

## Danube Day 2014 in Austria

### Celebrating 10 years of Danube Day at Vienna's Museumsquartier

Vienna's Museumsquartier was transformed into a Danube extravaganza to mark 10 years since the first celebration in 2004. Outside the capital, children from across Austria shared camaraderie and inspiration in the Danube Challenge and Danube Art Master contests.

The Danube took over **Vienna's Museumsquartier** with games, theatre, hands-on-science, street performers, crafts and competitions. Hundreds of children met with fellow Danubians - of the amphibian, reptilian and fish variety - and zoomed around each activity to win a Danube Day eco rally. Speed was the aim for many visitors: the MQ's water pools were put to great use in remote control boat races and children could sit at the helm of a Water Police speed boat. Organised by state and NGO organisations, the event was opened by Doris Bures, Minister for Transport; Ulli Sima, Vienna Environment Councillor; and Reinhard Mang, General Secretary of the Ministry for Agriculture, Forestry, Environment and Water Management.

**"The Danube shapes life throughout its basin. We use the Danube as a recreation area; ...for environmentally friendly hydropower; and... as one of Europe's most important waterways... We must protect this unique Danube ecosystem and preserve it for future generations."**

Doris Bures, Minister of Transport, Innovation and Technology

A mysterious death, international intrigue and dark deeds were afoot in the run-up to Danube Day when fans joined best-selling author, **Andreas Pittler**, for a reading from his novel 'The Curse of Sirte'. The discovery of a body in the Danube forms the basis of his new spy thriller and the event was made all the more thrilling by taking place on a night-time cruise.

In June, teenagers from across Austria took the **Danube Challenge**. The 8th national youth competition challenged them with crazy tests of skill and knowledge. It was extended this year to 5 rivers: Lafnitztal in Styria; Danube in Vienna/Lower Austria; Inn in Tyrol; Traun in Upper Austria and the Schwarzach in the East Tyrolean High Tatras. Sunken treasure was the prize but only after they'd investigated near-bank species; measured river flow and found a way to raise their prize from the river bed! Generation Blue, the Lebensministerium youth water platform, and Coca-Cola Hellenic Austria have organized the event since 2007. See [www.generationblue.at](http://www.generationblue.at).

**"We got to know the critters of the River Lafnitz, which we didn't know anything about before... and of course it's much better than a normal school day."** Lafnitz pupils, Julian Neubauer & Bernadette Koderholt.

Artistic talent, rather than treasure, was unearthed in the 2014 **Danube Art Master schools competition**, with the winning artwork featuring a boy covered to his neck in sand. Created by Sophie Mae Tabassi of Forest Owls Nature Club, their "Beach of Arts" scooped top prize against entries from 11 schools. The judging panel comprised specialists from the Umweltdachverband, Lebensministerium and Belvedere. The contest is part of a basin-wide GWP/ICPDR initiative that encourages children to think about their rivers and create a piece of art from found riverside materials. Check out the Austrian entries at [belvedere.at](http://belvedere.at) and see the wealth of creativity inspired by rivers on Facebook and Flickr.

### **Danube Day Partners**

Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, Environment and Water Management (*Lebensministerium*); City of Vienna; via donau; Ministry of Transport, Innovation and Technology; Generation Blue; Belvedere Museum; Donau-Auen National Park; Danubeparks; WWF; Birdlife; *Fischereiverband Österreich* (Austrian Fisheries Association); Coca-Cola Hellenic Austria; Danube Sturgeon Task Force; MA 45 Vienna City Water Management Department; MA 31 Vienna City Water Department; WGD Upper Austria Tourism Office; Vienna Water Police; Vienna Harbour; *Der Mann*; DDSG Blue Danube; *Echo Media Verlag*; and AQA (Aqua Quality Austria).

### **Danube Day 2014: Get active for a living Danube!**

For general information about the 14-country Danube Day celebrations, view [www.danubeday.org](http://www.danubeday.org) or email the International Commission for the Protection of the Danube River (ICPDR): [benedikt.mandl@unvienna.org](mailto:benedikt.mandl@unvienna.org).