

WANTED! We still need volunteers for these vacant sites:

- Gungahlin Pond, via Ibis St, Palmerston;
- Ginninderra Creek at Barton Highway roundabout, Giralang;
- McKellar Wetland (constructed 2004), via Jeanne Young Cct, McKellar;
- Gooromon Ponds (Little Bedduluck) Creek at Barton Highway, via Hall.

If you can help, or know someone who wants to get involved with Waterwatch, please contact Dr Beth Mantle on 6278 3309 or via [email](#).

Welcome!

I would like to welcome two new Waterwatch volunteers this month:

- Luke Hutchinson from Uriarra, who is monitoring Tarpaulin Creek on Uriarra Station, opposite the new Uriarra Village development.
- Jean Nicol from Fadden, who is monitoring the stormwater pond at the base of Fadden Hills.

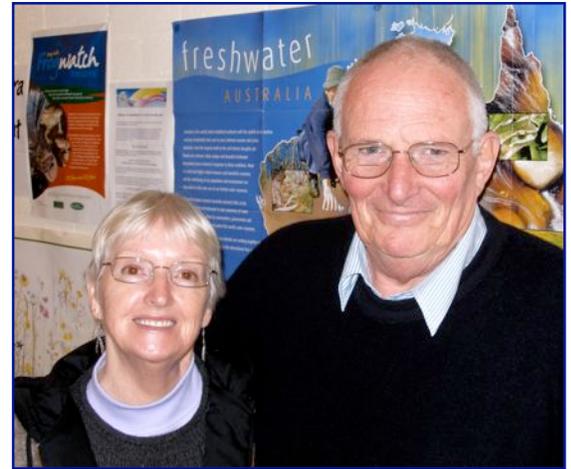
Spotlight On...

Pam & Fred Fawke

For many of us, our passion for the environment started when we were children, and both Pam and Fred Fawke exemplify this. Pam remembers walking excursions to the Lake District and North Wales. She caught newts and tadpoles in local ponds. Fred recalls a favourite teacher who took the class on nature walks in England and instilled in him the concept that "If you look after the environment, then the environment will look after you". Nowadays, Pam and Fred are icons in the Ginninderra Catchment and are two of our original Waterwatchers.

The Fawkes' emigrated to Melbourne from the UK in 1966, moved to Canberra in 1976 and moved from Higgins to Dunlop in 1998 to escape the city suburbs and, as Fred says, "to become fringe-dwellers"! During their time in Canberra, Pam worked for the Bureau of Statistics starting with aerial and topographic mapping, then writing instructional manuals and running payroll in the Census area. Fred worked for what is now known as the Australian Federal Police as an Information Specialist.

At home, the Fawkes' have made their house a model of sustainable suburban living by solar orientation, solar hot water, water tanks, and photovoltaic cells that contribute



to Canberra's electricity grid.

Both Pam and Fred have a strong community presence, but it's clear that Jaramlee Pond in Dunlop is their pride and joy. Much of the structural work and native vegetation that fringes the pond is a result of theirs and their team's hard work and dedication, and both Pam and Fred say that Waterwatch is an important tool for monitoring the water quality in this habitat they have helped create.

"It's proactive and it provides a benchmark of water quality for the future", says Fred. "We're helping to improve the landscape, which is contributing to our community and the local environment with habitat".

Waterwatch Results for June 2008

According to the Bureau of Meteorology's long-term average data, June should be our driest month, averaging 41.1mm of rainfall. Eerily, this year June provided us with 21.8mm of rain, which is half the expected amount but more than we have received in any one month since March this year.

This month's monitoring occurred just after a 4-day rain event (see figure overleaf), which contributed to high water levels and above-average flows. The flow of water across Canberra's limestone plains resulted in a narrower acidity range across all sites (range = 6.4 to 7.6).

Once again, Gooromon Ponds recorded an exceptionally high EC (1820µS/cm). At this

level, the water is still suitable for drinking (though it may taste a little salty) and is healthy for aquatic invertebrates and plant life, however, it becomes unsuitable for some crops, such as grapes.

Tarpaulin Creek at Uriarra Station reported the highest turbidity this month (>400 NTU), which can be directly attributed to the Uriarra Village development occurring upstream. Erosion control barriers have subsequently been erected at the development, but we will continue to closely monitor the creek.

Dissolved oxygen was exceptionally high this month, ranging from 44% at Gooromon Ponds to supersaturated levels (>100%) at

(continued overleaf)

GINNINDERRA CATCHMENT GROUP



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References:

Waterwatch SA
(http://www.sa.waterwatch.org.au/sw_salinity.htm)

Birds in Backyards
(<http://www.birdsinbackyards.net/finder/display.cfm?id=196>)

Table of Results for June 2008:

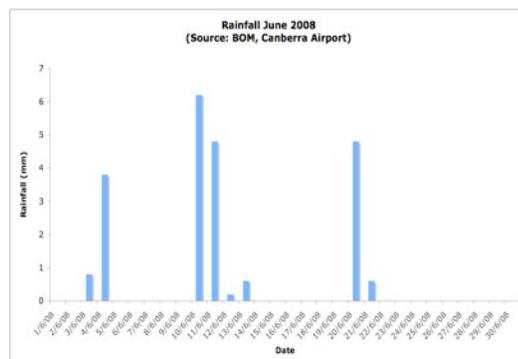
Parameter	Mean	Minimum	Maximum
Air temperature (°C)	11.4	4.5	16.0
Water temperature (°C)	9.3	3.0	14.0
pH	7.1	6.4	7.6
EC (µS/cm)	390.6	71	1820
Turbidity (NTU)	<10 (median value)	0	>400
Dissolved oxygen (%)	84.3	44.0	135.0
Orthophosphates (mg/L)	0.03	0.00	0.12

Waterwatch Results Continued

(continued from front page)

Coppins and Uriarra Crossings, and Ginninderra Creek at the Gunghalin Lakes Golf Course. Supersaturation is not uncommon where there are high flow rates and increased biomass of photosynthetic plants and algae.

Overall, an interesting month of Waterwatch results and it was very nice to receive some good rainfall in the Catchment.



(Above) Monthly rainfall for June 2008.

FOCUS ON...

Anhinga melanogaster

Australasian Darter

The Darter is a large, slim water bird with a long snake-like neck, sharp pointed bill, and long, rounded tail. Male birds are dark brownish black with glossy black upperwings, streaked and spotted white, silver-grey and brown. The strongly kinked neck has a white or pale brown stripe from the bill to where the neck kinks and the breast is chestnut brown. Females and immatures are grey-brown above, pale grey to white below, with a white neck stripe that is less distinct in young birds.

The Darter is often seen swimming with only the snake-like neck visible above the water, or drying its wings while perched on a tree or stump over water. While its gait is clumsy on land, it can soar gracefully to great heights on thermals, gliding from updraft to updraft. It has a cross-shaped silhouette when flying.



Photo by Barrie Jamieson



WE'RE ON THE WEB!

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