

Tasmania

When we arrive in Devonport at 7 am there is a cold wind blowing and we wonder what clothes to wear for our planned trip to the wildlife park at Trowunna. We opt for several layers which we discard as the temperatures soar towards midday.

Our trip takes us into the interior of Tasmania, past trim suburbs, and towards the mountains. The scenery is similar to Wales, very green with lakes, rivers, mountains and managed forests, and there are organic farms and fields of lavender.

However, lush as it seems at first glance, our guide tells us that they have had no significant rain for the last two years, and a closer look at the many lakes reveal them to be almost empty of water.

The houses are mostly wooden and painted in pastel colours, and there are some old colonial style ones with ornate verandas. The gardens are full of roses, dahlias and other late summer bedding plants.

The Trowunna sanctuary specialises in rearing orphaned animals of the local wildlife such as Koala Bears, Echidna, Wombats and Tasmanian Devils. The animals are all used to humans, and we are able to stroke them, and to take some really close-up photographs.



Alvina and friends!



Tasmanian Devil - beware!

After the trip we stay in the town of Devonport for the afternoon. We have lunch in a local café and buy a few souvenirs to take home. Prices are very reasonable and everyone greets us with a cheery "G'day".

There are reminders of home everywhere; we sailed into the estuary of the Mersey River this morning, there is a River Dee and Liffey, and place names include Formby, St Helens, Southport, Swansea and Melton Mowbray.

The only down side we could see was the irritating cloud of flies which followed us everywhere - we can certainly understand why rural Aussies have hats with corks dangling from them!