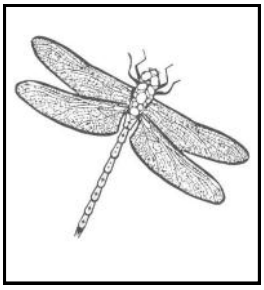


Cooma Region Waterwatch Update

JULY/AUGUST 2011

Our catchments in July– What does your data say?

Waterwatch monitoring during July found that turbidity remains low across monitored sites, correlating with steady flows in monitored streams at the time of sampling. As can be seen in the river level graphs to the right, increased flows were experienced around the end of July.

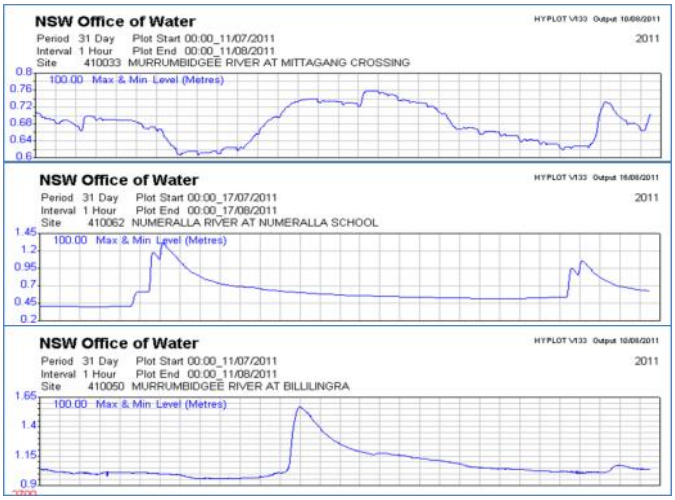
EC continues to be found at low levels in most streams, while pH levels were also within acceptable levels. Cold conditions are correlating with low water temperatures and higher oxygen levels. Nutrients were slightly higher compared to previous months in the Numeralla River and Cooma Creek.

Platypus have been spotted at various sites. This is the time when platypus become more active as they are getting ready to breed and can sometimes be spotted right in the middle of the day. Recent sightings for platypus include on the Cooma Creek, Numeralla and Badja Rivers and at the Murrumbidgee River Reserve picnic area (despite the platypus not showing itself during the recent Platypus Walk held there on the 6th of August!!). Please forward platypus sightings to Tanya Noakes at Tanya.rucokynoakes@act.gov.au

Weather (as at Cooma Visitor's Center) for July
(Source: www.bom.gov.au)

Total monthly rainfall: = 16.4 ml
Long term av. monthly rainfall: 28.9 ml
Maximum temperature for July: 13.9 ^{o}C
Minimum temperature for July: -3.0 ^{o}C

River heights (***Source: www.realtimedata.water.nsw.gov.au)***
Please note: River heights are from mid July-mid August



Water quality parameters tested by Waterwatchers in our local waterways

Turbidity– measure of 'murkiness', can be an indicator of sediment pollution. Levels above 10 NTU can affect aquatic life if occurring on a regular basis, low levels are desirable.
pH- measure of acidity. Levels between 6-8 pH units are suited for aquatic life. Levels near 7 pH units are desirable.
EC– electrical conductivity is a measure of dissolved solids or 'salts'. EC levels greater than 1000uS/cm are excessive and warrant attention. Lower EC levels are desirable.
DO– dissolved oxygen. Levels below 4mg/L cause stress to/death of aquatic life. Higher levels are desirable.
Nitrates/nitrites/phosphates– these refer to bio-available nutrient levels which will influence algal growth and productivity in stream. Excessive nutrient levels are not desirable.

Our Waterwatch data is generated by our team of dedicated volunteers. Without them this program would not be possible! Thanks to all volunteers that have contributed data this month.

If you would like to find out more or become involved in the Waterwatch program please contact your local Waterwatch Coordinator.

COOMA REGION WATERWATCH:
Antia Brademann
Cooma Region Waterwatch Coordinator
Monaro High School, Mittagang Rd
Cooma NSW 2630
Ph: 02 6452 4611
Mob: 04279778633
E: antia@coomawaterwatch.org.au
Web: www.coomawaterwatch.org.au

Want to learn more about water bugs, frogs or riparian vegetation? Look out for these free workshops coming up!

Frog seminar and field trip at Scottsdale Reserve (Bredbo)

For those interested in frogs, Frogwatch has organised a seminar about local frogs and how to identify them on the 26th of September (5:30-10:30pm), presented by frog expert Ben Scheele, at Scottsdale Reserve, Bredbo. This will be followed by a field trip to listen and record some frogs in the wild. This seminar will kick off the Frogwatch program in our region thanks to the Ginninderra Catchment Group and ACT and Region Frogwatch Coordinator, Anke Maria Hoefer. To find out more about Frogwatch or book for the seminar contact Anke Maria on (02) 6278 3309 or visit www.ginninderralandcare.org.au

Water bug workshops

The water bugs (also known as macro invertebrates) that live in our waterbodies are a good indication of available habitat as well as water quality. Waterwatch uses water bug assessments to give a broader picture of waterbody health based on the diversity and tolerance of water bug types found in a waterbody. To find out more about waterbugs and how they are used to assess waterbody health join us for one of our macro invertebrate training days to be held on the 28th of August (at Paddy's River, ACT, starting at 2pm) or on the 24th of September (Norris Park, Cooma, starting at 10am). To book contact Antia on the contacts below.

Riparian vegetation workshop

Riparian vegetation plays a big role in keeping waterways healthy. Waterwatch uses the Rapid Assessment of Riparian Condition (RARC) methodology to assess the health and integrity of riparian vegetation corridors. This looks at habitat availability, vegetation cover, native and introduced species etc to rate how healthy our river corridor is and to identify areas of high quality vegetation and what areas may need improvement. To find out more join us at our RARC training workshop to be held at Coppins Crossing (ACT) on the 17th of September, 10:30am to 2:30pm. To book contact Antia on the contacts below.

Getting out and about in the field

To gain more experience and get out and about in our region, why not join the Frogwatch program or help out with Waterwatch macro invertebrate/RARC surveys this spring? Waterwatch will be conducting a number of surveys and we welcome extra volunteers to help out with our macro invertebrate and riparian assessment surveys. Contact Antia if you are interested.

Coming Up……

- **Next Waterwatch sampling weekend–** 20th/21st August
- **Macro-invertebrate training–** 28th August, 2pm, Murrays Corner, Paddy's River. Contact Tanya Rucosky Noakes: 02 6207 2246
- **Rapid Assessment of Riparian Condition (RARC) training–** 17th September, 10:30-2:30pm, Coppins Crossing. Contact Tanya Rucosky Noakes: 02 6207 2246
- **Cooma Region QA/QC and Macro-invertebrate training day–** 24th September, 10:00-1:00pm, Norris Park, Cooma. Contact Antia: 0429778633 or antia@coomawaterwatch.org.au
- **Frogwatch seminar and field trip (Cooma Region)-** 26th September, 5:30-10:30pm, Scottsdale Reserve, via Bredbo. Contact Antia: 0429778633 or antia@coomawaterwatch.org.au
- **Riparian Week–** 3rd-9th October
- **Murrumbidgee River environmental flow release–** 11th-30th October
- **Water Week–** 16th-22nd October

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