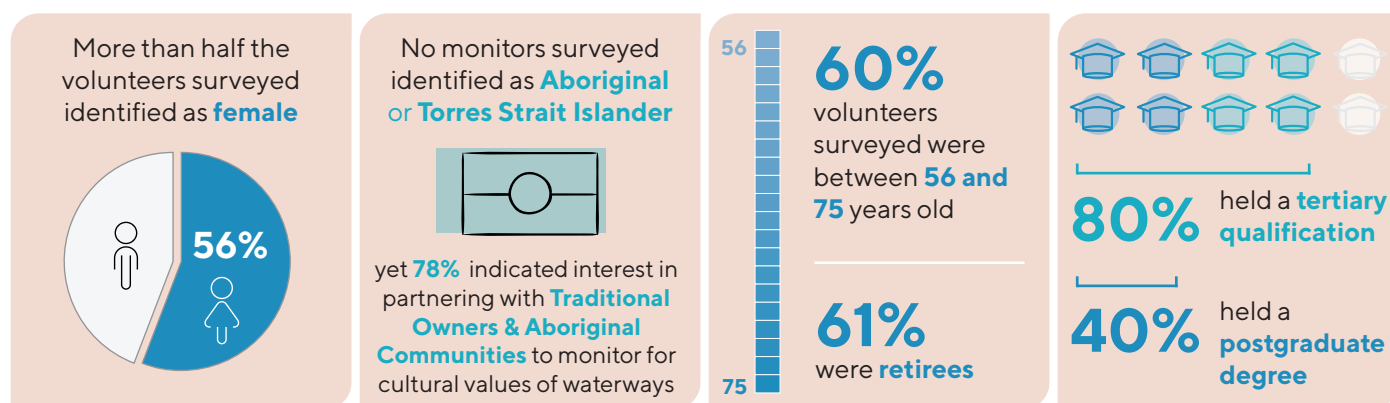


# EstuaryWatch & Waterwatch Victoria

## Who are our volunteers?

An online survey of EstuaryWatch and Waterwatch Victoria volunteers was undertaken in early 2020 to understand what volunteers expect and value about the current citizen science programs.

*The characteristics of the volunteer monitors who completed the survey were diverse; however, there were some notable trends.*



## Key findings

### Volunteer skills, knowledge and stewardship

#### Volunteers reported:

- large **increases in skills and knowledge across all relevant content areas** since beginning volunteering
- a large increase in feelings of **responsibility, concern for and undertaking actions to promote waterways**, demonstrating a rise in environmental stewardship for waterways across all regions
- they have taken **action to promote waterway and estuary health**, such as talking to friends, family and acquaintances, joining other environmental groups and lobbying to relevant ministers

### Commitment to EstuaryWatch Waterwatch programs



Average sites monitored **2.4**  
Average hours spent volunteering per month **2.8**



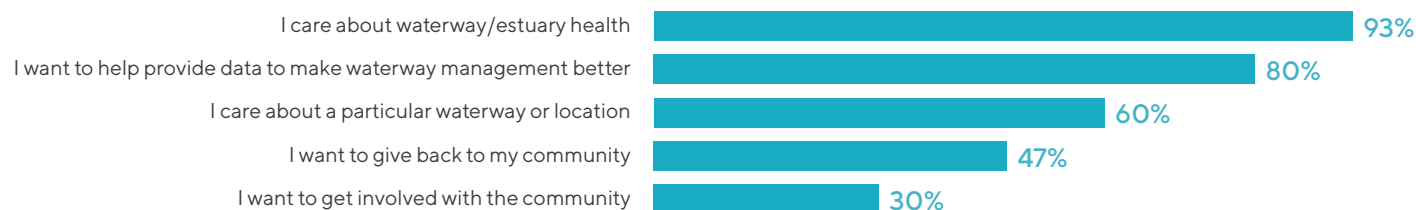
Respondents typically spent an average of **11 hours a month** volunteering with other environmental projects

Most of the volunteer monitors who were surveyed **intend to continue volunteering** with EstuaryWatch and/or Waterwatch into the future.

# Key findings

## Volunteer values and motivations

Most volunteer monitors are motivated by a desire to improve waterway management and waterway health



I want to get outdoors (25%); I want to get professional experience and/or skills (23%); I care about a particular animal or plant species (22%); Fun and enjoyment (12%); I want to meet people (12%); I want to do something with my family and friends (9%).

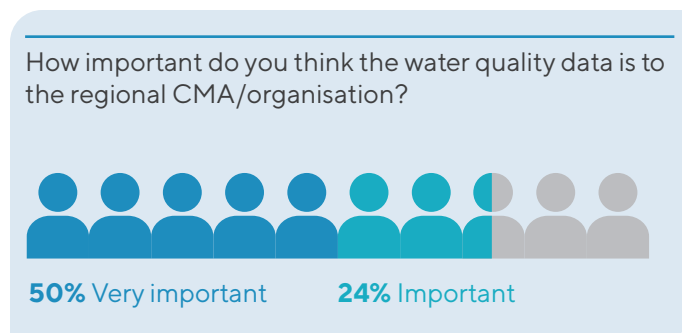
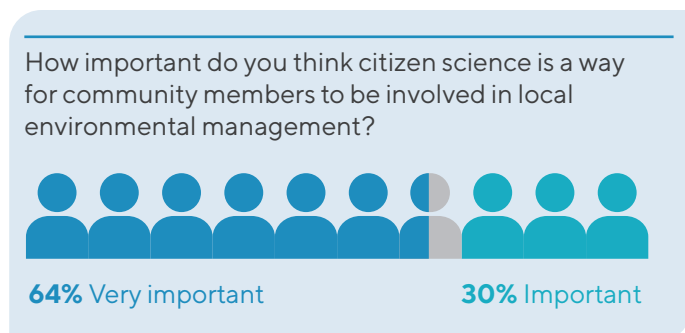
Volunteer monitors are interested in linking the monitoring programs to specific animal groups and species, and additionally in partnering with Traditional Owners.

“Working with **local community** in developing **language, artistic and storytelling** associated with waterways.”

“I am very interested in **Cultural flows** and conducting **Aboriginal Waterway Assessments**, would love to be involved.”

## Volunteer perceptions of the EstuaryWatch Waterwatch programs

Volunteer monitors **strongly valued data collection as a key component of the program**, but other objectives, such as community engagement were also highlighted as significant.



Volunteer monitors are eager to have **greater engagement with the application and outcomes of their data**, and to know that the data is being utilised in a meaningful way.

# 95%

of respondents recognised citizen science as a **significant way for community members to be involved in local environmental management**.

“For the Waterwatch program, it **educates its members** and there is no greater way to promote **environmental awareness** because what people understand they care about.”

“Through the education involved in these volunteer programs there is a **heightened awareness of the importance of environmental conservation**.”