Autumn: Late March to the end of May

During the period of Gwangal moronn, people gather in villages. Layered cooking ovens are used at this time and are passed over generations.

Gwangal moronn sees berries ripening. Plants flowering including: cranberry heath and hop goodenia in full flower, pink heath and flame grevillea candlebark and manna gums. Many orchid shoots showing first rosettes of greenhood orchids, parsons bands orchids are flowering.

Marsupials active, with young bandicoots out of pouch, antechinus are active and possums are beginning to breed.

The pre northern migration flocking of birds begins with red wattle birds flocking and first flame robin juveniles and females come down from the hills and flocks of insectivorous birds pass down gullies. Pied currawongs come down from mountains and Honeyeaters and Wrens are searching for moths and insects. Many birds are moulting feathers during this season.

In the Wetlands, the and River Red Gums flowers continue to attract honeyeaters while Masked lapwings and grey fantails are flocking, Skinks and tortoises hibernate and many tadpoles can be seen in ponds. Hawk moths are common.

Aquatic insects emerge as adults, attracting swallows and martins.

CONSERVATION VOLUNTEERS AUSTRALIA

Conservation Volunteers Australia (CVA) recently reviewed their business delivery model in the Wimmera.

This has resulted in CVA forming an alliance with the Wimmera CMA which will see CVA subcontract the Wimmera CMA to deliver the remaining works associated with CVA contracts.

As part of this new alliance the Wimmera CMA have offered Ben Holmes a role as Project Coordinator – Biodiversity to deliver these projects and also assist with the delivery of other NRM projects.

Looking forward, this will also provide the Wimmera CMA with the skills to hopefully build more biodiversity into their funding applications. For example, continue to actively pursue finding opportunities to progress the Rewilding the Desert Initiative.
ENVIRONMENTAL WATER

Small flows are happening for the Mt William Creek, MacKenzie River, Burnt Creek and Wimmera River. Given the low levels in Lake Lonsdale and Lake Wartook, flows are primarily focused in maintaining refuge pools in those areas.

A small project focused on the Burnt Creek and MacKenzie River involving rapid fish surveys and an expert workshop has provided valuable guidance on flows intended to sustain most (but not all) priority refuge areas over Summer/Autumn.

FISH HOTELS IN THE WIMMERA.

On March 5, in an effort to boost the fish populations in the Wimmera River, Horsham, the Wimmera CMA has placed 10 artificial man made structures in carefully considered positions in the river.

Horsham's Weir is known for its lack of fish habitats as the ideal habitat of logs or fallen trees are incompatible with the weirs, CEO Dave Brennan said "during flooding events, we wanted to make sure the habitat will not move or cause any damage to the existing bridge and weir structures”.

![Image of fish surveys](image)

These 'hotels' or habitats are e cubes made from stormwater PVC with branch structures coming off the body. It is anticipated that the 'fish hotels' will assist in the development of a stronger fish population for the future.

It is also expected that we will see an increase in the amount of food availability for fish, enabling stronger and larger growth of fish.

PLATYPUS SURVEY

This Autumn, Josh Griffiths Senior Wildlife Ecologist from CESAR will once again visit the area to undertake Platypus surveys and eDNA sampling. Information gained from the eDNA analysis will allow Wimmera CMA to gain a better understanding of the distribution of platypuses in the MacKenzie River, especially in response to environmental flows. The surveys are useful for checking on the condition of platypuses in the MacKenzie River as well as seeing if there has been any recruitment.
Did you know that platypusSPOT (www.platypusSPOT.org) is the only publicly available platypus sightings database? That means that all sightings are freely available to the community, land and waterway managers, and researchers to contribute to platypus conservation.

Thanks to funding from Melbourne Water our app is getting an upgrade to iron out some annoying bugs and link to the Atlas of Living ...Australia, making your data even more accessible.

So get online or download the app and get spotting today!

HORSHAM FISHING COMPETITION

The Horsham Fishing Competition is an Annual event held on the banks of the Wimmera River Labour Day weekend each year.

Held in Horsham on Sunday March 10.

The competition is supported by Wimmera CMA and draws people from all over the State and beyond!

Chris Humfrey and the Wild Action Zoo will once again be there in one of the live shows located at several locations dotted along the banks of the Wimmera River.

Apex Adventure Island Update.

Horsham’s Apex Adventure Island pump track is in its final weeks of construction, with the opening due to take place in early April. Funding for this project is being provided from Our Catchments our Communities and the Boosting Water Recreational Water Use Grants.

Visit to commemorate the 10th Anniversary of 2009 Bushfires.

On Saturday 2 February, Linda Dessau AC, Governor of Victoria and Mr Anthony Howard QC visited Horsham as patron of the 10 year anniversary of the 2009 Victorian Bushfires. A small group comprising of Gary Atkin (Wimmera River Improvement Committee), Rob Fry (BGLC Board member), Sunil Bhalla, (Horsham Rural City CEO) Mark Radford (Horsham Rural City Mayor) and David Brennan (Wimmera CMA CEO) led the Governor entourage around the
Yanga track for over an hour, explaining the fire and river.

Yanga Track replicates an important gathering place for traditional owner communities who traversed up and down the Wimmera River – the site houses many native plants that grew along the river’s edge for food, tools and shelter.

WHAT'S IN YOUR FARM PLAN?

What’s in your farm plan? Expressions of interest now open for Western Victorian Woodlands funding.

Wimmera CMA makes protecting native vegetation easy

Apply for funding online before Friday March 15 if you own property in the area marked on this map (click on image to enlarge) or please phone Wimmera CMA on (03) 5382 1544

Full details here: https://t.co/pAJVD9NLnj @LisanevilleMP @DELWP_Vic @landcarevic @trustfornature https://t.co/kQ3H18Wm32

VICTORIAN ENVIRONMENTAL WATER HOLDER

The annual Victorian Environmental Water Holder (VEWH) Reflections publication is now available to download on the VEWH website. We hope you enjoy reading about the highlights of the Victorian environmental watering program during the 2017-18 watering year.

In December community came together to mark a significant occasion for the Barengi Gadjin Land Council and Wotjobaluk Traditional Owners, as a program of environmental watering at The Ranch Billabong in Dimboola began.

VOLUNTEERING RECOGNITION AWARDS 2019

The Centre for Participation is again coordinating the Volunteering Recognition Awards for 2019 in partnership with a range of community organisations including Wimmera CMA. The Volunteering Recognition Awards incorporate the regional Landcare awards as well as other categories recognising the contribution of individuals and groups across our community. The Wimmera/Mallee has some of the highest volunteer participation rates in the country and the Volunteering Recognition Awards is a special way to recognise and thank volunteers who have put in extra effort to help others.
The Awards ceremony will be held at the Horsham Town Hall on May 17.
Nominate an outstanding volunteer or volunteer group from the Wimmera to show your appreciation for their efforts.
To raise awareness and support the nomination process for the awards, the @Centre for Participation held a Roadshow to Horsham, Yarrambiack, West Wimmera, Hindmarsh and Northern Grampians municipalities.
For more information contact Centre for Participation on 03 5382 5607.

Do you want to make your community a better place!
Do you want to make your community a better place! Have you considered being on a Victorian Water or Catchment Board?
Board Directors come from all walks of life, including farmers, small business owners, project managers and other professionals.
Expressions of Interest open February / March 2019.
If you would like to be contacted when board appointments become available, please email your name and contact details to: