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The Lakes Hub is the initiative of the Milang and District Community Association and is part of the South Australian Government's Murray Futures program, funded by the Australian Government's Water for the Future initiative.

The Sandhill Greenhood orchid (*Pterostylis arenicola*)

The only place in the world to see a Sandhill Greenhood orchid is in our own region of South Australia. Ken Strother, Revegetation Officer for the Coorong / Tatiara Local Action Planning Association (CTLAP) has captured the Sandhill Greenhood Orchid in flower in this stunning photograph (below) taken in the Nurrung Peninsula area.

More information -:

Pterostylis arenicola is endemic to South Australia and in 1991 was considered to be restricted to less than 1% of its original distribution (Bates and Weber 1990), however more populations have since been found. Populations are present at Tailem Bend, Grange (suburban Adelaide), Potter's Scrub in the Coorong National Park and Poltalloch (near Meningie) (Jusaitis and Sorensen 1997).

The current study located populations at Tailem Bend, Grange, Potter's Scrub in the Coorong National Park, Poltalloch and other locations on the Narrung Peninsula.

Of the nine populations recorded during this field survey, two are conserved in National Parks, one is conserved in a council reserve, one is conserved in a Heritage Agreement and five are not conserved. Three new populations (that were previously unrecorded in government databases) were recorded during this survey.

The extent of occurrence of this species is 2468.3 km² (246,824 hectares).

Given that *P. arenicola* is **listed as vulnerable** it is considered that all known habitat is critical to the survival of the species. Recovery actions include surveying for further populations that would lead to the identification of additional habitat critical to the survival of the species.

Reference :South Australian Murray Darling Basin Threatened Flora Recovery Plan - Chris Obst May 2005



Ken has a large print of this photograph at the Lakes Hub in Meningie should you wish to take a closer look.

Community Advisory Roles – Expressions of interest

Expressions of Interest are being sought from members of the Coorong, Lower Lakes and Murray Mouth (CLLMM) community to provide advice to the South Australian Government about projects and activities proposed within the region.

A community advisory panel is being established for the *Murray Futures* Coorong, Lower Lakes and Murray Mouth (CLLMM) Program and *The Living Murray* (TLM) Icon Site Program. The aim of the panel is to integrate community values and opinion into the on-going management of the CLLMM region by providing advice about, and a community perspective on, projects and management actions proposed for the region under the two programs.

Further information and the Expression of Interest form are available from the Department of Environment and Natural Resources website – www.environment.sa.gov.au/cllmm

OR

http://www.environment.sa.gov.au/Conservation/Rivers_wetlands/Coorong_Lower_Lakes_Murray_Mouth/The_community/Community_Advisory_Roles - and the Department for Water website – www.waterforgood.sa.gov.au

Or contact Gemma Cunningham on (08) 8204 9453 or email gemma.cunningham@sa.gov.au

Expressions of Interest submissions close 5 pm 27th January 2012.

Weed management videos now online

The Adelaide and Mount Lofty Ranges NRM Board has posted short videos on line featuring local weeds and control methods. Some of the weeds in the spotlight are Caltrop, Blackberry, Cape Tulip, Willow, Gorse, Broom, Bridal Creeper and Olive. Also videos of individuals and scientists talking about such things as water trading entitlements, water planning allocations, chemical handling, Penguins, Locusts etc

To access these videos go to <http://www.youtube.com/user/amlrnrmboard>

Comments on the Coorong – Part 2

By Garry Hera-Singh, Coorong Fisherman

The last 14 months of continuous flow down the River Murray and out the Murray Mouth has transformed this almost collapsed ecosystem of the lower lakes and Coorong region into an amazing moving body of creatures, big and small. Water fowl, migratory waders and piscivorous birds have returned in their thousands, most notably to the estuary region of the Coorong. This is how I remember the Coorong more than forty years ago and how my family describe the Coorong 90 years ago with one exception, the south lagoon used to have as many species of birds as the north lagoon. Unfortunately the south lagoon salinities are still high after this major flow event ie. > *85,000EC's. This may be ideal for the aquatic plant - *Ruppia Tuberosa* but it certainly is too high for all of the commercial fish species and almost too high for many of the non – consumptive species of fish except for the soft mouth hardy head.



While this recent flood event has provided a massive turn around to the ecology of the lower lakes and Coorong there is a real likelihood that the South lagoon will return to the exceptionally high hyper saline levels experienced during last ten years unless further flows continue.

Bird species are easily seen so are an immediate indicator to the response of major flow events. However, fish are “under water and out of sight” so the recognition of a major ‘turn around’ of stock levels is not easily proven. All commercial species are not legally taken until the third year of growth which is described as the ‘minimum legal length’. This principle ensures that a species has spawned at least once before it may be caught by the commercial or the recreational sector. The fishing industry expects a very strong year class (2010-2011) of many fish species to dominate catches for the next ten years.

Prior to European settlement river flows were almost every year with varying magnitudes of flow. These varying events occurred over many thousands of years so most fish species and bird life adapted and then began to rely on the episodic flow regime for recruitment and growth rates. Freshwater and estuarine fish species developed a very

high reproductive capacity to exploit these infrequent flow events. Most notably, Golden Perch (Callop), Black Bream, Greenback Flounder, Pipi's (Cockles) and Congolli. Other species such as Mulloway and Yellow eye Mullet are marine dominant so are significantly less reliant on freshwater flows. The fishery has been described as a ' Boom and Bust' type fishery (Pierce and Doonan 1998) which reflects the episodic nature of river flows.

There is no doubt that the Lakes and Coorong fishery would of disappeared if it had not been for the dredging program at the Murray Mouth. Industry clearly understands that most of the commercial species migrate in and out of the Coorong. These fish do not have legs to crawl over the sandbars that were engulfing the region and severely restricting any seawater from entering the Coorong. While more than 35 million dollars was spent on the dredging of the Murray Mouth it was money well spent keeping the Coorong on life support until river flows returned.

The 32 licence holders with 36 licences have remained in business supporting their communities from Goolwa to Meningie. This has meant that the 104 people employed by the industry still have jobs and the value to this state remains around \$32 million per annum from direct and indirect flow of benefits (Econsearch 2009-10) These figures may be miniscule compared to other industries but the local community rely heavily on the supply of locally caught fresh seafood. This small fishery has been servicing the community for more than 150 years so there is now a broad consumer expectation to provide local seafood products. Industry hopes with optimal river flow management, timely releases through the barrages and a far greater appreciation by society of the degradation of habitat issues, our Lakes and Coorong fishery will continue to feed people for another 150 years!

Editors note :

* '**piscivorous**' describes a carnivorous diet that consists largely of fish, though a piscivorous diet may also include similar aquatic foods such as aquatic insects, mollusks and crustaceans. Piscivorous birds are equipped with specialized bills to capture fish either by spearing them with a sharp tip or catching them with ridged edges. Sharp, strong talons can also help some fish-eating birds capture their prey.

For more information on the Lakes and Coorong Fishery go to <http://www.coorongfishery.com>

NATIONAL WINNER - Australian Seafood Industry Awards - Environment Award Gold Coast - Seafood Directions Conference 2011

STATE WINNER - Seafood for the Future - Environment Award SA Seafood Industry Awards 2011

* **electrical conductivity (EC) units.** The measure of a solution's ability to conduct electricity. EC units are used to express salinity levels in soil and water. When salt is dissolved in water the conductivity increases, so the more salt, the higher the EC value. The table below shows some EC unit ranges for different water types.

Note that sea water is about 50,000 EC compared to the water in the Southern lagoon of around 85,000 EC at present. As of 16.12.2011 the salinity level reading at Snipe Island in the Southern lagoon is 98,546 EC.

| Table 4.3: Some electrical conductivity ranges | |
|--|---------------------------------|
| Water type | Electrical conductivity (µS/cm) |
| Deionised water | 0.5-3 |
| Pure rainwater | <15 |
| Freshwater rivers | 0-800 |
| Marginal river water | 800-1600 |
| Brackish water | 1600-4800 |
| Saline water | >4800 |
| Seawater | 51 500 |
| Industrial waters | 100-10 000 |

Source: Suttar S., Ribbons of Blue Handbook. Scitech, Victoria, 1990.

Threatened species, ecological communities or key threatening processes listing

Nominations are invited for the assessment period starting 1 October 2012, for any species, ecological communities or key threatening processes to be considered for listing under national environment law.

The conservation theme for this assessment period is corridors and connecting habitats (including freshwater habitats). Nominations consistent with this conservation theme are encouraged, but nominations outside the theme will also be considered. **Nominations close 5pm Thursday 22 March 2012**

For further information and nominations go to:

<http://www.environment.gov.au/biodiversity/threatened/nominations.html>

RIVER MURRAY – weekly FLOW ADVICE

For weekly flow / level reports on the River Murray and Lakes go to the following website 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.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

DAILY RECORDINGS – RIVER MURRAY DATA

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

DATE **NOV 7th - 11th 2011**

| DATE | SITE | WATER LEVEL (AHD) | SALT (EC) |
|------|-----------------------------------|--------------------|-----------|
| 7 | GOOLWA | 0.738 | 559 |
| 8 | | 0.784 | 554 |
| 9 | | 0.798 | 543 |
| 10 | | 0.674 | 544 |
| 11 | | 0.804 | 696 |
| | AVERAGE | 0.760 | 579 |
| DATE | SITE | WATER LEVEL (AHD) | SALT (EC) |
| 7 | MILANG JETTY | 0.752 | 438 |
| 8 | | 0.794 | 444 |
| 9 | | 0.773 | 445 |
| 10 | | 0.717 | 445 |
| 11 | | 0.768 | 452 |
| | AVERAGE | 0.761 | 445 |
| DATE | SITE | WATER LEVEL(AHD) | SALT (EC) |
| 7 | RAUKKAN OFFSHORE | 0.744 | 380 |
| 8 | | 0.760 | 452 |
| 9 | | 0.763 | 465 |
| 10 | | 0.746 | 535 |
| 11 | | 0.758 | 479 |
| | AVERAGE | 0.754 | 462 |
| DATE | SITE | WATER LEVEL(AHD) | SALT (EC) |
| 7 | MENINGIE JETTY | | |
| 8 | | 0.709 | 4670 |
| 9 | | 0.787 | 4574 |
| 10 | | 0.799 | 4580 |
| 11 | | 0.792 | 4627 |
| | AVERAGE | 0.772 | 4613 |
| DATE | SITE | WATER LEVEL (AHD) | SALT (EC) |
| 7 | NORTH WARRENGIE POINT LAKE ALBERT | 0.786 | 5339 |
| 8 | | 0.826 | 5358 |
| 9 | | 0.814 | 5413 |
| 10 | | 0.773 | 5345 |
| 11 | | 0.802 | 5180 |
| | AVERAGE | 0.800 | 5327 |

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.

January 2012

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| 20 | Greening Australia –Revegetation & Restoration workshops - Mt Barker Contact : Jo Clarke, Vegetation Consultant, Greening Australia, M 0427 181 585 www.greeningaustralia.org.au |
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| 22 | Fresh Water Classic – Milang to Goolwa yacht race |
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Disclaimer

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