

yrka bulletin

The quarterly newsletter of Yarra Riverkeeper Association (yrka)
Issue 21 Winter 2011



Shortlisted for the International RiverPrize The Yarra is a finalist for the 2011 International RiverPrize, one of the world's most prestigious environmental awards. Restoration of two rivers in the US are the other finalists. Melbourne Water's submission was shortlisted from 50 others across 20 countries. Importantly, the submission highlights the support and commitment of stakeholders and communities along the river (eg yrka!) who are heavily involved in driving change and looking after the Yarra. The winner will be announced on 27 September.

Finalist for Keep Australia

Beautiful Award Yrka was a finalist for the 2011 Keep Australia Beautiful (Victoria) award for "protection of the environment", nominated by the City of Yarra. The winner, announced on 29 July, was the Dingo Discovery Centre in Melton.



← Studley stroll so successful, a second scheduled

Our guided walk *A Stroll around Studley Park* on 23 May was a great success. Many people responded to our advertisement, but given the terrain we limited the participants to 40. The walkers, which included the local MP, Hon Andrew McIntosh, enjoyed the beautiful and diverse riverbank setting, and learned from expert speakers, historian Tony Michael, geographer Marian Letcher and park ranger Peter Lynch. Studley Park Boathouse provided free tea and coffee. In view of the interest in the walk, we are planning another on Saturday 10th September. After inviting those on the previous "waiting list", there are a few places left. If you would like to join us, quickly email info@yarrariver.org.au or phone 0409 510 766.

Riverkeepers worldwide gather in Chicago

Yrka is a member of the growing and successful global movement, called the Waterkeeper Alliance, of on-the-water advocates who patrol and protect over 100,000 miles of rivers, streams and coastlines in North and South America, Europe, Australia, Asia and Africa. In June our Riverkeeper Ian joined representatives from the other 200 member groups for their annual conference in Chicago. He was also given guided on-water tours of the Potomac and James River (photos below) on the US East Coast by their respective riverkeepers. Ian said "The great strengths of the movement are the valuable lessons shared between the Waterkeepers tackling similar issues and the mutual support for each other's endeavours." See blog on youtu.be/SuD_-apfUvA or visit www.waterkeeper.org.



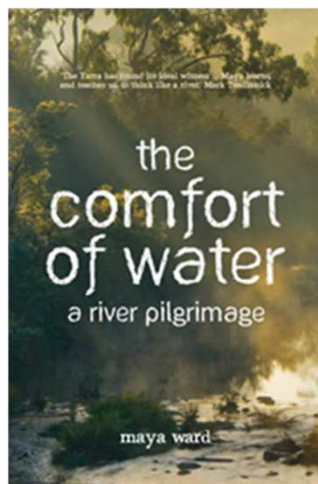


← **“I wish happy fish”** Enthusiastic yrka member Lynda Gilbert is continuing her series of school art competitions to urge young people to care for the Yarra and its wildlife by not dropping litter. With support from the Friends of Warrandyte State Park and Melbourne Water, the students at Wonga Park Primary School recently produced some wonderful anti-litter posters and smart slogans, such as “I wish happy fish”. The next competition will be held at Park Orchards Primary School.

The Imperial Blue Butterfly →

There are hundreds of insect varieties which dwell in the woodlands, wetlands and forests along the Yarra – and that doesn't include the many still to be named! Insects are crucial in the food chains supporting frogs, reptiles and mammals. The Imperial Blue butterfly is notable for its delicately sculpted wings and vivid markings. The caterpillars are guarded by a type of ant which offers protective services in exchange for a nutritious honeydew secretion. Communal hatchings can be seen in summer on Black and Silver Wattles, as shown in photo at right beside the Yarra in Warrandyte.

“The Comfort of Water” In 2003, Maya Ward walked the length of the Yarra River with three friends and has captured her joyful yet poignant story in a new book, *The Comfort of Water: A River Pilgrimage*. Maya's lyrical exploration of the Yarra is a testament to the fact that the greatest of worlds are often at our doorstep. She weaves her personal journey with the river's ecological and cultural history, and shows how a river can nourish the passion to transform our world. Yrka was pleased to be Maya's guide on a river cruise some years ago and to attend her recent book launch.



Yarra Riverkeeper takes on state-wide role

The Minister for Environment, Ryan Smith has appointed our Riverkeeper Ian to be a part-time commissioner of the newly established Victorian Environmental Water Holder. The Water Holder is an independent statutory authority, headed by a three member commission that is responsible for managing the environmental water entitlements in rivers across Victoria and making decisions on their use. Ian says “the appointment is an acknowledgment of the leading work that yrka has done in the field of environmental flows”.



Yrka is grateful to Melbourne Water, the EPA, Parks Victoria and the Ruffin Falkiner Trust for their grants to fund our river monitoring, community education and advocacy activities.

Join yrka today!

Yrka is a grassroots community organisation concerned with the health of the Yarra River from source to mouth. The strength of yrka depends on its membership numbers and commitment.

Please pass this bulletin on to like-minded individuals and groups, along with the yrka membership form, available at: www.yarrariver.org.au



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