

# Deep Ecology Yatra 2011

A Sacred Pilgrimage in the Nightcap National Park

Sunday 11 – Friday 16<sup>th</sup> September 2011



## The 'Deep Ecology Yatra'

The Sanskrit word 'Yatra' means 'Life-journey' or 'Pilgrimage'. This 'Deep Ecology Yatra' is a unique journey where we explore the concepts of Deep Ecology along with the spiritual traditions of Yoga and Insight Meditation. The World Heritage listed Nightcap National Park will provide us with an ideal environment for this sacred pilgrimage. In 1989 Nightcap National Park was added to the Central Eastern Rainforest Reserves of Australia (CERRA) group which marked an important step in the protection of our Gondwanic Rainforests. The power of this awe-inspiring natural environment will support our individual and collective enquiry which consists of a respectful combination of meditation, reflection, discussion and movement. This pilgrimage is an opportunity to look deeply into the interconnectedness between man and nature. The Yatra is conducted in the spirit of simplicity in which we tread lightly on the earth with respect and gratitude.

## Deep Ecology

Deep Ecology is a philosophy of nature which explores the psychological or spiritual dimension that underlies our environmental problems. To Deep Ecology the fundamental problem is anthropocentrism, or human centeredness – the idea that humans are the centre of everything: the crown of creation, the measure of all being. The world is a pyramid with humans on the top and everything else is just there to support us, a "resource". To resolve this according to Arne Naess, the philosophy professor from Norway who coined the term "deep ecology", ecological *ideas* are not enough, we need ecological *identity*, ecological *self*. For over 20 years John Seed has worked with Joanna Macy and others developing experiential processes which nourish ecological identity and each evening on the Yatra, we will spend a couple of hours exploring such processes with him.

## Our Journey

Our journey will take us on a 5 day round trip starting and ending at the *Cloud Mountain Homeland* at Doon Doon, 25min out of Uki. Our route will lead along the Historic Nightcap Trail through the Gondwanic Rainforest of Natural Heritage listed *Nightcap National Park*, passing a number of spectacular landmarks including the *Nightcap Bluff*, *Minyon Falls*, *Protester Falls* and the *Daranga Rocks*.

The daily walking distance will be around 15 kilometres or less. 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. Accommodation will be in our personal tents. The Yatra is an all weather event. The weather in the area could vary between hot and dry days to continuous days of heavy rain.

## Helping

The Yatra is based on active participation. The support team will need help with food preparation, washing up, luggage and setting up and packing up the camp sites.

Active support on the Yatra makes it possible to keep costs low. It also lifts the spirit of the group as we come together in a functional team.

People who need a break from walking will have the option to get a ride with the support crew.

## Teachings and practice

On the Yatra we access a variety of teachings, exercises and techniques which are based on the *Deep Ecology*, *Insight Meditation (Vipassana)* and *Yoga* traditions.

The pilgrimage is conducted under the shelter of Five Ethical Precepts, which create a safe, caring and conscious environment for spiritual practice. The precepts invite us to restrain from harmful speech and actions, sexual expression and intoxicants. The walking periods are in silence. The Yoga exercises are suitable for beginners and are designed to support our physical condition as well as our mindfulness on the Yatra.

## Teachers

**John Seed** is an environmental activist who has been working for the world's forests since 1979 and in 1995 was awarded an Order of Australia Medal for services to conservation. He is also a leading light in the Deep Ecology movement and, in 1988, co-authored "Thinking Like a Mountain – Towards a Council of All Beings" the seminal work in experiential deep ecology. He has been facilitating experiential deep ecology workshops all around the world. He has been involved in Buddhist meditation practice since 1973 and has taught deep ecology and engaged Buddhism at Sanghas in Australia, the US and UK.

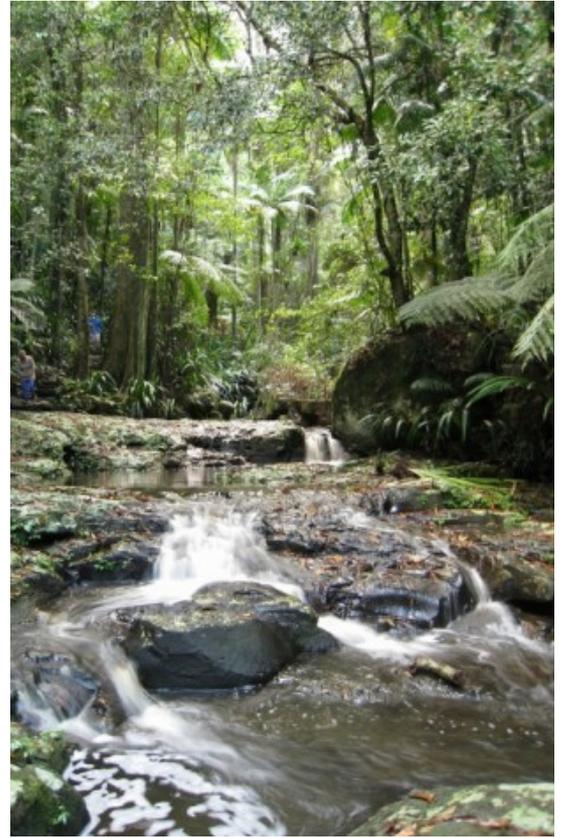
**Ken Golding** has a diverse history of long term social and environmental activism and meditation. He lived for many years in intentional community and worked with Joanna Macy to help introduce 'Despair to Empowerment' workshops to Australia 30 years ago. In more recent years he has directed his attention to working with men and is currently a facilitator of the Walking Man Yatra. Ken lives on the North Coast and teaches meditation using the Recollective Awareness approach.

**Ronny Hickel** is an affiliated teacher of the Satyananda Yoga Academy who has studied and taught in various traditions of yoga and insight meditation for over fifteen years. He facilitates classes, workshops, and yatras in the Northern Rivers area. Ronny is a qualified outdoor recreation guide and has also trained in Hakomi Psychotherapy. He presently lives with his family in Doon Doon in the Tweed Caldera where he is involved in developing a sustainable dharma farm.



## What to bring?

- tent
- sleeping bag
- camping mat (NO MATTRESSES PLEASE)
- sun hat and rain coat
- appropriate clothing for *hot*, *cold* and *wet* weather (be prepared for heavy rain)
- 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 –*

The entire luggage is handled daily by the support crew and transported to each new camp site. Please keep your luggage confined to two bags maximum.

## Getting to the 'Cloud Mountain Homeland'

**The Yatra will start on Sunday, 11<sup>th</sup> September at the 'Cloud Mountain Homeland' at 5pm.**

People who have registered will receive a confirmation letter and a map with instructions on how to get to the *Cloud Mountain Homeland*.

Through a car pooling network we will try to arrange lifts for those who can not or wish not to drive themselves.

Pick ups from Murwillumbah and certain other nearby locations can be arranged if necessary.

The closest airport from Murwillumbah is Coolangatta (Gold Coast). If you are flying please arrange your flights in order to arrive in Coolangatta before 3pm.

**It is important that you arrive at the *Cloud Mountain Homeland* in Doon Doon for registration by 5pm on Sunday.** Dinner will be served at 6pm

**The Yatra will end on Friday, 16<sup>th</sup> September at the 'Cloud Mountain Homeland' at 10am.**

Note: The Deep Ecology Yatra can be combined with the annual Dharma Yatra which will start at the 'Cloud Mountain Homeland' on Saturday, 17<sup>th</sup> September 2011. For more information please contact Ronny.

## Yatra cost and Booking

**Cost: \$380;** Early bird fee is \$330 if paid by 1<sup>st</sup> August 2011

This covers all meals and catering, hiring of support vehicles, camping fees, administration and organisation expenses.

*The fee does not include any payment for the teachers.*

### Dana - Donation

Validating an ancient tradition the teachers 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 not only supports individual teachers for the time they have spent on this event but it will make future events of this kind possible.

Note: The route of the Yatra does not go anywhere near an ATM.

### How to book:

1. Contact *Ronny* (see contact detail below) and check if places are available.
2. Fill in the three registration forms (see below) and send your completed forms with full payment to:

**Inner Union / Deep Ecology Yatra**

**PO Box 3100**

**Uki NSW 2484**

Payment

- by *cheque* or *money order* made out to "**Inner Union**".

or

- by money transfer (direct credit) to:

**Account Name: INNER UNION**

**BSB: 802185**

**Account Nr: 100070036**

Please state *your name* and 'Deep Ecology Yatra' in the reference box.

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.

**Note: There are only limited (20) places available and the Yatra might book out quickly.**

### Cancellation:

Cancellations before the 1<sup>st</sup> September 2011 will receive a full refund minus a \$50 administration fee. 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: innerunion[at]st.net.au

Ph: 02 6679 9045

Mob: 0422 075 488

## Deep Ecology Yatra 2011 - Registration Form

**Name:** .....

**Address:** .....

**Phone:** (home/mobile) .....

**Email:** .....

**Life Situation/occupation:** ..... **Age** .....

**Contact Person in case of emergency:** Name: .....

Relationship: ..... Phone(s): .....

**Dietary needs:** The food provided on the Yatra will be a simple vegetarian diet. Do you have any special dietary needs other than vegetarian?

### Transport:

Can you offer a lift to the 'Cloud Mountain Homeland'? Yes / No from .....

Do you need a lift to 'Cloud Mountain Homeland'? Yes / No from .....

### Camping:

Can you offer a space in your tent? Yes / No Room for ..... person(s)

Do you need a space in a tent? Yes / No

### Fitness and Health:

**Do you have any or have you had any**

- **alcohol and drug dependency?** No / Yes

- **diagnosis of a mental health condition that could require attention during the Yatra (including any current medication)?** No / Yes

- **medical conditions or injuries that could require attention during the Yatra (including any current medication)?** No / Yes

(If yes to any of the above please give details on back of this sheet)

### Acknowledgement of Risks:

In voluntarily participating in the Deep Ecology Yatra, I am aware that my participation may expose me to risks that could lead to injury, illness or death or to loss of or damage to my property. Those risks include, but are not limited to, slippery and/or uneven ground or rocks, rocks being dislodged, cliffs, exposure to bad weather, falling, hypothermia, and bites or stings from ticks, spiders or snakes.

To minimise these risks I have endeavoured to ensure that

(1) The Yatra is within my capabilities;

(2) I will be carrying water and equipment appropriate for the Yatra;

(3) I have advised the Yatra organisers if I am taking any medication or have any physical or other limitation that might affect my participation.

I will make every effort to remain with the rest of the group during the Yatra and accept the instructions of the leaders.

I have read and understand these requirements. I have considered the risks before choosing to sign this acknowledgement of risk. I still wish to participate in the Yatra.

I accept that in signing this form I will take full responsibility and liability for my own property, health and safety

**Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_