

National Water Week



Corangamite

Corangamite's National Water Week began with 236 fishermen and women registering for the Geelong Catch a Carp Day, which saw 56 carp caught including an 8.4kg monster! Waterwatch joined other environmental educators to promote the program to teachers at the regional Environmental Expo. A 'round the world' water education day was held for four local primary schools, which saw students participating in activities from faraway places including Alaska and Cambodia. Balyang Sanctuary was the venue for a second day of various water-themed student activities. The Colac Catch a Carp day ended the week with a successful haul of 202 carp (454kg in all!).

Central Highlands

Central Highlands Waterwatch Program hosted a range of activities throughout National Water Week including community tours of the Ballarat South Wastewater Treatment Plant and White Swan Reservoir water filtration plant, tree planting days, an interactive community catchment tour along the Yarrowee River, and native walking night tours at Central Highlands Water's Kirks Reservoir Parks and Gardens. Hundreds of local students took part in the annual NWW poster competition, with four students from Waubra, Buninyong and Woody Yaloak Primary Schools awarded regional and state prizes.

East Gippsland

The East Gippsland Student Environmental Forum, 10 Year Waterwatch Reunion and 'Who Does What in Water?' Conference featured during National Water Week in the state's east. Over 120 students attended the Environment Forum and participated in presentations and workshops from both students and NRM professionals. Tammy Van Wisse, marathon swimming champion, was guest speaker and presenter at the 10 Year reunion, whereby a number of local volunteers, past and present, were recognised for their 5 - and 10 - year contribution to Waterwatch. Vox Bandicoot was the entertaining MC for 180 participants at the 'Who Does What in Water?' Conference. East and West Gippsland Waterwatch programs held a joint display which provided plenty of information to attendees, and Coordinator Marni Speed presented how Waterwatch fits into the community education and NRM sector.

Glenelg Hopkins

A frenetic National Water Week in the Glenelg Hopkins region saw over 1300 students partake in activities focused on the "Water for Life" theme. Younger children were mesmerized by the live exhibits of crays, crabs and abalone from DPI Fisheries, and the koalas and joeys from the Heywood Wildlife shelter. Senior students enjoyed the challenge of the DSE Threatened Species games, Wannon Water's Indian Water Balancing Act and Land for Wildlife frog talks. Coastcare highlighted the importance of sharks, the EPA covered various forms of pollution and Fishcare discussed sustainable fishing practices. Teachers, parents and kids alike sung, danced, clapped and even croaked along to the entertaining Barry Peters and the entertaining Connies.

Goulburn Broken

River cruises and walks featured in the Goulburn Broken during National Water Week. River cruises on Lake Nagambie and along the Murray River were popular events, as was the Nagambie Canoe Tour. Five interpretive river and wetland walks were hosted in Yea, Benalla, Mangalore and Mansfield. Free movie nights featured 'Whale Rider', 'Ferntree Gully' and 'No Worries'. Competition was tough in both the amateur photo and River Yarns competition. A regional Water Week Awards Night was a highlight, with a number of local individuals, groups and industries recognised for their contribution to sustainable water management.

Top left DPI Fisheries officers enthralled students from Port Fairy Consolidated School. **Top right** Traditional dancers and spokesmen welcomed guests to the Goulburn Broken's National Water Week awards night. **Above left** Birrarung Marr visitors took time to checkout some aquatic beasts. **Above centre** North East students get involved in the Kiewa River Snapshot event. **Above right** Waterwatch Coordinator Bruce Birrell puts the final touches on a Waterwatch display in Wodonga Plaza.



Mallee

The Mallee Waterwatch program hosted and participated in a huge range of events for National Water Week 2005. The Murray Darling Basin Committee International River Health Conference was held in Mildura and Mallee Waterwatch was involved in the mentoring of a number of local school groups and in hosting environmental activities associated with the conference. The Spring Water Bug Survey was a popular event with six schools and over 570 students involved. Interactive displays, including a working fish ladder and a catchment model, and water saving gardens featured at a two day Water Expo involving over 1250 participants. Highlights included a student pipe assembly relay, the presentation of 5 year recognition certificates to deserving volunteers by Tammy Van Wisse, and performances by Vox Bandicoot and the Science Discovery Centre's water show.

North Central

National Water Week in the North Central region saw over 1500 participants in a range of activities. A school River Health Field Day along the Richardson River and the Bendigo Creek Discovery Walk was a hit for many students, as was Vox Bandicoot's "The Last Shower" production. Around 120 movie-goers took up the opportunity to watch "Storm Boy" in Eaglehawk. The Coliban Water Smart Gardens Seminar and Waterwise Demonstration Garden proved popular for home owners. The Campaspe bus tour was also well attended, and showcased the range of environmentally and culturally significant aspects of the river system.

North East

The North East Catchment Management Authority celebrated National Water Week with seven days of free events for local groups, organisations and the North East community. Waterwatch joined the festivities with an interactive display at Wodonga Plaza which provided information on water quality, conservation, treatment and stormwater. Events were also organised throughout the region including snapshot monitoring down the lengths of the Ovens and Kiewa Rivers, water treatment plant tours and a poster competition.

Top left Waterwatch Coordinator Fleur Johnson engages students during the Mallee Water Expo. **Top right** Students prepare to tell a river story at the Mildura Water Expo. **Above left** The Connies performance troop entertained visitors and spread river health messages. **Above right** Kids get hands-on at the Mildura Water Expo's Science Show.



Port Phillip

Melbourne Waterwatch seized the opportunity during National Water Week to unite more than 100 employees from Melbourne Water, Melbourne City Council, and Department of Sustainability and Environment, with an enthusiastic group of Eltham High School students who are monitoring the health of the lower Yarra River. All enjoyed a hands-on river health session and BBQ celebration at Birrarung Marr, taking time to discuss the issues facing the lower Yarra River with Melbourne Waterwatch Coordinators and the infamous Connies. A wide range of other Melbourne Waterwatch activities across the region included a Yarra River Monitoring Tour in canoes, organised in partnership with Canoe Victoria, Parks Victoria and the Spring Outdoors Councils.

West Gippsland

West Gippsland Waterwatch offered plenty of opportunities to 'get wet' during National Water Week. Teaming up with South Gippsland Water, the Heyfield wetlands interpretive trail was the site of various Waterwatch activities for students. Waterwatch presented at the "Who Does What in Water" Conference and the Gippsland Integrated Natural Resources Forum. Towards the end of the week, thirty-four community members attended the Powlett Paddle community canoe event. Greening Australia, West Gippsland Catchment Management Authority, Landcare, and local landholders were present to discuss local issues. Positive feedback was received from the various NWW learning experiences offered.

Wimmera

National Water Week in the Wimmera catchment began with Waterwatch celebrating and recognising longterm community monitors, including Jeparit Waterwatch Group (see Wimmera case study). The Wimmera Catchment Management Authority and Grampians Wimmera Mallee Water hosted the Wimmera Dryland Boat race in Horsham. Twenty teams competed in student-decorated boats, with the race focussing on the critical shortage of water in the Wimmera catchment (currently 8% capacity) and the importance of different life forms as indicators of stream health. The 2nd Wimmera Kids Conference concluded the week with over 450 primary students from across the region participating in nearly 40 presentations and workshops, focussed on the theme 'Kids view of the environment'.