

Annual Report, Waterwatch in the Molonglo Catchment, 2012

As in other years, I'd like to put the emphasis on what the volunteers do first, and then on the rest of the exercise.

This year so far we have had a total of 502 site reports for Water Quality sent in by our volunteer teams: that is an average of 42 reports each month, with about 19 groups participating each month. Their work can be seen in the two six-monthly Molonglo Catchment Health indication Reports on our website. Our volunteer base changes over time and we would like to say a very big thank you to those who have finished their efforts for us, and to welcome on board those who have joined us recently.

Throughout this year, using the data that our volunteers have reported we have been able to contribute to catchment environmental reporting and decision making on the Majura Road redevelopment, the Murrumbidgee to Googong Pipeline management, various reviews of EIS for The Poplars, Stage 5 at Mugga Lane Tip, and similar developments, the new Jerrabomberra Wetlands Management Plan, NCA developments in the mouth of Sullivans Creek and the revegetation of Lake Burley Griffin, and, of course, the Commissioner for the Environment's Report of Lake Burley Griffin.

Thank you very much indeed to all those loyal and hard-working volunteers!

In **January** the CHiP report on the frog census for 2011 was completed. This report is designed to give an indication of the health of our catchment based on the how many of what kinds of frogs turn up across the landscape. This trial scheme will be completed again this January, for 2012.

Going to the sustainability fair at ANU in Orientation Week payed off! There is a new team of post-graduates taking samples along the city side of Lake Burley Griffin, and one of them was even introduced by the last of the out-going team.

March was a busy month. The Highs and Lows of Rivers and Wetland Health conference highlighted the work of Dr Fran Sheldon and her teams in the Brisbane and Gold Coast waterways, and made it quite clear the key to waterway health lies in maintaining variable flows. This coincided with the first review of the Palerang Council work on water use in the peri-urban parts of the shire. Anna and I negotiated a restart to the sampling of Woolshed Creek at Etta Southwell's and became engaged again in the negotiations about the proposed new road. The postponed World Wetland Day Barbecue was finally held at Dickson Wetland and I spent the weekend before Easter at the Bermagui Bioblitz.

The autumn QA/QC, in **April**, at Lions Youth Haven in Kamar was well attended by our volunteers.

We held our first Afternoon Platypus Walk in **May**, and the good crowd were treated to several water rats, but no platypus. The Catchment Group also spent some time in Riverside Plaza letting the rest of the community know that we are here and the things we get involved in.

We had been involved, because of the volunteers' data and our work in the Lake Users Group, in the review of the catchment that the Commissioner for the Environment and Sustainability's review of the state of Lake Burley Griffin. In **June** several volunteers and committee participated in the Forum at the University of Canberra.

July, August and September included more platypus events, without seeing a platypus when the people were there, and participation in consultations like the Molonglo to Googong pipeline Environmental Review Group.

The first week of **October** found us all in the Look and Learn tent at Floriade, with a newly painted model and plenty of water samples! I also went to the MDBA Educators Show and Tell. The spring QA/QC at Black Mountain peninsula was a grand day! And so was the field day before the UMCCC Forum.

Visiting the tip on my birthday was the highlight of **November**.

In this calendar year we have engaged with ten different schools, and conducted 38 classes. While the emphasis is still on a primary school experience, there is now a shift to lower secondary engagement, particularly at Daramalan College and Lyneham High School where both schools get advantage from the local constructed wetlands. The senior secondary course is given to three schools, but may expand.