

JAN TO MARCH 2021



# INTO THE STREAM

Official Newsletter of the Australian Trout Foundation

## Some Further plans...

BY ATF PRESIDENT TERRY GEORGE

The Australian Trout Foundation has been very busy in the first months of 2022. The lifting of Covid restrictions it has allowed the ATF to recommence some much needed activities that were put on hold due to the restrictions imposed in 2021.

Activity includes the partnership work with the North East Catchment Management Authority, Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning and the Corryong Angling Club to plant 10,000 trees in the Nariel Valley for bushfire recovery.

The ATF, in partnership with Native Fish Australia have also conducted a very successful 2021 Ovens River Challenge with over eighty anglers in attendance.

Electro-fishing to ascertain success with stocking and Jordan Scotty incubators has also been undertaken and stream gauge upgrade to provide live data to anglers is well underway. New Habitat projects are also being planned.

This Newsletter and those to come will keep you up to date with all activities undertaken and/or planned for the future and how you can get involved.



Photo: courtesy David Anderson [www.Twigwater.com](http://www.Twigwater.com)

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# Ovens River Challenge

The 2021 Ovens River Challenge conducted by the Australian Trout Foundation and Native Fish Australia, is all about bringing everyone together and making fishing the winner.

Centred at Myrtleford, this “catch, measure and release” event brought together a wide cross section of 81 anglers who fished the day and a half for either native fish or trout in the beautiful Ovens River Catchment. It was pleasing to report that this included 6 female and 18 male junior anglers.



*Terry George and Tim Curmi congratulate Jordan Gasser on winning the biggest rainbow*

The Grand Champion was Alex Evan who caught the double; a Murray Cod of 60cm and Brown Trout of 27cm.

Winners for the longest Murray Cod:

- 68cm caught by Shaun Reynolds (senior)
- 64cm caught by Spence Reynolds (Junior)

Winners for the longest Rainbow Trout:

- 33cm caught by Jordan Grasser (senior)
- 36cm caught by Alan Grasser (junior)



*The crowd at the 2021 Ovens River Challenge Presentation*

Winners for the longest Brown Trout:

39cm caught by Zac Mather (senior)

32cm Caught by Max Lyon (Junior)

he brightest shining light was witnessing the excitement and enthusiasm of the junior anglers from start to finish. With fantastic support from a range of generous sponsors, all junior anglers walked away with a fishing rod and other goodies. Our generous sponsors once again provided the quality fishing tackle and apparel for the awards, for which we were most grateful. The social Sunday lunch BBQ saw lots of smiles and laughter, stories of success and failure, and great camaraderie between anglers with a common interest in fishing.

The next challenge is already in planning for March 2022 and the ATF & NFA Committees look forward to meeting current and new participants next year.

The date for the 2022 event will be announced mid 2021 so you can save the date in March

## Stream Gauge Data

One of the priority actions stemming from the RFL Large grant provided to the ATF was to collect and disseminate water temperature data on priority trout streams and provide live online data for trout fishers.

The abundance of trout, as well as their catchability, is heavily influenced by temperature. Increasing temperatures, which are further compounded by reduced stream flows in drought conditions, are affecting trout populations. At high water temperatures (>20°C) trout become less catchable because feeding and activity are reduced, and at higher temperatures trout become stressed and vulnerable.

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# Nariel Valley Trees for Trout

Instantaneous access (via telemetry) of water temperature information in priority wild trout streams will have multiple benefits to fishers and fisheries managers; these include:

- Provision of information to fishers as to when and where to fish trout streams. Temperature information will assist in identifying areas potentially too hot for trout to feed actively.
- Identifying times of the year and stretches of rivers affected by high temperatures. This information may help guide habitat improvement works such as tree planting for shaded areas. Dr John Morrongiello of Melbourne University's research concluded that an unshaded pool can be up to 10°C higher than a shaded pool.

Rivers and Streams > Surface Water Sites > 401-Upper Murray Basin

### 401204 MITTA MITTA RIVER @ TALLANDOON

All data times are Eastern Standard Time

Real time data Details Reports Data

**Latest instantaneous values**

Water Level (m) Available for release	1.581	08:00 03/03/2021	↓
EC@25C (µS/cm) Available for release	50.500	08:00 03/03/2021	↑
Discharge (ML/d) Available for release	936.0	08:00 03/03/2021	↓
Temp (°C) Available for release	15.600	08:00 03/03/2021	↔

## Possible format of River data

Valuable information to improve modelling of the effects of water temperature on trout abundance and distribution across Victoria.

There is a network of water monitoring stations across Victoria's waterways and the Water Monitoring Information System (WMIS) is hosted by DELWP. Some stations already monitor water temperature in real time (instantaneously data transferred by telemetry). This project will expand temperature monitoring across the network and make this readily available and useful to wild trout fishers. Catchment Management Authorities (CMA's) are already running pilot programs in various streams and the ATF & VFA are working together with the CMA's to upgrade selected stations to build and enhance the project. The ATF will make this data available via their website in the near future with the expanded gauging station network

The 2019-20 Bushfires had a significant impact on the cross-border areas around Corryong, Tumbarrumba and into the Alpine National and Snowy Mountains National Parks. The Nariel Valley and tributaries were badly affected. Streamside vegetation was razed and subsequent rains produced oxygen-draining sludge in rivers and creeks badly affecting aquatic life. Electrofishing post the fires indicated very limited fish and aquatic invertebrates remained in some of the iconic streams in this area.

The North East Catchment Management Authority, the ATF, Department of Environment, Water, Land & Planning and the Corryong Angling Club have joined forces in a significant bushfire recovery program that includes a 'Trees for Trout' planting of 10,000 trees and shrubs over the week of May 15-22. The poster below provides details of how to participate as a volunteer. Please register at <https://australiantroutfoundation.com.au/find-a-project/>



The poster features logos for the Victorian Fisheries Authority, North East Catchment Management Authority, and Australian Trout Foundation. It includes two photographs: one showing a group of people planting trees in a stream, and another showing a stream with a thick layer of brown sludge. The text is as follows:

**TREES FOR TROUT**  
*Nariel Creek "Tree Planting Event"*

*Planting Day at Nariel 2019*      *The Nariel Creek just after the bushfires*

**WE NEED YOUR HELP!**  
Following the devastating fires of 2019/2020 summer,  
we have thousands of trees ready to plant.

**Saturday 15th May - Saturday 22nd May 2021**  
Meet up at the Nariel Folk Festival Ground, Nariel Ck Reserve at 9.00am each day  
lunch provided for volunteers, BYO snacks

If you would like to participate in one or all of the days,  
please register your interest on the ATF Website:  
<https://australiantroutfoundation.com.au/find-a-project/>

or by contacting: Terry George: E: [habitat@atfonline.com.au](mailto:habitat@atfonline.com.au) M: 0418 332 744 or  
Shea Bloom: E: [shakaleg\\_12@hotmail.com](mailto:shakaleg_12@hotmail.com) (Corryong Angling Club) M: 0419 541 756

For information regarding accommodation and camping please read letter attached.

**Victorian Fisheries Authority**      **Corryong Angling Club**



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## Nariel Valley Trees for Trout

The North East Catchment Management Authority project team of Andrew Briggs and Mick Broughton have done a fantastic job in the planning and preparation of this substantial trees for trout event at Nariel Creek, and NECMA have also sourced the funding from the bushfire relief funds they were able to acquire. The Nariel Creek has been an iconic trout stream for many anglers and suffered severe damage in last year's fires. North East Catchment Management Authority (NECMA), Corryong Angling Club, the Australian Trout Foundation, Victorian Fisheries Authority, Native Fish Australia and the Victorian Fish Habitat & Flows Group are combining in this joint effort over seven days from Sat May 15 – Sat May 22. The project managers are Andrew Briggs & Mick Broughton of NECMA.

The Group are calling for expressions of interest from volunteers interested in participating in a massive tree planting exercise on the Nariel Creek following the 2020-21 bushfires. This is a prime opportunity for current and new volunteers to donate their time and efforts to assist the recovery of this fire devastated region by re vegetating the riparian zones along the creek.

If you would like to participate in some or all of the days, please register your interest on the ATF Website: <https://australiantroutfoundation.com.au/find-a-project/> , or by contacting:

Terry George: E: [habitat@atfonline.com.au](mailto:habitat@atfonline.com.au)M: 0418 332 744 or

Shea Bloom: E: [shakaleg\\_12@hotmail.com](mailto:shakaleg_12@hotmail.com) (Corryong Angling Club) M: 0419 541 756

**NB: Some difficulty was encountered registering at the ATF website but this has now been rectified**

There will be camping at the Nariel Folk Festival Ground, or accommodation at Colac Colac Holiday Park, Mt Mittamatite Holiday Park, or enquire about Motels, Cabins etc. at Corryong Information Centre: 02 6076 2277.

Lunches provided for all volunteers.

- BYO: snacks and drinks.
- gloves, spade, shovel or little pick.
- fishing gear (optional) – opportunity to take some time off to try the Swampy or Indi, or other streams before end of the season.

Please accept this request for assistance and come and join us for a great time and a very worthwhile revegetation project to restore the Nariel Creek and other tributaries.

We look forward to meeting you at this extremely important “Trees for Trout” event.



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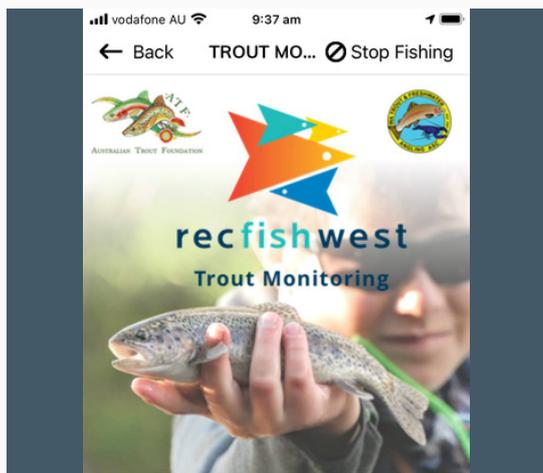


# WA News

## New Trout Monitoring App for WA.

Recfishwest with support of the WA branch of the Australian Trout Foundation and the Western Australian Trout and Freshwater Angling Association has just released a new App. Available from Google and Apple stores the app is titled: Recfishwest trout monitoring and covers trout fishing in the south west of WA.

The app has information on where and how to fish, rules and regulations, species and other interesting facts.



## New Freshwater Angling Club in WA

The Southern Forests Freshwater Angling Club formed a few weeks ago and has appointed office bearers. The new club has expressed an intention to be closely affiliated with the WA Branch of the ATF and we are already discussing joint projects that could be undertaken in the Manjimup/Pemberton Region.

## Nanga Brook Fish Ladder Repaired

A team of ATF members gathered at Lane Poole Reserve on the Murray River on 29th March 2021 to repair the Nanga Brook Fish Ladder. The ladder has been in place for many years and provides a passage for fish moving upstream and downstream past a small waterfall that is a barrier to fish.



*Repairs underway with volunteer help*

In recent years, the ladder has not functioned effectively as parts of the wall have been eroded or damaged. A tree fell onto the ladder 4 years ago breaking away several metres of the wall and rendering the ladder all but useless as a fish passage.

Nanga Brook is regionally important as a fish refuge during the summer months as it is one of very few small brooks that still flow all year.



*Completed Repairs on the Nanga Brook fish ladder*

## Our Decorated President

Recently our President, Terry George received a prestigious award from the Victorian Fly Fishers Association. The award is called the Jack Ritchie Award and is only given to those who have provided outstanding service to the Victorian trout fishing community. The award recognized the tremendous work that Terry has done over the last number of years in helping to build a sustainable trout fishery in Victoria



*Terry George receiving the Jack Ritchie Award from VFFA President Chris Gray*



## Book Review

Fishing Through the Apocalypse: Miller, M.L., 2019, Lyon Press, Guildford Connecticut. (Book Review by Dr. P Stolz).

The author of this somewhat dystopian book claims he set off on recording his experiences of freshwater fishing in America to see 'what the future held for fish and the people who pursued them.'

This is not a book solely about trout, but it does include some chapters on strange hybrid trout such as banana trout and golden trout that have been bred for exotic angling experiences. Also included is a chapter about the dissemination of trout, particularly rainbow trout, from its indigenous origins within the Pacific rim of North America, to far and wide across the world. Reference is made to another very interesting book, An Entirely Synthetic Fish (A. Halvorson, 2010, Yale University Press, New Haven).

The book relates the fishing exploration of the author observing some of the more bizarre developments in freshwater fishing. These developments include; the hybrid breeding of exotic trout species mentioned above for stocking in various locations for anglers to access; large sturgeon kept in ponds for anglers to catch almost at will; fishing in what would appear to be little more than drains filled with litter and excrement for exotic tropical fish; micro fishing for tiny fish of all kinds as a contest of species caught; and catching fish in urban areas within restored waterways including the Potomac River, flowing through Washington DC.

While much of the experience of the author does not easily relate to Australian freshwater fishing some of the more disturbing and depressing elements can be found in within the Australian experience. One incident that remains as a signal point in freshwater management in Australia was the death of millions of fish in the Murray/Darling Basin during the recent drought. This catastrophic event was largely the result of mismanagement and greed within the Murray/Darling Basin Plan.

Polluted and degraded waterways are not simply the purview of North America but exist internationally and in Australia. Reduced water flows, degraded fish habitat, over-silting from logging run off, reduced rainfall, agricultural nutrient inflows and general freshwater degradation have all had a significant impact of freshwater fisheries and fish in Australia.



*Dead Murray Cod, Darling River, 2019*

While there is some similarity with the author's experience in North American freshwater fisheries within the Australian experience, the book ultimately leaves the reader with a hopeful conclusion. Whether it be fishing in a restored Potomac River or a creek that was badly affected by coal mining and is on the way to restoration, hope is to be found in individuals and groups attempting to restore waterways for better environmental outcomes. Bodies such as Trout Unlimited in America and Australia's own Australian Trout Foundation and similar organisations in the UK, are all working for this environmental improvement.

The author is realistic enough to acknowledge that a return to pre-European abundance is highly unlikely. However, it is possible, with input from many sources including indigenous knowledge, to provide environmental restoration to our freshwater waterways. This will undoubtedly provide better quality water and therefore better fishing outcomes for both native and introduced fish. This book is a very interesting read and provides a timely warning that constant vigilance and action needs to be exercised for the improvement and sustainability of the precious resource that is not just the foundation for freshwater fishing but for the very sustenance of life itself. Tampering with nature in all its complexity has impacts well beyond what may be initially anticipated.



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