

Dampier Peninsula – Cape Leveque - One Arm Point

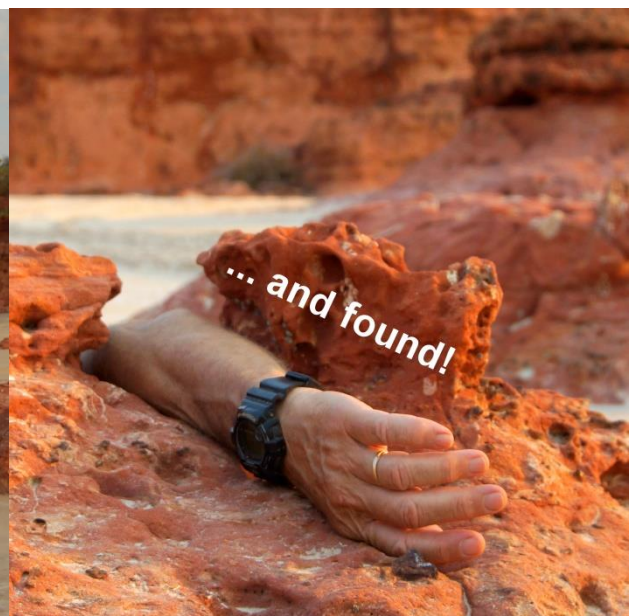
The road leading up the Dampier Peninsula is sandy and corrugated for about half the distance - dished out and cambered from decades of grading! The top 50% has been sealed and there is work in progress to tar the lot. Glad to be doing it now: One won't quite have that "conquering experience" running up to the Cape on bitumen in a few years' time!



One Arm Point – 220km north of Broome

Some suggest the above (*one arm*) might happen should you enter the waters here (with reference to local wildlife) but not so:

The name actually refers to an incident with a pearler many years ago who had a slight mishap when dynamite fishing... ahh... the good days of old!





The campground at One Arm P. is called '**Gumbanan Wilderness Retreat**'.

The Bardi Jawi people are the traditional owners of this land. The Kimberley coast around here experiences some of the highest tidal changes in the world (up to 11m/33ft).

The indigenous locals built a traditional fish trap that submerges completely at high tide, and then traps fish as the waters recede: Simple and effective – *who needs dynamite?!*



Fish trap completely drained at low tide



The drained trap



*Some of the world's highest tides:
This rocky summit will completely submerge at high tide!*



In the interim Katherine is trying her own trapping method...



Netting bait fish

**We take a drive to Cape Leveque at the northern tip of the Dampier Peninsula:
After lunch there, at Kooljaman resort, we cool off in turquoise waters on a pure white Beach.
Cape L. is known for its dark, west facing 'Red Pindan' cliffs that so starkly contrast blue skies and ocean.**



Red Pindan Cliffs - Cape Leveque



Dampier Peninsula



Hello from Cape Leveque!

Flocks of rare *Gouldian Finches* (extinct in QLD) show on occasions at Gumbanan; they never did for me!
Though some other customers do turn up while lying in wait...



After four nights at Dampier's top we head south to **Pender Bay Escape** for another four...
The access road is soft, sandy and single-lane along some stretches. Best to let morning departures come through first; delay heading in from the main road until mid-afternoon and avoid long-distance reversing on sand with a trailer in tow ...



We end up at site E5, sitting atop a sandstone cliff top overlooking a dreamy beach which we call our own...



Cliff top views



A beach we call our own

It was a little up and down getting into Pender but nothing so serious a Matrix wouldn't lap up...

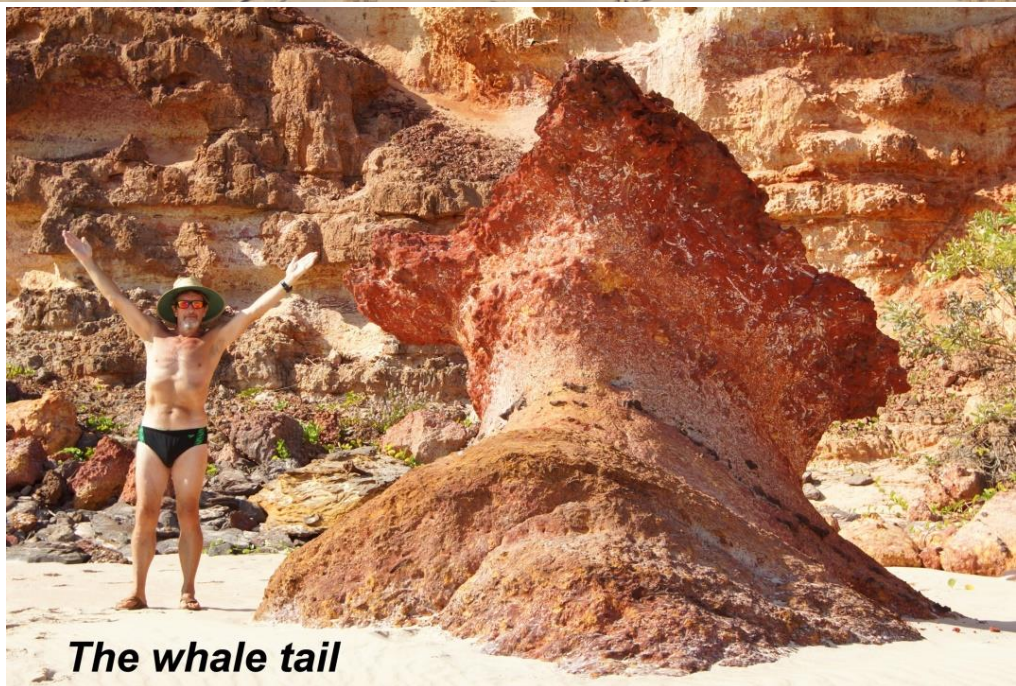


Matrix on the move



We discover a number of curious rocks along our beach... let your imagination run wild!

Sea lion



The whale tail



Heart Rock



Fish out of water



Cod rock or Rock cod?



The real 'Crocodile Rock'

Around the corner from Pender Bay lies ***Middle Lagoon*** with its crystal clear waters. Ideal for snorkelling and whale watching. We camp on the waters edge and soak up the vista for several days:



***Middle Lagoon
beach patrol***



Two adult whales and a newborn calf show off their antics, flukes slapping the water, pectoral fins waving all over the place, spy hopping noses poke through the surface...

I look on in sheer amazement after a very lengthy wait on this cliff top, armed with camera and tripod, in anticipation for something spectacular to unfold!

Yet... I am mortified at the same time: A split second after I take the above close-up shot...

my camera battery dies! Way too far from camp... I give it a go nevertheless... dump the gear in a bush along the way... haste back to base but to no avail: By the time I return with a fresh battery the whales have moved miles up shore and out of reach.

I am devastated – feeling robbed of the photo opportunity of a life-time...

... but consolation is near in the form of several beers and a tasty rack of lamb!



Cooked-to-perfection



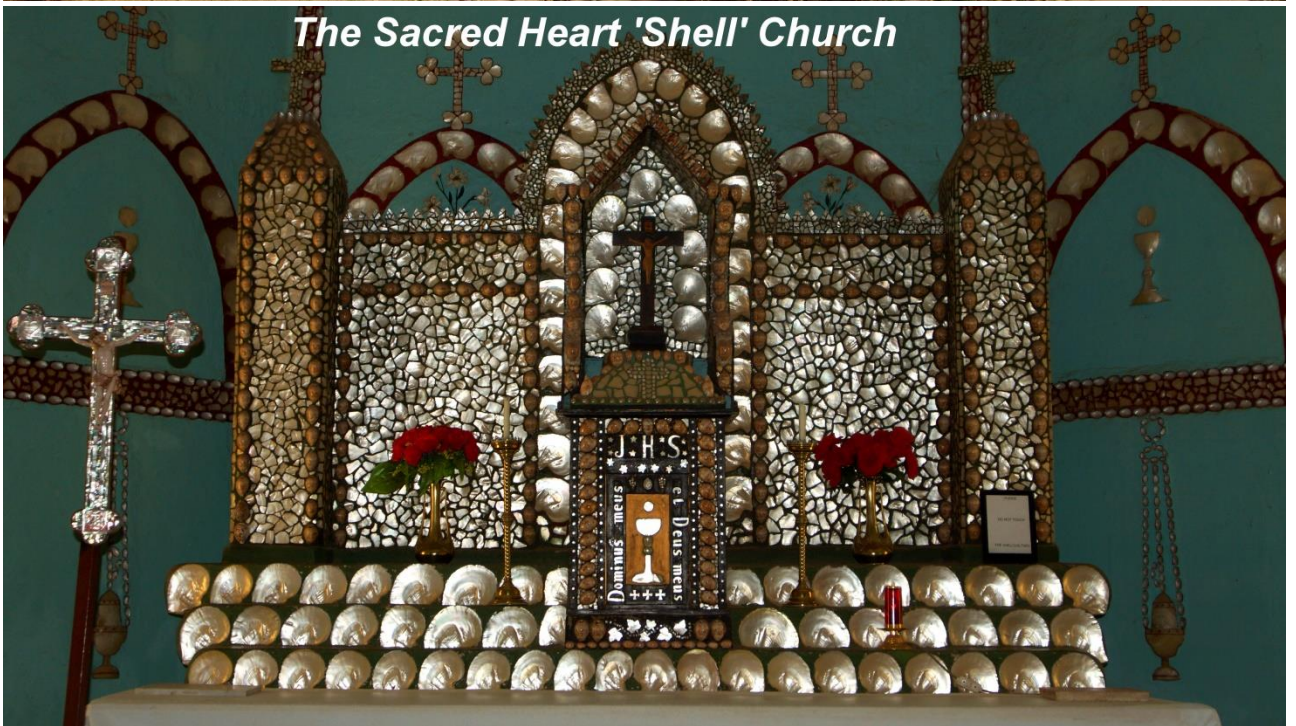
Middle Lagoon sunset

Heading south we want to see the famous **Beagle Bay 'Shell' Church** which was built in 1915 by German priests, brothers and the local people. Complete with a 12m bell tower, it was modelled after the photograph of a German country parish church and opened in 1918. Ninety thousand bricks were formed by hand and fired in local kilns. Cement being unavailable, lime was made by burning shells and used as the mortar and plaster. Indigenous women made the altar's shell decorations with Mother of pearl, cowries, volutes and olive shells which were gathered on the beaches and arranged in mosaics. The work is a fusion of traditional aboriginal symbols and materials mixed with traditional European Christian features resulting in a unique expression of art and faith.

Beagle Bay



The Sacred Heart 'Shell' Church



Bluenose Salmon



After getting truck and van serviced back in Broome, we head for **Barn Hill Station** some 150km south where Katherine charms (*she does this well!*) a fisherman to part with his catch!



*Katherine scores a
Bluenose Threadfin Salmon*



Barn Hill Station - beach



Barn Hill (cloud-shrouded) sunset

Continues in Part 7b...separate mail