

Dharma Gaia Yatra 2017

A Pilgrimage through the Lamington and
Springbrook NPs, SE- QLD

Friday 5 – Saturday 13 May



Our Journey

'Yatra' is the Sanskrit word for pilgrimage. A yatra is a pilgrimage which offers an opportunity to explore dharma teachings whilst hiking through some of the most pristine natural landscapes in Australia. On this Dharma Gaia Yatra we will cultivate a supportive environment to investigate our relationship to self, others and our natural environment in order to deepen our sense of interconnection. The program will provide a flexible combination of silent periods for yoga, meditation, and reflective walking (wandering), as well as time for facilitated exercises, workshops, group circles, and artistic expression. The variety of practices will draw from deep ecology, traditional dharma teachings, nature wisdom, science, eco-psychology and tribal traditions.

Our journey will start at the Green Mountain Campground (O'Reilly's), where we will camp for the first night. Our route will then lead us along the 'Border Track' following the Tweed Caldera rim through pristine world heritage listed rainforest. At Binna Burra, we will be accommodated for three nights in the historic Groom's Cottage from where we will explore some spectacular hikes of the region. From there our pilgrimage will continue along the 'Gold Coast Hinterland Great Walk' descending into the Numinbah Valley, past Egg Rock and Turtle Rock - two significant aboriginal sites. That evening we will camp at the Numinbah Community Hall. The following day we will climb up to the Springbrook plateau, where we will spend two nights at the Theosophical Society, incorporating a day of rest and mindful exploration. Our final hiking day will take us on the Purling Brook Falls circuit and our final camp will be at the Settlement Campground.

The daily walking distance varies with the longest walk being 21km and the shortest about 10km. Some sections will lead through steep and bushy terrain requiring at least a medium level of fitness. An accompanying support team will take care of meals and luggage.

At some locations we will be accommodated in our tents, the Groom's Cottage in Binna Burra provides basic accommodation in small dorm rooms and the Theosophical Society offers single rooms. The yatra is an all-weather event. In May rain is quite common and the nights can be expected to be quite cool.

Facilitation

Ruth Rosenhek works as a psychotherapist largely with individuals who have lived through complex trauma. She is the director of the Rainforest Information Centre and is a lifelong social justice and environmental activist. Ruth has facilitated eco-psychology and deep ecology workshops worldwide and has published articles in many journals and books. Ruth is passionate about compassionate action and the deeper meaning and implications of the environmental and social challenges that we face.

Ronny Hickel has studied and taught in various traditions of yoga, insight meditation and eastern philosophy since 1992. He is an accredited yoga and tai chi instructor, a qualified outdoor recreation guide and has also trained in Hakomi mindfulness based psychotherapy. Ronny runs a small business for personal development and outdoor recreation, teaches yoga, tai-chi and buddhist meditation in his local community and facilitates yatra expeditions and nature retreats throughout Australia.

John Seed (*special guest facilitator*) is an environmental activist who has been working for the world's forests since 1979. In 1995 he was awarded an 'Order of Australia' Medal for services to conservation. John is a leading light in the Deep Ecology movement and in 1988 he co-authored "Thinking Like a Mountain – Towards a Council of All Beings", the seminal work in experiential deep ecology. John has been involved in buddhist meditation practice since 1973 and has been facilitating experiential deep ecology workshops and engaged Buddhism all around the world over the last three decades.

The yatra will be conducted under the shelter of the five ethical precepts, which create a safe, caring and conscious environment for spiritual practice and interaction. The precepts invite us to restrain from harmful speech, actions, sexual expression and intoxicants. The walking periods will be in silence. The meditation instructions on a yatra are generally rooted in buddhist mindfulness practices. The yoga exercises are suitable for beginners and are designed to support our physical condition as well as our mindfulness practice.

What to bring?

- tent
- sleeping bag
- camping mat (NO MATTRESSES PLEASE)
- sun hat, beanie and rain coat
- appropriate clothing for hot, cold and wet weather
- good (walked in) hiking shoes
- daypack for walking
- water bottle(s) for 2 litres or more
- cup, bowl, plate, cutlery
- lunch box
- sun screen, insect repellent, blister plasters
- torch and spare batteries
- toiletries, towel, swim wear
- any personal medication or supplements if required

Pack lightly and tightly – On most days your luggage will be handled by the support crew and transported to each new camp site. Please keep your luggage confined to two bags maximum.

How to get there?

The yatra will start on Friday, 5th May at the 'Green Mountain Campground' at 4pm

The Green Mountain Camp Ground at Lamington NP is a remote place. We'll provide a transfer service to Green Mountain for participants from 3 locations: the Gold Coast Airport, the Nerang Railway Station and the Theosophical Society.

ARRIVING BY CAR OR TRAIN

- Secure parking is available at the *Nerang Railway Station* carpark which has video surveillance. *Pickup time will be 12.30pm.*
- Secure parking will also be available at the *Theosophical Society* for those who wish to have their vehicles available at the end of the yatra. *Pickup time will be 12 noon.*

ARRIVING VIA GOLD COAST AIRPORT

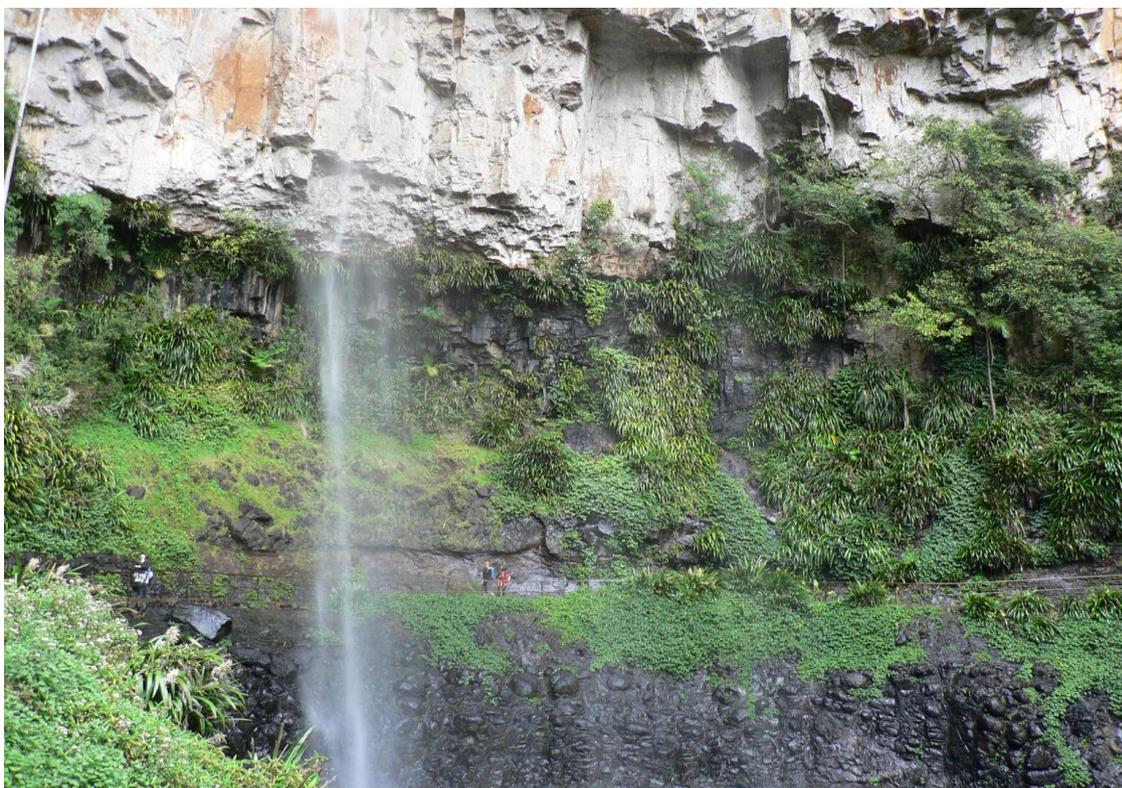
If you are flying please arrange your flights in order to arrive at the *Gold Coast Airport* (Coolangatta) no later than 12 noon. *Pickup time will be 12 noon.*

People who have registered will receive more detailed information about these pick up options.

If you choose to make your own way to Green Mountain please make sure to arrive there no later than 4pm. Please note that we won't provide any transport back to Green Mountain at the end of the yatra.

The yatra will end on Saturday, 13th May at the 'Settlement Campground' in Springbrook around 11am

At the end of the yatra we will provide transport to the nearby Theosophical Society as well as back to Nerang Railway station and to the Gold Coast Airport by 12noon. Please book your return flights for after 1pm.



Purling Brook Falls

Yatra cost

Cost: \$690 (plus Dana)

This covers all meals and catering, hiring of support vehicles, venue hiring fees, administration fee, YBC membership and any other yatra expenses. *The fee does not include any payment for the facilitators.*

Dana: Following an old Buddhist tradition the facilitators on this yatra do not charge any payment for their teachings. At the end of the yatra there will be a donation box and donations for the teachers will be gratefully received. Dana supports individual teachers for the time they have spent on this event and also enables future events of this kind.

Note: The route of the yatra does not go anywhere near an automatic teller!

How to book?

1. Fill out and submit the online registration form - [CLICK HERE!](#)

2. Secure your booking by making a full payment by:

- *money transfer* (direct credit) to:

Account Name: Yatra Bushwalking Club Inc

BSB: 062580

Account Nr: 10270467

Please state '*DGY17*' and '*YOUR NAME*' in the reference box.

- *cheque* or *money order* made out to 'Yatra Bushwalking Club Inc'.

post to: ***Dharma Gaia Yatra, PO Box 3100, Uki NSW 2484***

3. You will receive a confirmation letter with further information by email to confirm your booking. Your place will be allocated only after we have received your completed registration forms and full payment. Please do not make any travel arrangements before your place on the yatra has been confirmed.

Please note that there are only limited places available and that the yatra might book out quickly.

If the retreat is fully booked upon registration, you will be notified and your name will be placed on a waiting list. You will then be contacted if a place becomes available.

Cancellations before the 20 April 2017 will receive a full refund minus a \$50 administration fee. No refund can be guaranteed for cancellations after the 20 April. Please inform us early if you need to cancel so that you can receive your payment back and your place can be offered to someone else.

For more information please contact Ronny on:

Email: yatracontact@gmail.com

Mob: 0422 075 488

yatra.org.au