

So now all the reedbeds are topped with feathers and the bulrushes are exploding! It's the beginning of winter and the aquatic plants are going into resting mode. Hopefully we will get some decent rain soon, and the system will be able to renew itself before the rush of spring.



*The Queanbeyan at the top of the Dane St Gorge, autumn colour.*

Thank you to everyone who has sent in their results for May. We are approaching the middle of the year and need to have as much current data as we can to make a proper job of the six monthly M-CHiP review. We really would like people to try to make sure that all their first half of 2009 data is all in to us by July 1<sup>st</sup>.

**Some notable things in this month's data:**

- The ponds around the University on Sullivans Creek have high levels of phosphates and the usual high levels of electrolytes (EC range from 390 to 515  $\mu\text{S}/\text{cm}$  this time). There are also lingering remnants of the Lake Burley Griffin algal blooms.

- Weston Creek still has a major blackberry problem. How are others noting aquatic and riparian weed behaviour? Reports on Blackberry and willow would be good, and if soapwort, mint or veronica or even bulrushes are spreading or getting out of hand we'd love to know.
- The Molonglo River sites continue to be notable for their high EC readings, and the river remains sluggish.
- The Queanbeyan system remains quite healthy where it is still flowing.

It is good to see nitrates starting to be reported. We will probably have to wait a little before we can see trends or patterns.

**We have calibration buffer.** If people are in Queanbeyan, and bring in their containers they can get fresh pH 7 and pH 10 buffer for resetting their pH meters, and 1416  $\mu\text{S}/\text{cm}$  EC calibrating fluid. The EC buffer has a shelf life of about 6 months. I don't have any of the 'magic dust' to make the 520  $\mu\text{S}/\text{cm}$  EC buffer that some have been using. The other one is the standard one, and works well across a wide range.

### **Why we issue you with a card, annually.**

We really value the work you do and the data you collect. Our funding is dependent on being able to assure the funding authorities that you all know how to use and maintain your equipment and go about collecting your data in the accepted manner. It was intimated to us that we needed to have a list of accredited field workers. We decided that we would do this by issuing volunteers with a card when they attended a refresher course, a training session or the half-yearly QA/QC sessions. And people can arrange to come in to the office, discuss how they are going with their monitoring, get their equipment checked and get a card, too.

We would love all of you to attend the QA/QC sessions...they are our social gathering as well as our check on your equipment and practice. And I cannot emphasise enough that the calibration fluids, especially the EC one, have a short shelf life and need to be renewed regularly. We are not the National Association of Testing Authorities, and we are not going to take away your kit or your right to sample.