

## **Robberg Nature Reserve and Marine Protected Area – 10 June 2021 – Garden Route, South Africa**

We left our Airbnb and drove down the hill to have breakfast at East Head Café. The café overlooks the ocean and the food was very good. Good enough that we had breakfast at the café the following day.

We were headed towards Robberg Nature Reserve but first we came to a detour. The officer explained to us that there was a civil protest ahead blocking the road. OK, so we drove through the community of Plettenberg Bay. As we drove by very pretty landscaped houses it didn't take long to understand why Plettenberg Bay, population of close to 40,000, is considered a resort city.

The Nature Reserve has three different trails of varying lengths: 1) The Gap 2.1km, 2) Witsand 5.5 km and The Point 9.2 km/5.5 miles. We opted for The Point trail.



The first two trails are below and to the left and we are hiking (this was not a walk but a hike) to the right.

The views were beautiful.





It was about five minutes past the above photographed ocean and rocks that we came upon three relatively young fisherman. They stopped us and by pointing into the ocean below we saw a Great White Shark – it was big.



We have rounded The Point and followed the trail down to the beach and ocean. We spent a little time here looking at plants, birds and resting up for the return uphill hike.



We reached the exit from the beach and the upward climb of the return trail.



Great, a concrete walkway – this will make the hike up much easier.



However, for those with a healthy respect for heights and anyone our age knowing that a fall from the sofa to the floor can put you in a bed from anywhere from a day or two to months – I noted the narrowness of the concrete walkway.

“Legs just keep moving forward” I am thinking to myself.





Beautiful views all the way downnnnn.



Then not just in mind but outloud, "What the f\*^k!



The ocean spray made the rocks we are now hiking across wet and slippery – don't want to make a 5.4-mile hike too easy for 70+ year old.



Nancy and I gave some thought to turning around but we thought going down wet rocks was more dangerous than going up the wet rocks. We stopped a half dozen times to determine the best route for our next step. We were no longer stopping for photographs but to think of each of our loved ones.

Finally, there was a ray of sun lights.



When we returned to the 4Runner I retrieved our Lonely Planet and re-read the paragraph on the trails: “There are three circular walks of increasing difficulty, with rich Intertidal marine life and not for the unfit or anyone with knee problems! You have to keep to the trails and look out for freak waves.”

Please note, the above says nothing about the concrete walkway being washed out on the most difficult part of the trail.

We both agreed this trail hike almost ate our lunches.

To make things better we both knew we had a 168 vertical step walk from our Airbnb parking space to our guest house. Our legs were already spent from our coastal hike and so it took three maybe four stops on the walk up to our lodging.

If memory serves me correctly, we both slept soundly that night.

