

# STREAMLINES

AUTUMN 2012

## Regional QA/QC

Regional QAQC is to be held in early March. The testing will be undertaken outdoors to see if we can improve our results on our turbidity reading as it is believed that reading the turbidity under false lighting could be affecting final reading results.

The day allows members to replenish supplies, clean equipment, catch up, swap stories and ask questions.

Invitations will be sent out to monitors with RSVP being essential for catering purposes.

Regional QA/QC is sponsored by SGS Australia who operate a network of over 60 offices and laboratories within Australia and provide the mystery samples for the West Gippsland Waterwatch Program.

The QAQC mystery sample testing is an important part of monitoring as it assures users of Waterwatch data that it is of good quality and can be used by various departments and organisations.

Our past pass rates and results have demonstrated a high level of competency in regard to Waterwatch monitors data collection.

I look forward to the seeing you at our March QAQC.



## Recommencement of monitoring in the Lower Latrobe Wetlands

After a long period of drought water has inundated the lower Latrobe wetlands once again. The wetlands have sprung into life with plants re-establishing and birds returning to feed, rest and breed in the wetlands.

Through funding provided by Esso and BHP Billiton new modern equipment has been purchased to re-commence monitoring of the Lower Latrobe Wetlands including Dowd Morass, Heart Morass and Sale Common.

The community is invited to join the project and have a chance to learn about the changes that occur over time to water quality in a wetland. The data collected will inform government agencies and other wetland managers and help them to understand the needs of a wetland to maintain its health and biodiversity.



The Sale Common, Heart Morass and Dowd Morass are the focus of the monitoring program aiming to add to the ten years of existing data collected before the drought by Waterwatch volunteers.

A big thanks goes out to the previous volunteers that were involved in monitoring the wetlands for collecting data that documented changes and trends over time. Re-establishing the program will provide a continuous set of water quality data for the area.





## Coastal Discovery – Minibeast Safari



This years Coastcare and Department of Sustainability and Environment annual festival of all things coastal, Summer by the Sea provided opportunities for all Victorians to get to know more about our local coastal environments. This year the minibeast safari was held on the Tarra river near Robertson's Beach. Participants found freshwater shrimp, water treaders and various crabs. This gave everyone an idea about the multitude of living creatures that can be found in the river



## Corner Inlet Connections presents 'Saltmarshes Uncovered'

On a lovely warm morning at McLoughlins Beach, the West Gippsland Catchment Management Authority (WGCMA), Waterwatch and Yarram Yarram Landcare Network (YYLN) presented the 'Saltmarshes Uncovered' information day. Speakers at the event included Professor Paul Boon (Victoria University), Susan Taylor (Department of Sustainability and Environment), Gerard Delaney (Parks Victoria) and Michelle Dickson (West Gippsland Catchment Management Authority).

Dr Paul Boon started the day discussing the Victorian Saltmarsh Study he recently completed including, why the study was important in regards to understanding the role saltmarshes play in ecosystem

health and biodiversity, and the findings that came out of the study. Key findings include the ability to divide a possibility of dividing the current Ecological Vegetation class 9 into seven distinct EVCs to reveal greater information on ecological processes within saltmarshes and there is a need to clearly recognise saltmarshes for protection in legislation and policy.

The group then walked along the boardwalk that runs through the saltmarsh that borders the estuary of the Bruthen Creek. Stopping near the boat ramp, Susan Taylor spoke about the various birds including waders that are found in the area and use saltmarshes for resting and to forage for food. After a short walk over the bridge and through the coastal vegetation that leads to McLoughlins Beach participants heard from Gerard Delaney about the beach erosion that was affecting beach access. Michelle Dickson finished the morning with a talk about the work underway by the YYLN and the WGCMA in



partnership with landholders to protect the local saltmarshes with almost 600 ha of saltmarsh now fenced to exclude livestock. Michelle also spoke about how the partnerships in the Corner Inlet Connections project are helping local communities undertake projects that will improve their local environment. The morning finished with an impressive lunch catered by the Woodside Landcare Group.



*Corner Inlet Connections ...is a partnership between government agencies, landowners and the community*

*The partnership is committed to maintaining and improving the environmental, agricultural and economic sustainability of the inlet and its surrounds.*





## SPONSOR PROFILE: Esso and BHP Billiton

ExxonMobil is the world's largest publicly traded integrated petroleum and natural gas company. We operate facilities and market products globally, and explore for oil and natural gas on six continents.

The Longford plants and associated Bass Strait oil and gas production facilities are owned by ExxonMobil Australia subsidiary Esso Australia Resources Pty Ltd (EARPL), and BHP Billiton Petroleum (Bass Strait) Pty Ltd in a 50:50 joint venture for the exploration, development and production of oil and gas from Bass Strait.

Our commitment to environmental responsibility is about more than compliance with regulations. We actively contribute to the community's environmental objectives through participation in education programs and partnerships with organisations involved in environmental research and environment protection.

One such program is our

support of West Gippsland Waterwatch – a longstanding partnership that we're proud to have been associated with for over 15 years through the Esso and BHP Billiton joint venture contributions program.

They support Waterwatch in the Gippsland region by contributing to the delivery of the Wetland monitoring program which will collect water quality data in the lower Latrobe wetlands. This allows the Waterwatch program to be re-establish water quality monitoring in the Sale Common, Heart Morass and Dowd Morass. With sponsorship allowing for the purchase of high tech

Nicole Russell shows John O'Leary, Esso's Longford Plant Manager, water quality testing methods.



meters and probes, water quality monitoring kits and resources for volunteer training events.

The Gippsland Basin Joint Venture



## The Waterbug Workshop

Are you interested in waterbugs? Well the Waterbug Workshop could be for you. The workshop is designed to give participants the skills to identify aquatic macroinvertebrates (waterbugs). The workshop will be the Seventh Waterbug Workshop (an introduction to the taxonomic identification of freshwater invertebrates) and will be held on the 11–13 of April 2012, at the Zoology Laboratories Monash University, Melbourne

Participants are taken through the array of common families of aquatic macroinvertebrates from the easiest to the hardest to identify.

Participants are encouraged to

bring their own material that they want to identify at the workshop, this ensures that the knowledge they take home is relevant to them.

The emphasis of the workshop is on building the already acquired skills on interpreting key descriptions rather than on parrot learning. Hi-tech lab equipment is utilised to demonstrate the key identification features of each group.

### Workshop Scholarship available

Interested people can apply for a Waterbug Company Scholarship. Applications are required to send an email



describing in half a page why they would like to participate. Applications are to be in by the 5 March 2012.

For more information about the workshop and how to apply for a scholarship view the waterbug shed web page <http://thewaterbug.net/workshop.html>

## West Gippsland Waterwatch Calendar

**March 2012** - QA/QC mystery sample test  
**4th March 2012** - Clean up Australia day  
**22nd March 2012** - World Water Day  
**23rd - 25th March 2012** - Earth Fest 2012, Sale and surrounding towns

## Welcome to new volunteers!

Bob Stannells (South Gippsland)

DON'T FORGET: Can all Waterwatch volunteers please get your data sheets in so the data can be included in the Waterwatch Data report 2011 .

## West Gippsland Waterwatch Contacts



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## Key Stakeholders and Sponsors

