



Corangamite

Partners/Sponsors National Action Plan for Salinity and Water Quality, Barwon Regional Water Authority, Corangamite Catchment Management Authority, City of Greater Geelong, Surf Coast Shire, Corangamite Shire, Golden Plains Shire, Colac Otway Shire, Department of Sustainability and Environment, Department of Primary Industries, Barwon Community Tree Propagation Centre, Environment Protection Authority, Gordon Institute of TAFE, Coast Action/Coast Care, Barwon Regional Wastewise Management Group, Fishcare, Marine Discovery Centre, Conservation Volunteers Australia, Parks Victoria, Swan Bay Integrated Catchment Management Committee, Social Justice Initiative Group, Corangamite Connections Education Group, Association of Geelong and District Anglers.

Monitoring Information 54 Groups, 864 participants, 128 sites. **Education Participation** 4948 participants.

Coordinators Bernadette Van Noordenburg, Michelle Anderson, Brenda Skene, Deirdre Murphy, Anne McLaughlin.

Engaging the masses Coranga-mites action in the catchment



How many students can Waterwatch engage each year? Plenty, when you mix keen teachers with a creative program and structured support. Corangamite Waterwatch has developed a successful 'train-the-trainer' program that builds the capacity of local teachers to lead their own quality Waterwatch activities.

The 'Coranga-mites - Action in the Catchment' education program supports local teachers through the development of program-specific resources and professional development opportunities. The program, developed for multiple ages and multiple learning disciplines, encourages a whole-school, whole-year learning approach. This successful approach directly involved 950 students from 38 schools in Waterwatch activities in 2005.

Afternoon professional development (PD) days are hosted by the Waterwatch coordinators across the catchment early each year and have proved popular with local teachers. These sessions encourage regional teachers (with varied Waterwatch skills and experiences) to meet, discuss new ideas, learn and refresh monitoring methods, and gain confidence to teach and engage students in river health education and monitoring.

Innovative teachers involved in the Coranga-mites program have successfully planned much of their curriculum around their ongoing Waterwatch monitoring and activities. The broad range of activities has taken Waterwatch out of the science laboratory and into maths, physical education and art classes to name a few. For example, teachers include bike education to get to the school's monitoring sites, sampling water quality results for maths activities, sketching to record seasonal changes in the environment, litter collections to identify their source and predict environmental impacts, and interactions with other allied environmental educators to broaden the student's understanding of catchment health.

Anne McLaughlin, Corangamite Waterwatch's Education Officer, sums up the success of the program best - "At the end of the day, the program aims to increase community awareness and understanding of sustainable water issues and their relationship to catchment health. What better way to achieve this than having local teachers confidently teaching local students about local water resource issues."



Top left and right Students get involved in National Tree Planting Day for schools. **Above** Educators get hands-on at the Coranga-mites training days to learn new skills and information to take back to their classrooms.