



Monitoring Information
90 groups, 2 931 participants, 203 sites
Education Participation 41 795 participants
Coordinator FTE 11.2
Program Budget \$652 290

Prioritising Ongoing Works

Waterwatch Coordinators



Keir Jarvis



Trish Grant



Amy Paraman



Melanie Smith



Julia Vanderoord



Sarah Crinall



Greg Woodward



Sam Harrison



Rhys Collins



Ian Garsed



Kirsten Lingard



Nicole Biscan



Jane Beverlander



Tobey Henry

Adrienne Stephens
(not pictured)

David Barr, a Friend of Wilsons Reserve, has monitored the water quality of local waterways for seven years. These aren't the sexiest of sites - they are the drains and ponds that filter stormwater before they enter billabongs and ultimately the Yarra River.



David Barr (pictured) is a major contributor to Waterwatch monitoring.

David was motivated to monitor these sites to determine how effectively these ponds are at 'cleaning up' the water from the drain. After two years of monthly sampling, it was clear that the stormwater ponds were indeed reducing levels of sediment, fertiliser and pollutants, but needed to be maintained to remain effective. In 2005, David used his Waterwatch data to support his proposal to Banyule Council and Melbourne Water for more works to decrease the siltation of Reedy Billabong. In response, Melbourne Water excavated the drain which reopened the channel and improved water flow. A constructed a settling pond has improved water quality in the Billabong.

The high quality monitoring and record keeping performed by David and his Waterwatch partner, Margaret Feivez, have clearly shown that with regular maintenance, settling ponds and billabongs can significantly improve water quality. "I found the project work on the ponds most rewarding. Using the results to improve the understanding of an area makes the monitoring worth doing. I recognise the benefit and value of continuous monitoring for extended years and hope the present work on drains and billabongs leads to improved management of these polluted systems in the future."

Not only have David's monitoring efforts demonstrated that Waterwatch data can effectively be used for prioritising works, he has been recognised through council publications, a Melbourne Water documentary and a 2006 'Keep Australia Beautiful Sustainable Cities' Award nomination. Keep up the great work, David!



Stormwater settlement ponds act to filter water quality before it enters downstream billabongs and the Yarra River.



Community revegetation works complemented the channel improvement works undertaken by Melbourne Water.

"David's excellent work over the last seven years has contributed significantly to the Waterwatch program and to Council's own assessment of the quality of our waterways," endorsed Pat Vaughan, Banyule Council's Environmental Coordinator.

Waterwatch Objective 2:

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

Two neighbouring community groups - First Friends of Dandenong Creek (FFDC) and Knox Environment Society (KES) – know their local waterways intimately, having monitored 11 sites monthly for 7 years. That is almost 55 working days spent on monitoring! Two men, Barry Robinson from FFDC and Graeme Patterson from KES, are especially dedicated to their local environment and to sharing their knowledge and expertise with their local community. Its people like Barry and Graeme that you find at the heart of Waterwatch's achievements.

Waterwatch Objective 1:

Increase community awareness, understanding and ownership of water issues and their relationship to catchment health

Sunshine Middle Years Learning Environment (SMYLE) school cluster have been working in partnership with Maribyrnong Waterwatch and Brimbank City Council to document the habitat and stream conditions of Kororoit Creek from its source to Port Phillip Bay. A two-day bus tour with Brimbank Council and Waterwatch staff along the length of the creek highlighted a number of issues affecting their local waterway, including recent housing developments and historical land uses. Students have presented their findings and recommendations at local environment forums.



A majestic remnant red gum alongside Kororoit Creek.



Woori Yallock kids join Waterwatch Coordinator Trish Grant to learn more about their local waterway.

In 2006, Greening Australia Victoria partnered with Waterwatch to deliver a schools programme along the Yarra River, sponsored by Melbourne Water. Children from the Woori Yallock area helped out at one local site by planting trees, checking on water quality in creeks, and by learning more about indigenous history and cultural values of the area. These events focussed attention on creek erosion and provided hands-on action to improve local waterways for people, plants and animals in and around them.

Waterwatch Objective 3:

Increase community involvement in water management decisions and gain community commitment to action in addressing waterway and catchment issues



Waterwatch Objective 5:

Provide school learning opportunities and be an integral part of the curriculum



Waterwatch Coordinator Rhys Collins joins teachers to scope study sites along Kororoit Creek.

Waterwatch Objective 4:

Establish and maintain effective partnerships between the community and catchment managers



Students from St Macartan's Primary School represent their environmental learnings through artwork.

For the second year running Waterwatch was a part of the Level 3 (Grade 3 and 4) curriculum at St Macartan's Primary School, Mornington. The 'Feathers, Fur and Fins' integrated unit ran for eight weeks with the central focus question 'In what ways do humans influence the survival of animals?'. Students learned to recognise local frog calls and investigated macro-invertebrate sensitivities before spending the day at local Tanti Creek. Scientific maps cooperatively drawn by class groups were the result of the Waterwatch investigations.

Other outstanding highlights and achievements

Greg Woodward – Melbourne Award nominee (Contribution to Environment)

Waterwatching Edwardes Lake Neighbourhood Environment

Improvement Plan – winner of 2007 Keep Australia Beautiful Sustainable Cities Award (Community-Government partnership category)

Waterwatcher Gill Gordon – winner of 2006 Keep Australia Beautiful Dame Phyllis Frost Award

Partners/Sponsors Melbourne Water, Natural Heritage Trust, Department of Sustainability & Environment, Department of Primary Industries, Merri Creek Management Committee, Banyule City Council, Baw Baw Shire Council, Boroondara City Council, Brimbank City Council, Cardinia Shire Council, Casey City Council, Darebin City Council, Frankston City Council, Greater Dandenong City Council, Hobsons Bay City Council, Hume City Council, Kingston City Council, Knox City Council, Manningham City Council, Maribyrnong City Council, Maroondah City Council, Melbourne City Council, Melton City Council, Monash City Council, Moonee Valley City Council, Moorabool Shire Council, Moreland City Council, Mornington Peninsula Shire Council, Nillumbik Shire Council, Stonnington City Council, Whitehorse City Council, Whittlesea City Council, Wyndham City Council, Yarra City Council, Yarra Ranges, Nestle, Port Phillip & Western Port Catchment Management Authority.

Photos courtesy of Port Phillip and Western Port Waterwatch.