



**Monitoring Information**  
 32 groups, 32 participants, 85 sites  
**Education Participation** 3 503 participants  
**Coordinator FTE** 3.0  
**Program Budget** \$183 125

#### Waterwatch Coordinators



Bernadette  
Van Noordenburg



Brenda Skene



Deirdre Murphy



Anne McLaughlin



Michelle Anderson



Andrew Harris  
(Central Highlands)



Monitors collecting data in the Southern Otways.



Wendy Kerry collecting data for the Swan Bay Integrated Catchment Management Project at the Begola Wetlands, Ocean Grove.

## Making a difference

Volunteer monitoring in the Corangamite region is supporting catchment managers to better prioritise local and regional waterway management activities and plans.



*"Waterwatch has been working with us to identify opportunities and resourcing needs in order to support future community monitoring in high priority areas." said Greg Peters, CCMA River Health Coordinator.*

Monitor Jill Stonehouse doing what Waterwatch Volunteers do best – water quality testing.

*"Waterwatch data helped the CCMA to identify which river reaches were currently being monitored, where there were data gaps, and discuss options for how these gaps might be filled in the future" recalled regional Science Coordinator Deirdre Murphy.*

*"Having catchment managers recognise the efforts of Corangamite Waterwatch volunteers in collecting credible data has been very satisfying and rewarding. We look forward to building on this in the future", said Deirdre.*

Locally, Waterwatch monitoring has a valued role within acclaimed community-driven projects such as the Swan Bay Integrated Catchment Management Project. "Data collected by our volunteers has assisted us to prioritise and implement remedial actions along waterways flowing to Swan Bay, a Ramsar wetland of international importance. The data will help us gauge the success of these works over time", said Coastal Officer, Sue Longmore.

Regionally, Waterwatch data has been used to shape longer-term strategies. In 2006, the Corangamite Catchment Management Authority's (CCMA) River Health Strategy (RHS) was endorsed. This strategy drew upon existing river health data for the region, in order to identify regional assets and prioritise the management of these assets. Corangamite Waterwatch Coordinators were able to bring 10 years of community-collected water quality data from across the region to the planning table to help this process. A total of 282 sites and over 5,300 water quality results were monitored in this period.

#### Waterwatch Objective 2:

Involve communities monitoring their local waterways to collect and provide data which is credible, accepted and used



Barbara Baird, a Waterwatch monitor since 1995, has demonstrated outstanding involvement and commitment to action in her catchment. Barbara is the eyes and ears of the Moorabool River by undertaking regular monitoring (including bushfire recovery) and by caring for orphaned animals. Barbara will contribute this passion and experience to the Moorabool River Catchment Project - a new long-term river monitoring and restoration project in the Ballarat region.



Barbara Baird takes a look at macro-invertebrates sampled from her local Moorabool River.

**Waterwatch Objective 3:**  
Increase community involvement in water management decisions and gain community commitment to action in addressing waterway and catchment issues



Corangamite Waterwatch's Bernadette Van Noordenburg assists young Garden Expo visitors to make a 'water wish'!

All life depends on water, and Corangamite Waterwatch invited the younger visitors at the Geelong Water Wise Gardening Expo to explore this theme beyond the garden. Children were hands-on in their learning, by getting to know some other 'water users' (aquatic macro-invertebrates), and by making a 'water wish' on a raindrop. Most raindrops were adorned with wishes for more rain, or any at all. Others were decorated with beautiful drawings of plants and animals that depend on water too.

**Waterwatch Objective 1:**  
Increase community awareness, understanding and ownership of water issues and their relationship to catchment health



North Shore Primary School's curriculum has many learning opportunities centred on the school's wetland. (Photo courtesy of Philip Bignoux)

Teacher Philip Bignoux of North Shore Primary School leads by example. Not content with just his students participating in Waterwatch monitoring and educational activities, he has guided other teaching staff at his school to integrate Waterwatch into comprehensive units of learning. Philip has inspired other schools and teachers in the region by sharing his enthusiasm, experience and learnings at Corangamite Waterwatch's annual teacher information session.

**Waterwatch Objective 5:**  
Provide school learning opportunities and be an integral part of the curriculum

#### Other outstanding highlights and achievements

Winners of Powercor Corangamite Awards – Corangamite Waterwatch (Business category) and Waterwatcher Geoff Bolger (Coastcare Community category)

Waterwatching school Holy Spirit School recognised as a "Nucleus School - Science School of Excellence" by the Catholic Education Office.

Launch of Corangamite Waterwatch's "Now and Then" macro-invertebrate card deck.

Winners of Greater Geelong World Environment Day awards – Waterwatchers Sue Longmore (individual category) and Mandama Primary School (school category).

**Partners/Sponsors** National Action Plan for Salinity and Water Quality, Barwon Region Water Corporation, Corangamite Catchment Management Authority, City of Greater Geelong, Surf Coast Shire, Colac Otway Shire, Corangamite Connections Environmental Educators Group.

Photos courtesy of Corangamite Waterwatch (unless otherwise specified).

Since 2005, the Upper Barwon Landcare Network (UBLN) has monitored 17 sites to evaluate and communicate the effectiveness of the group's nutrient and sediment reduction works. Neil McInnes, UBLN Coordinator, says "We are quite happy with the data we are collecting and the use we are able to make of it in our newsletter etc... It's effective in creating community interest and awareness".

**Waterwatch Objective 4:**  
Establish and maintain effective partnerships between the community and catchment managers



Upper Barwon Landcare Network Coordinator, Neil McInnes, takes to the water along with Corangamite CMA River Health Officers and other Waterwatch Volunteers to collect macro-invertebrates.