

# WEST GIPPSLAND WATERWATCH STREAMLINES

WINTER 2010



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## Welcome to Winter

Well it has started to get cold and I hope everyone is rugging up before you venture out to monitoring sites. Also a reminder to be careful as the ground becomes quite slippery and water levels in waterways can rise quickly so please be aware of these extra issues over the next few months.

## QA/QC week June 21<sup>th</sup>-26<sup>th</sup> 2010

Nicole Russell

It only feels like last week that there was a regional QA/QC, but during the week of the 21<sup>st</sup> -26<sup>th</sup> June there will be the state QA/QC. There will be an evening held at the Traralgon office with nibbles and a DVD called 'Dancing and the Devil Fire: Uncovering the hidden history of the Alps', I will send out an invite and for those of you who cant make it please let me know so we can organise alternate delivery.

## Data Report 2009

Nicole Russell

I am working hard to finish our annual data report so we can see what has been happening across the catchments so please forgive me if there is a delay in catching up with all of you. This year we were lucky enough to have Kate Britton, who has been woking with us as part of her studies in Wildlife and Conservation Biology at Deakin University, to assist in putting together the report . I am working to get the report out June/July.

## Its a Boy

Tanya Cowell (South Gippsland Waterwatch Facilitator) had a baby boy on the 18<sup>th</sup> April

and they named him Dylan Jarvis. He weighed 3.150 kg and was 50cm long. All are doin well. Congratulations Tanya and Owen.

## Welcome to new volunteers!

### Latrobe

Friends of Upper Morewell River (Morwell River and Falls)  
Kate Britton (Hazel Creek & tributaries)

## Estuarywatch Training on the Powlett

Nicole Russell

On a lovely Saturday moring in March, training for Estuarywatch in South Gippsland commenced. Matt Khoury, the Victorian Estuarywatch Coordinator led volunteers and local Waterwatch facilitators in a training day at the mouth of the Powlett River. Mike Linsell, Mark Robinson, Neil Rankine and Nick Silby are all part of this monitoring group. The group have recently completed a monitoring plan and had their first official monitoring session on the 8<sup>th</sup> May.





## Tarwin Canoe Tour

Marni Speed

The weather was kind as enthusiastic participants set off to paddle 6km of the Tarwin River on Saturday March 20<sup>th</sup>. Starting out at the Davies' property upstream of Tarwin Lower participants heard from South Gippsland Water's Ros Griggs on the use of water from the Tarwin including environmental flows and water entitlements. As the sun came out we paddled the first large stretch flanked by tall phragmites which have now reclaimed the largely fenced riparian zone, a testament to the good works being carried out by landholders along the river. Richard Allen, Project Officer with the WGCMA updated the group on the current works program underway to protect vegetation & wetlands along the river.



Participants paddle beside the tall phragmites reeds.

Operations Manager Mal Gibson then gave an interesting talk on the long and varied history of management of the Tarwin and the changes to it through straightening and construction of levees which commenced very soon after European settlement. Close to settlement and has drastically altered the natural functioning of the river.

River & Wetlands Officer Matt Bowler was the last speaker with a talk on the vegetation and fish species of the Tarwin. We finished the tour in excellent time and enjoyed lunch at the Tarwin Lower boat ramp. One participant remarked that "It was a very pleasant way to see the Tarwin and see the great work that has been done. Really enjoyed the history details on the river and about the work today."

Canoe tours remain a popular event, watch out for future tours over the next 12 months.

## Thomson River Freshwater Circus

Nicole Russell

The WGCMA recently held a freshwater circus event on the Lower Thomson River. The aim of the 'circus' was to showcase the works underway to protect and enhance habitat for native wildlife that is occurring along the lower Thomson River.

Circus 'Acts' included Damian O'Mahony from River to Sea research, Damien demonstrated how electrofishing is used to survey the types (native & non-native) of fish that are living in our rivers.



Damien & Matt surveying fish

Jim Reside from Wildlife Unlimited came along to explain the different ways they survey fauna, for example how they catch microbats to determine which species are living in the area and by recognising frog calls to determine frog species.



Bat catching nets

Matt Bowler of the WGCMA discussed the range of different plants that recolonise after a billabong is fenced off. The final act was

Waterwatch Facilitator, Marni Speed. Marni showed participants the various types of Macroinvertebrates that are found in rivers and how they are used by scientists and river managers to better understand the condition of rivers and waterways.



Tupong

## New WaterBug ID method

Nicole Russell

Just a quick word to let everyone know that a method of macroinvertebrate surveying called 'Alternative Level Taxonomy' or ALT is being built so the bugs can be identified in the field to family and species level. This will do away with the need to take and preserve samples for identification in the lab under a microscope. With this method some species cannot be distinguished from each other and it is agreed upon that they cannot be identified any further than order or family, hence the name 'Agreed Level Taxonomy'. With this new method interested volunteers will be able to be trained and conduct macroinvertebrate surveys at their monitoring sites. Volunteers will still need to be quite confident with their identification skills but this can be built upon with practice and time!

## Macroinvertebrate Training

Nicole Russell

On Saturday 8th May I ran a training day to start trialling the new ALT method. Three sites were chosen for the training including Traralgon Creek in Kornalla and Tyers River at Wilrida Park. Both spots delivered some interesting bugs and



showed quite healthy scores. In the following months the ALT method should be finalised and I will run macroinvertebrate survey training session in spring.

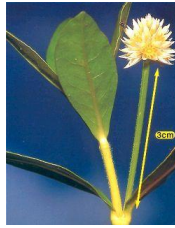
## WoNS workshop

Nicole Russell

Latrobe Valley Landcare network invited Waterwatch volunteers on the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> of May to come along to a aquatic weeds information day.

With Waterwatch volunteers monitoring sites along waterways on a regular basis this

makes you a prime candidate to observe changes in the waterways . Being able to identify aquatic weeds can mean that new infestations could be reported before a large outbreak occurs giving the weed experts time to get the weed under control before too much damage has been done. If anyone would like some information on Aquatic weeds please contact :



Alligator weed

Andrew Wolstenholme at the WGCMA on 1300 094 262.

## West Gippy Waterwatch Calendar

**June 6<sup>th</sup>** Celebrate Your Corner Inlet Day - Yanakie

**June 9<sup>th</sup>** Latrobe River Freshwater Circus

**June 7<sup>th</sup>** DSE school camp

**June 21<sup>st</sup>-26<sup>th</sup>** State QA/QC week

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## Key Stakeholders and Sponsors

