




Catchment Update Autumn 2016

In General: *I know. It's a sickenly cute squirrel. Away it's better than all the oak leaves on offer in 'clip art'. They just clog our urban waterways this time of year (the real ones not the ones in clip art.....obviously..).*

Water bug surveys were conducted in at least one site in most reaches over autumn. Thank you to all the volunteers who did this at their sites. I also want to thank all the others for either covering additional sites (Kacey-Lee and Alison from the latest Green Army team) or, as our esteemed Facilitator Woo O'Reilly and our Scientific Officer Dan Starrs did, by dragging themselves away from the office. I also want to thank the members of the University of Canberra's Environmental Science Society for also trekking south in their free time to monitor sites both urban and rural. [Follow the yellow shrimp road](#) 

On a completely unrelated note, while poking around the **ALA data base** to show someone how super spiffy it is, I discovered an issue when trying to view all data. To actually look at **ALL** the Waterwatch data on the site and not just your own, you need to avoid the automatic temptation to 'log in'. **Don't log in**. Just go straight to the '**View Records**' tab. The Waterwatch world will open up before you ☺. But be patient. The map will take a while to change from the whole of Australia to a view of our region with yellow spots everywhere. Very impressive when you see it for the first time. <http://root.ala.org.au/bdrs-core/umww/review/sightings/advancedReview.htm>

Anyway, on with the show;

Murrumbidgee River;



Murrumbidgee River @ Casuarina Sands in April

Murrumbidgee River CMM6 *Michelago to Tharwa 'Sandwash'.*

6 out of 6 data sets were received for the 2 sites in this reach.

The top part of the Murrumbidgee River was looking good this season. Thanks to Bernie and Deb for keeping an eye out. Deb reported damage to the steps at Tharwa Sandwash in March.



Site: Angle Crossing Score: 4.9 Variety: 9

GOOD

Murrumbidgee River CMM7 *Murrumbidgee River; Tharwa 'Sandwash' to Point Hut Crossing.*

4 out of 12 data sets were received for the 4 sites in this reach.

Survey of waterbugs conducted by the enthusiastic students of Erindale College. Try as they might only a poor result was found.



Site: Point Hut Crossing Score: 3.5 Variety: 5

POOR

Murrumbidgee River CMM8 *Murrumbidgee River; Point Hut Crossing to Kambah Pool.*

4 out of 5 data sets were received for the 2 sites in this reach.

At Pine Island the Erindale College students had a happier bug result.



Site: Pine Island Score: 4.8 Variety: 8

GOOD

Murrumbidgee River CMM9 *Murrumbidgee River; Casuarina Sands to Uriarra Crossing.*

6 out of 6 data sets were received for the 2 sites in this reach.

A turbidity score of 30NTUs was recorded at Uriarra Crossing in March. And the state of Casuarina Sands was of such a concern that it was reported to the ACT Government. Wendy of 'Sands' Waterwatch team could only find mostly tolerant bugs at Casuarina Sands.



Site: Casuarina Sands Score: 3.8 Variety: 7

POOR

Spring Station Creek CMS1 *Top of creek to confluence with Murrumbidgee River.*

1 out of 3 data sets were received for the 1 site in this reach.



No survey done. Rain foiled plans by Kacey and Alison of the Green Army to check this site for us.

Castle Hill Creek UMC1 *Creek on Castle Hill Homestead.*

0 out of 3 data sets were received for the 1 site in this reach.

No data submitted.



No survey done. Rain foiled Kacey and Alison's plans again.

Barney's Gully MMB1 *Woodcock Drive to confluence with Murrumbidgee River*

3 out of 3 data sets were received for the 1 site in this reach.

Deb reported a milky creek with a turbidity reading of 35NTUs in April. Bug survey done by Kacey and Alison from the Green Army



Score: 3.9 Variety: 4

POOR

Swamp Creek LMS1 *Uriarra Creek confluence to Murrumbidgee River confluence.*

3 out of 3 data sets were received for the 1 site in this reach.

The members of Canberra University's Environmental Science Society discovered a creek in 'good health' this season.



Score: 4.1 Variety: 8

GOOD

Stranger Pond MSP1 *Stranger Pond in North Bonython.*

1 out of 6 data sets were received for the 2 sites in this reach.

Erindale College assisted again by conducting the bug survey for this pond as part of their Ecology class.



Site: Dam wall Score: 4.3 Variety: 11

GOOD



Ian and some of the team at Lions Youth Haven

Westwood Farm TMM1

McQuoid's Hill to Murrumbidgee River.

5 out of 6 data sets were received for the 2 sites in this reach.

A new education program at 'Lions Youth Haven' headed by Ian Crabb, has provided a new energetic team monitoring this reach. Students from both Carolyn Chisholm and Calwell High School provided the results this season.



Sites: Farm dam and creek Average Score: 3.4 Average Variety: 7 **POOR**

Coleman Ridge dams RAN1 *Two dams on Coleman Ridge.*

4 out of 4 data sets were received for the 2 sites in this reach.

The dams on Coleman Ridge were both extremely muddy and full of phosphorus this season. Cattle had been in the old dam and this pushed the NTUs to 100 by April. The Coleman Ridge Parkcare Waterwatch team sent in a detailed report on this issue. Water bugs were once again surveyed by the good folk from the UC.



Site: Kathner Street Dam Score: 3.53 Variety: 6

POOR

Tuggeranong Creek;

Upper Tuggeranong Creek TUG1 *Headwaters of Tuggeranong Creek catchment to Theodore.*

1 out of 3 data sets were received for the 1 site in this reach.

Water bug survey conducted by the lovely Yr7s from Chisholm HS.



Score: 3.6 Variety: 6

POOR

Middle Tuggeranong Creek TUG2 *Concrete drains system upstream of Isabella Pond.*

1 out of 12 data sets were received for the 4 sites in this reach.

A difficult bug surveys were conducted by the terrific students from Carolyn Chisholm HS. To find any living animals in this concrete drain was a feat.



Site: Average Score: 2.0 Average Variety: 0.5

POOR

Tuggeranong Creek TUG3 *Tuggeranong Creek to Murrumbidgee River confluence.*

1 out of 3 data sets were received for the 1 site in this reach.

The Green Army recorded a better bug score this season than any I can remember for this stretch of the creek. Interesting.



Score: 4.5 Variety: 8

GOOD

Lake Tuggeranong Wetlands TLT1 *Drakeford Drive weir to South Quay foot bridge weir.*

4 out of 6 data sets were received for the 2 active sites in this reach.

South Quay and the wetlands upstream recorded 30 NTUs in March and the wetlands had a stagnant dissolved oxygen reading of 3.8mg/L then as well.

UC team provided the bug score.



Score: 2.25 Variety: 4

POOR

Lake Tuggeranong TLT2 *Main body of Lake.*

12 out of 14 data sets were received for the 5 active sites in this reach.

Lake Tuggeranong College were back on board this season and recorded that the mud from the southern inflows was also in the main lake body with a turbidity score of 30NTU at both sites near the town center. There Ecology class also ran the nets around 2 sites to monitor the bugs.



Sites: College boat jetty and Town Park beach Average Score: 3.8 Average Variety: 5 **POOR**

Isabella Pond TIP1 *Large pond south of Monash.*

3 out of 6 data sets were received for the 2 sites in this reach.

March also saw high turbidity and stagnant conditions upstream of Lake Tuggeranong in Isabella Pond with Eileen and Stuart getting exactly the same turbidity and dissolved oxygen readings as Walt in March.

Bug survey by UC.



Site: Isabella Pond South Score: 2.75 Variety: 8

GOOD

Goodwin Village Pond RAN2

Small pond at Goodwin Village, Monash.

0 out of 3 data sets were received for the 1 site in this reach.

No data submitted.

Carolyn Chisholm HS Yr7's provided the bug score.



Score: 2.8 Variety: 5

POOR



Students from Carolyn Chisholm HS and some old bloke.

Fadden Pond *Small pond in Fadden.*

2 out of 3 data sets were received for the 1 site in this reach.

No macroinvertebrate survey conducted.

Point Hut Pond;

Point Hut Ponds MPG1 *Headwater of Conder Creek to Point Hut Pond.*

15 out of 15 data sets were received for the 5 active sites in this reach.

This reach had a variety of lowlights this season. Steve from 'Carers of Point Hut Pond' Waterwatch noted the continued garnish of a submerged motorcycle at the southern end of the lake while Alan recorded phosphorus levels of 0.15 mg/L in the north, in March. Vera found her GPT under Box Hill Ave very stagnant with a dissolved oxygen level of 3.2mg/L. Vera also provided the bug survey from that site.



Site: Conder creek GPT Score: 4.5 Variety: 4

POOR

Cotter River;

Cotter River MCC1 *Downstream of the Cotter Dam.*

3 out of 6 data sets were received for the 2 sites in this reach.

Fleur from Paddy's River Waterwatch confirmed that this stretch of the Cotter is not as healthy as the one above the dam.



Site: Cotter campground Score: 4.7 Variety: 6

POOR

Cotter River MCC2 *Pipeline Rd crossing to Vanity's Crossing*

3 out of 3 data sets were received for the 1 site in this reach.

Bernie from ACT Parks and Conservation kept a meticulously eye on this part of the Cotter river.



Score: 5.3 Variety: 8

GOOD

Daddy's River;

Paddy's River catchment CTP1 *Tidbinbilla Rd bridge to Murray's Corner.*

9 out of 9 data sets were received for the 3 sites in this reach.

This reach was comprehensively monitored by 3 terrific teams, who also completed the water bug surveys.



Sites: Murray's corner & Flints crossing Average Score: 4.0 Average Variety: 8

GOOD

Tidbinbilla River CTT1 *Headwater of Tidbinbilla River and Ashbrook Creek to Gilmores Road Crossing.*
Includes Sanctuary wetlands

15 out of 15 data sets were received for the 5 sites in this reach.

The readings of concern for Tidbinbilla this season all came from within the Sanctuary. In March the monitored pond at the end of the system recorded a pH of 9.1, a phosphorus reading of 0.2mg/L and a turbidity of 30 NTUs. The monitoring point at the middle of Tidbinbilla river also had a phosphorous level of 0.21 mg/L at this time. Bug survey and water monitoring was all conducted by the friendly team of CVA Interpreters.



Sites: 3 sites in Tidbinbilla NR Average Score: 5.6 Average Variety: 5

FAIR

Gibraltar Creek GIB *Top of river to Woods Reserve.*

6 out of 6 data sets were received for the 2 sites in this reach.

This is arguably the reference site for our region. Monitoring of bugs was conducted by Woo O'Reilly, our esteemed UMWW facilitator. See the photo of her on Facebook enjoying a gordian worm. Priceless.

www.facebook.com/ACT-Landcare-and-Waterwatch-466689643385473/

Thanks to John too, who never misses a beat in his monitoring.



Site: Woods Reserve Score: 6.4 Variety: 9

EXCELLENT

Gudgenby River;

Gudgenby River catchment CGG1 *Headwaters of small creeks and Orroral River to the Murrumbidgee River confluence.*

6 out of **15** data sets were received for the **5** sites in this reach.
Water bug survey done by the lovely Green Army team.



Site: Smith's road bridge Score: **5.1** Variety: **9**

GOOD

Bogong Creek catchment CGB1 *Headwaters to Yankee Hat trail bridge.*

6 out of **6** data sets were received for the **3** sites in this reach.

Martin and Michaela do a top job of monitoring both this reach and Hospital Creek. They also completed the bug surveys for both as well.



Site: Yankee hat trail bridge Score: **5.5** Variety: **9**

EXCELLENT

Hospital Creek catchment CGH1 *Headwater of Hospital Breakfast and Little Dry Creeks to the confluence with the Gudgenby River.*

8 out of **8** data sets were received for the **4** sites in this reach.

The boggy section in the middle of Hospital Creek had a stagnant dissolved oxygen reading of 2.3mg/L in April. This only the third time in 13 years Martin has seen this happen.



Site: Hospital Ck Nth Score: **5.1** Variety: **8**

GOOD

Naas River;

Naas River NNN1 *Headwater to Gudgenby River confluence.*

2 out of **15** data sets were received for the **6** sites in this reach.

UMWW's dynamic duo of Dan and Woo conducted the bug survey.



Site: Caloola farm Score: **4.6** Variety: **12**

GOOD

A huge thank you to all those groups and individuals involved in collecting data. Waterwatch volunteers provide vital and immediate information on the state of our waterways which is used regularly by government, consultants and corporations and other agencies locally and nationally. To view Upper Murrumbidgee Waterwatch data go to <http://www.act.waterwatch.org.au> . For more information contact the SACTCG Waterwatch Coordinator on 62966400 or at waterwatch@sactcg.org.au .

Martin Lind.

