



North Central
Waterwatch



catchment care

Autumn Edition
May 2012

Hello Waterwatch Monitors,

Welcome to another edition of Catchment Care. Some news for those who haven't heard, my team - Communications and Community Engagement Programs - has moved into a new office in Bendigo. We are located in Bridge Street, across the road from Coliban Water's offices. Feel free to pop by and say hello!

Waterwatch has been very busy participating and hosting many events over the past three months. In March, I delivered the 'water science activity' to our River Detectives schools, hosted two 'picnic by the river' events, attended a girl guides session to talk about 'stormwater and its impacts on macroinvertebrate communities', took part in the Peppergreen Farm Festival, and also recruited two new monitors.

In April, Waterwatch was lucky to have Chris Ewart join the team for two weeks. Chris is a TAFE student studying Certificate IV Conservation and Land Management. Chris gained valuable experience in a wide range of North Central CMA activities. April also saw the first of three North Central Waterwatch Water Science Forums. This year it was a Focus on Frogs. The day was a huge success!

No rest for the wicked, May saw a move into the new office, many site visits engaging monitors across the North Central CMA region in Saltwatch activities and sparking the interest back up in some of our longer-term monitors who have not monitored for some time, mostly due to lack of water. Now back on board and armed with equipment and some refresher training they are ready and passionate to get back into it! But, it didn't end there, in May each year River Detective schools get wet collecting water samples and raising awareness about salinity issues across the state!

I hope you enjoy the read

Cass Davis,

Regional Waterwatch Coordinator

Thank you to the following organisations who Sponsor the Waterwatch Program in 2012



Rochester Campaspe
Water Services Committee



Department of
Sustainability and Environment



NORTH CENTRAL
Catchment Management Authority
Connecting Rivers, Landscapes, People



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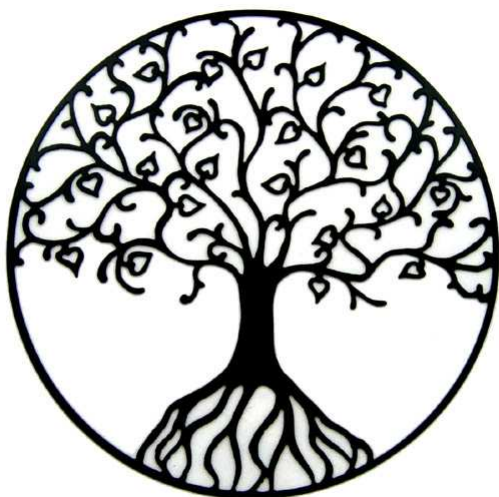
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Winter Waterwatch Activities

JUNE/JULY	
Ongoing	Project planning and reporting for Waterwatch
SEPTEMBER	
2 nd – 8 th	Quality Assurance and Quality Control (TBC)
10 th -21 st	River Detectives – Macroinvertebrate activities

Other Special Events

JUNE	
5 th	World Environment Day
15 th	Global Wind Day
20 th	Victorian Carbon Farming Roadshow (North Central CMA)
29 th	Red Nose Day
JULY	
1 st - 8 th	NAIDOC Week (North Central CMA)
11 th	World Population Day
27 th	Schools Tree Day
29 th	National Tree Day
AUGUST	
5 th	Jeans for Genes Day
9 th	International Day for World Indigenous People
12 th	International Youth Day
22 nd – 28 th	Keep Australia Beautiful Week





Landcare Covers More Ground

Woodend residents honour their mums on Mother's Day with an environmental heart-warming gift.

The inaugural Woodend **Trees for Mum** event took place on Mother's Day, Sunday, 13 May 2012 with over 150 people planting 120 native trees and grasses at Five Mile Creek Reserve in Woodend. The event was a huge success and even the forecast rain held off until the last tree was planted.

"It was a wonderful morning out. What a great way to celebrate Mother's Day," said Liesl Frankenberg.

The **Trees for Mum** initiative was started by friends and colleagues, Deena Raphael and Lauren Adlam, in Sydney in 2002. Both had lost their mothers to cancer and this was their way of paying tribute to their special mums. In the years since inception, interest has grown and **Trees for Mum** events have been run in many states across Australia with more than 20,000 people planting trees as tributes to mothers who have passed away or to celebrate those who are still alive.



First mother's day for a few Woodend Mums. Photo: Courtesy of Angela Van Dam

Woodend and Mildura were the only two towns in Victoria to host events for 2012.

"We gave so many people the opportunity to create a living legacy on Mother's Day and made the day less painful for many as they remembered their dear mothers," said Angela Van Dam Event Coordinator.

"Thanks to the team at Woodend **Trees for Mum**. We had a special moment planting trees for two very special mums (and now grandmas!), who are no longer with us," said Sarah Adair.

Myron Lysenko commented on Facebook "A heart-warming event. Thanks for organising it."

This event was only made possible thanks to generous funding from the North Central Catchment Management

Authority and the enthusiastic support of the Woodend Landcare crew.

Given the extremely positive feedback from the local community, the Landcare team is already planning for **Trees for Mum** 2013.

If you are interested in attending next year please email Angela Van Dam at TreesForMumWoodend@gmail.com or join us on Facebook 'Trees for Mum Woodend'.

For further information about Woodend Landcare sign up for their blog at <http://woodendlandcare.wordpress.com/> or call Peter Yates on 5427 3221.

Jodie Odgers

Regional Landcare Coordinator

P: 03 5440 1883

E: jodie.odgers@nccma.vic.gov.au

What happened in March?

Picnic by the River

On 15 and 16 March North Central Waterwatch hosted two 'Picnic by the River' events - one on the Avoca River at Coonooer Bridge and one at the Bridgewater picnic ground. Over 20 community monitors came along to hear stories from Bambi Lees (North Central CMA's Indigenous Facilitator) about indigenous cultural heritage and Tess Grieves (Project Officer) who spoke about fish in the Loddon River. We also enjoyed a delicious lunch and everyone brought their Waterwatch kit so we could ensure all our equipment is up-to-date.

The picnics are a great way to catch up with your Regional Coordinator. They also provide the opportunity for monitors to get together, tell stories about their sites and get to know each other. I strongly encourage you to try and get to the next picnic in 2013!



Avoca River: Monitors listen to Bambi Lees Photo by: Cass Davis



Peppergreen Farm Festival

On 31 March, I attended the Peppergreen Farm Festival with bugs in toe from Bendigo Creek. I partnered with Nicole Howie, Northern Bendigo Landcare Group, to host a site and promote the Landcare and Waterwatch program in our region.

Over 200 people visited the festival, with people entering our site to check out the frogs display and Landcare promotional material. Anyone and everyone who had children stopped to learn all about the water bugs, then headed off with Nicole to take part in stormwater educational activities along Bendigo Creek. The day was fantastic and it's a great way to share knowledge with the community about life in our waterways.



Children stopped by to see what lurks beneath the surface of the Bendigo Creek Photo by: Nicole Howie

What happened in April?

Work Placement Student (BriTAFE)

Over the school holidays Chris Ewart a student from Bendigo regional institute of TAFE, completed two weeks of work placement at the North Central CMA with the Waterwatch team. Chris had the opportunity to research frog monitoring programs and to investigate native fish found in the North Central CMA region. Chris also had the opportunity to get out in the field and test a site at Lockwood for increased reactive phosphorus issues. He also visited the Gunbower Creek to help train a North Central CMA staff member in water quality monitoring and to set up four 'works on waterways' monitoring sites along the creek.

Chris enjoyed his time with the Waterwatch team and we enjoyed having him. I wish Chris all the best in his studies and his future career in Natural Resource Management.

Annual Water Science Forum: A Focus on Frogs



On 28 April, the North Central Waterwatch program hosted its first ever Water Science Forum – with a focus on frogs. The forum coincided with 'International Save the Frogs Day', and helped meet the community's insatiable appetite for knowledge about the natural environment.

Damian Wells, North Central CMA Chief Executive Officer, said "We continue to be thrilled by the thirst the community has for information about the natural environment. Whether it is identifying native grasses, protecting the platypus in local waterways, or enhancing habitat for native fish, the community continues to overwhelmingly support our events."

"This is clearly demonstrated by the fact that participants travelled from across our region to attend the event, with others coming from Eltham and Seymour - outside our region.



Participants enjoying the calls of frogs in the North Central CMA region Photo by: Mal Brown

"Frog populations are important indicators of the health of the environment. To meet the demand for knowledge about frogs we had five expert speakers give entertaining presentations on identifying frogs, their behaviour and tips for creating frog-friendly habitat.

"We filmed the event and edited versions of each presentation will soon be available on our website. The North Central CMA is committed to sharing the available knowledge with our regional community.



The frog forum is the first in a series of annual water science events. Next year's forum will focus on native fish and the 2014 event will focus on water birds.

"The forums are important because they provide the community with the knowledge and skills to better understand their local environment. They also enable and empower people to contribute to improving the health of their catchment," said Mr Wells.

Feedback from the forum indicated that participants were most interested in identifying frogs, how to create frog-friendly habitats and how to monitor and record the distribution of frogs in the region.

What happened in May?

Saltwatch Week



Saltwatch Week 2012 was a huge success, with over 40 results entered for the North Central CMA region!

Saltwatch Week is all about raising awareness of the affects of salt on the environment and learning about ways to limit the impact of salt on the environment.

Thank you to everyone who took part in testing your mystery samples and submitting your results. I have entered the results into the Victorian Saltwatch Database. The results can be viewed at: <http://www.vic.waterwatch.org.au/monitoring-and-data/1010/>

When you open the URL, go to region and select North Central, then click display.



John Knight collects a sample from the Avoca River at Quambatook Photo by Cass Davis

All North Central CMA regional salinity results will be displayed on the screen, you can zoom in and out to view all the data for the North Central CMA region, and even Victoria!

Sites are displayed as follows:

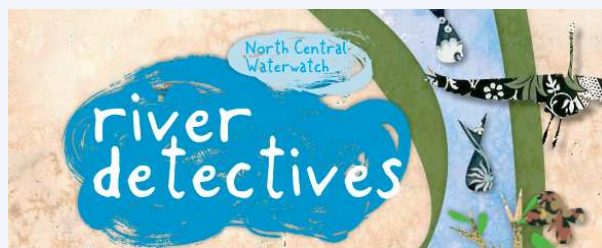
- * 2012-05-24
- * North Central CMA Waterwatchers
- * CMA: North-Central
- * EC: 450.00
- * Flowing Surface Water
- * **LOD240** (you will need look for your site code to identify your site)
- * Coordinates: 55H 248282 5885016

Thank you again. What a huge success!

Catchment Care Features

River Detectives Get Wet

Our River Detectives got wet again in May this year. Over 280 students across the North Central CMA region took part in Saltwatch Week activities! Student brought along samples to be tested for salinity levels from a range of sites, some even brought in tap water! We tested well over 150 samples this year! Unfortunately we could not get everyone's result onto the website, so we have just entered their monitoring sites data.



Students got to watch the Wimmera Mallee 'Fresh and Salty' DVD which explains (by a very funny looking water bug) how salt gets into our waterways, and what we can do to reduce salt.

Students also got to taste a mystery samples to see which was the saltiest, and then we talked about how to identify if an area has lots of salt in it!

We also compared our salinity samples against a salinity chart to identify if our samples could be used for drinking water, livestock and irrigation!

Well done River Detectives, you all passed the taste test!



Water Quality Fact

Turbidity levels in water will vary depending on the physical and chemical activities of the river. Typically, turbidity levels increase from headwaters to lowlands. The old geology and associated high levels of clays in the region's soils result in naturally higher levels of turbidity in our rivers and streams compared to those internationally. Extensive clearing has made Australian soils more prone to erosion, increasing sediment loads and turbidity.

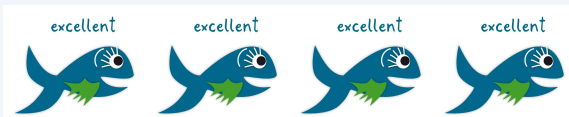
Turbidity levels vary over time. High flows (whether seasonal or episodic) are typically associated with increased inputs of sediment. If storms follow bushfires, even higher sediment loads can be expected.

State Environment Protection Policy Waters of Victoria (SEPP WoV) objectives for turbidity and typical levels in healthy and disturbed areas for cleared hills and coastal plains are <10 -20NTU.

Sourced from:

[http://www.vic.waterwatch.org.au/file/file/Data%20Interpretation%20Manual/Pages%20from%20WW_DI_MANUAL_PART%20A%20\(p_1-18\).pdf](http://www.vic.waterwatch.org.au/file/file/Data%20Interpretation%20Manual/Pages%20from%20WW_DI_MANUAL_PART%20A%20(p_1-18).pdf)

What Fish am I?



I look pale olive-green or brown, almost black, with a diffuse marbled pattern
I can grow up to 350mm long and weigh about 100g

I have a BIG mouth

I prefer good in-stream cover such as woody debris, boulders and aquatic vegetation (this is where I like to lay my eggs)

I am a big feeder on aquatic invertebrates, and sometimes eat other fish

I am listed as a threatened species

I am a R _ _ _ _ B _ _ _ _ _

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North Central CMA Projects

Echuca Weir Modification

Restricting fish movement can effectively stop many native fish species from breeding and repopulating waterways by restricting their ability to access breeding partners and spawning grounds.

Barriers to fish movement result in long-term flow-on effects to the size and sustainability of native fish populations. A healthy native fish population is desirable for both ecological and recreational benefits.

In December 2006, the Arthur Rylah Institute for Environmental Research undertook an assessment of barriers to fish movement along the Loddon and Campaspe rivers. The Echuca Weir was identified as the highest priority for modification or removal in the Campaspe River.

The weir forms a 0.6m barrier and its modification will 'open up' 27 km of river for upstream movement of native migratory fish - including Golden Perch, Silver Perch and Murray Cod from the Murray Campaspe Siphon near Rochester.

The North Central CMA will work in partnership with Goulburn-Murray Water (G-MW) to modify the Echuca Weir on the Campaspe River.



The Echuca Weir on the Campaspe River

For More information contact:

Britt Gregory Project manager
t: (03) 5448 7124
f: (03) 5448 7148
www.nccma.vic.gov.au





Coliban Water News

Coliban Water's new Catchment Officer

Lucy Patterson is our latest addition to the catchment team at Coliban Water. Lucy fills the role of Land Catchment Officer working with Land and Catchment Coordinator Francine Noble who featured in our article in the last edition of Catchment Care.

Based at Lauriston Reservoir Lucy is responsible for weed control on Coliban Water lands throughout the catchment. This entails contractor supervision, site visits, and works prioritisation on a variety of land types. Lucy also liaises with neighbouring rural land owners, businesses and community groups to ensure consistent communication between Coliban Water and stakeholders. With a background in bushland regeneration, and a bachelor of Environments from the University of Melbourne, Lucy is enjoying this opportunity to work with a strong community to regenerate the Coliban Water landscape.

During the second term of the school year Lucy was involved in our education program when we provided the 'Catchment in a Sandpit' activity to seventy five grade one and two students from Our Lady of the Rosary Parish Primary School in Kyneton. Students were also taken on a tour of Lauriston reservoir during the week following the presentation by Lucy and the headworks staff.

Story by Lucy Pintro
 Land Catchment Officer Coliban Water
www.coliban.com.au

Answer: What fish am I?



I am a River Blackfish

Picture courtesy of <http://www2.mdbc.gov.au>

Find the frogs Cass Davis

c g a g f o s n s e o o o g k r r e t o s e
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- Growling Grass Frog
- Perons Tree Frog
- Southern Brown Tree Frog
- Barking marsh Frog
- Bibrons Toadlet
- Common Froglet
- Common Spadefoot Toad
- Pobblebonk
- Plains Froglet
- Giant Banjo Frog
- Spotted marsh Frog
- Victorian Smooth Froglet