Part 392 for Cathy's blog

Thursday 1st October, 2026

Temple Day : Ta Som Temple and Leak Neang (near Pre Rup)

Ta Som Temple lies at the furthest corner of the Grand Circuit (Road) that includes the more famous of the Angkorian Temples.

It is a beautiful temple.



The is the western gopura, heavily carved, and a hint of the temple buildings inside.



Beside the doorways, the medallions are carved.

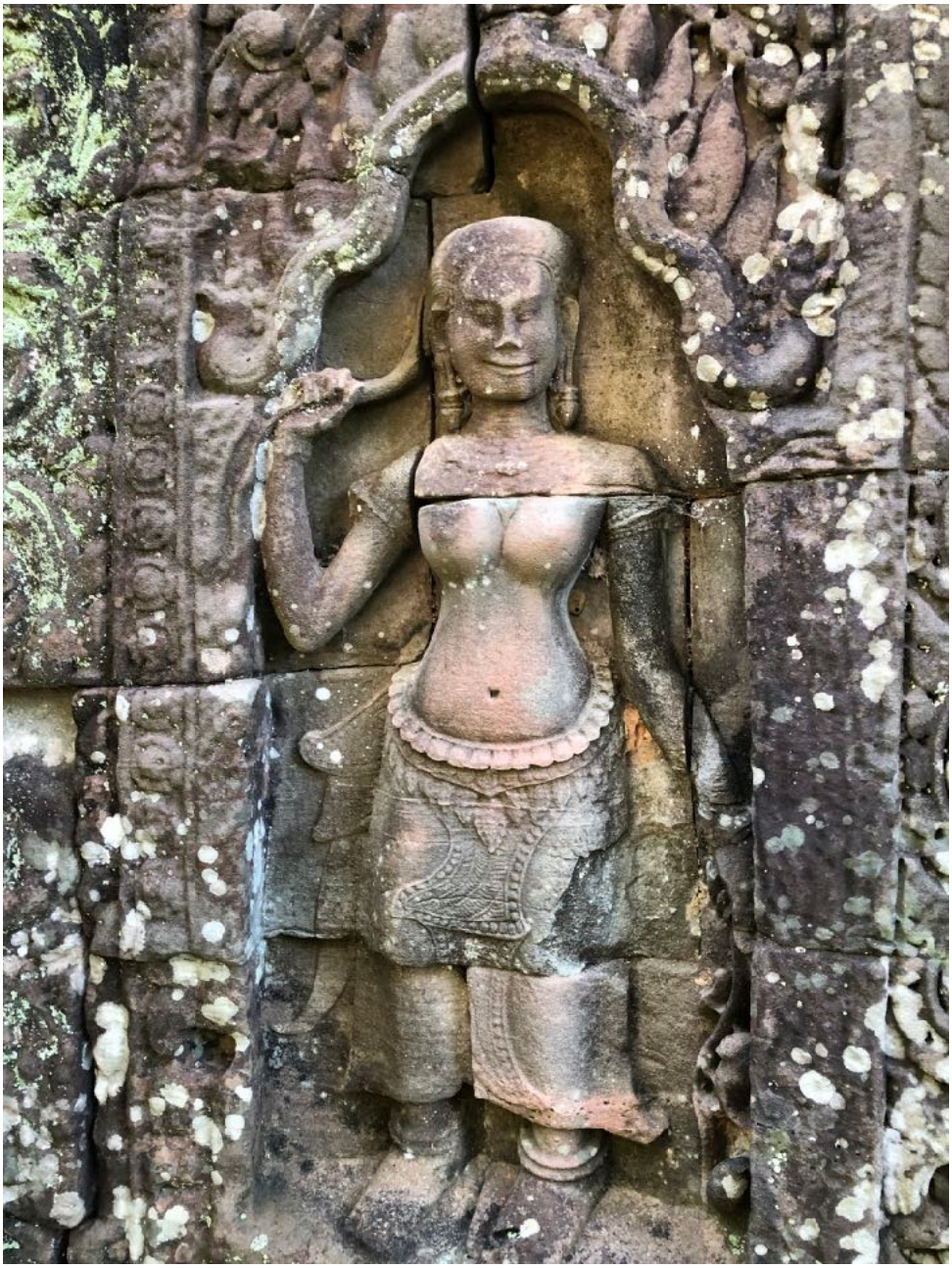


Although they are weathered, the carvings are still beautiful.

What a serene expression.



Moss has covered many of them.



The carvings have fine work. You can see the patterns on the edges of the skirt.

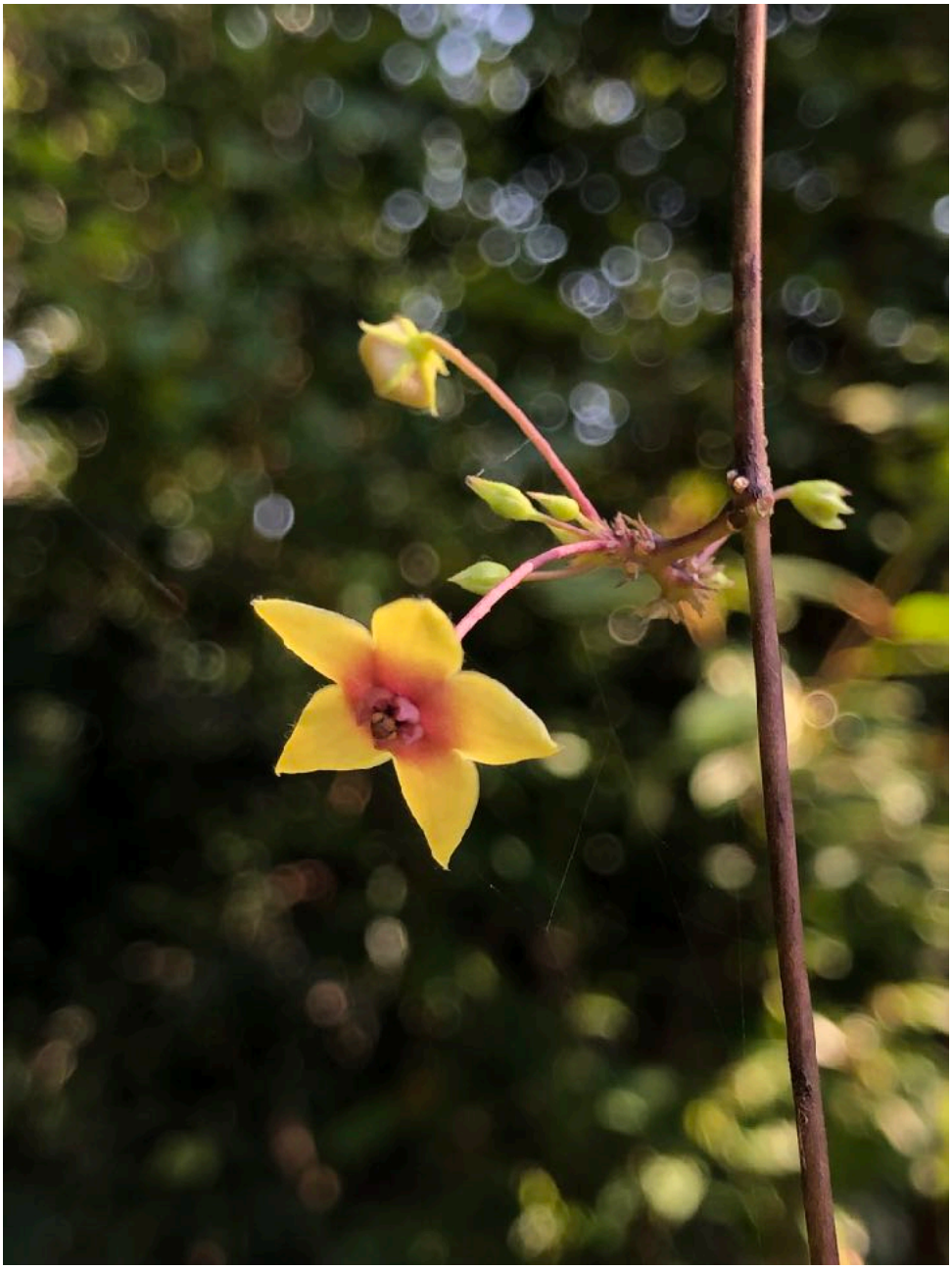


At the eastern side of the temple, there are basins and in the wet season, the water runs via a little stream from one to the other.

These basins are home to frogs.



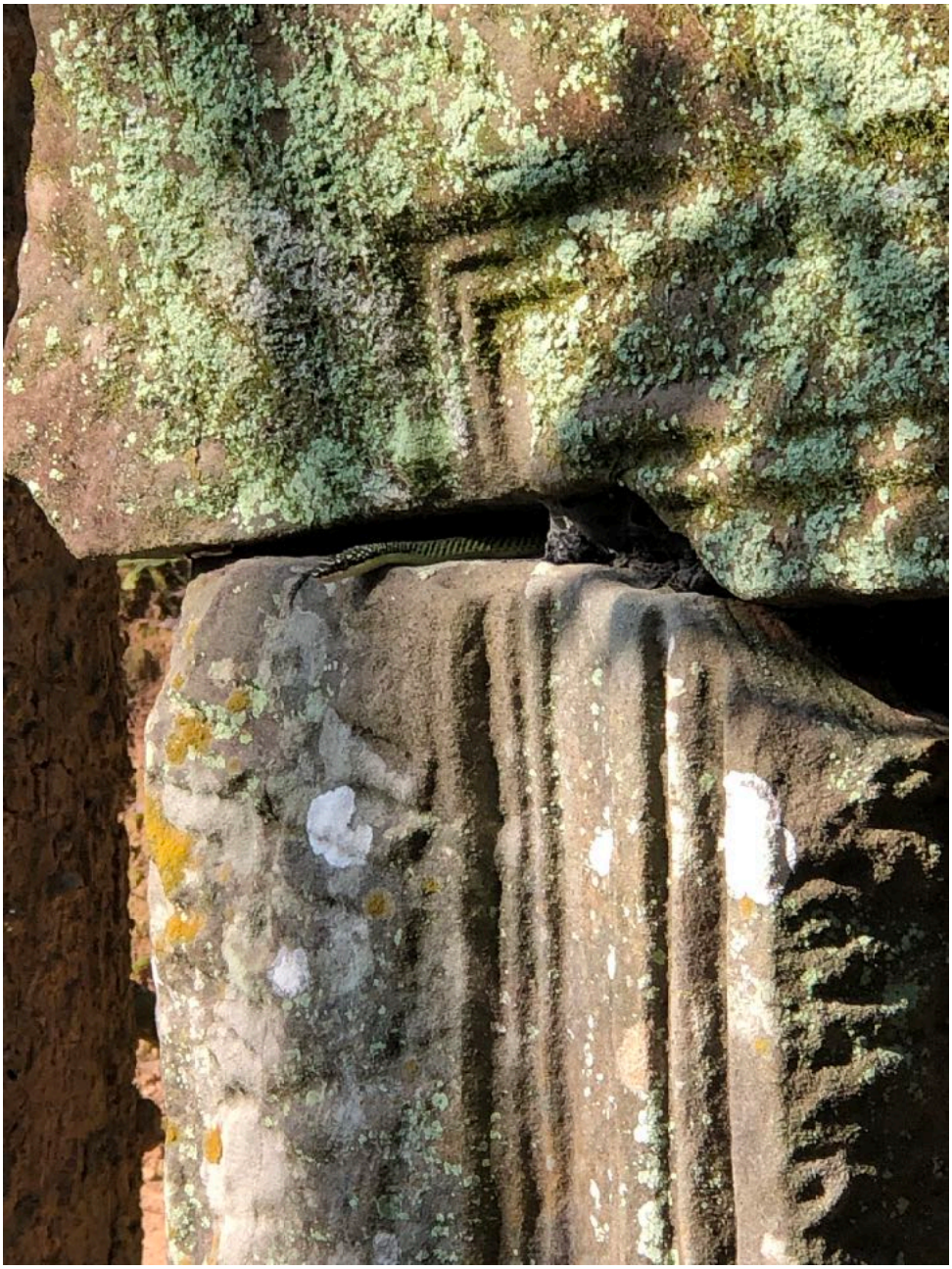
The weeds have pretty flowers.



It is almost the end of the wet season, but plants are still flowering.



And where there is water, there are dragonflies.



You have be careful when climbing around. You never know who is watching you. Can you see?



Perhaps the snake (a green tree snake) is watching this little banded Lipinia lizard. He wriggles his tail over his body. He is about 15cm long.



Even at 8:30 in the morning, the sun is bright and hot.



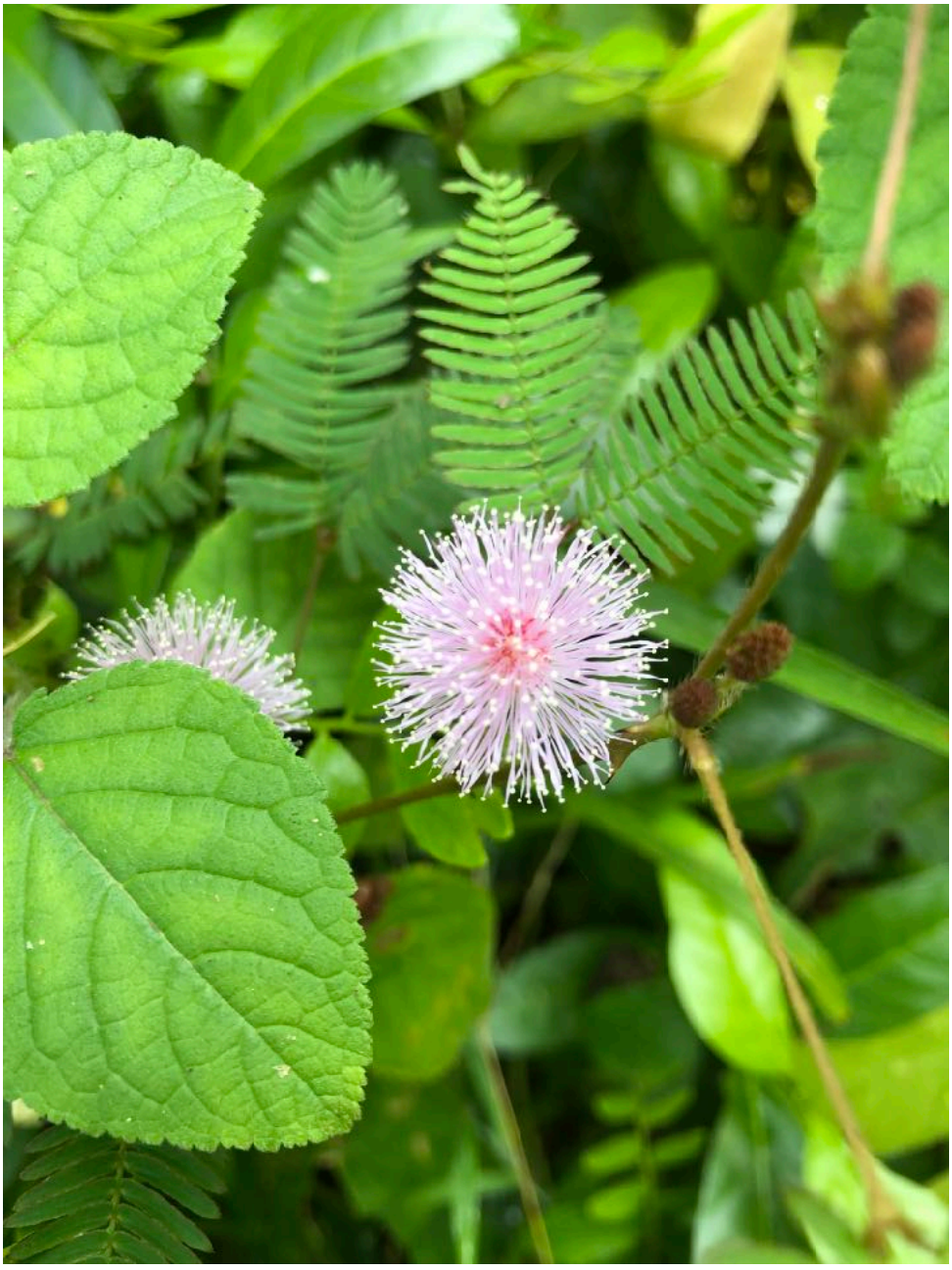


The sun cannot reach between some of the buildings in the temple; the carvings are more protected in these areas.



Looking through the doorways and chambers at Ta Som Temple.

Then it was a ride South to Leak Neang Temple (near Pre Rup), where we found more flowers.

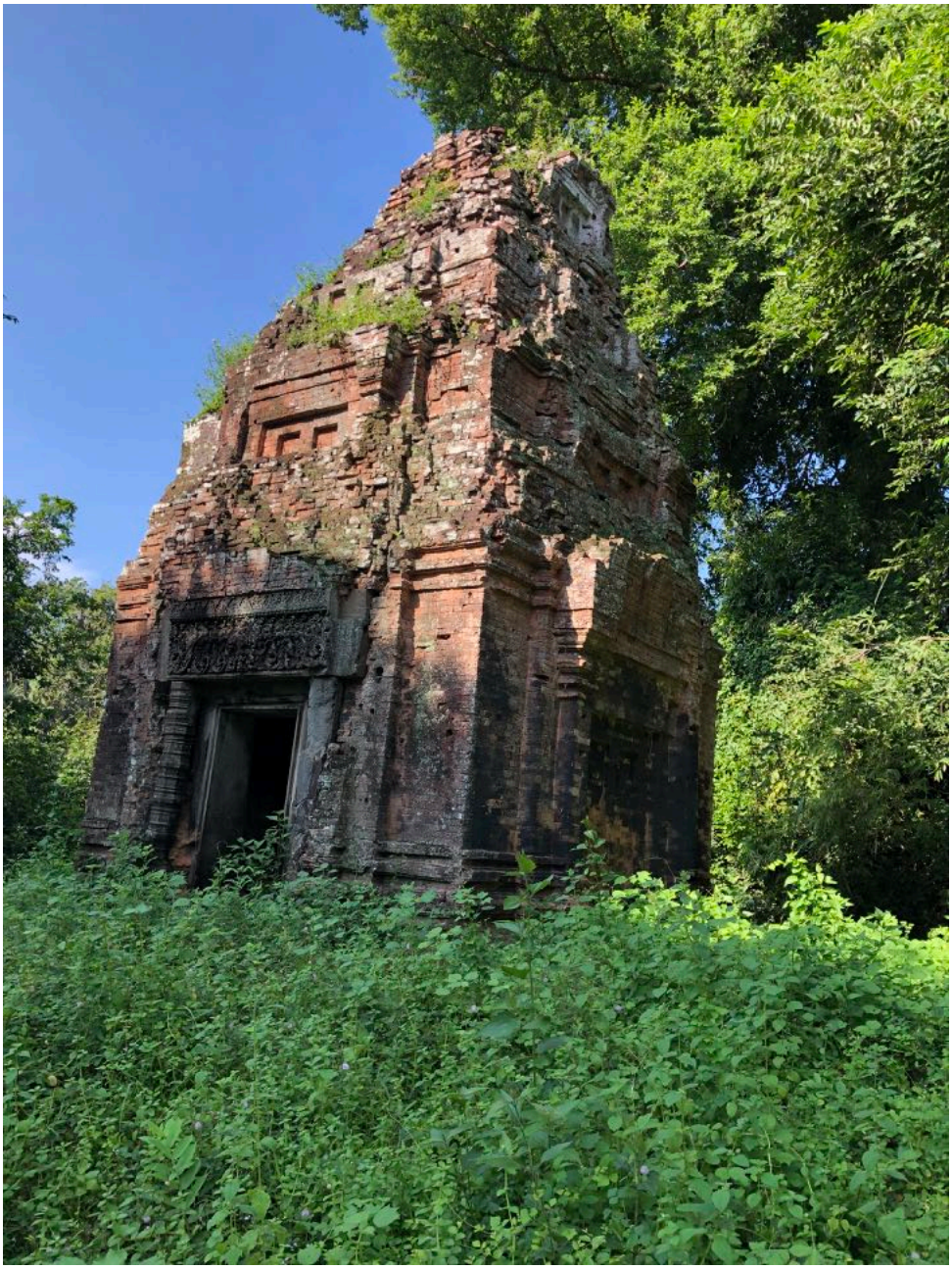




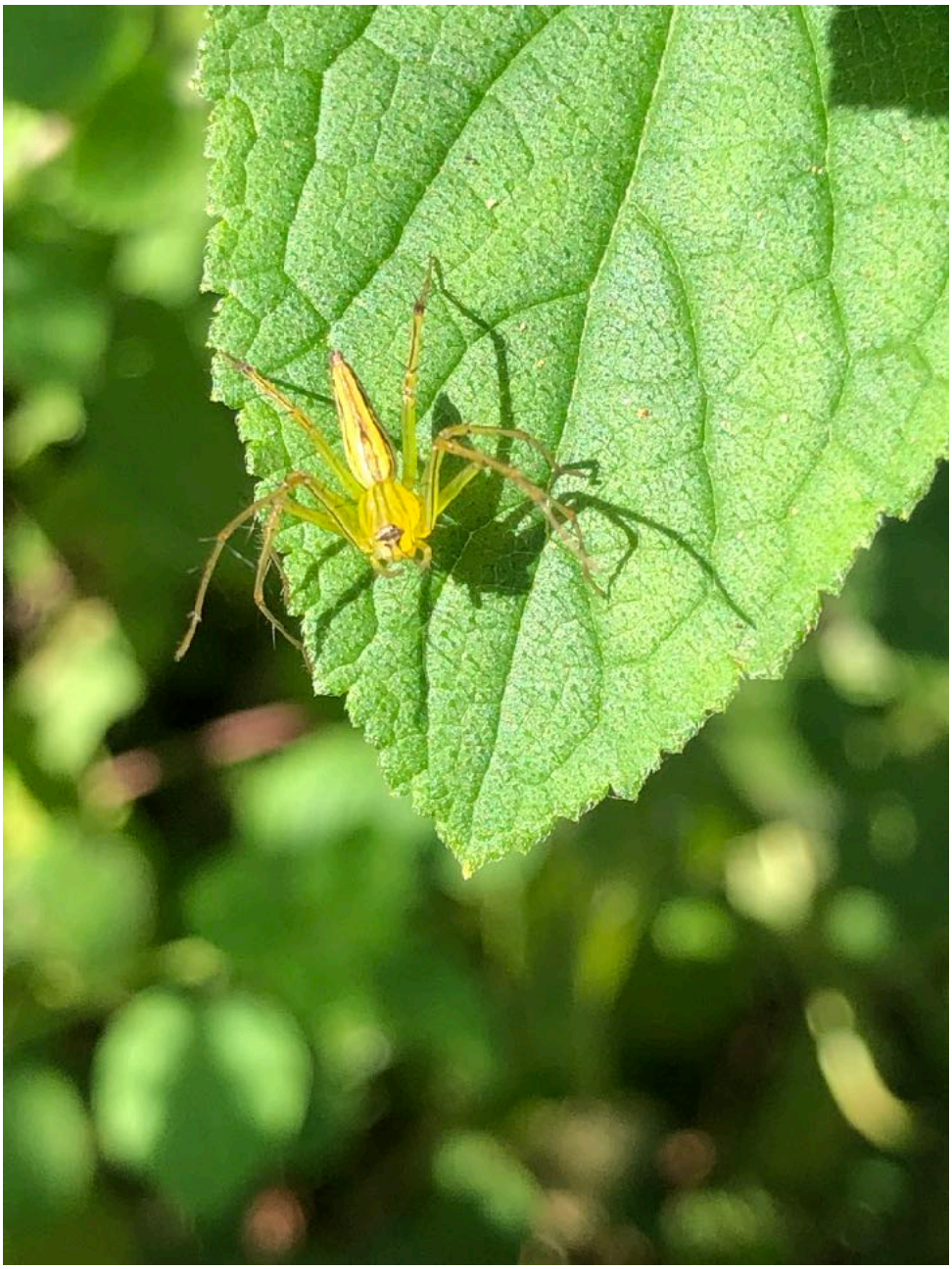


And more dragonflies.





Ta Som is built from laterite blocks and covered with sandstone (often carved). Leak Neang is older and built of bricks. It is a single tower with no outer buildings or walls.



In the weeds that grow around the temple, many insects and other small creatures live in peace, until we come tramping along to photograph them.



In the standing water, the tadpoles are growing up.

It is a further 15 km ride home, and a 45km ride in all to complete the Grand Circuit (and the ride south along the river to our apartment).

Friday 2nd October, 2026.

Today is our daughter's birthday. In Melbourne, that would mean having tea out. Here in Siem Reap, it is not just that food is cheaper : there are only two of us here!

It was raining heavily and we stayed home.

I spent some time finishing the Kuala Lumpur blogs.

Saturday 3rd October, 2026.

It is time to get our days back in order, so we walked to the supermarket.

Sunday 4th October, 2026.

Our day was spent as usual, a little housework and washing, some language study, some television and sewing, and a set of exercises and a swim.

In the afternoon, we "dressed up" to go to a book launch.

Colin Graham was an English English teacher in Phnom Penh in the early '70's. Thus, he was around for the build up

before the Khmer Rouge / Pol Pot era. I won't pretend to understand what happened at that time. And his book doesn't try to explain it either. It just tells of his life, as a teacher who had a push bike first and then a motor bike and access (through a reporter) to film and processing. He would ride around and take photos of people and places.

He spoke of Consular advice and finally transport out of the country on a rice plane (American) about two weeks before the city fell.

He spoke of collecting his photos and those of his journalist friend (many years later) and how the book came about. An interesting evening.

He was invited to Siem Reap by Jo Farrell. If you are interested in architectural photography (and a range of other topics, including the bound feet of women in China and other countries), check out Jo Farrell Photography.

We met Jo Farrell walking on the wall around Angkor Thom.

After the talk by Colin, we headed into the Pub Street area of Siem Reap. It is quiet at the moment, with tourist numbers down and the Pchum Ben festivities and local tourists not in full swing. We decided to try Mexican for tea.

You can have **any** cuisine here in Siem Reap. We went to the Mexican restaurant that is opposite a large, popular

(and delicious) Greek restaurant. And we were pleasantly surprised. It was a good meal followed by a leisurely walk along the Old Market and then a walk beside the river, down to our place.



Riverside restaurant lights.



“Our” side of the river. These food vans and marquees are set up every evening. Electricity is available by plugging into the wires of the hanging lights.

Usually, cars and motorbikes simple park on the road and call out their orders. You can park **anywhere** in Siem Reap, regardless of traffic (road or foot).

Young locals often gather at these restaurants and it seems to me (just in passing) that they spend their time looking at their phones.