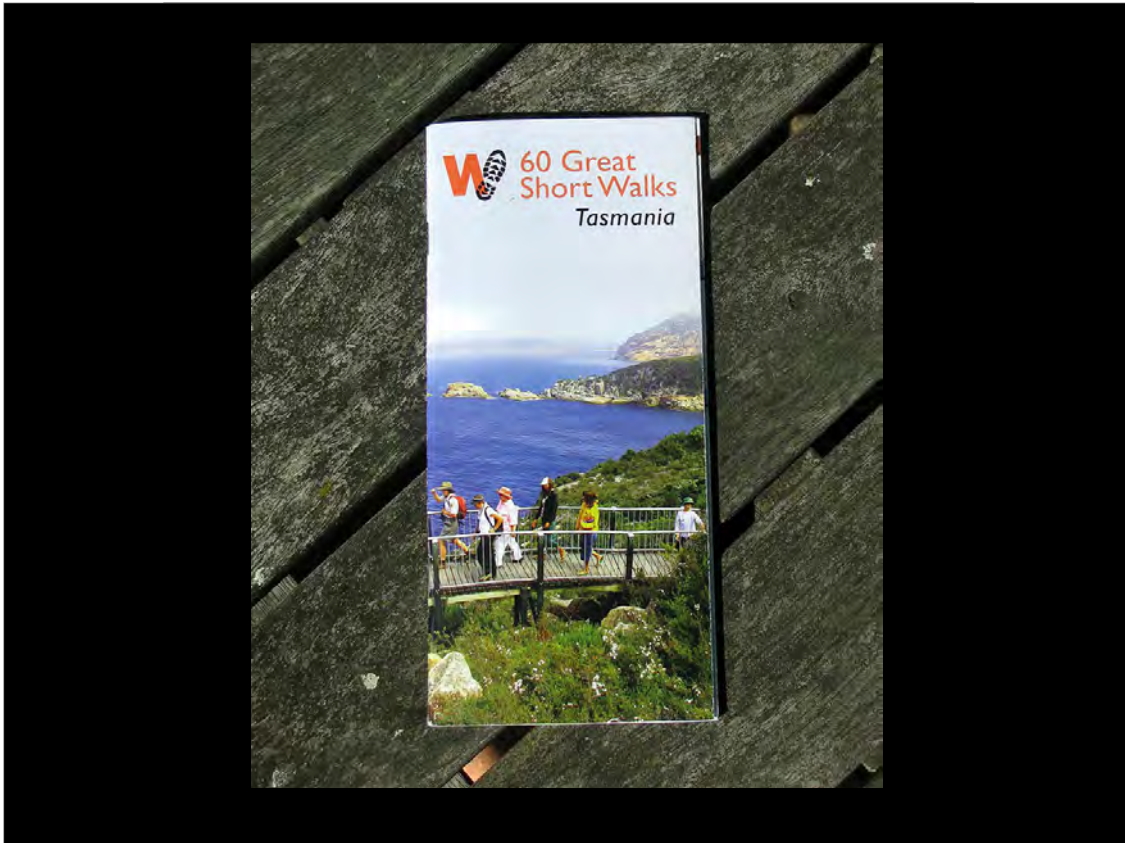


First up, here's a map showing where we went. As you can see, we covered a lot of the state in a very short time.

The red dots show where we photographed fungi.

There are 25 dots, but some of those dots represent multiple walks in an area.

For example, in Freycinet National Park here, we did four different walks.

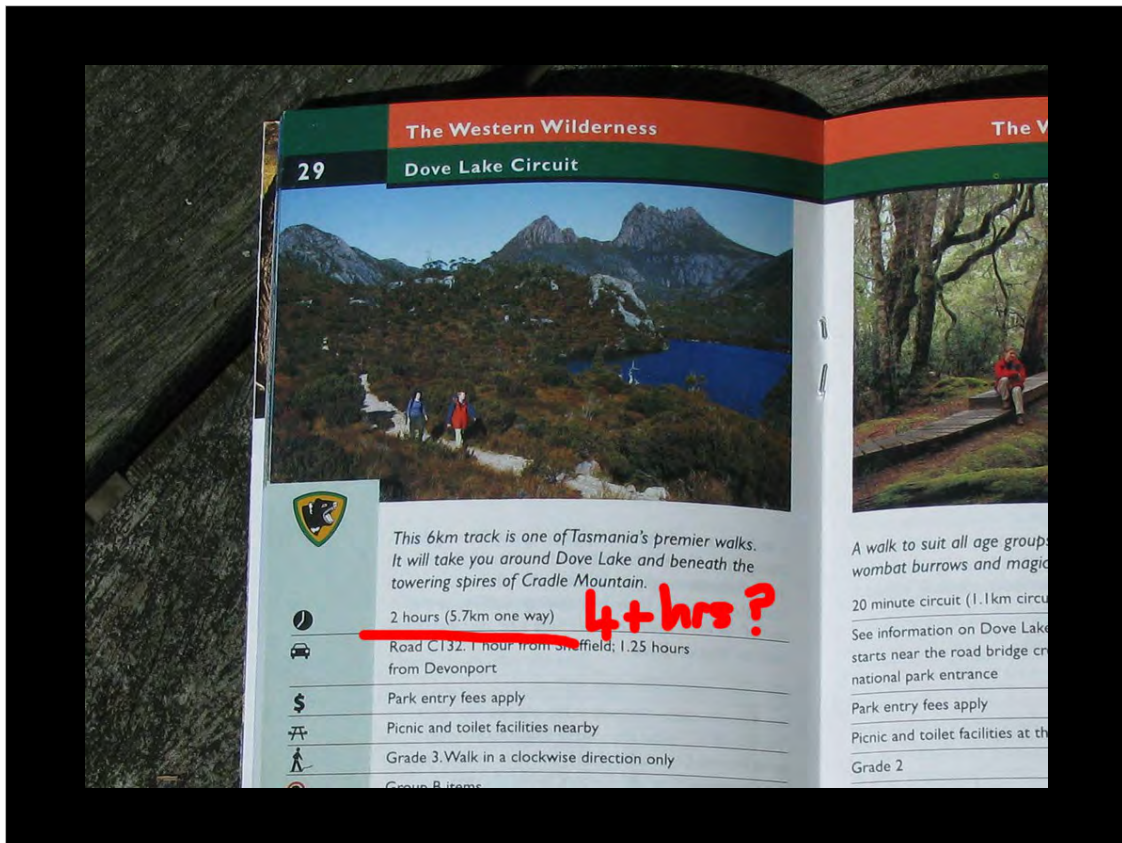


I don't drive, so Chris did all of the driving.

Most days we managed to do two or three walks.

This pamphlet became our bible. It has great descriptions of all the walks and directions for how to get to them. Some of the locations are a bit hard to find.

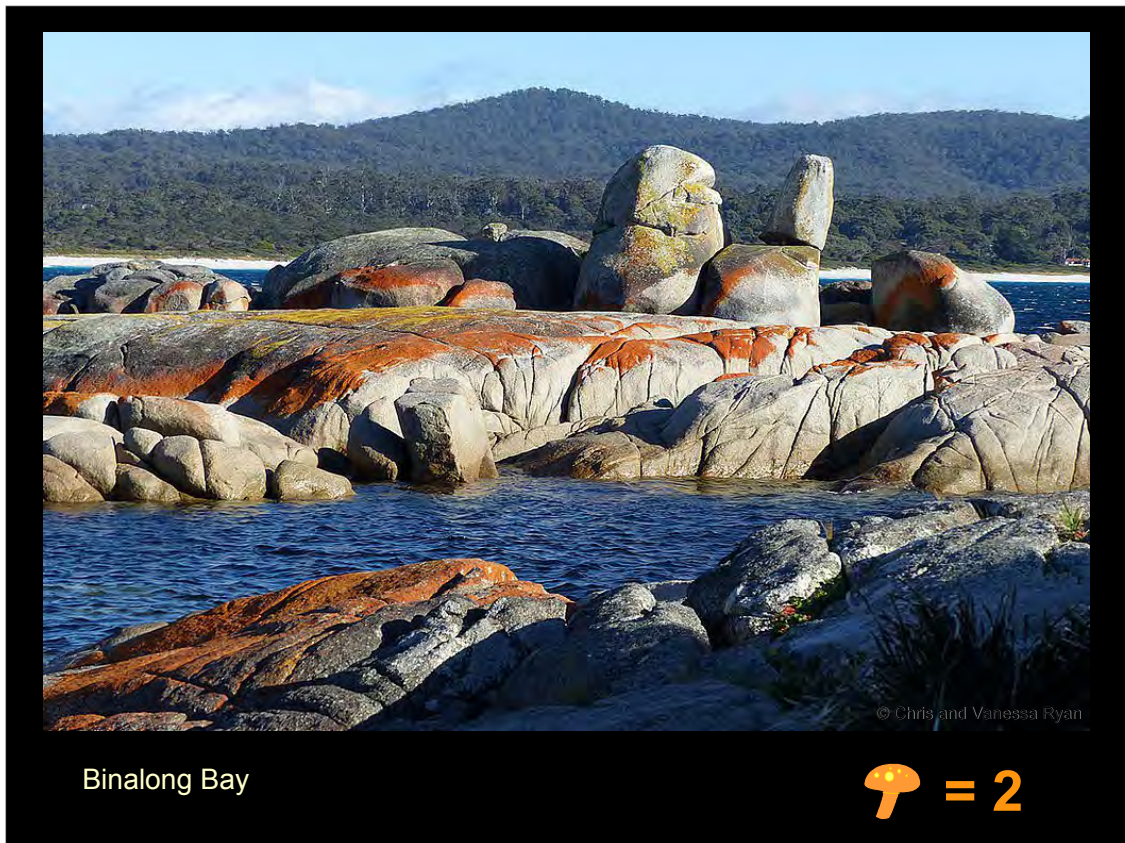
We chose to do the shortest walks, so we could cover as many different kinds of landscape as we could in the limited time we had available.



Time was a big issue for us.

We quickly learned that the estimated times for the walks did not apply to us. A more accurate guide was to take the time suggested and double or triple it.

For example, the 6 kilometer long Dove Lake circuit walk at Cradle mountain is supposed to take two hours. It took us five.



Despite the time pressure, we still managed to do a lot of walks in a lot of different places.

I'll just quickly show you some of them to give you an idea.

I've put under the photos the name of the location and how many instances of fungi we photographed there.

As you can see here, we did walks along the coast...

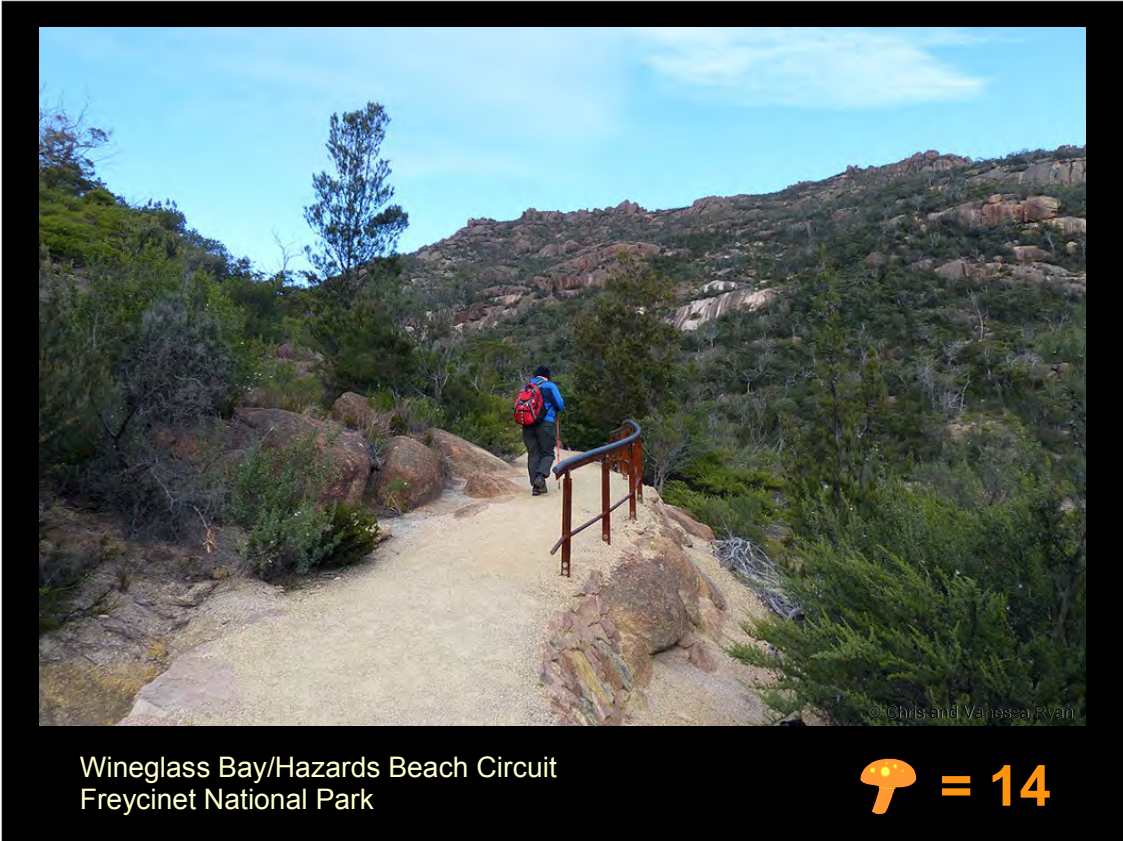


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Franklin River Nature Trail
Franklin-Gordon Wild Rivers National Park

 = 83

Beside lakes and rivers...



In the mountains...



Tall Trees
Mt Field National Park

 = 19

And in forests..

Some of the forests were near pristine...



Goblin Forest Walk
Blue Tier Reserve

 = 45

One was a rehabilitated tin mine...



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Waterfall Bay
Tasman National Park



And one had been damaged by fire.



© Chris and Vanessa Ryan

Arve Falls
Hartz Mountains National Park

 = 13

We also forayed in alpine heaths...



Newdegate Cave
Hastings Caves State Reserve

(Forest Outside Cave)  = 26

And in and around caves.



Some tracks were very easy... like this one.

It was designed for wheelchair access.

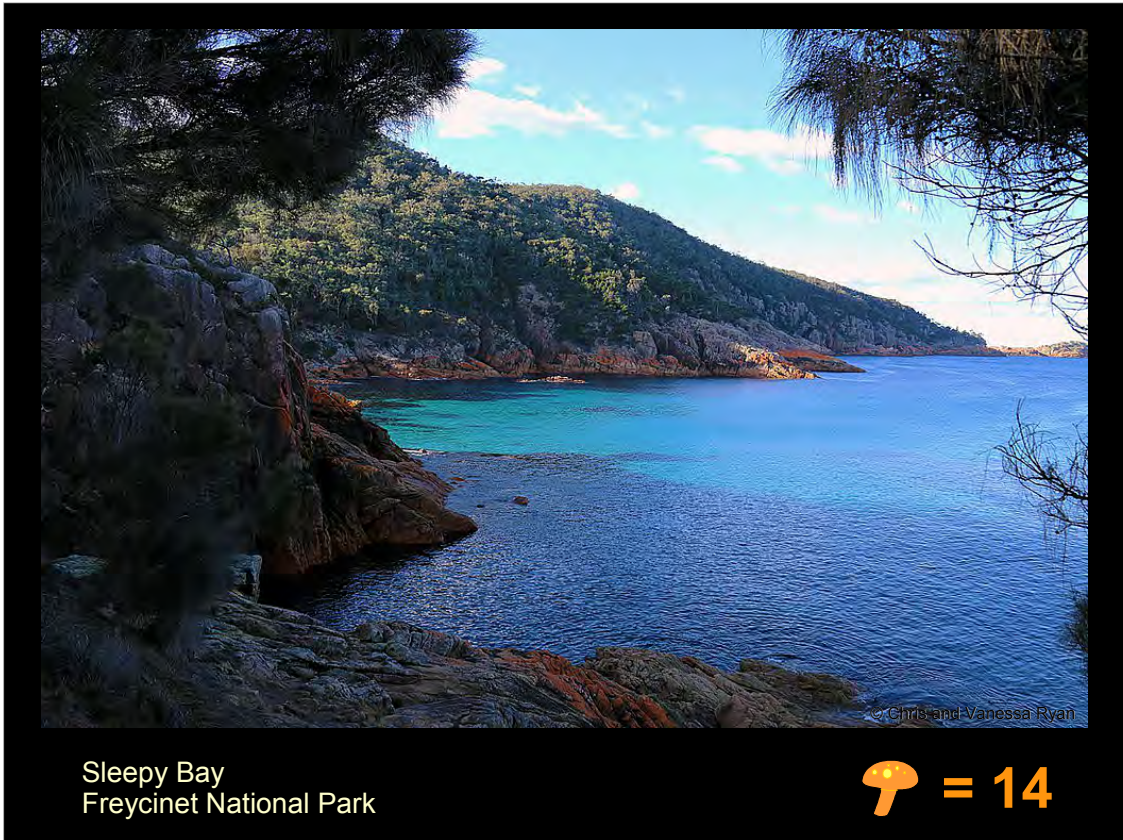


Duckhole Lake
Forestry Tasmania Area

 = 59

Other tracks were more difficult.

The track here was awful. It was soft, very sticky mud and the boards someone had put down tipped and rocked when you stepped on them.



Being in Tasmania, the weather provided its challenges as well.

In the east it was very dry and sunny... They'd been having a bit of a drought.



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Lake Osborne
Hartz Mountains National Park

 = 55

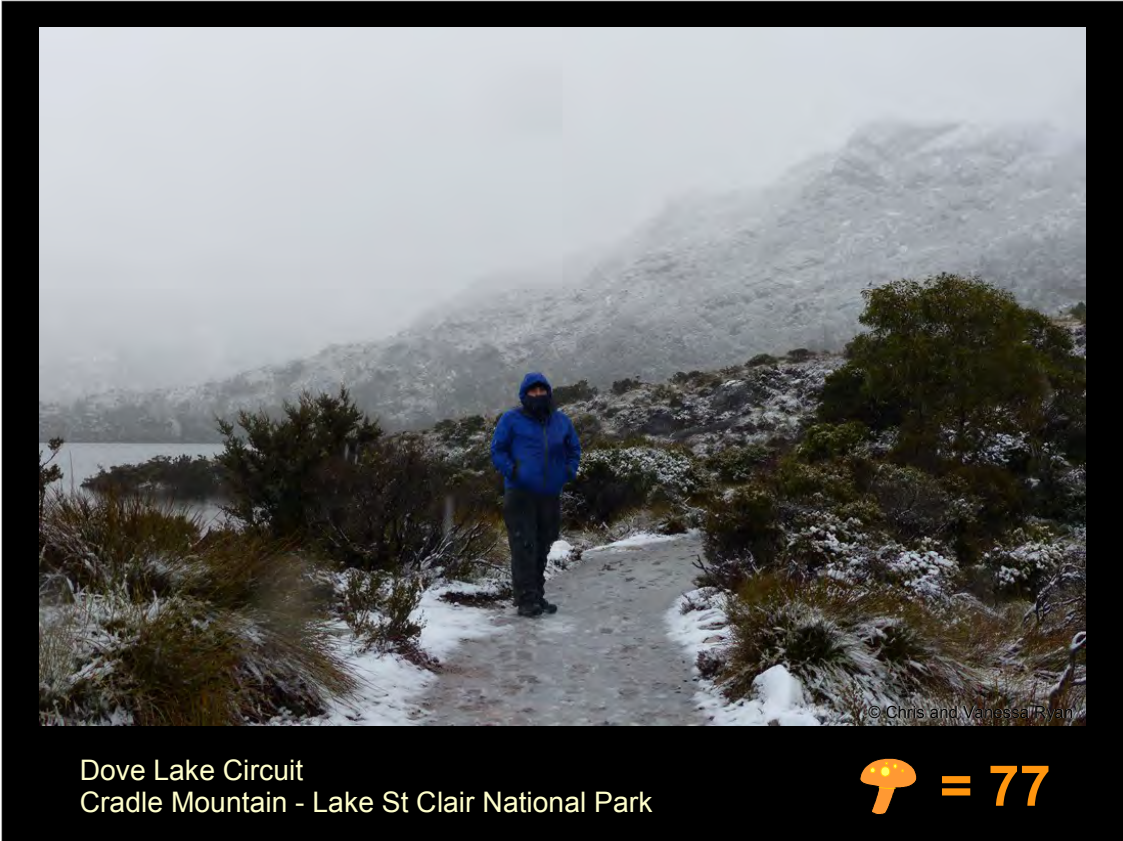
Just about everywhere else, it was raining...



The Pinnacle - Mt Wellington
Hobart



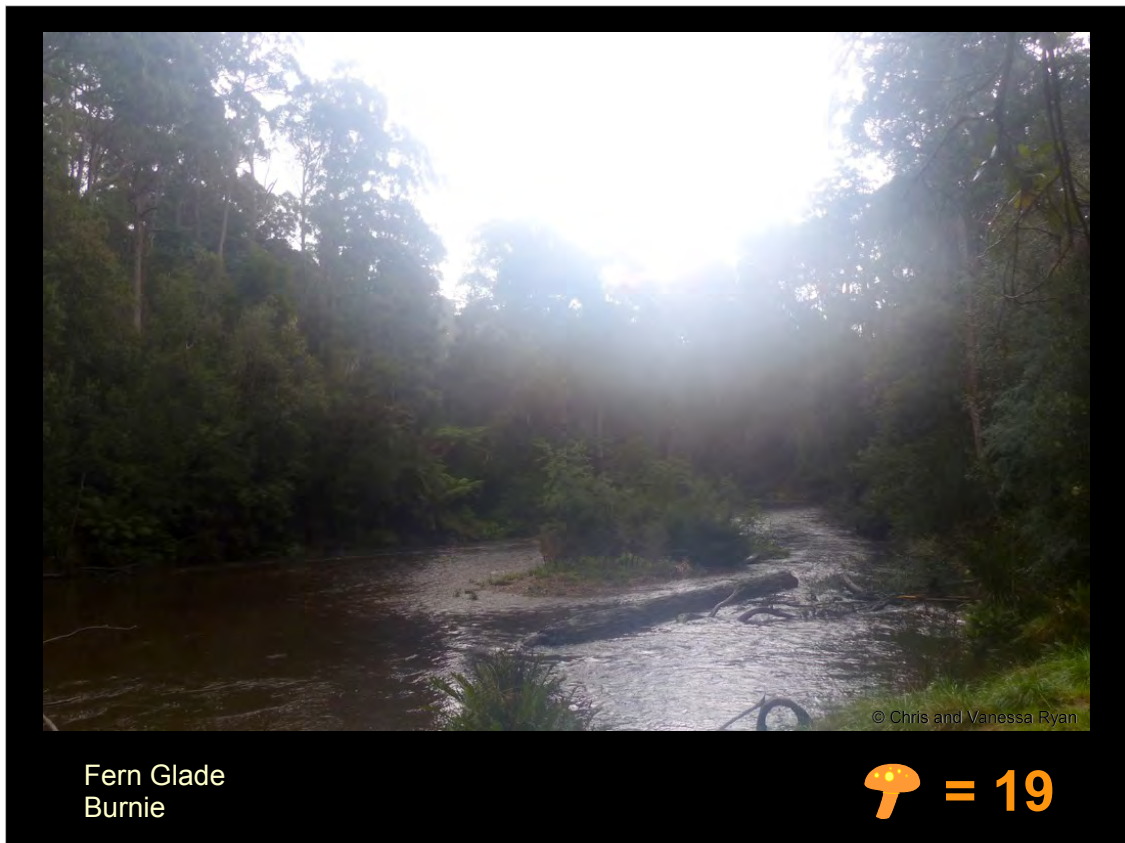
In some places it was very cold, windy and foggy...



Dove Lake Circuit
Cradle Mountain - Lake St Clair National Park

 = 77

And in one place it even snowed.



High winds, rain, sleet and snow were a real challenge for our photography.

Our main problems were rain on the camera lenses and the lenses fogging up internally. This photo was taken with a fogged lens.

My best friends became a small towel to wipe the lens dry and a plastic bag to cover the camera when I wasn't using it.

I also learned not to hold my camera too close to me while I was walking, as I discovered it was my body heat that made the lens fog up internally.

We were really worried one time when Chris's camera's electronics started playing up. Luckily, it dried out overnight and worked ok again in the morning. Because of this scare, he took to using his mobile phone camera when it was raining



Chris - Canon 6D with a 28-135 IS lens and a mobile phone.
Me - Panasonic Lumix DMC FZ200 and a Canon SX100 IS.

We used four cameras.

Chris had his Canon 6D with a 28-135 IS lens and, as I just mentioned, his mobile phone camera – a Samsung Galaxy S2.

I used my Panasonic Lumix DMC FZ200.

My backup was my old Canon SX100 IS.

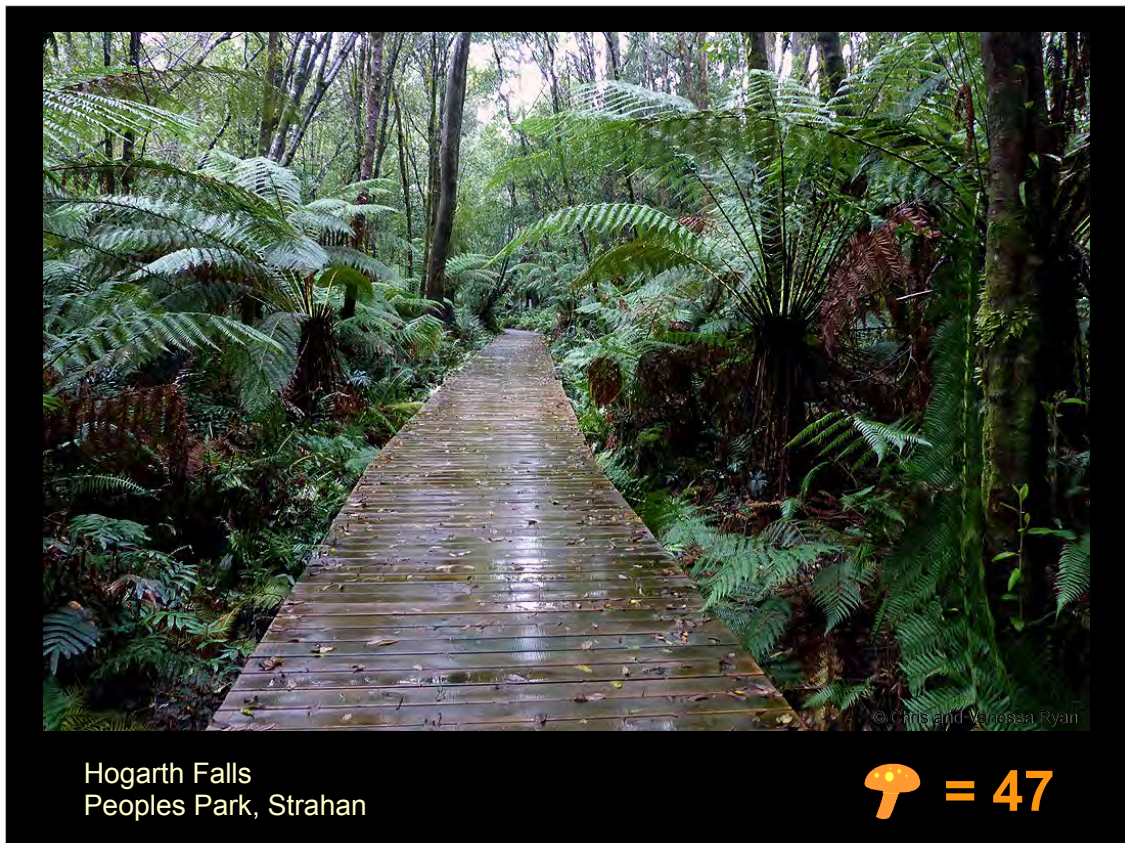


No room or time for a tripod!

We quickly ditched using our tripods.

We didn't have the time to keep setting them up and the bigger ones were awkward to carry.

A lot of the locations, too, just didn't have the ground space to set up a tripod.



I had to use the flash for a lot of my photos, as the light was usually very dim.


The low light was due to cloud cover, or us being in a forest, or a gully, or the sun was setting, or all of those together!

Our Canon 6D doesn't have a flash, so a lot of the time Chris was taking photos at ISO 12,800. This isn't the highest ISO he got to - some were at 25,600.

Sometimes I could hold the camera still for long enough to get a nice shot without using the flash.

And the old trick of resting the camera on something helped too.

THREATS


Root Rot
Phytophthora cinnamomi


Are YOU killing our plants?

The answer may be right on your feet - the disease known as 'root rot' is carried in soil by unsuspecting humans.

An introduced plant pathogen called *Phytophthora cinnamomi* (pronounced *Fy-TOFF-thora*) is the cause of the deadly 'root rot' disease.

Similar to a fungus, it lives inside the plant's roots where it gradually consumes parts of its host. In the process, it blocks the uptake of water and nutrients within the plant. Some plants die rapidly, while others only show signs of disease during periods of stress such as drought. Root rot spreads between plants by root-to-root contact and by the release of microscopic spores that can move through the soil.

Did you step in something?



What can you do to stop the rot?

Before you leave home

- Always start your trip with clean, dirt free gear. Remove dirt from your machinery, boots, camping and bushwalking gear, horses' hooves and bike tyres.
- Obey track and road closed signs. These may have been closed to prevent the disease spreading.
- Keep to formed tracks. Moving off infected tracks into uninfected areas will spread the disease. !
- Where tracks are designated as one way, always walk in the direction indicated.
- Clean your gear before you leave your campsite. Brush the soil off your tent floor, pegs, toilet trowel etc.
- Use wash down stations where provided.
- Avoid driving in areas when soils are wet and sticky.

Our photography was also limited by the fact that we were mostly in National Parks.

They have a big problem with root rot in Tasmania, so this meant that we had to keep to the tracks as much as possible.

Sometimes we were lucky that things were right next to the track or in an accessible area, but a lot of the time we had to take our photos at extreme zoom and be satisfied with the limited view that our location allowed us.

And if a fungus was close enough to touch, because it was in a protected area, we couldn't pull it up and turn it over to photograph the underside. My little mirror came in very handy sometimes.



Horseshoe Falls
Mt Field National Park

🍄 = 130

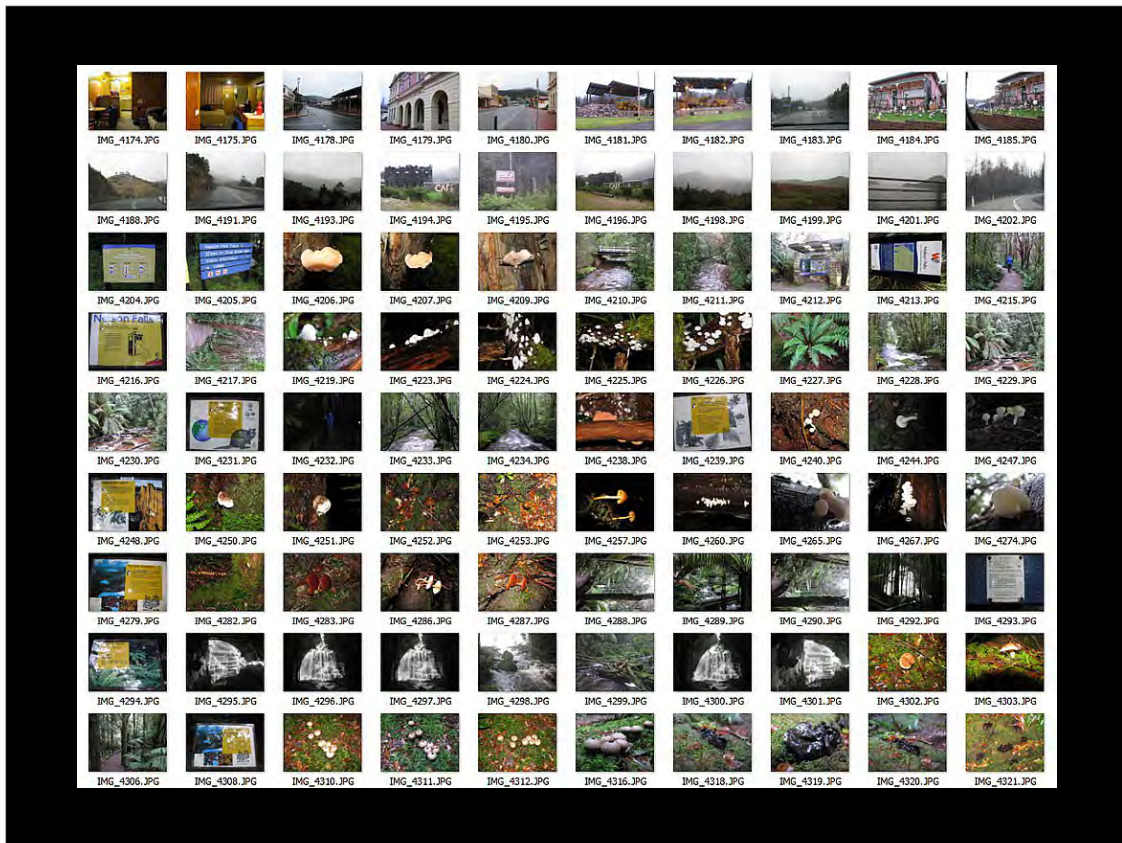
Again, time was a very big factor.

Chris tried to be patient and helpful, but he did have his limit.

Also, there were things other than fungi that we both wanted to see and photograph. It was supposed to be a holiday, after all!

I usually only had the time to take a couple of quick snaps of a fungus before I had to move on.

So our photographic fungi foray became a photographic fungi foray fast.



In the end, together we took over 10,000 photos.

I only had a 16 gig sized memory card in my Panasonic camera, which meant that I ran out of space about halfway through the trip.

I need to get a bigger card! Or a spare one as backup.

Fortunately, we both had brought our laptops, so it was a nightly routine to copy the photos from our cameras onto our computers and back them up.

I could then make room on my camera's memory card for the next day's photos.



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Strepera fuliginosa Black Currawong
Lake St Clair, Cradle Mountain – Lake St Clair National Park


 = 30

Apart from the landscapes I've showed you so far, we also photographed some of the local wildlife.

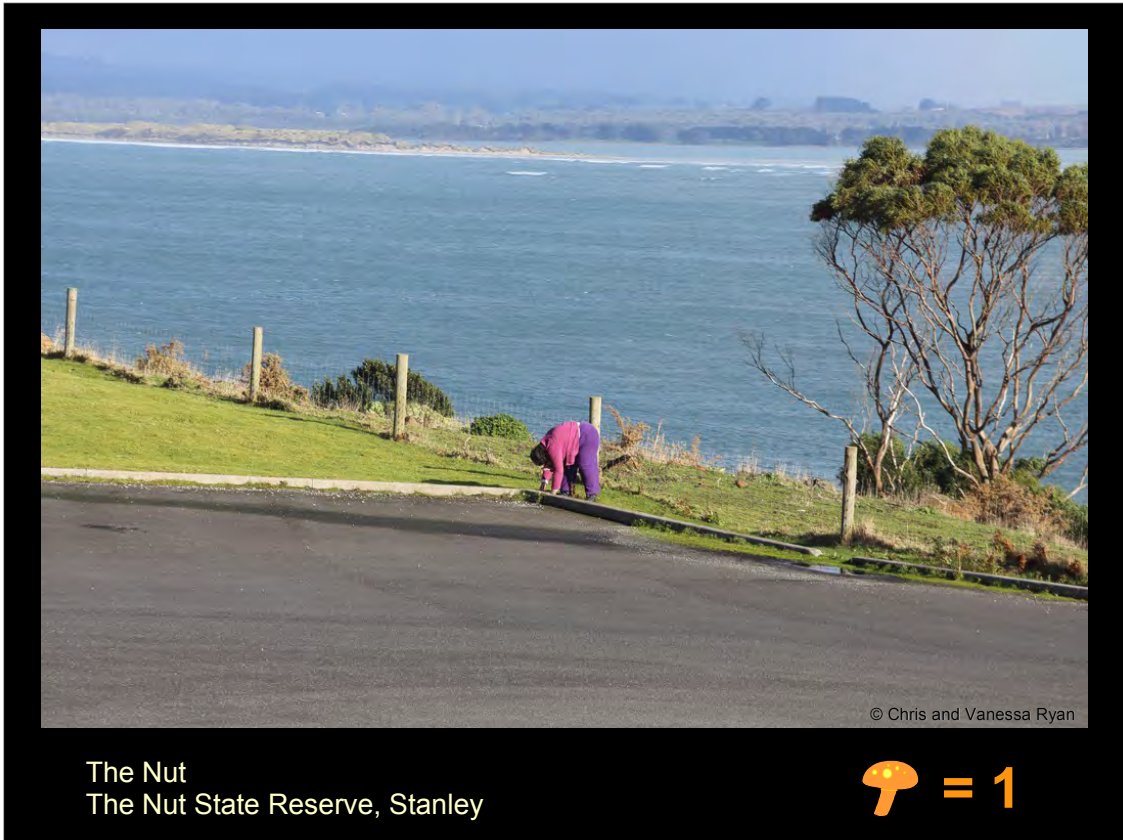
Birds...



© Chris and Vanessa Ryan

Macropus rufogriseus Bennetts Wallaby
Enchanted Walk, Cradle Mountain–Lake St Clair National Park  = 20

And beasts...



And, finally, everywhere we went, we photographed fungi!

We literally found fungi in every colour of the rainbow...



Red...



Orange...



Yellow...



Green...



Blue...



Indigo...



and violet...

These are just a few of the fungi we saw and these are just the Agarics.

We also saw fungi from most of the other morphogroups.



Everywhere!
Tasmania

Oh... And did I mention lichen?

It was absolutely everywhere!



© Chris and Vanessa Ryan

Ralphs Falls
Mt Victoria Forest Reserve

 = 13

At the November meeting, I'll be talking specifically about the different species we saw and whether or not they have been found in Queensland.

I hope I'll see you then.

Thank you.