

EstuaryWatch Update November – December 2008

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.

New EstuaryWatch Coordinator

Rhys has now settled into his new role as the Estuary and Coastal Officer, and I have taken over the EstuaryWatch Coordinator role. As an enthusiastic environmentalist I am looking forward to coordinating this exciting and truly rewarding program over the next six months. I will be based at the Corangamite CMA office on Pakington Street in Geelong. If you require any information, have any queries, or just want to talk to me about the program, don't hesitate to contact me via:

Email: matthew.khoury@ccma.vic.gov.au

Ph: (03) 5224 9402

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During the Christmas break I will be unavailable from the 24th of December to the 5th January.

Regards, Matt.

News and upcoming events....

Image Disc for Christmas

The DVD displaying all the wonderful images catalogued by the EstuaryWatchers of the Corangamite region, is now being constructed. If everything goes to plan this disc should be landing on your doorsteps just in time for the Christmas break.

Updates to depth gauges

Thiess Services have been contacted regarding an upgrade to the depth gauges. The project should be complete by the end of January 2009. More details will be provided in the next update. Monitors will be advised if any alterations occur and adjustments provided accordingly.

Quality Assurance and Quality Control

The second QA/QC event is underway. So far I have had the pleasure of meeting with EstuaryWatchers from Painkalac Creek, Spring Creek and the Angelsea 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 Gellibrand and Barwon Rivers. This can be done through your team leaders. Additional database entry training is possible upon request.

Data Confidence Plan

The 1st draft of the Data Confidence Plan for EstuaryWatch is near on completion. As Rhys explained in last months update, 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

From January the 5th there will be a student working with us on the EstuaryWatch program (and other parts of the CMA). Several special projects have already been drafted up and some will involve our ground proofing our data confidence plan. Rebecca will be likely meet to some of you during her time with us and we hope enjoys her experience with us.

Database upgrades

On the 10th of December Rhys and I met with the database contractors to discuss the recent database upgrades. According to our contractors the majority of these upgrades, which are currently still in the test phase, will be launched either this week (15th -19th of December) or at the beginning of the following week. So to prevent losing any valuable data, we have all (administrators and EstuaryWatchers) been advised not to enter any EstuaryWatch information into the database during this period.

Of the upgrades that Rhys mentioned in the last monthly update, the following will be launched next week. 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

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

- Rating for EstuaryWatchers to accompany data to show accuracy following QA/QC events
- 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.

Estuary Openings

In the past month there have been a number of permitted artificial openings, including;

- Aire River, 3rd December and 18th of November
- Angelsea River, 2nd of December
- Gellibrand River 11th of December.

Wrapping up from the last month.....

Estuaries Unmasked- Night Seminar for Apollo Bay, thanks Biosis Research

The 2nd Estuaries Unmasked Night Seminar was held in Apollo Bay on **Thursday 13th** of November from 6-8pm. Topics were estuary vegetation types, and connecting to estuary places from an indigenous perspective. We would like to thank our speakers (Jeff Yugovic from Biosis Research and Richard Collaply from the Framlingham) for providing the group with two truly excellent presentations

These seminars are conducted to provide EstuaryWatchers with a deeper understanding of estuary processes, and promote the interaction of community members and industry practitioners. Due to the success of our two previous night seminars, we intend on conducting several more. As mentioned in the previous monthly update, the next event is likely to be in February or March at either Torquay or Barwon Heads.

More news at the start of January.

Matt