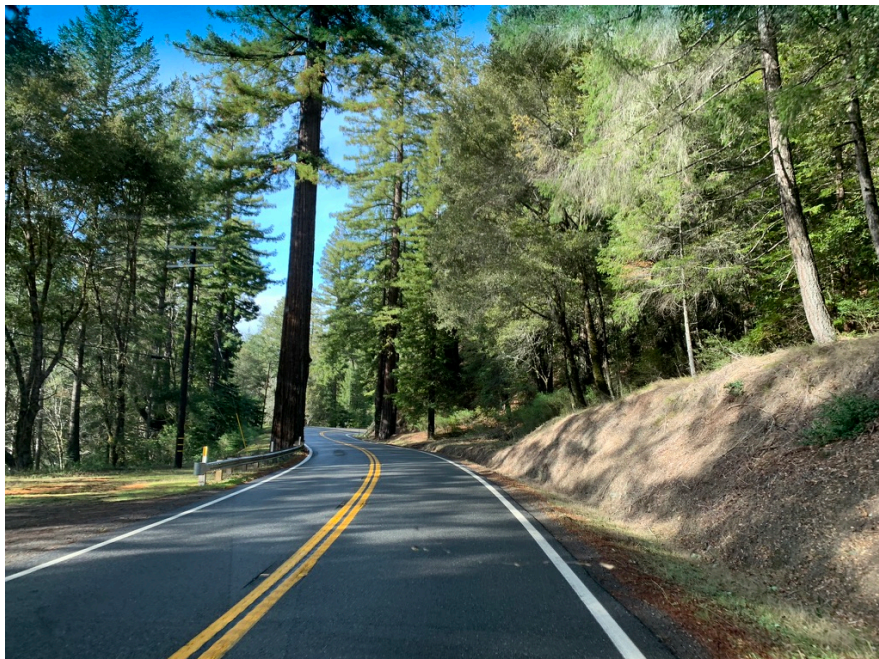


Trip 4 – Episode #9: California Here We Come – For the First Time.

When we planned this trip, our idea was to leave early enough in the fall to get to some places that were too cold in the winter. We now know that leaving near the end of October was not early enough. Many of the places we'd wanted to go were already cold. However, it still seemed that we could get to the redwood forests of California in time. So, we kept heading north into territory we hadn't been to before.



And soon we saw evidence that we were going in the right direction.



As happens in so many places we've travelled through, anything that attracts people could attract even more people if you come up with a gimmick.



So, as we got closer to the giant trees, we started seeing some interesting signs...

... Trying to entice us to stop and see something amazing. And of course, buy a souvenir to remind you of its amazingness.







Normally Jim can't turn down an opportunity to go on a train ride. But this time, he did.



We as we continued to drive north, we started seeing some pretty tall trees. But we were still a distance to the “Avenue of the Giants” as it’s called, so we decided to stop.



We stayed at this campground. And it delivered on its promise. It truly was Elk Country.



As we ventured up the driveway, there they were.





It was quite a pretty spot, and allowed us to explore the redwoods and return again that evening.



Which we did the next day.



I know a real photographer would delete this photo – or more likely, never even take it in the first place – but I couldn't resist.



We drove along the Newton B Drury Scenic Parkway, and it was indeed scenic.



At regular intervals, there were pull-offs where you could park and stroll along a trail. So we did.



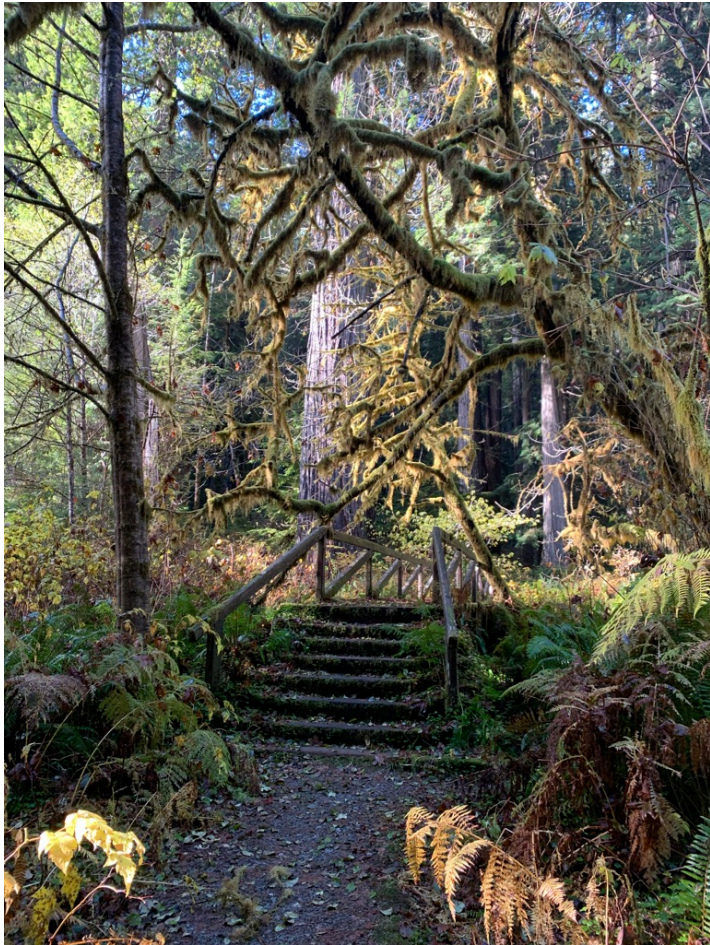
Although we knew these trees weren't the biggest of the redwoods, they were still impressive.







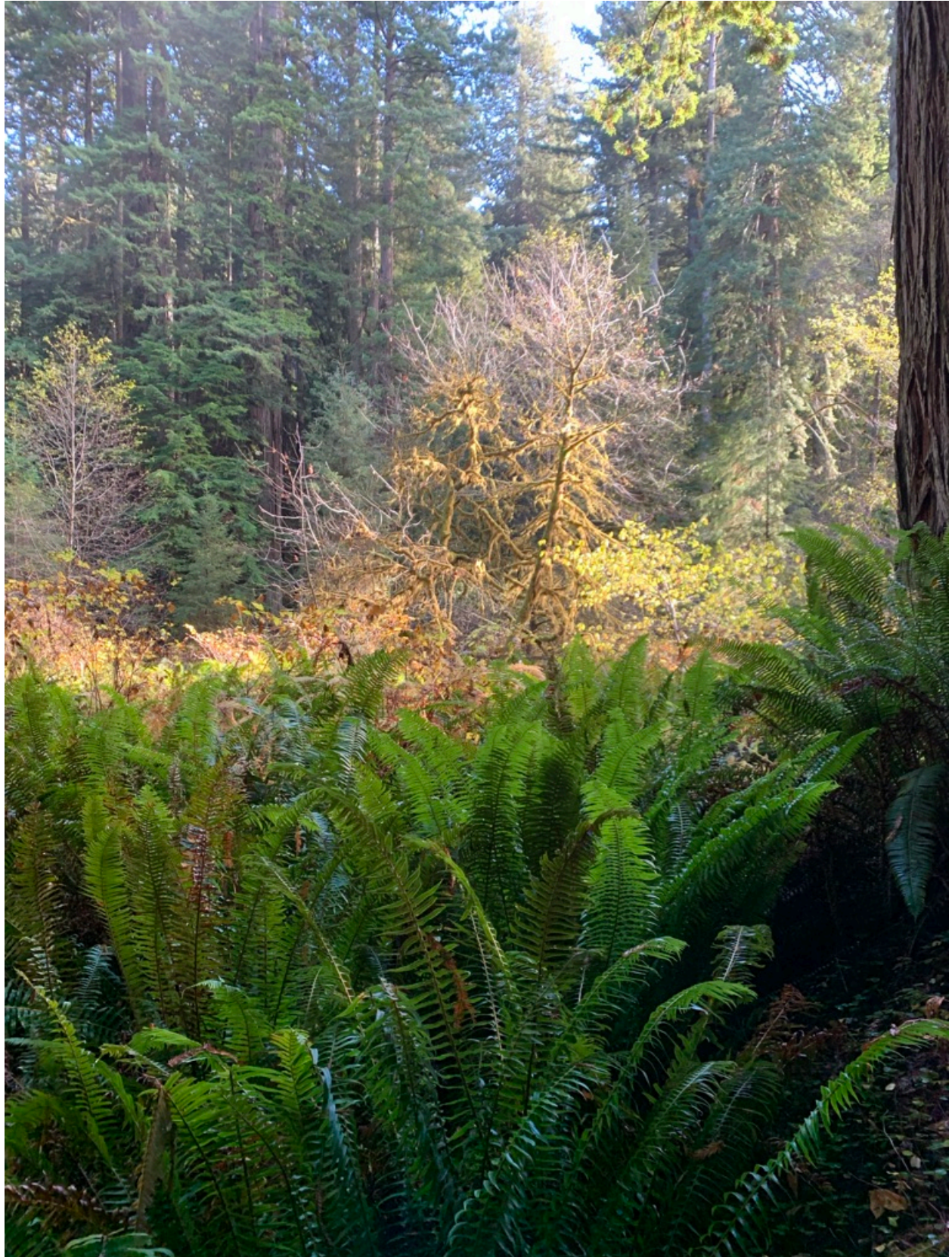
Even when we weren't amongst the giants, it was a lovely walk.



With so many rich colours.









It was exhilarating and calming at the same time. Reminiscent of Cathedral Grove on Vancouver Island. We were glad we'd made the trip.



But we had a few more sights to see before we headed back to Elk Country. Although we had avoided the other touristy attractions we'd passed along the way, there was one we just had to check out. It was touted in one of our books as a "drive-through" tree.



We were pretty sure Charles wouldn't fit, but we had to find out.

Clearly, it wasn't as successful a tourist spot as some of the others we'd passed.

We were the only ones there. The attendant didn't even show up!



And when we got there, we confirmed what we'd expected.

You could drive through ... if you were on a motorcycle, or maybe in a Smart Car.



But if
you're in
Charles....



... Not quite.



It was silly, but at least we knew the answer.
And as a bonus, I got to say hello to a couple of emus!



We continued following the Klamath River for a while.





We drove as far as Crescent City, which is close to the Oregon border. And when we got this far, we decided to turn around and head back before it got dark.



It was a beautiful drive, the whole way.





When we got back to Elk Country, the elk had moved on, but we did get a sky on fire.



The next day, we'd start heading south. To warmer weather, we thought...