

Part 380 for Cathy's blog
Tuesday 28th July, 2026.
Temple Day : Angkor Wat

To balance our northside trip last week, we went back to Angkor Wat to walk the southside. It is wetter now, although we haven't had as much rain as usual. The grounds-keepers have been through before us (a few days ago) and the grass (and weeds) have been cut.



We entered from the east. As is typical for Angkorian architecture, the buildings line up with the equinox; you can see the central tower of Angkor Wat through the centre doorway of the east gopura.

We walked to the left of this, outside the laterite wall.



We found this mantis, just waiting on the leaf.



We also met this local who has collected three different sorts of mushrooms to eat.

On Facebook, there have been a few jokes about my cooking (I don't need poisonous mushrooms for my cooking to be deadly) and a few reminders of an infamous case of murder via mushrooms in Melbourne.

With just a few words of Khmer (mushroom = “pst”, eat = “nyam”, and delicious = “chhnang”), we were able to communicate (and he happily showed us his foraged collection).



Even after being cut, the plants (in this picture a fern) grow quickly.



This is the southern gopura. It is not used as an entrance, because you cannot cross the moat here. Many locals come here with offerings and sit for prayers. You have to take your shoes off to walk through this building.



This small snail was out and about on the blocks left in the grass around the south gopura.



There are not as many butterflies as in the “jungle” around some of the other temples, but you can still see some here at Angkor Wat.



This is the south west corner of the Angkor Wat wall. It is in need of some repair. It is 4.5m tall.



We have had some strong winds the last few weeks and a few of the trees have fallen.

These logs will be taken away by locals for firewood. Most locals cook on a small concrete stove (looks like a heavy plant pot) using charcoal and /or wood. Only those in apartments use gas (burners). Some use gas cylinders and portable stoves (as used for hotpots).

We come to the west side and the main entrance to Angkor Wat. It is a big building with impressive carvings in its own right.



Apsaras, beautifully carved (but perhaps out of proportion?)



Above the windows, there is a frieze of horses, bulls and elephants.



Here is a heavenly dancer and a stylised lion.

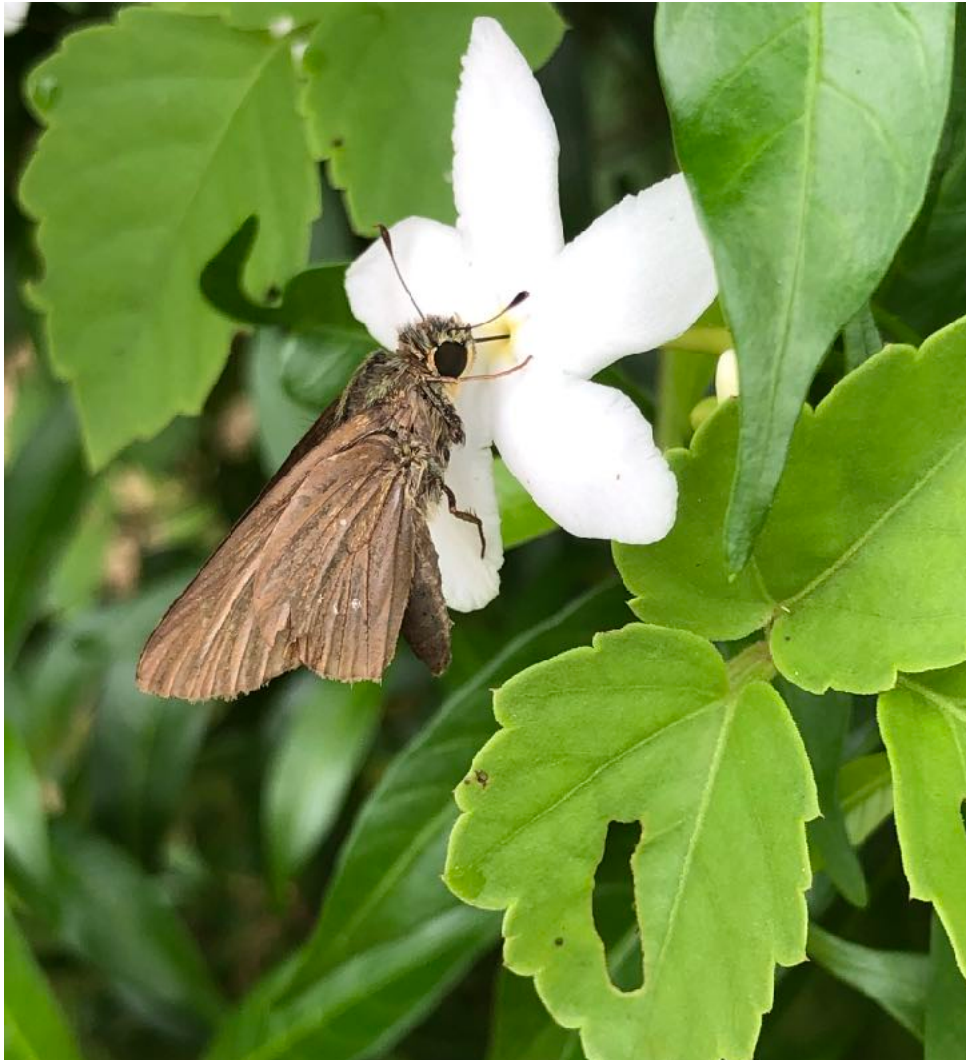
Angkor Wat and the reflecting pool.

We will be back on a sunny day.





Workers at Angkor Wat.



Moth.

We came across some monkeys at Angkor Wat. Here they are sitting, quietly, resting, as is a tour guide.



The south east corner of Angkor Wat.





Fungi growing on a fallen tree trunk.



The same tree trunk but different fungi. They are a good colour, but I don't think much of their size or shape.



Again, the same tree trunk and different fungi.



This yellow fungus is growing on a different fallen tree, one that is well on the way to being recycled by nature.



A different, almost rotted log, with pretty yellow mushrooms.

And that brings us back to the east gopura.



We were pleased to be invited to the restaurant owned and run by our landlord's daughter. If you like typically hot Khmer food, you will love it. If you are more cautious, like me, there are pasta choices available.

We enjoyed chicken wings, Udon noodles and pasta, shared with the parents. We also enjoyed chatting, partly in English and partly in Khmer.

Wednesday 29th July, 2026.
Angkor Botanical Gardens

The gardens don't open until 8:00, so I had time to get a load of washing done before we headed out.

They are rebuilding the entrance (and the sun hats and glasses etc are now being sold from trestle tables).

As usual, we found some new and interesting things.



An exhibition about the newly released fauna (into the Angkor Archeological Park... not the Gardens!)



Lovely new green and black beetle.



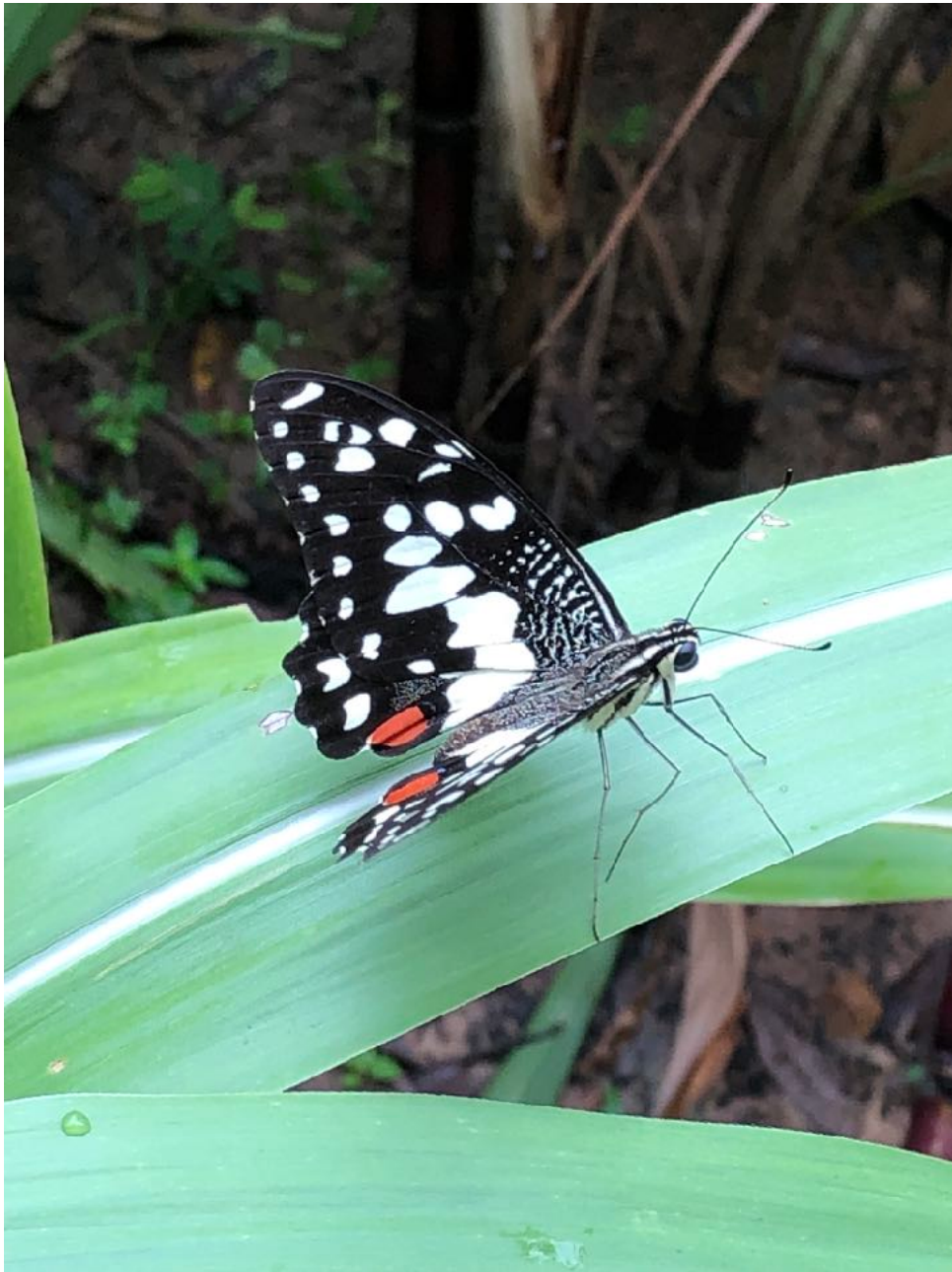
Not new, but a Hobbit Hole (unexpected on our journey around the Gardens).



Several (small) fields of rice.



A handsome blue beetle.



Elusive butterflies.



Fred Flintstone's Honda Dream, less than 125cc.



A damp ostrich.



A grey millipede with pink legs.



**An exhibition of photographs of insects etc. by
Stephane de Greef (a local expert).**



A pot of pitcher plants.

Then it was time to head home (just ten minutes along the river road). As well as my language lesson, we need to get the apartment organised and our things ready for our upcoming trip.

