



North Central
Waterwatch



catchment care

Summer Edition
February 2012

Regional Update

Hello Everyone,

Welcome to a fresh new year of monitoring! There is lots on the agenda for 2012 with some new projects starting up for the Waterwatch program, stay tuned to find out what's going on in your region!

Over the summer period I took some leave and spent Christmas at home with my family, I hope you all had a wonderful Christmas too. January was busy developing the Waterwatch program project for 2012-13 and with attending meetings in Melbourne to discuss the State Waterwatch program as a whole for the next four years.

The *Frog's Field Guide* is being reprinted and the *River Detectives Manual* is almost complete. I am working on the *Fish Field Guide* and hope to have this completed by November 2012. I have been in touch with the Biodiversity team at Department of Sustainability and Environment (DSE) to discuss the Frog Monitoring program and the best methods available to collect and store data, to use in natural resource management. I am also working on a methodology report for the program and will try to get funding for voice recorders, so more people can get involved when we are ready to launch the new monitoring method.

By now you should have received your 2012 monitoring diary, if you haven't got yours yet, don't worry it will be coming! I hope you find them useful when in the field and enjoy a new way of collecting data from your site, if you need a hand with understanding the diary or the new Data Management System, please give me a call.

I look forward to catching up soon,

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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Look what Google did!!

Ron Cosgrave sent me an email to check out the Google page on 29th February! Thanks Ron, Cass



HAPPY LEAP YEAR EVERYONE!!

Autumn Waterwatch Activities

12 th – 13 th March	River Detectives Get Wet – Water Quality Monitoring
15 th 16 th March	Picnic by the River – Waterwatch monitors catch up
31 st March	Peppergreen Farm Festival – Water Bugs on show
28 th April	Annual Water Science Forum: A Focus on Frog’s - Community Event
13 th – 19 th May	Saltwatch Week – Monitors include their data on the State Saltwatch site to capture data from across the State
14 th – 25 th May	River Detectives – Saltwatch activities

Other Special Events

MARCH	
2 nd	Schools Clean Up Day
4 th	Clean up Australia Day
8 th – 9 th	2012 National Soils Forum
4 th – 10 th	National Sea Week
22 nd	International World Water Day
22 nd	National Close the Gap Day
31 st	Earth Hour
31 st – 15 th April	Victorian School Holidays
APRIL	
18 th	World Heritage Day
22 nd	Earth Day
28 th	International Save the Frog Day
MAY	
8 th -10 th	Ozwater Day
12 th – 13 th	World Migratory Birds Day
14 th - 20 th	National Volunteer Week
18 th	National Walk Safely to School Day
22 nd	International Day for Biological Diversity
27 th – 3 rd June	National Reconciliation Week





Landcare Covers More Ground

There is no time like the present to get your group together for a brainstorming session and to kick-start the planning process in readiness for when the Victorian Landcare (VL) Grants open in April. It is beneficial to have a project brief ready to go as it makes writing a funding application much easier. All you need is a one-page document addressing the following:

What?

- ...do you want to achieve?
- How much will the project cost overall?
- How much (grant) do you need to complete the project?

Why?

- ...is this important to your community?
- How will this make a difference?

Who?

- ...will manage the project?
- ...will support the project (partners)?
- ...will benefit from the project?

When?

- ...will it start and end?

The 2012-13 VL grants will open in April this year and close late May. There won't be any changes to the process and there will again be money for 'project grants', and 'group maintenance and start-up grants'.

Lastly before I sign off I would like to congratulate Rob Youl and Sue Marriot who were both recipients of the Australia Day Awards, a fantastic achievement for two very worthy Landcarers.

Jodie Odgers

Regional Landcare Coordinator

P: 03 5440 1883

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

Peppergreen Farm Festival

Sunday 31st March 2012

Have you ever seen a Backswimmer?
Or Dragon Fly Larvae?



Discover more about these amazing water bugs are at the Peppergreen Farm Festival.

Waterwatch will be running hands-on activities for the whole family to identify water bugs and understand their roles in our Waterways. Come along and learn what it means to be a water bug!

Lets get Bugg'n

Coliban Water's new Land & Catchment Coordinator

Francine Noble has recently joined Coliban Water in the newly created role of Land & Catchment Coordinator.

The role is designed to coordinate an integrated approach to land and catchment management across our land interests; the goal being improved outcomes for water quality protection, biodiversity, pest plant and fire hazard management, and relationships with landholders and community groups. The role is also a key contributor in helping the business achieve sustainability.

Francine assisted our education program towards the end of last year at a water cluster day where we conducted presentations for 150 students from five of the smaller schools in our southern region.



Francine Noble shares her knowledge with students at Chewton Primary School during our 'Catchment in a Sandpit' activity

Story by Rob Krober
Education Officer
Coliban Water





Catchment Care Features

River Detectives Get Wet

River Detectives will get wet again as the program rolls out for 2012. Over 12 schools from across the North Central CMA region will get involved in activities this year such as; Water Quality Monitoring, Saltwatch Week and Water Bugs.

This year's River Detectives will also learn how to enter their data into the Waterwatch Data Management System and create reports so data from their local waterways can be better understood.

I am looking forward to another great year with a bunch of new students to engage in environmental issues about river and wetland health!

Water Quality Fact

Phosphorus is a naturally occurring element originating from minerals in rocks and is essential for animal and plant life.

In natural circumstances, phosphorus usually enters waterways from the weathering of rocks and the decomposition of plant and animal material.

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 am the largest Australian freshwater fish

I can travel 120km upstream to spawn

I sit and wait for my predators behind rocks, fallen logs and in undercut banks

I like to eat fish, crayfish and frogs

I am a M _ _ _ _ C _ _

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North Central CMA Projects

Flood Recovery Employment Program

The Flood Recovery Employment Program (FREP) is funded through the 2010 Victorian Government's employment initiative to assist the recovery of flood affected communities in north central. The FREP program is based in the North Central CMA region to assist in the repair and protection of public environmental assets damaged during the 2010 floods.

There are eight on-ground FREP crews operating across the north central CMA region, with a great deal of positive environmental works happening.

Working on site along the Campaspe River in Echuca, the Gannawarra Crew #1 has made headlines in the local Riverine Herald. They have been removing woody weeds such as Desert Ash (*Fraxinus angustifolia*), Olive tree's (*Olea europaea*) and Deadly Nightshade (*Solanum spp*). The western banks of the Campaspe River have undergone a positive environmental facelift.

The Bendigo Crew # 1 has made significant changes along Sedgwick Road where the crew spent time removing Hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*).

The Bendigo Crew #2 has been working around Cairn Curren Reservoir and Laanecoorie Weir building new hinge-joint fences around their respective water bodies.

The Gannawarra Crew #2 has recently completed over three kilometres of rabbit proof fencing on a Trust for Nature site known as the Wanderer's Plains, in the Kerang region of our catchment.

Story by Kelly Dunn

Project officer North Central CMA



The FREP crew: Photo by Kelly Dunn North Central CMA





Waterwatch Data Management System

The data management system is currently undergoing some changes. Some of you may have tried to extract reports out of the system and found it is not working; this should be rectified and up and running soon.

As mentioned most of you should have received your 2012 monitoring diary in the mail. If you haven't received one yet, it may be because you don't have access to the internet and therefore will keep using the data sheets you are already using. Please let me know if you haven't received one yet and I will get it made and sent out ASAP!

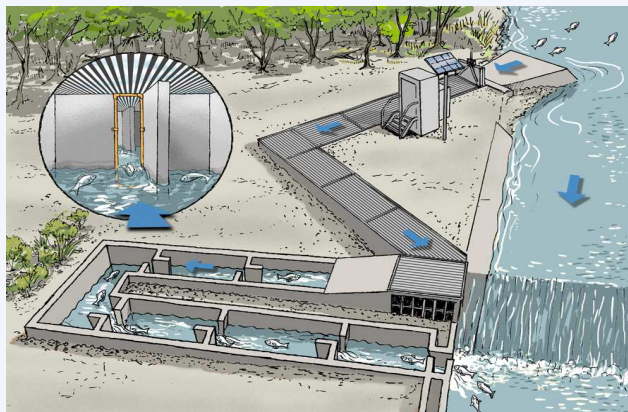
If you have more questions about the new system or your diaries please don't hesitate to call or email me!

Kerang Weir Fishway Monitoring

Something Fishy Going on..

In September 2011 a system for recording fish movement through the Kerang Weir fishway was launched.

The Kerang Weir is the first significant structure on the Loddon River upstream from the Murray and until 2008, had been a barrier for fish swimming up the Loddon from the Murray. In 2008 a vertical slot fishway was constructed to improve the ability of fish to migrate beyond the Kerang Weir.



After much delay due to the 2010-2011 floods the fishway has been fitted with PIT (passive integrated transponder) tag reader system which is used to monitor the movement of fish through the fishway.

The PIT system works by gathering data from specially tagged fish as they move through the fishway. Each time a tagged fish migrates through the Kerang fishway, a data series including antenna number, a unique fish number, date and time is captured and sent to a central database.



This system is the first permanent solar powered PIT reader to be installed in Australia. The PIT reader comprises three antennas located within the fishway. For the system to be effective a number of fish need to be fitted with a PIT tag which is similar to a microchip as used in domestic pets. For the Kerang Weir fishway a total of 140 fish, from four native and two introduced species have been tagged, including 51 bony herring, 40 golden perch and eight Murray cod.

The information gathered will contribute towards improving the efficiency of the Kerang Weir fishway, our knowledge of fish migration in the Loddon River and ultimately contribute to improving the health of the fish populations of the Loddon River.

PIT tag readers have been installed at most fishways along the Murray River as part of the 'Sea to Hume' river restoration program. The Kerang Weir fishway is now part of this PIT reader network and will log any of the 35,000 fish that have been tagged as part of the 'Sea to Hume' project.





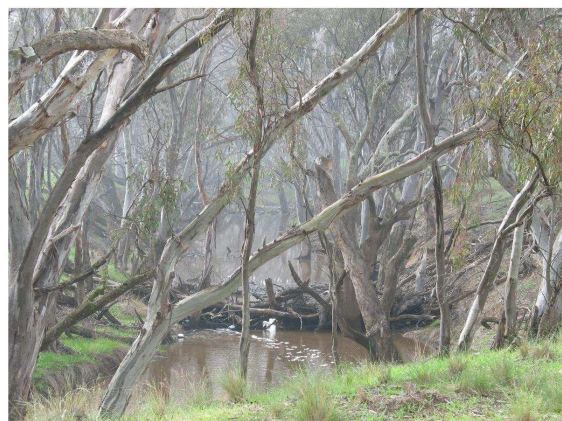
The installation of the system and the tagging of fish were carried out by the Arthur Rylah Institute of the Department of Sustainability and Environment working with the North Central CMA. Information gained from fish movement between the Murray and Loddon rivers will provide researchers and managers with important ecological information on the movement of fish populations.

If a tagged fish is captured it can be kept or released it. If you catch a fish it would be helpful if you could record the date and location of the capture, the external tag number, an accurate length of the fish and whether the fish was released or kept. You can call the phone number on the external tag to report the details and to receive a reward. It would also be great if you could return the internally located PIT tag to the address shown on the external tag. Your cooperation will assist in ongoing research.



Story and Photo's by Tess Grieves
Project Officer
Loddon Stressed

Don't Forget the Waterwatch Monitors Picnic by the River Event!



Avoca River at Glenloch. (Photo courtesy North Central Catchment Management Authority)



Join Waterwatch for the second annual 'Picnic by the River' event to celebrate and recognise the wonderful hard work of Waterwatch monitors throughout the North Central CMA region.

Two events will be held with special guests speaker Bambi Lees (Indigenous Facilitator). Bambi will discuss cultural heritage significance in the North Central CMA region and provide you with information on identifying cultural heritage sites.

Please indicate which event you would like to attend:

Event A: Avoca River @ Coonooer Bridge
When: Thursday 15 March 2012
Time: 10.30am - 1pm

Event B: Loddon River, Bridge Water
When: Friday 16 March 2012
Time: 10.30am - 1pm

Please note: There are no public toilets at Coonooer Bridge - Charlton is 10km North

Lunch will be provided. Please specify any dietary requirements upon registration.
You will need to bring your Waterwatch Kit and a chair to sit on!

Please RSVP by 13 March 2012 to:
Cass Davis
Regional Waterwatch Coordinator
P: 03 5440 1863
M: 0434 730 526
E: cass.davis@nccma.vic.gov.au

See next page for directions.....

Answer: What fish am I?



I am a Murray Cod

Jon Leevers holding a Murray Cod that has been tagged at the Kerang Fishway



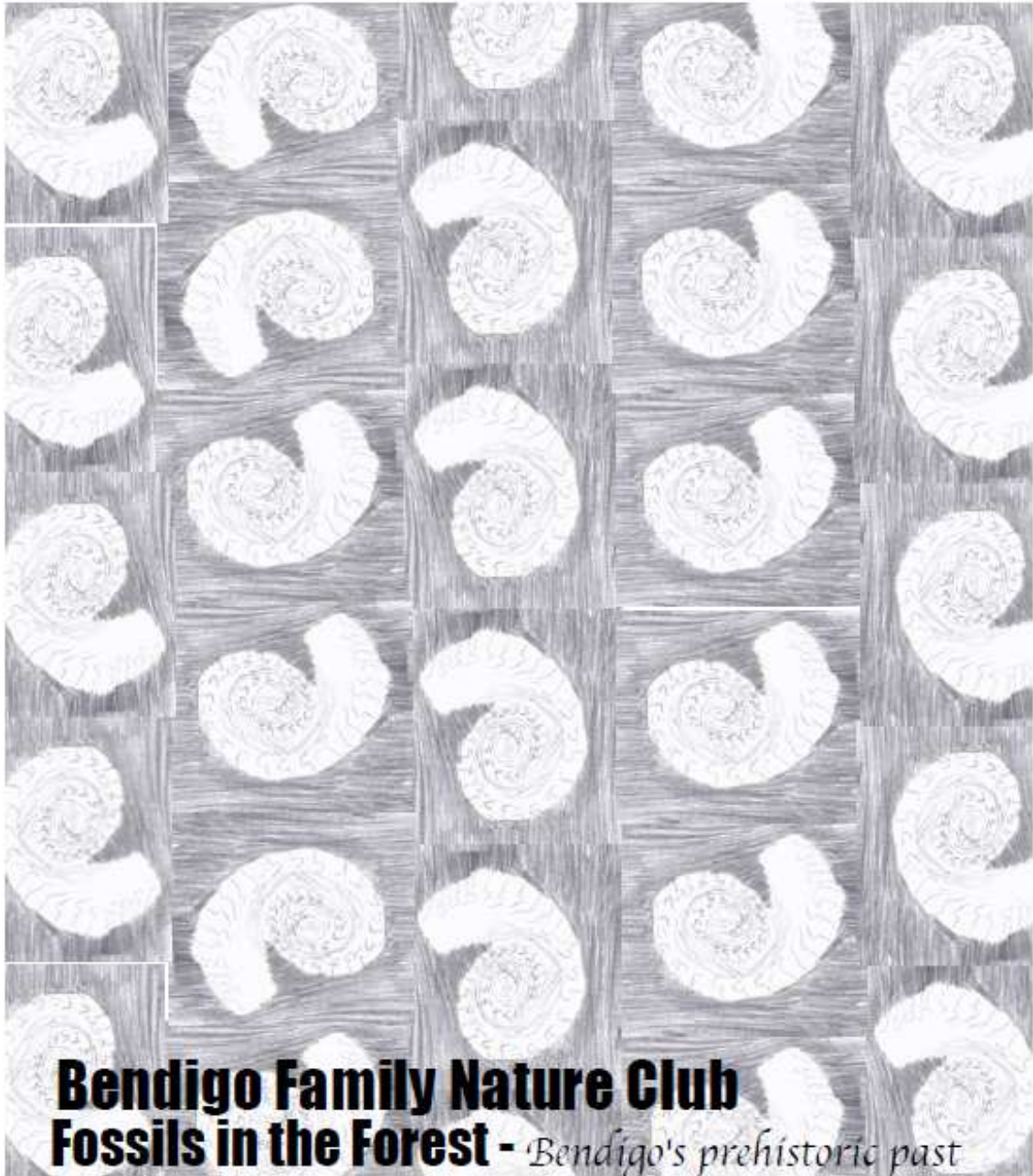
Happy autumn season everyone,
keep your eye out for the next edition of
Catchment Care

Cass





Bendigo Family Nature Club Fossils in the Forest



Bendigo Family Nature Club **Fossils in the Forest** - *Bendigo's prehistoric past*

Sunday 18 March 9.45 am- 12pm Free event for
Historical location provided on registration

KIDS
& their big people

bendigonatureclub@gmail.com

5443 1326



Bendigo
Sustainability
Group

