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Welcome to the spring edition of our joint Y Water Discovery Centre and Yea Wetlands newsletter. We hope you enjoy reading about our recent activities and plans for the future.

2019/2020 Speaker Series

Connecting, Engaging and Empowering Communities to be more Environmentally Aware

The Y Water Discovery Centre @ Yea Wetlands is proud to present a series of six public information sessions focusing on increasing awareness of local environmental issues in the context of fire, flood and drought management.

Featuring an impressive line-up of keynote speakers and panelists, session topics will include:

- Adapting Nature's Unique Ecosystems to Fire, Flood and Drought, 4 October
- Climate Change and Endangered Species, 15 November
- The Importance of Wetland Habitats
- Managing Water Resources to Secure Environmental Sustainability
- Plant Biodiversity Loss from Environmental Changes
- Sustainable Environmental Practices by Indigenous Communities

The first of these sessions *Adapting Nature to Climate Change*, will be held on Friday 4 October at the Y Water Discovery Centre @ Yea Wetlands and will feature keynote speaker Professor Ary Hoffmann. Professor Hoffman is an international expert researcher working in the area of environmental stress adaptation of Australia's Unique Ecosystems resulting from fire, flood and drought events.

On Friday 15 November Professor David Karoly will speak on the topic of *Climate Change and Community Responses*. Professor Karoly is Leader of the Earth Systems and Climate Change Hub in the Australian Government's National Environmental Science Program, based in CSIRO. He is an internationally recognised expert on climate change and climate variability. This presentation will be held at Beaufort Manor in Yea and will include a two course sit down dinner.

The Y Water Discovery Centre @ Yea Wetlands Speaker Series is funded by the Foundation for Rural and Regional Renewal. Bookings can be made online at www.trybooking.com/BEPDN, or for further information visit www.ywatercentre.com.au, follow @ywaterdiscoverycentre or call 5797 2663.



Professor Ary Hoffmann



Professor David Karoly



Y Water Discovery Centre News

NAIDOC Week Celebrations

We celebrated NAIDOC Week with some excellent activities on offer and once again the fantastic talents of Angela ten Buuren and Cassie Leatham ensured the success of this event.

The celebrations included sessions ranging from the Medicinal and Traditional Uses of Indigenous Plants, Story Time with Elder Uncle Larry Walsh and a BBQ complete with kangaroo burgers and sausages.

The always popular, and most informative, Taste of the Taungurung walk and talk in the Yea Wetlands was very well received, as were Angela's delicious foods with an indigenous flavor.

Cassie continues to engage the younger participants, this year creating some very fine jewelry with all manner of natural materials. Every child went home mightily pleased with their efforts.

Congratulations, must go to Angela though who, not only organised the week's events, but also produced the most informative audio-visual commentary on the history of Indigenous interaction with Europeans - the highs and the lows of the last 200+ years.

Coupled with a simply stunning display of artifacts the Centre looked fantastic and many visitors commented on this visual feast. If their holiday schedules permitted they also spent some time watching the incredibly interesting summary of Australia's recent indigenous history.

If you missed out on this year's NAIDOC Week events put the 2020 date in your diary now – 6-12 July - as YWDC's celebration is fast becoming a 'must not miss' occasion.



Education Programs

VCE subjects in the 21st century are so much more interesting and varied than last century. Instead of 'just' Biology being the one and only natural science subject available to Year 11 students there is now a selection to choose from, including Outdoor and Environmental Studies.

Unit 2 in this subject investigates outdoor environments and deals with various types of land management. The different environments studied are at the discretion of the individual schools, but suffice to say that it appears we are now on the radar for secondary schools to make use of our programs en route to the snow.

Whilst Bacchus Marsh Grammar have been utilising the Yea Wetlands for many years they now include the YWDC educational offerings for their Year 11 VCE Outdoor and Environmental Studies' students, and other schools are catching on.

Over the space of 12 days in July we not only welcomed back Bacchus Marsh Grammar and Overnewton College, Keilor but also welcomed Broadford Secondary College, via the Department of Education Rubicon School Camp program, as well as Parade College in Bundoora.

Favourable comments from all make us think the Y Water Discovery Centre could become a regular feature on their study programs. Many thanks to all those volunteers, once again, who continue to assist so knowledgably and enthusiastically with these very important excursions.

Volunteering at the YWDC

Join our team

We are extremely fortunate to have a dedicated and reliable team of 40+ volunteers supporting the Y Water Discovery Centre.

With a broad range of skill sets and expertise they provide support across a wide range of activities including:

- Visitor Servicing
- Guided Tours
- Education Programs
- Retail
- Database Management
- Bookkeeping
- Catering
- Cleaning & Maintenance
- Gardening

We are always keen to welcome new members to the team and in particular are seeking people who are available to cover shifts on a weekend.

Commitment can be as little as one shift per fortnight or more regularly as desired and available.

Shift times are 9am – 1pm or 1pm – 5pm. The Centre is open 7 days a week except for Christmas Day and Good Friday.

If you know of someone who would like to get involved, please encourage them to contact:

Pauline Roberts 0408 246 308
proberts@murrindindi.vic.gov.au

Yea Wetlands Kiosk Development

Business Opportunity at the Y Water Discovery Centre Wetlands Kiosk

Y Water Discovery Centre's Wetlands Kiosk is nearing completion with final building works and fitout expected to be completed later this month.

The Centre is now seeking Expressions of Interest from suitably qualified and experienced persons to run the Kiosk as a separate business.

It is anticipated the Kiosk will be open four days a week (Fridays through Mondays) and on public holidays, times that coincide with most of the Centre's 30,000 visitors each year. Where practicable the Kiosk will source products from local suppliers.

The Wetlands Kiosk comes fitted out with a coffee machine, ice cream and display cabinets, fridge, freezer and espresso machine, so significant upfront capital outlays will not be necessary.

The Centre management is keen to collaborate with suitably qualified persons to make a success of this start-up business located in a superb facility offering a unique ambience for customers.

Persons interested in running the Wetlands Kiosk are asked contact the Centre Coordinator on 0419 943 630 or email sales@ywatercentre.com.au



Help us grow

Y Water Discovery Centre Inc Membership

A strong and active membership base will help the Y Water Discovery Centre Inc in its endeavours to continue to enhance our facilities and grow our programs and activities. Please help us to expand our membership base by encouraging others to consider joining. New membership applications can be submitted at <http://eepurl.com/c2kEUX>

Yea Wetlands Trust

The Yea Wetlands Trust Fund is included on the Register of Environmental Organisations and as such has been granted Deductible Gift Recipient status. Since its formation in 2004 the Trust has raised over \$350,000 to assist the development of both the Wetlands and Y Water Discovery Centre as a base for environmental learning. The Trustees welcome fully tax deductible donations, bequests and gifts (greater than \$2) to:

1. assist in the management, protection and development of the ecological and environmental assets of the Yea Wetlands;
2. deliver and grow environmental learning programs; and
3. facilitate research that grows our understanding of the ecological systems in the wetlands.

To find out more contact: yeawetlandstrust@gmail.com

Wetlands Wanderings

The Silver Wattle – *Acacia dealbata*

Spring is upon us and in the Yea Wetlands that means lots of wattle blossom. The most common in the wetlands, and therefore the most noticeable, is the blossom of the Silver Wattle. With a life span of 15 – 20 years it is a small to medium sized tree with a slender trunk and frond like leaves that are green to silvery grey on both surfaces. Flowers are fluffy yellow balls about 1 cm each, in clusters of 25 – 35 flowers, and they appear in late winter and spring.



The tree was useful to indigenous communities in many ways. The gum that oozed from damaged areas was a valuable food source and used as a type of cement. Bark provided fibre to make coarse string and the wood was used to make handles for stone axes. The seeds were crushed to produce a coarse flour which when mixed with water was cooked as damper.

As these wattles age, their branches are prone to breaking and they can become a little unstable in strong winds. You will see ample evidence of this anytime you take a stroll in the wetlands. Luckily they are prolific producers of seeds and they will regenerate quickly given the right conditions.

Weed Control in the Wetlands

Common ordinary English Ivy might look good in your garden, but it is an invasive weed species when found in the wetlands. After all, a weed is just a plant growing where it is not wanted, and we do not want ivy in the Yea Wetlands! It tends to just grow over anything in its path and grow upwards as well.

Featured in the last newsletter were Yea High School students helping to grub out a large patch of ivy. Since then the school's VCAL students have assisted with the removal of the accumulated mounds to an area outside of the wetlands, ready for disposal. This they did with gusto, with eight students, two staff and some committee members taking just over an hour! It is partnerships like this that mean so much more can be achieved by working together. Once again thanks to Yea High School for working with the committee to improve the environment for all.



Did you know?

Pimelea Axiflora
Bootlace Bush
"Babadiyl"

The Taungurung word for Bootlace Bush is "Babadiyl". The Bootlace Bush was traditionally used by Taungurung people for making nets. The tough fibrous bark was used by the women to make tying material, and produces fine silky fibre for net making, in particular for those used to catch Bogong Moths. Early settlers observing the skills of Aboriginal people used the material from this plant for bootlaces. Hence the common name. The flowers are rich in nectar and attract butterflies and other insects.



The Great Goulburn Broken Platypus Search

The platypus is a popular Australian icon. However, very little is known about how this unique mammal is faring across much of Victoria.

A major study is now being launched to monitor platypus in rivers and creeks in the Goulburn Broken Catchment and the good news is that local residents can play a key role in keeping track of this fascinating monotreme.

Platypus experts from the Australian Platypus Conservancy will be providing guided platypus spotting and help train interested people on how to monitor their local platypus populations. The best times to spot platypus is either dawn or dusk. Sessions will last around an hour.

Sessions at the Y Water Discovery Centre will be held on:

- Wednesday 18 September 5.30pm
- Thursday 19 September 7.00am

The sessions are free, but registration is essential. Please RSVP to Sue Kosch on 5797 4400 or suek@gbcma.vic.gov.au by 5pm Monday September 16.



This project is funded by the Victorian Government.

Wetlands Planting Session

On a perfect Sunday morning in late August, four volunteers managed to plant the grand total of 240 grasses and sedges in an area previously cleared of English Ivy. Well done to Ann Drysdale, Glenda Woods, Bec Bowles and Cath Zerbe together with Ralph the dog. It was a perfect morning for planting as it was fine and sunny and the ground was soft, making it so easy to use the Hamilton tree planters. And then, after the group had finished in just over 90 minutes and packed up, the plants received welcome rain that same afternoon, greatly increasing their chances of survival.

A further 80 plants will be added soon by Sacred Heart Primary School students when a date can be agreed upon. Once again, the environment is the winner!



Friends of the Wetlands

Join our team

If you know of someone who would like to get involved with our wetlands activities - from fundraising and special events to working bees and tree plantings, please encourage them to contact us at:

yeawetlands@gmail.com

Events & Activities

Dark Spectrum Book Launch

Hendrik Dierich who, prior to moving to Euroa to live, was a volunteer at the YWDC for 3 years. He returned recently to the Centre to launch his first book 'Dark Spectrum'. It is a collection of poems and songs that he has written over the last 8 years and is quite a revelation of his literary talent.

A small, but enthusiastic crowd greeted the reading of his poetry with interest and curiosity as he had never thought to make mention of his talents whilst working with other volunteers. His verses range from poignant to humorous, to deeply thoughtful and acutely aware of this precious planet we all inhabit, Hendrik's writing has something for everyone.

This poem is just a toe in the water for readers. If you would be interested in reading more, or even purchasing his book, we have copies on sale at the YWDC for the very reasonable price of \$25.

Tree-sky-earth

I am tree
and see all the sky
and feel the earth
beneath my roots.

I breathe the air
and drink the rain
much like you.

In me light forms energy
and leaf renews the air
so all may breathe again.

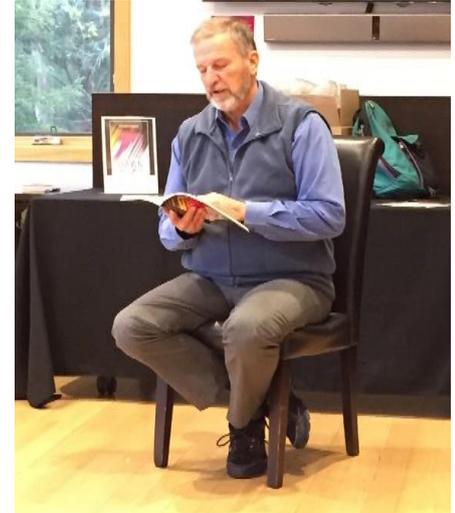
I build forests of wood
as sentinels and guardians
that sift the sky carbon

and cool the green earth
by wind and rain
renew and enliven

shelter, warm,
enlighten, enliven;
I am plantae of earth.

Now homo sapien
what is your story?

Hendrik Dierich



Hendrik Dierich at the Dark Spectrum Launch

School Holiday Activities

We'll be running our always popular school holiday activities during the term three holiday break. From art based activities to science discovery sessions and Wetlands exploration these are a great way to keep primary aged children occupied during the holidays. Bookings are via the YWDC and only \$4 per child.



Diary Dates

School Holiday Activities
25 September, 2019

Yea Pottery Group Exhibition
26 September – 1 October, 2019

School Holiday Activities
2 October, 2019

Adapting Nature to Climate Change
4 October, 2019

**Climate Change and
Community Responses**
15 November, 2019

YWDC Inc Annual General Meeting
29 November, 2019

Wild Pollinator Count
17 November, 2019

Contact Us



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