

## November 2012 in our Catchment

Now, as we enter summer (mid-summer in the southern hemisphere is a few days before Christmas) everything in the catchment, friend and foe alike, is filled with vitality. Hemlock appears to be the star turn this year!

For those of you who have good reason to be out of here for some or all of the next two months, do not panic. If you get to monitor your sites on two occasions during the holiday season that would be wonderful! If you miss one, or even both, it is no disaster. Thank you all for your very conscientious efforts across the whole of 2012.

### Your Results

**pH:** While some sites continue to have low values, such as the upper Queanbeyan River, and others persist at elevated levels, the Telopea Creek drain, in Barton, was markedly elevated.

**Electrical Conductivity:** As well as the usual suspects (Stony Creek Carwoola and Yarralumla Creek in Curtin for instance) three of the urban wetland or drainage sites were elevated, Eddison Park and Norgrove Park in particular, and one point along Jerrabomberra Creek in the rural area. Burra Creek at the outlet also was up on previous months.

**Dissolved Oxygen:** Two of the sites with algal activity, one urban and one rural were poor for oxygen.

**Phosphorus:** The water round the edges of Lake Burley Griffin and the mouth of Sullivans Creek are already showing the presence of plenty of Phosphorus. There really is an urgent need to clean up the many small inflows into the lake basins.

**Algae:** There is blanket weed in Telopea Creek drain and in the middle of Sullivans Creek in the ANU. The small dam and the overflow in the Watson Wetlands are showing cyanobacterial blooms.

### It really is a pest!

I suppose African Lovegrass (*Eragrostis curvula*) is not strictly a water plant but it does mighty well along creek-lines. And while I was down in the Riverina last week, sampling for useful algae, I saw once again what a first class pest it can be! We drove from Darlington Point into the Coleambally Irrigation Area. As we approached the main channel we could see a digger poised on the edge of the bank, dipping its bucket into the water! Now, as you know, diggers don't drink water! When we stopped we realised that the whole channel at the sluice gate on the east side of the road was choked with windblown heads of grass ... African lovegrass no less! Out in the dry wilga scrub between the Murrumbidgee and the irrigation area the grass probably thrives in the early spring and then dries out quickly and the brittle candelabra the seeds hang on roll gently into the channel, then get swept round to the nearest sluice gate and ... look what you get!

Keep an eye out for African lovegrass in your area. The tussocks can look like some of the Poa species, but the dark green to blue-green leaves are distinctive, and most of the tips curve and curl as they mature and dry out. The panicles are large and open and the flower heads are steel grey-green rather than the mauve or reddish tints of the local Poa species. Let your council know where it is. They have the tools to deal with it.



### Calendar

15 <sup>th</sup> and 16 <sup>th</sup> December	Waterwatch Monitoring	Your sites
19 <sup>th</sup> and 20 <sup>th</sup> January 2013	Waterwatch Monitoring	Your sites

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The operation of the Molonglo Catchment Group and Waterwatch program is assisted by the Australian Government's Caring for our Country and the ACT Government. Some administrative assistance is provided by the Australian Government's GVESHO program.