

Exploring change in 2007/08

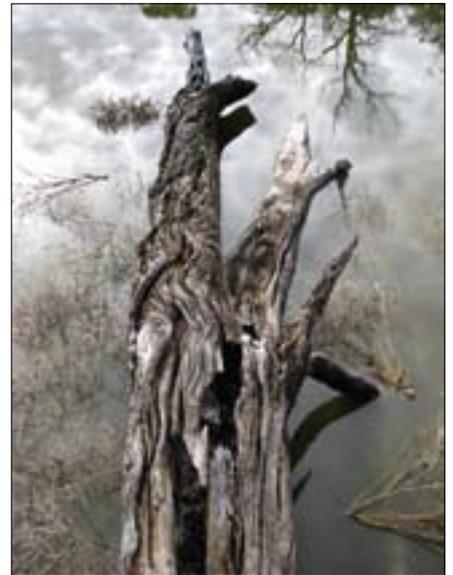
For more than 10 years the Waterwatch program has played an important role in the Victorian community, giving students and adults alike the opportunity to learn about and contribute to the protection, restoration and management of their local waterways.

In recent years, the work of Waterwatch has taken on even greater significance. As our rivers and waterways undergo significant change in the face of drought and climate change, and our communities themselves change as a result of these and other global influences, community networks and engagement programs like Waterwatch are finding a new level of relevance in waterway management.

With coordinators, volunteer monitors, students and participants out in the field experiencing and discussing the changes, they form a key part of the solution: adapting, testing and learning new approaches and practices to suit the different conditions.

The theme of the 2007/08 Waterwatch Victoria Yearbook, 'Changing places, changing people, changing practices,' captures some of these innovative collaborations. It also illustrates the critical role that capacity building programs like Waterwatch will play as a conduit for communities, natural resource managers and scientists to share knowledge and understandings, in an effort to develop and apply solutions to the challenges facing our state's waterways.

We also hope that in documenting these stories in a time of unprecedented environmental conditions, we can pass our knowledge and experience of change on to future generations; to help them adapt to changes they will inevitably face. After all, this ability to adapt culturally is what makes us human!



Telling the Waterwatch story

Yearbook Case Studies

The stories in this Yearbook paint a picture of change occurring in local communities: changes in the biophysical environment, changes in people's attitudes and knowledge, and changes in the way people and Waterwatch itself are adapting approaches and practices in response to the different situations around them.

Each section showcases the achievements of one of the ten regional Waterwatch programs operating across Victoria, and illustrates the diverse roles the Waterwatch Coordinators play in their local communities. Regional maps show where coordinators are hosted, and where case studies are located. The case studies explore many facets of change through the three key activities of Waterwatch:



Education



Monitoring



Partnerships

The stories also recognise the on-going contribution many volunteers, participants and partners make to Waterwatch, and the inspiring efforts and achievements of Waterwatch Coordinators and their communities in making Victoria's waterways healthy.

Yearbook Statistics

You may also notice some facts and figures about each regional Waterwatch program. While these tell only a small part of the Waterwatch story, they do help understand the scope and reach of each regional Waterwatch program.

- Number of monitoring groups (Standard 3 or 4 groups actively monitoring ¹)
- Number of monitoring participants (Standard 3 or 4 monitoring participants actively monitoring)
- Number of sites (actively monitored by Standard 3 or 4 groups/participants a minimum of 4 times per year)
- Number of education participants (involved in Waterwatch education and awareness raising activities)
- Coordinator FTEs (full-time equivalent staffing of program)
- Program budget (financial program investment, in-kind support not included)

Monitoring Sites Map

Excitingly, this year for the first time we have been able to map the sites being monitored by Standard 3 or 4 groups/participants and Waterwatch coordinators. Take a look at pages 14-15 for the spatial spread of this high quality Waterwatch data across Victoria.

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¹ Standard 3 and 4 Waterwatch groups/participants monitor water quality for the purpose of collecting scientific, credible data. Waterwatch Victoria's Data Confidence Framework and Guidelines define minimum criteria for Standard 3 and 4 monitoring, and Regional Data Confidence Plans contain specific information on how Standard 3 and 4 monitors are supported to achieve their monitoring aims.