

EstuaryWatch Update December 2008 – January 2009

This is a monthly email to let people know of recent achievements and upcoming events for EstuaryWatch.

If you receive this and would like to be removed from the mailing list please reply to email requesting to be removed.

Any person interested in adding something to the update, please send me an email with your written piece toward the end of the month.

News and upcoming events....

Updates to depth gauges

Thiess Services have been contacted regarding an upgrade to the depth gauges. The project will commence in January. Monitors will be advised if any alterations occur.

Quality Assurance and Quality Control

The second QA/QC event is almost complete. So far I have had the pleasure of meeting with EstuaryWatchers from Painkalac Creek, Spring Creek, Angelsea River and the Gellibrand River. Each of these groups performed exceptionally well. To successfully complete this QA/QC event, dates and times still need to be set with EstuaryWatchers from the Barwon River. This can be done through your team leader. Additional database entry training is still possible upon request.

Data Confidence Plan

The 1st draft of the Data Confidence Plan for EstuaryWatch has now been completed and is currently being reviewed. As previously explained this plan will detail all the measures we take to ensure that our data is of the high quality needed to be used by estuary managers (please refer to last months update for further information).

Student Cadetship

On the 5th of January our cadetship student, Rebecca, began working with us here at the CMA. Initially, Rebecca will be assisting in the WaterWatch program, before moving over to help out with EstuaryWatch and a series of the other programs that are currently running at the CMA. Several special projects have already been drafted up and some will involve our ground proofing our data confidence plan. Rebecca is looking forward to meeting you all, and we all hope she enjoys her time with us.

Database upgrades

Thanks to our wonderful database contractors, the following database changes have now been launched. These include:

- Images shown with data entries on side of column to assist in data uploading and back dating images, also for external users looking just for images so they don't have to open each individual entry.
- Scroll through function for results to prevent having to go page by page

- Check boxes on data entries to note that data has been reviewed and checked by administrator
- Rating for EstuaryWatchers to accompany data to show accuracy following QA/QC events

The remaining upgrades are still currently under construction, they are expected to be launched early this year. These upgrades include:

- New improvement to older graph style with a temporal x-axis (i.e. bottom scale bar now date divided not equally spaced for each monitoring event).
- Data points are no longer linked and appear as dots. This is because the monitoring events are not linked to each other.
- A critical limit placed on the DO graph to infer when oxygen has dropped below a safe limit for life.
- Totally new graph which a tricky combo of depth, salinity, open/closed, and DO all on one graph, and highlights the halocline so we can instantly see the ratio of fresh to saline water. Of course this is not always relevant or available to all sites.

Social Event east and west

An event will be arranged soon to encourage all EstuaryWatchers to gather, have fun, a good BBQ lunch and share some ideas about our monitoring program. This is a great chance to gather people from different groups together. Food and drinks will be supplied and there will be some extra special random prizes available. All EstuaryWatchers (and families/friends) are invited to attend either or both. Dates and locations are as follows:

Spring Creek (east) Sunday 8th February 1pm, Picnic area on the eastern side of Spring Creek near the estuary mouth.

Kennett River (west) Sunday 15th February 1pm, Picnic area on the western side of the Great Ocean Road Bridge.

If Kennett River is not a suitable location for EstuaryWatchers in the west, please let me know ASAP. Numbers will need to be finalised prior to the event for catering purposes so contact your team leaders to let them know you're coming along.

Night Seminar for Apollo Bay

The third in our series of night seminars will be held soon. These are designed to provide our EstuaryWatchers with a deeper understanding of estuary processes and are also open to the public. Our first night seminar was held in Anglesea and many people expressed interest in attending but found the timing unsuitable. The timing for the second night seminar held at Apollo Bay was much better, and as a result we had a much larger turnout. Those who are keen to attend the third night seminar are invited to email (or phone) their team leaders with days of the week that aren't preferred, and dates that they are not able to make it due to holidays or other extended absences. Thoughts are at this stage 6.30- 8.30pm on either a Thursday or Friday in late March. Team Leaders are requested to supply any information to Matt by the end of January. Any suggestions for topics will also be considered. Once a date and venue are confirmed, a promotional flyer will be sent to all, including all details and information on topics and speakers. Those interested but not part of the EstuaryWatch monitoring team can contact Matt if interested by emailing matthew.khoury@ccma.vic.gov.au.

Wrapping up from the last month.....

Image Disc for Christmas

The DVD displaying all the wonderful images catalogued by the EstuaryWatchers of the Corangamite region was successfully delivered prior to Christmas; I hope you all enjoy it. If you did not receive a copy, and you are keen to obtain one, please let me know ASAP as numbers are limited.

State WaterWatch Conference

At the beginning of December I attended the state WaterWatch conference in Port Fairy. This conference was very beneficial for both EstuaryWatch and me. There was a lot of interest in the program and a substantial amount of positive feedback (that's a credit to you EstuaryWatchers). I also gathered a lot of attention from WaterWatch Officers of other Victorian coastal catchments, who intended on setting up an estuarywatch program but are presently lacking the resources to do so. The conference also provided me with an opportunity to learn more about the WaterWatch program, such as; how it is run, and the direction in which is currently heading. This information may be useful for EstuaryWatch into the future.

More news at the start of February.

Matt

