



## WEEKLY BULLETIN

August 1st 2011. No 59

**Lou Mawson** : Lakes Hub Coordinator

**Andrew Dawes** : Lakes Hub – Info. & Admin. Officer Meningie

**Jo McPhee** : Community Nursery Coordinator Milang

**Carole Richardson** : Project Officer Coordinator GWLAP Milang

**Regina Durbridge** : Monitoring & Evaluation Project Officer GWLAP Milang

**Leah Sullivan** : Revegetation Project Officer GWLAP Milang

**Terry Sim** : Fencing grants Project Officer GWLAP Milang

**Ken Strother** : Revegetation Project Officer GWLAP Meningie

**Joy Mayberry** : Hub Office Admin assistant ( part time ) Milang

### Lakes Hub contacts

Office – Milang phone 8537 0808

Office – Meningie phone 8575 1830

Email Milang Office [info@lakesub.com](mailto:info@lakesub.com)

Meningie Office [meningie@lakeshub.com](mailto:meningie@lakeshub.com)

Web [www.lakeshub.com](http://www.lakeshub.com)

*The Lakes Hub is part of the Lower Lakes Bioremediation and Revegetation Project funded by the Australian Government and supported by the South Australian Department of Environment and Natural Resources.*

### Bony Bream deaths

There have been reports across Lakes Alexandrina, Albert and up into the River Murray of dead Bony Bream. It is believed that these minor fish kills are caused by recent cold water temperatures. This particular species is highly sensitive and has low tolerance to changing water temperatures, in particular very cold water. Primary Industries of SA ( PIRSA ) and the Environmental Protection Authority (EPA) said that fish deaths are a seasonal natural occurrence due to the current cold weather conditions and it is very common to find dead Bony Bream throughout the region during the months of July and August. Temperatures have plummeted in the region recently and with conditions still and clear, both factors contributing to the Bony Bream mortalities. At this stage no other species have been identified as being affected.



*Photo courtesy of Alex Stone of Milang*

**PIRSA has urged people to report any fish kills to the 24-hour Fishwatch hotline 1800 065 522.**

### **FISH FACTS – Bony Bream ( *Fluviolosa richardsoni* ) Ngarrindjeri = Thukeri**



Bony Bream are a native Australian species and are a member of the Herring family. They occupy freshwater rivers in most regions of Australia. Their distribution includes all states except Tas. They are infrequently found in inland areas of central W.A. and N.T.

Bony Bream usually grow to 12 -15 cm in length, but fish have been found that are up to 48 cm long and weigh as much as 2 kg. Bony Bream can live for up to 3 years.

The Bony Bream is found in the lower areas of the Murray-Darling Basin (those areas that are less than 200m above sea level). The largest numbers are found in the Darling River and the rivers that flow from it.

Bony Bream are probably the only native fish in the Basin whose numbers have not gone down due to changes in river regulations. They are not threatened at this time.

## Queen's Own Town and the Finniss district

Source : *Regiment on the River, Author Heather Partridge 1994*

European settlement began around Lake Alexandrina from around 1843. The area of Finniss was surveyed in the late 1830's and named Queen's Own Town as the Queen's Own Royal West Kent Regiment was camped in the area for several years. In 1839 the land in the area was surveyed into farming blocks with the first lands being taken up in 1840. Farming was the main industry; by 1869 the town was properly established and was a major camp for the construction workers of the rail link between Victor Harbor and Strathalbyn.

The name was not changed from Queen's Own Town to Finniss until 1940.



It was named after Boyle Travers Finniss ( 18 Aug 1807-24 Dec 1893). Mr Finniss was initially appointed assistant surveyor to Colonel William Light in 1835 before becoming the first Premier of South Australia in 1856. During his surveying days he was heavily involved in surveying land in the Finniss area and surveying the railway line from Strathalbyn to Victor Harbor. This rail line was a horse/ bullock drawn rail car or tramway. Construction began in 1866 which was an extension of the first railway built in the country which started in Goolwa ( 1851) and went to Port Elliot and later to Victor Harbor. More information on this rail line can be found in the Lakes Hub Bulletin No 57 July 18<sup>th</sup> 2011.

## Native Fish Booming up north

Source: *The Murray Mallee Whistler Newsletter Edition 7– June 2011. A DENR production.*

Recent high flows in the River Murray created ideal conditions on adjacent floodplains for several species of native fish including endangered species.

Ecologists from the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) and the Department for Water (DFW) have been working on a collaborative project recording 11 native species using the habitat on the Chowilla and Katarapko floodplains. Flows created by floods are vital for the successful breeding of many native fish and surveys found many juvenile fish using these temporary flooded habitats.

The native species discovered include Gallop (*Macquaria ambigua ambigua*) and Freshwater Catfish (*Tandanus tandanus*). The Freshwater Catfish are a protected species currently being considered for re-classification as an endangered species.

Other rare native fish found during the surveys include Dwarf Flat Head Gudgeon (*Philynodon macrostomus*), Un-specked Hardyhead (*Craterocephalus stercusmuscarum*) and Murray Darling Rainbowfish (*Melanotaenia fluviatilis*). Another notable native fish species caught during the surveys is the Spangled Perch (*Leiopotherapon unicolor*) which were caught on the Chowilla floodplain. This species has only been recorded in South Australia on two other occasions as the climate is generally too cold, although they are widely found throughout the Darling catchment. Finding this species in the lower Murray is a good example of how rivers such as the Murray provide links for species and ecosystems across vast distances.

Four pest fish species were recorded including the Oriental Weatherloach (*Misgurnus anguillicaudatus*) which has not previously been recorded in South Australia, however, are found commonly in other parts of the Murray. The high flow provided many opportunities for river and floodplain flora and fauna. Floods provide an essential flush of nutrients and food which gets washed downstream and in from floodplains to drive the riverine food webs. Many fish require specific conditions for successful breeding and there is a lot of work going on to improve our understanding of the importance of habitats and flow conditions.

The flooding cycle that we have recently experienced is important to the survival and health of all native fish populations regardless of which section of the river, floodplain or wetlands the fish use.

If you would like to be added to the Murray Mallee Whistler Newsletter email list please contact Benita Dillon on [benita.dillon@sa.gov.au](mailto:benita.dillon@sa.gov.au) or phone 85952204 (Mondays, Wednesdays and Thursdays).

## Amendment to contact details

Please note that the mobile phone number for the MEC Nursery was incorrect in the previous Bulletin. The corrected contact details are below.

### **Milang Environment Centre Community Nursery**

**Manager : Deb Melville**

**Contact : 0448959699**

**Email [mecnursery@lakeshub.com](mailto:mecnursery@lakeshub.com)**

**Operation days – by appointment**

**Volunteers appreciated**

**Plants for sale – contact Deb Melville**



## The Landcare Landscape – 2011 Landcare Volunteering Survey

Landcare Australia Limited is seeking to gain an understanding of the operating environment of the Landcare movement and its needs by surveying people who are actively involved in their local Landcare group.

If you play an active role in the Landcare movement, we would greatly appreciate your assistance in gathering information by completing the following survey which should take no more than 10-15 minutes of your time. Everyone who fully completes the survey will go into a draw to receive one of 20 grants worth \$500 for their group.

The survey results may be made public to help raise awareness of the Landcare movement and the vital role it plays in repairing and protecting Australia's biodiversity and the uptake of sustainable production practices. However, your individual identity will remain anonymous.

You can participate in this survey if you are a Landcare, Coastcare, Bushcare, 'Friends of', Rivercare or Dunecare group, a group of farmers embracing sustainable farm management or any community group that works on volunteer environmental projects in their local communities.

The survey closes at 11.59pm (EST) on Sunday, August 7th 2011

The survey can be completed on the Landcare Australia web site: [www.landcareonline.com.au](http://www.landcareonline.com.au) or by clicking this link:

<http://www.landcareonline.com.au/news/archive/the-landcare-landscape-2011-landcare-volunteering-survey/>

## Environmental water requirements for the lower lakes & Coorong

*Reference : Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR)*

The work to determine the environmental water requirements for the Coorong, Lower Lakes and Murray Mouth region have been identified. To view the targets and findings control/click on the following link :

[http://www.environment.sa.gov.au/Conservation/Rivers\\_wetlands/Coorong\\_Lower\\_Lakes\\_Murray\\_Mouth/The\\_environment/Water\\_flows\\_levels/Environmental\\_water\\_requirements/Targets\\_findings](http://www.environment.sa.gov.au/Conservation/Rivers_wetlands/Coorong_Lower_Lakes_Murray_Mouth/The_environment/Water_flows_levels/Environmental_water_requirements/Targets_findings)

## RIVER MURRAY FLOW ADVICE

For current flow / level reports on the River Murray and Lakes go to the following website [www.waterforgood.sa.gov.au](http://www.waterforgood.sa.gov.au)

Up-to-date River Murray flow and water level information can be accessed at the Department for Water, SA Water and Murray-Darling Basin Authority websites:

<http://data.rivermurray.sa.gov.au>

[www.sawater.com.au/SAWater/Environment/TheRiverMurray/River+Murray+Levels.htm](http://www.sawater.com.au/SAWater/Environment/TheRiverMurray/River+Murray+Levels.htm)

<http://www.mdba.gov.au/water/live-river-data>

Details of river height and rainfall information in the River Murray within Victoria and New South Wales are available at the Bureau of Meteorology website:

<http://www.bom.gov.au/vic/flood>

Information on the discharge of acid drainage water into the Lower River Murray can be accessed online at [www.waterforgood.sa.gov.au](http://www.waterforgood.sa.gov.au)

# DAILY RECORDINGS – RIVER MURRAY DATA

Data received from <http://e-nrims.dwlbc.sa.gov.au/Telemetry/Default.aspx?App=RMW>

Date : July 25th - 29th 2011

Date	Site	WATER LEVEL AHD	SALT (EC)
25	Goolwa	0.604	
26		0.676	
27		0.719	
28		0.664	
29		0.586	
		<b>0.650</b>	
25	Milang Jetty	0.617	558
26		0.658	555
27		0.668	553
28		0.651	519
29		0.602	596
		<b>0.639</b>	<b>556</b>
25	Raukkan offshore	0.638	1091
26		0.652	965
27		0.656	829
28		0.646	995
29		0.608	839
		<b>0.640</b>	<b>944</b>
25	Meningie Jetty	0.699	5182
26		0.678	5371
27		0.691	5410
28		0.714	5522
29		0.648	6414
		<b>0.686</b>	<b>5580</b>



## **NOTE CHANGE OF SITES**

### **MONTHLY AVERAGES FOR July 2011**

	WATER LEVEL AHD	SALT (EC)
Goolwa	0.697	
Milang	0.688	573
Raukkan	0.688	806
Meningie	0.723	5859

### **THIS TIME 11 MONTHS AGO – AUGUST 2010**

	WATER LEVEL AHD	PH	SALT (EC)
Clayton	0.121	8.27	15146
Milang	0.456	7.95	3581
H.Island	0.435	8.67	18924
Albert	-0.389	8.79	12159

# CALENDAR OF EVENTS for more info contact the Lakes Hub

If you have any relevant community event or courses that you would like added to the Calendar of Events please contact the Lakes Hub.

## August 2011

1	
2	Finniss Nursery working bee 9.00 – noon. Volunteers welcome Contact Helen Fenton 8536 0093 <a href="mailto:helenf@activ8.net.au">helenf@activ8.net.au</a>
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