

YMAC NEWS

News from
Yamatji
Marlpa
Aboriginal
Corporation

ISSUE 48 | November 2023



Yamatji on Country

Save the dates!

ARM MEETINGS

Pilbara

Thursday 16
November 2023

Yamatji

Saturday 25
November 2023

Yule River



Yamatji Marlpa
ABORIGINAL CORPORATION



Contents

ISSUE 48 | November 2023

- 2 Contents, hello and welcome
- 3 News from the CEO
- 4 Pilbara communities unite at Yule River
- 6 Regional Calls for Action at Yamatji on Country
- 8 Yamatji on Country – our youth shine again
- 10 State Government repeals new heritage laws
- 12 YMAC takes Yes Campaign on the road
- 13 YMAC's Consultations informs 2023 Native Title Forums
- 14 Celebrating our Elders – NAIDOC Week
- 15 Wattandee Elders share Dreaming stories
- 16 YMAC interns embrace real work experience
- 18 Nyangumarta women rangers create national connections
- 19 Dingo Declaration a first in Australia
- 20 Department of Justice Open Days
- 21 YMAC Annual Regional Meetings 2023
- 22 Why Renewables Must Partner with First Nations People
- 23 Pilbara organisations recognised for excellence

Cover photos:
Yamatji on Country
Yule River.

Please be advised this publication may contain images, voices and names of deceased people. We sincerely apologise for any distress this may cause.

Hello and welcome to issue 48 of YMAC News



Miss Natalie Parker,
Co-Chairperson – Pilbara Region



Mr Peter Windie,
Co-Chairperson – Yamatji Region

In this edition, we:

- share outcomes from the annual Yule River and Yamatji on Country meetings.
- discuss the latest on laws impacting First Nations people in our region.
- celebrate elders and the achievements of local community organisations.

YMAC posts regular updates on current news and issues affecting Native Title and Traditional Owners.

Visit ymac.org.au to stay up-to-date or subscribe to email updates by visiting the website, clicking on 'Media & Publications' and then 'Subscribe' on the pulldown menu. You can also scan the QR code.



You can also follow us on LinkedIn via tinyurl.com/ymaclinkedin.

We are always on the lookout for interesting and informative news. If you have stories or photos you would like to share, please reach out to us by emailing editor@ymac.org.au.

News from the CEO

Welcome to the latest edition of YMAC News.

This year continues to be one of significant announcements and events, and I am consistently impressed by the hard work YMAC Board, Regional Committees and staff undertake to keep pace and remain resilient.

Since our last edition, we have hosted several key events across both of our regions. These include the Annual On-Country Bush Meeting at the Yule River Meeting Place (see pages 4-5), Yamatji On-Country (see pages 6-7), our regional Referendum Roadshow (see page 12), and our first ever Native Title Forums (see page 13). By organising these events, YMAC provides opportunity for people to come together, to listen and learn from one another, to share their experiences and ideas, and to seek better understandings across a range of interests and issues.

I am very pleased to advise that, in June, YMAC was notified of its successful application for re-recognition as the Native Title Representative Body for both our regions. This advice, along with confirmation of related funding being secured, provides surety for YMAC to continue its important native title roles and functions for another three years.

As we finalise this YMAC News, our 2023 Annual Report is also going to print.

Copies will be posted to all YMAC members. I encourage everyone to visit our website and download a copy, and/or collect a hard copy from any of our offices.

We have had a busy year in our Research and Legal teams in unclaimed areas, which has resulted in several very productive meetings in recent weeks. I look forward to being able to make some more detailed announcements on this work early in 2024.

In far less positive news, it deeply saddens and frustrates me to provide updates on the unsuccessful 2023 national referendum on constitutional recognition and the Voice to Parliament, and the Western Australian Government's re-introduction of 1972 Aboriginal heritage laws (see pages 10-11). Despite the large volume of work both YMAC and our fellow supporters undertook on these fronts – our resounding support for and contributions to the YES campaign, and our advocacy demanding better protections for cultural sites across the state – we were unable to get the results we had hoped for. My thoughts are with all who have been negatively affected by these outcomes. Be assured, YMAC will persist in our pursuits for recognition, for respect, for representation, and for all-round better outcomes across the board for our members and clients. The outcomes and aftermath of the referendum demonstrate to me the importance of ensuring First Nations people are respected and their voices heard on issues affecting them. In spite of the recent blows we have experienced, I am confident YMAC's First Nations communities will emerge stronger than ever.

I hope you enjoy reading more about YMAC's recent activities, as well as those stories shared from community, in this edition of our newsletter.

On behalf of YMAC, thank you for your ongoing interest in and support for the critical work the organisation does.



Simon Hawkins,
YMAC Chief Executive Officer

Pilbara communities unite at Yule River



Photo by Jose Kalpers

Unity, action, leadership, and a voice for Aboriginal people of the Pilbara were key themes of this year's On-Country Bush Meeting at the Yule River Meeting Place.

Taking place on Kariyarra Country, the eighth annual meeting was held 12 and 13 July 2023. Over 500 people gathered over the two days, to discuss local empowerment and a fresh call on the government to Close the Gap for Aboriginal people from across the region.

Kariyarra Elder, Alfred Barker delivered the Welcome to Country before Nyamal-Pitjkarli Elder and Deputy Co-Chair-Pilbara Regional Committee Mrs Doris Eaton opened the meeting.

Day 1 saw Aboriginal attendees discuss and endorse a Call to Action that calls for a more genuine, grassroots approach by government to working with community on placed-based

solutions in six key areas of concern – systemic reform, education, health, housing, wellbeing, and community safety.

A draft of a Call to Action had been developed at a pre-event workshop in April, to which YMAC invited organisations to nominate Elders and emerging leaders to attend.

The Call to Action highlights these key concerns, proposed solutions, and identifies how they align with government commitments and targets such as the National Agreement on Closing the Gap, the State Government Aboriginal Empowerment Strategy, and the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People.



Photo by Jose Kalpers

Scan QR code to
view Yule River
image gallery



Community members spoke of the need for action, unity and leadership to create significant change, as well as the need for a well-resourced Pilbara leadership group and hub to lead this change and better connect government and community. Access to land, waters and the protection of Aboriginal cultural heritage were concerns also raised by attendees.

Day 1 also featured a presentation on the Voice to Parliament from Mr Thomas Mayo, member of the Federal Government's Voice Referendum Working Group. When asked if they intend to vote "yes" in the referendum, an overwhelming majority raised their hands.

On Day 2, community members presented the refined Call to Action to Federal Minister for Indigenous Australians the Hon Linda Burney MP, State Minister for Education and Aboriginal Affairs the Hon Dr Tony Buti MLA, Greens Senator Dorinda Cox, WA Commissioner for Children and Young People Ms Jacqueline McGowan-Jones, and the many local, state and federal government representatives in attendance.



Photo by Jose Kalpers



Photo by Tash Gillespie

A last-minute special guest was Acting Prime Minister the Hon Richard Marles MP, who joined the meeting to speak with community members and discuss their concerns.

The two-day meeting was co-chaired by Ngarla-Nyamal leader Mr Danny Brown and Kariyarra leader Ms Raylene Button who are members of the Call-to-Action Working Group nominated at the April Yule River pre-event meeting. The other working group members who presented were Ashley Councillor, Linda Dridi, Mrs Eaton, Terry Jaffrey, Maureen "MK" Kelly, Henry Lockyer, Pat Mason, and Ethan Tittums.

YMAC is working with the Call-to-Action Working Group to finalise the statement, incorporating additional actions identified by community at the Yule River meeting, and release to government for their consideration and action. They plan to also meet to discuss how to share the document broadly within the Pilbara community to ensure PBC's, community organisations are kept informed on progress on the Call to Action.

Regional Calls for Action at Yamatji on Country

The annual 2023 Yamatji on Country took place on Wednesday 20 and Thursday 21 September at the Bundiyarra Aboriginal Community Aboriginal Corporation in Geraldton.

The meeting supports community to voice their concerns which is then translated into a collective Call for Action Statement to local, State and Federal government representatives and parliamentarians in attendance.

The 2023 Call to Action Statement seeks support for community to achieve self-determined and place-based governance through:

1. A Yamatji on Country Reference Group
2. Advocacy and System Navigation
3. Supporting and Listening to Young People

The Call to Action also seeks commitment from government to report annually against the Call to Action, so that community can measure progress and to work together with community to create change.

The statement identifies action needed across the following areas, which align with the National Agreement on Closing the Gap:

1. Racism
2. Housing & Accommodation
3. Police & Justice
4. Education
5. Employment, Training & Economic Development
6. Health & Wellbeing



Photo by 65Thirty Events

Photo by Jose Kalpers





Photo by 65Thirty Events

Participant and nominated community spokesperson Dr Charmaine Green said, “The time is right, and the time is now to strengthen how all levels of government decision makers respond to our collective Call to Action Statement, they need to take up real action and respond beyond idle talk as a matter of urgency demonstrating and cementing their commitments to working with Yamatji communities and Yamatji people”.

The Midwest Aboriginal Organisations Alliance (MAOA), was identified by community members present as an existing group that, with government support, could become a registered corporation and take on the role of a peak agency for the region. Mr Peter Windie, YMAC Co-Chairperson – Yamatji Region shared the hope that, through the Call to Action, that ACCOs and government agencies will have further grass-roots evidence to adopt new ways of working, help attract better support for their services, and strengthen discussions with decision-makers.

The meeting also featured the youth presentations from the students from Geraldton Senior High School, Champion Bay Senior High School, Nagle Catholic College, Geraldton Christian College, and Carnarvon Community College.



Photo by Cherelle Danker

On Day 1 updates from YMAC on the status of Aboriginal cultural heritage laws were also presented alongside Mr Thomas Mayo talking about the Voice to Parliament to the community.

Representing the WA Premier was Parliamentary Secretary Yaz Murabakai MLA who responded to the Call-to-Action Statement and recognised how important this meeting was, where people get to engage with government directly, Mr Murabakai was asked if he could explain why non-contentious, simple amendments to the *Aboriginal Heritage Act 1972* such as increased penalties and a modern definition of cultural heritage can't be used in the recycled 51-year-old laws. Mr Murabakai took the question on notice.

Although discussions with Parliamentarians and invited guests took up most of day two, attendees were also treated to a performance by students from Geraldton Primary School singing in Wajarri language and a dance performance by students from Geraldton Senior High School also enjoyed a night of bush tucker and evening entertainment from local performers.

The 2023 Call to Action Statement can be viewed on the YMAC website by visiting www.ymac.org.au



Scan QR code to view the Yamatji on Country image gallery



Photo by Cherelle Danker

Yamatji on Country - our youth shine again



Photo by Tash Gillespie

The Yamatji Marlpa Aboriginal Corporation (YMAC) partnered with the Aboriginal Health Council of WA (AHCWA) to deliver the youth component of the 2023 Yamatji on Country meeting at the Bundiyarra Aboriginal Community Aboriginal Corporation on 20 and 21 September 2023.

Students from Geraldton Senior High School, Champion Bay Senior High School, Nagle Catholic College, Geraldton Christian College, and Carnarvon Community College attended two workshops held in August and September.

The first workshop involved twenty-one students participating in a Young Leaders Program workshop run by AHCWA. The workshop gave the young people an opportunity to not only learn about health topics, but to gain the confidence to present to their peers.

A second workshop involved twenty-seven young people. Thirteen emerging young leaders' that had participated in the first workshop presented activities to the rest of the group on what they had learnt from the Young Leaders Program, displaying their new leadership skills and knowledge to the larger group.

The young people then discussed what issues and concerns were affecting them today in their communities.

They identified five topics that they feel needs to have recognised improvement and solutions if there is to be real change in their community, they are: Youth Substance Use, Racism, Lack of Culture, Intergenerational Trauma leads to Violence and Home environment. They also developed key messages for each of these topics.

On both days of Yamatji on Country, the students presented their issues and concerns. They spoke with passion and confidence on what is needed to help First Nations young people and their families thrive.

To effectively share their key messages beyond Yamatji on Country, the young people created eight artworks during the workshops that will become the backdrops of age-appropriate resources posters and social media tiles created by AHCWA, as well as short video resources. When completed, the resources created will be distributed to schools throughout the Yamatji region for sharing with peers.



Photo by Tash Gillespie

At the workshops, the students also came up with a list of programs and ideas that they would like to see happen in their region, both in school and their communities. One of their main items included a youth forum or camp, where they can learn about lots of different topics including language and culture. Ideally, they would like to see this forum happen on Country, at a camp. This would give them the opportunity to learn more about different topics to do with young people, while being grounded and connected to Country.

YMAC are very proud to have successfully collaborated with AHCWA to create the common goal of providing our young leaders with a platform to speak and to have their voices heard. We would also like to acknowledge the outstanding commitment and passion shown by the young people throughout the workshops and presentations. They displayed leadership and maturity beyond their years. We also thank and highly commend the teachers and Aboriginal Islander Education Officers (AIEO's), who contributed their time to attend and assist the young people in this project.

The 2023 Youth Statement can be viewed on the YMAC website by visiting www.ymac.org.au



Photo by Tash Gillespie



Photo by Tash Gillespie

YMAC was very pleased to learn that three young people from the youth component of Yamatji on Country were recently selected to attend the National Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation (NACCHO) Youth Conference in Perth in October. The three young people that were chosen were Christian Wright and Charlize McDonald from Geraldton Senior High School and Trevor Farrell from Nagle Catholic College.

Not only did they have the opportunity to attend the NACCHO youth conference, but they also participated in a joint presentation with AHCWA and YMAC on the youth component of Yamatji on Country.

While Christian was unable to attend, both Charlize and Trevor did an outstanding job presenting on the Young Leaders Program and workshops they participated in, in the lead up to Yamatji on Country as well as highlighting the resources that are going to be and have already been developed.

We are very proud of Charlize and Trevor for not only presenting in front of young leaders in the Aboriginal health sector from all over Australia, but also as they take on the responsibility as future young leaders and role models in their community.

State Government repeals

After only weeks of it coming into effect, on Tuesday, 8 August 2023, the State Government announced it will repeal the *Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Act 2021* (ACHA) and reintroduce the *Aboriginal Heritage Act 1972* (AHA) with some amendments.

On Wednesday, 9 August 2023, WA Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Dr Tony Buti MLA, tabled the *Aboriginal Heritage Legislation Amendment and Repeal Bill 2023* (WA) in Parliament.

On Thursday, 17 August 2023, Minister Buti held an online briefing, where he presented on the few amendments being introduced to the AHA. He also advised that consultations on the associated regulations and guidelines to support the “new” legislation would be undertaken.

On Tuesday, 22 August 2023, YMAC representatives participated in a further meeting with Minister Buti, along with WA Premier, Roger Cook MLA. Also in attendance were representatives from the National Native Title Council (NNTC) and a number of other staff and directors from various WA Native Title Representative Bodies/Service Providers and Prescribed Bodies Corporate. At this meeting, the Premier agreed further amendments to the *Aboriginal Heritage Legislation Amendment and Repeal Bill 2023* (WA) would be considered if provided, and he further tasked Minister Buti to continue discussions on such.

Following this meeting, a number of these same Aboriginal organisations, including YMAC, contributed to a submission, presented on our behalf by the NNTC (of which YMAC is a member) – which was sent to both the Premier and Minister on 23 August 2023.

This submission outlined basic amendments needed to modernise the 1972 act, including reasonable requests to:

- broaden the definition of Aboriginal cultural heritage to recognise social, spiritual, historical, scientific, or aesthetic perspectives (rather than just “sacred, ritual and ceremonial sites”),
- increase the penalties for disturbing, damaging, or destroying Aboriginal cultural heritage sites (at least in parity to built heritage), and
- increase the time limit for prosecutions for damaging sites from twelve months to six years or two years from when the damage was discovered

It was noted that these issues must be dealt with in the legislation being considered, as what was proposed was massively inadequate.

Since the meeting with the Premier and Minister, a smaller working group of these same Aboriginal organisations (nominated to represent collective interests) again met with Minister Buti.

new heritage laws

Following this meeting, YMAC was advised that the Minister clearly indicated no intention of considering further amendments and provided no meaningful or satisfactory explanation as to why.

Further, while discussing the repeal in Parliament, Minister Buti indicated his intention to produce the associated regulations for the Opposition's benefit prior to debate resuming on the legislation in the week commencing Monday, 18 September 2023 – with no genuine consultation having taken place with Aboriginal people.

On Wednesday, 13 September 2023, the Minister provided a written response via NNTC explaining further amendments will not be considered due to time constraints – which are, along with making any amendments, wholly at the discretion of the State Government given their dominating powers in both Houses of Parliament.

On this same day, the WA Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage (DPLH) distributed a suite of draft regulations that had already been developed, advising feedback on them was due by Wednesday, 27 September 2023. This communication also included a draft 'Consultation Policy' and 'Section 18 Guidelines' (with feedback due on these two documents by Wednesday 11 October 2023).

Despite not willing to consider the amendments proposed by the Aboriginal organisations, the Government also circulated a set of amendments that it was planned to introduce to the Bill, which included an amendment for the benefit of landowners, namely a new Section 18B that allowed consents to damage sites to be transferred to new owners of the land without any input or consultation with Aboriginal People.

On Thursday, 21 September 2023, the bill passed through the Legislative Assembly and moved to the Legislative Council for consideration. Amendments moved in the Legislative Council by Dr Brad Pettitt for the Greens were rejected and the bill passed through the Council on 17 October 2023.

On Tuesday, 24 October, the bill was assented to by the Governor, meaning it has now become an act.

It is anticipated final versions of the associated regulations, guidelines and other policy documents will be made available on the DPLH website soon.

YMAC's level of disappointment and frustration at these series of events cannot be overstated.

For more information about YMAC's related advocacy activities, including our written submissions and media releases, please visit www.ymac.org.au

YMAC remains committed to pursuing better heritage protection outcomes than what are afforded under the recycled 1972 act.

We will do so by focusing on best practice agreement-making, as well as educating proponents and the broader community on the significance and value of cultural sites (e.g. by producing publications and other resources to be hosted on our website and utilised in our heritage work).

YMAC takes Yes campaign on the road

Over August and September, the Yamatji Marlpa Aboriginal Corporation journeyed throughout the Yamatji and Pilbara regions for our Voice Referendum Roadshow, going to communities to host information sessions, and help answer questions people had about the Voice to Parliament referendum.

Hosting fifteen events in ten towns and cities, we were joined by a diverse group of Traditional Owners, community leaders, politicians, and legal experts for panel discussions and yarning circles to provide information on how the referendum came about, the referendum question, what a successful 'Yes' vote would mean for First Nations peoples, what the Voice would and would not do, and what would happen after a successful yes vote.

With hundreds of people joining us across the Roadshow, YMAC was glad to see so many members of the community turn up to hear from panellists and have their questions answered ahead of the October vote.

YMAC Deputy Co-Chairperson, Pilbara Region Mrs. Doris Eaton joined some of the discussions throughout the Pilbara, explaining why YMAC was holding the Referendum Roadshow.

"We know a lot of people have said they just don't know enough about it to decide on how to vote. The roadshows will provide a forum to learn more, ask questions, and have a yarn with our speakers so they feel confident writing YES on Referendum Day," Mrs Eaton said.

The Referendum Roadshows were an opportunity for everyone living in the Yamatji and Pilbara regions to understand the positive difference the Voice could make for Australia and open to all members of the community to attend.

While YMAC is saddened and disappointed with the outcome of the 14 October Referendum, we will not withdraw from the fight for constitutional recognition. We will also continue to promote the significance of Australia's First Nations peoples and their heritage; and the need for ensuring local voices are heard, and historical truths told.

YMAC consultations inform new Native Title Forums



To assist with the implementation of YMAC's 2021-2025 Strategic Plan, YMAC undertook a 'Core Stakeholder Engagement Consultation' project – which later informed our delivery of our first ever Native Title Forums held in June 2023.

The purpose of the consultation was to:

- seek guidance from core stakeholders regarding their collective priorities and aspirations,
- inform the future direction/s of and services offered by the organisation, and
- provide focus relating to what additional advocacy, information sharing, and capacity building work YMAC should be progressing.

The project consisted of YMAC hosting two regional roundtables: one for the Yamatji region in November 2022, and another for the Marlpa region in February 2023.

The information gathered through this process is critical for YMAC to take into account and make practical changes to improve how we can help better inform people and corporations in our regions and assist them in other ways by targeting our efforts and resources where they are most needed.

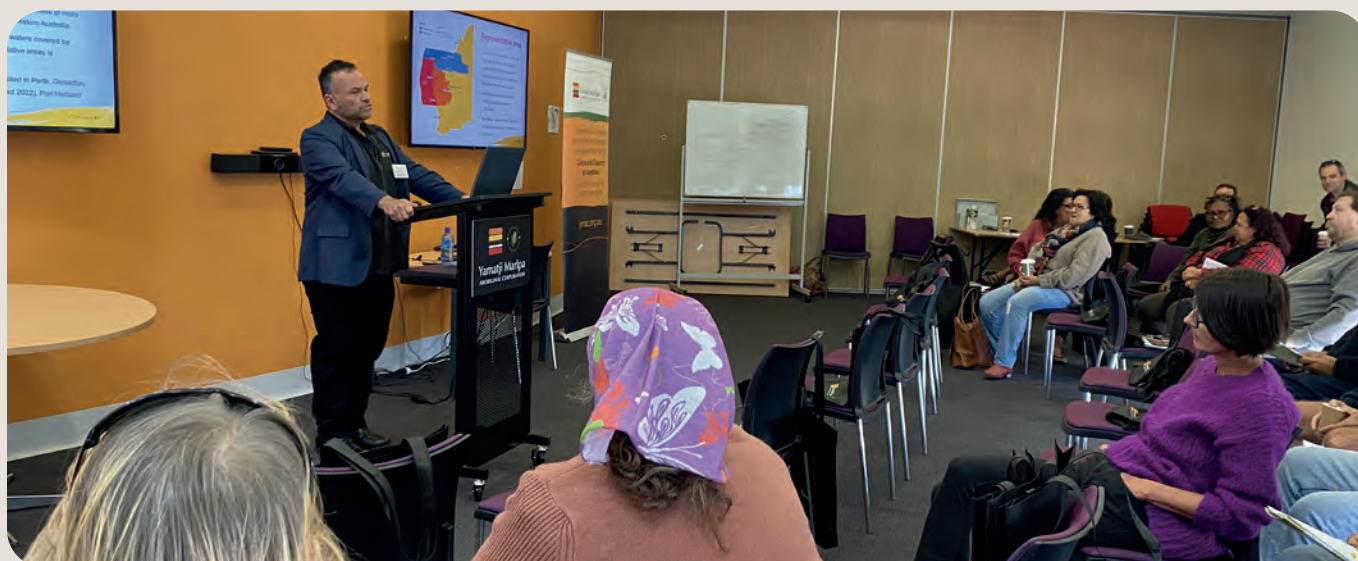
Because of the consultation project, YMAC held two educational events, referred to as YMAC "Native Title Forums": one in Carnarvon and another in Port Hedland.

YMAC hosted these forums to create opportunity for participants to learn more about and discuss native title processes, as well as key issues facing Traditional Owners in our Yamatji and Marlpa regions.

A key result from the forums was the development of a set of new and updated YMAC fact and information sheets – now available on our website.

These resources cover a range of topics and issues, including on various law reforms, native title compensation, renewable energy projects, and much more.

To learn more about the consultation project, the Native Title Forums, and/or to view the new suite of resources, visit ymac.org.au



Photos by Jane Mitchell

Celebrating our Elders – NAIDOC Week

Staff from our Geraldton office travelled to Gwoonwardu (Carnarvon) during NAIDOC Week to attend the town's NAIDOC events and host an event.

The highlight of the week for YMAC staff was the Elders morning tea held at our Carnarvon office. The event was well attended and held significance as we paid respect to our Elders by spoiling them with a delicious morning tea and raffle prizes.

The theme for this year was 'For Our Elders' - because across every generation, our Elders have played, and will continue to play, an important role and hold a prominent place in our communities and families.

They are cultural knowledge holders, trailblazers, nurturers, advocates, teachers, survivors, leaders, hard workers, and our loved ones.

Carnarvon had a full program of events including a NAIDOC Baptism, Opening Ceremony March, Elders luncheon and yarning, Family Funday, an On-Country Day trip to the Blowholes, and finished with a Closing Ceremony.

YMAC also ran a stall at the Family Funday that provided a chance for community engagement through activities including badge-making, a football kicking competition for the boys and girls, and a free raffle.



Photos by YMAC Geraldton staff



Wattandee Elders share Dreaming stories

In September, YMAC was proud to support the Wattandee Littlewell Aboriginal Corporation (WLAC) '2023 Elders Connect Day'.

Despite some very poor weather, the event was well attended, and discussions were both positive and productive. Also of special significance were the cultural performances, cleansing ceremony, and sharing of stories of culture, Country, creation, and connection.

WLAC Chairperson Tristan Mongoo said their second Elders Connect day proved the need for cultural events which bring our Elders together to share hidden stories and was looking forward to a bigger Elders Connect Day in 2024.

"Our Elders are a wealth of knowledge and culture for our Wattandee Community. They do this by handing down stories from generation to generation. By knowing our history and Dreaming stories, this will help protect our Wattandee Culture and Dreaming stories."

YMAC CEO Simon Hawkins said YMAC is pleased to be able to help and participate in such constructive community-driven events.

"Local initiatives like the Elders Connect Day provide great opportunity for people to come together to celebrate their culture and achievements and work together to develop ideas for future goals and successes. It's very encouraging and admirable."



Photos by Tash Gillespie

YMAC interns get meaningful work experience



Riley at the YMAC Perth office - Photo by Cherelle Danker

This year YMAC was thrilled to partner with Curtin University to offer a brand-new Anthropology internship to a third-year student. Acceptance into the program required an Expression of Interest (EOI) addressing why the student wanted to gain experience with YMAC in the native title sector.

.....

We spoke to selected intern Riley Brown about her experience. Upon completing her Anthropology degree, Riley worried her career prospects would be limited but her time at YMAC revealed more opportunities for Anthropologists in Australia.

"The best experience of the internship was being given the chance to go on Country with two Anthropologists from the Research team, I got to venture beyond the classroom and learn Applied Anthropology through firsthand experiences," Riley said.

Riley expected her intern tasks would be scanning, printing, organising and – every now and then – interaction with the busy Anthropologists.

To her surprise she got involved in various projects, including assisting the team by taking their field notes, completing transcriptions, learning map creation as well as attending training sessions and workshops. On her last day, they even had an excursion to the State Records Office.

.....

"I've already recommended YMAC's internship to several students at Curtin and so far, every one of them have asked me what they have to do to get selected," she said.



Riley throwing earth into Murchison River on Wajarri Country – Photo by Luke May



Charlotte with Nyangumarta rangers – Photo by Nyangumarta rangers

YMAC's Land and Sea Management Team in partnership with Nyangumarta Rangers also hosted an intern this year, through the Aurora Education Foundation.

Charlotte Gotze was keen on field experience as an Environmental Science student (University of Queensland). She thoroughly enjoyed her time at YMAC but what stood out the most was working with Nyangumarta rangers monitoring the black-flanked rock-wallaby. She got a chance, while working on Country, to visit unexplored rocky outcrops along the Nyangumarta highway.

"I really enjoyed learning and working with the rangers and was lucky enough to see four *Warru* (black-flanked rock-wallabies) which was so amazing – they are rare to see as a threatened species," Charlotte shared.

"It was a great opportunity working with the rangers and their community to protect and conserve land while connecting with traditional Aboriginal culture. When I complete my degree in the next two years, I plan to get a job in the field as a ranger would be a good start.

A key learning for Charlotte from her time at YMAC is the importance of consulting Elders before starting environmental and conservation projects on Country. She also gained valuable insight on how traditional knowledge and science both have an important role in conserving Country.



Charlotte on a night expedition in the Pilbara – Photo by Nyangumarta rangers

Nyangumarta's women rangers create national connections

In March 2023 women from the Nyangumarta Rangers, along with the Ngurrara Rangers and the Wiluna Martu Rangers were invited to participate in the first ever Desert Women Rangers Leadership Trip. This was a week-long opportunity for the six rangers to develop their leadership skills, connect with Victorian-based rangers and enjoy the surrounds of south-eastern Australia.

After arriving and navigating the streets of Melbourne, the team made their first stop in Wurundjeri Country where they visited the Narrap Ranger Team, a group based out of Healesville that manage an area that includes the city of Melbourne. The Narrap Rangers were shocked to hear just how much land the teams manage and the amount of burning they can do, while the WA rangers heard about the challenges that come with managing Country that includes a major city.

Over the next few days, the team travelled down the Mornington Peninsula where they presented to over 450 students at Mornington Secondary College, before meeting with Parks Victoria's Women in Operations team who had travelled from across the state to meet and hear from the rangers about their roles and how they look after desert Country.

The next stop was Phillip Island, where they were welcomed by Uncle Anthony Egan, a Bunurong elder.

After the Welcome to Country ceremony, the rangers joined a yarning circle with Uncle Anthony and the team at the Koala Conservation Reserve at Phillip Island Nature Parks, where they talked about their roles as rangers, and how each group manages Country in such different landscapes.

The final stop was Koori Place in Federation Square. Here, the rangers met and talked with a formal audience, including Lord Mayor of Melbourne – Sally Capp. They spoke to the audience about the importance of the leadership trip, and why it was a key focus for desert women.

In between the formalities the team enjoyed a first-class experience, watching the Fremantle – St Kilda footy match from a corporate box. They met the President and Vice President of the Fremantle Football Club, Dockers defender Brandon Walker and St Kilda Women's captain Hannah Priest, before heading down to the Freo rooms after the game to meet a few more players.

All up, the rangers had a productive experience formally presenting to six audiences, participating in three yarning circles, and attending over five informal networking events, they built on their public speaking and leadership skills whilst raising the profile and voice of women rangers for not only the desert, but the ranger groups and wider community all over Australia.



Photos by Indigenous Desert Alliance

Dingo Declaration a first in Australia

In September 2023, the Girringun Aboriginal Corporation held the National Inaugural First Nations Dingo Forum, inviting First Nations people and organisations from all over the country to share their stories about Dingoes, their cultural and spiritual importance, and the ways that different groups manage and monitor Dingoes on their Country.

At the end of the conference, the National First Nations' Dingo Declaration was issued, a document demanding better understanding and protection of the Dingo and advocating for change in the model of management: caring for Dingoes on Country.

Nyangumarta Ranger Jacob Loughridge, along with two other NWAC Rangers and a cultural advisor attended the forum in Cairns to share their research and present to the forum on how they manage Dingoes on the Nyangumarta Indigenous Protected Area (IPA).

"We had great conversations and connected nationally with Ranger teams and other organisations. We learnt lessons on how to approach pastoralists to discuss changing attitudes towards Dingoes," Jacob said.

"We also learnt about how the First Nations groups in the US came together to create a declaration for the Grizzly and Grey Wolf which led to changes in government legislation federally; an angle they used was to change the narrative away from ecology and science to include the spiritual and cultural significance of the Dingo. Each group from around Australia had dreaming stories about the Dingo."

In addition to Cairns, the NWAC team visited Broome, Perth, Sydney, Nhulunbuy, Darwin and Kununurra, and went on Country with the Girringun Rangers to see waterfalls and wildlife.

Jacob was very positive about their experience at the forum.

"It was a really well put together forum with talks, then time for workshop writing at each table which then got tabled and formed the creation of the declaration," Jacob said.



"This is the beginning of a movement altering the narrative about Dingo management and their place in this nation. The Declaration was signed by Edward Badal, Augustine Badal and Elliot Hunter as Nyangumarta people, not necessarily on behalf of NWAC or the Rangers, and we are looking at another forum next year as well as establishing a national network."



Photos by Nyangumarta Rangers

Department of Justice Open Days

The Aboriginal Mediation Service has been holding open days in the Yamatji and Pilbara regions throughout 2023 and have more planned for early 2024. The Aboriginal Justice Open Days are a “one-stop shop” for people to access services that can help with identification, drivers’ licences, and fines.

For example, The Department of Transport at the open days can help with applying for a driver’s license, photo ID, and driving tests, and The Registry of Births, Deaths and Marriages.

Staff will be able to assist with registering your children’s births, accessing birth, death and marriage certificates, and name changes.

Local community services are also attending each open day to help people with a variety of issues and provide advice which will vary in each region.

The Aboriginal Justice Open days will be in the Yamatji and Pilbara regions from November 2023 to March 2024. Email opendays@justice.wa.gov.au for more information.



Government of **Western Australia**
Department of Justice



ABORIGINAL JUSTICE OPEN DAYS



Here to Help You

Do you need to obtain ID? Licence Check?
Register a birth, death or marriage? Pay fines?
Need legal advice (Extraordinary license)?

Look out for our team at the following locations!

Meekatharra / Mt Magnet 20 to 21 November 2023
Mullewa / Geraldton 22 to 24 November 2023
Carnarvon 11 to 14 December 2023
Mullewa / Cue / Meekatharra 19 to 23 February 2024
Tom Price / Paraburdoo / Newman 11 to 15 March 2024
Ieramagadu 25 to 28 March 2024
Jigalong / Parngurr 20 to 24 May 2024

opendays@justice.wa.gov.au
FREE CALL 1800 671 866

YMAC Annual Regional Meetings 2023

Yamatji Marlpa Aboriginal Corporation's (YMAC) 2023 Pilbara and Yamatji Annual Regional Meetings will be held in November 2023.

2023 Yamatji ARM

SATURDAY 25 NOVEMBER 2023

Gybes - 214 Marine Terrace

Geraldton WA 6530

9.00am (for a STRICT 9.30am start) until 1.30pm

Call the Geraldton office on (08) 9965 6222 for catering purposes

The meetings are a great opportunity to meet up with other members, hear about the work we have done over the past 12 months and have your say about important issues.

2023 Pilbara ARM

THURSDAY 16 NOVEMBER 2023

Walkabout Hotel - 944 Great Northern Hwy

Port Hedland WA 6721

9.00am (for a STRICT 9.30am start) until 1.30pm

Call the Hedland office on (08) 9160 3800 for catering purposes

If you cannot attend, YMAC encourages proxies to attend instead. For more information on proxies, please refer to the Annual Regional Meeting notice mailed to all Pilbara and Yamatji members.

Lunch will be catered || YMAC is not funded to pay travel allowance



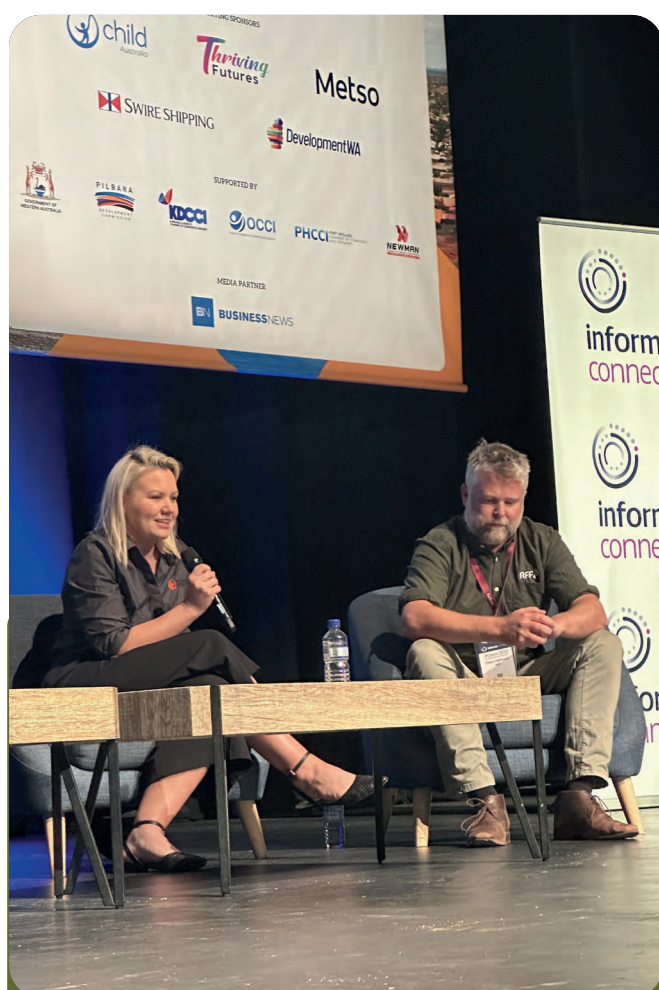
Yamatji Marlpa
ABORIGINAL CORPORATION



ymac.org.au
ICN 2001

Why renewables must partner with First Nations people

Pilbara Solar's Managing Director Kylie Chalmers presented at the Pilbara 2023 summit on 9 October to attendees (from various industries, government agencies, Prescribed Bodies Corporates and energy companies) where she shared the unique position Pilbara Solar is in to support industry to develop renewables and to support First Nations people to lead renewable projects on Country, should they wish.



Kylie Chalmers and Owen Hightower from RFF in Q&A - photo by Cherelle Danker

For full article visit pilbarasolar.com.au or scan the QR code



Kylie highlighted the numerous benefits First Nations communities receive when they get the opportunity to lead renewable projects.

"The wealth generated stays local and gives back to the communities creating more jobs, training, and more business opportunities," Kylie said.

The best land in Australia for large projects is mostly native title land. Rapid large-scale rollout of projects, which are also socially sustainable, can only be achieved in partnership with First Nations people so it is in everyone's best interest to enable First Nations partnerships."

At the summit, Kylie spoke of the 10MW Junja Solar Farm, which is a demonstration project that supports a new industry standard that is Aboriginal-led with commercial partnerships.

With several projects in the pipeline supporting First Nations communities and industries working together, Pilbara Solar is leading the way in the development of renewables partnerships that are socially, economically and environmentally sustainable.

The Pilbara Solar team has collectively participated in developing over 5GW of renewable energy projects and has begun development work with major companies that also want green energy with First Nations involvement. Pilbara Solar is fifty percent owned by Yamatji Marlpa Aboriginal Corporation (YMAC) and is Supply Nation registered. Visit pilbarasolar.com.au and follow on Facebook and LinkedIn.



Photo by IBN Group

Pilbara organisations recognised for excellence

A big congratulations to Julyardi Aboriginal Corporation and IBN Corporation for their recognition in business excellence at the Business Excellence Awards 2023 run by Port Hedland Chamber of Commerce.

- IBN Corporation – Port Hedland Fortescue Best Aboriginal Business Award
- Julyardi Aboriginal Corporation – Gateway Village Best Community Organisation Award



Photo by Julyardi Aboriginal Corporation

Director Registrations with ORIC

Many people in YMAC's region would be aware that the office of the Registrar of Aboriginal Corporations (ORIC) have introduced the need for all Directors of Aboriginal Corporations operating under the CATSI Act to have a Director ID.

To register for a Director ID visit www.oric.gov.au

Look for 'RUN A CORPORATION' in the website menu at the top of the page and follow instructions.

Country, Culture, People, Future

About us

YMAC News is produced by Yamatji Marlpa Aboriginal Corporation.

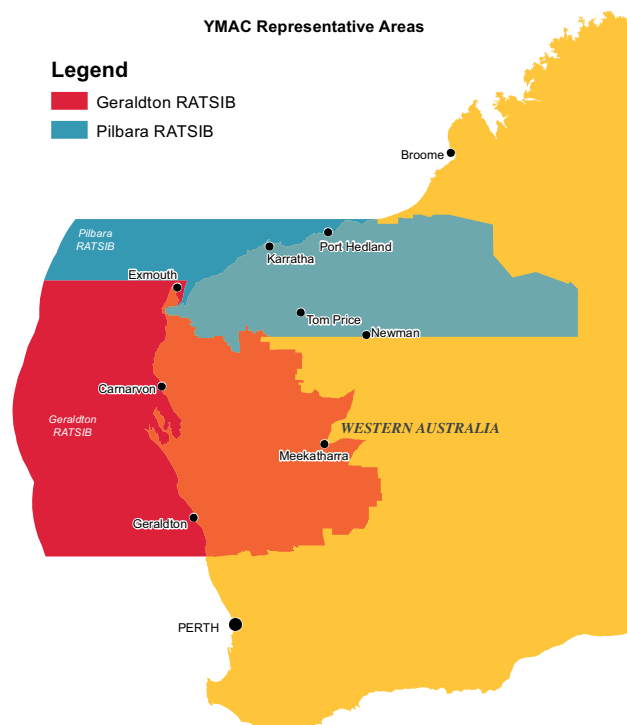
We are an Aboriginal Corporation and the Native Title Representative Body for the Mid West, Murchison, Gascoyne and Pilbara regions of Western Australia.

YMAC Vision 2021–2025:

Through connection to Country, Aboriginal people pursue and achieve economic, social and cultural goals and aspirations with strength and confidence.

Our mission:

For current and future generations, we work with and for Australian Aboriginal people to protect rights and manage Country and opportunities.



Contact us: Send your questions, ideas, letters and photos to editor@ymac.org.au

Freecall: 1800 270 709

Geraldton

171 Marine Terrace
Geraldton WA 6530
PO Box 2119
Geraldton WA 6531
T: 08 9965 6222

Perth

Level 8,
12 The Esplanade
Perth WA 6000
PO Box 3072
249 Hay Street
East Perth WA 6892
T: 08 9268 7000

Hedland

8 Manganese Street
Wedgefield WA 6721
PO Box 2252
South Hedland
WA 6722
T: 08 9160 3800

Broome

Shop 2/24
Clementson Street
Broome WA 6725
PO Box 2059
Broome WA 6725

Carnarvon

4 Francis Street
Carnarvon WA 6701
PO Box 1424
Carnarvon WA 6701
T: 08 9965 6222
(open Tues, Wed, Thurs)

Subscribe: Join YMAC's mailing list to receive your newsletter direct to your inbox. Go to ymac.org.au and click on 'Media and Publications', then 'Subscribe' on the pulldown menu. You can also scan the QR code.

This publication is available in alternative formats for people with disability upon request. **An online version can be downloaded from ymac.org.au**

