

**Partners/Sponsors** Natural Heritage Trust, Glenelg-Hopkins Catchment Management Authority, Glenelg Water, South West Water Authority, Warrnambool City Council, South West College of TAFE, Shire of Southern Grampians, Glenelg Shire Council, Portland Aluminium, Environment Protection Authority, Department of Sustainability and Environment, Department of Primary Industries, Southern Rural Water, Warrnambool & District Fish Care, Portland Coast Shire, Central Highlands Water, Greening Australia, McDonalds.



**Monitoring Groups/Site Information**

76 Groups, 1423 participants, 224 sites

**Coordinators**

Jennie Sparke, Gillian Fry, David Nichols, John Miles

## Glenelg Hopkins

*Left: Laura from Brauer College gets up close with our native wildlife. Below: Brauer College students.*



## Waterwatch and Victorian Certificate of Applied Learning initiatives

**S**cience teacher and natural enthusiast, Famie Gargen introduced the Waterwatch monitoring program to her school's as soon as she came to Brauer College. Famie embraced Waterwatch as she wanted to encourage students to become more involved and passionate about their local environment while meeting curriculum requirements.

*“The Waterwatch monitoring program in Brauer College has literally grown and grown,” says Famie. “It is stimulating to get kids out of the classroom and involved in hands-on work.”*

This year Brauer College strengthened its commitment to Waterwatch by incorporating the Victorian Certificate of Applied Learning (VCAL) into the Waterwatch monitoring program. VCAL is a new qualification that sits alongside the Victorian Certificate of Education (VCE) and provides students with a new pathway from Secondary school to work. As part of the VCAL Personal Development Skills program, three year eleven students have been collecting water quality data fortnightly.

The student's monitor two sites on the Merri River, measuring pH, turbidity, dissolved oxygen, electrical conductivity, ortho phosphates and temperature. To complete the picture students also conduct habitat and macro-invertebrate surveys providing essential information on the living components of the Merri River.



The relationship forged between Brauer students and Waterwatch has been a mutually beneficial experience. The data gathered by students has been valuable in providing local communities and government agencies with a bigger monitoring picture of the Merri catchment. In return Waterwatch has helped the students develop their scientific knowledge and monitoring skills, as well as gaining an appreciation for aquatic environments.

Brauer College's significant contribution through the Waterwatch monitoring program won them the inaugural Glenelg Hopkins Environment Achievement Award in the Waterwatch category for 2003. Next year it is envisaged another group of students will continue the valuable Waterwatch monitoring as part of Brauer Colleges VCAL program.

*Above: Brauer College students carry out macroinvertebrates survey's.*