



MONTHLY REPORT FROM THE VRFISH OFFICE SEPTEMBER 2006

Welcome to the Monthly Report from the VRFish Office.

This newsletter should be sent on to all clubs and members of associations that you represent. Anyone wishing to receive this newsletter directly can e-mail Alison at alison@vrfish.com.au to be added to the distribution list.

- **Family Fishing at Lilydale Lake** – the inaugural family fishing day, as part of the Go Fishing in Victoria initiative was held at Lilydale Lake on Saturday 16 September 2006. VRFish Staff, Merv McGuire and Alison Cobbledick as well as a few VRFish Members were lucky enough to volunteer for this event. A fantastic day was had by all. It was great to see the kids smiling as they told their stories of how big their fish was (they sounded very similar to a few tall stories told by the adults!). Congratulations to the Department of Primary Industries, Yarra Valley Fly Fishers and the numerous other volunteers who helped out on the day. I can't wait to see the other Go Fishing events. For more information on this initiative, check out www.dpi.vic.gov.au/gofishing
- **More Deaths Predicted for Lake Modewarre** – VRFish recently wrote to the Chair of the Eel Death Investigation Reference Group, Christine Forster, seeking improved methods for monitoring the health of Lake Modewarre in the aim to prevent future 'fish kills'. VRFish expressed that the current monitoring being completed by the Environment Protection Authority Victoria (EPA) was insufficient and that the data should be collected continually throughout the year not just seasonally (during summer). VRFish believes that the collection of this data would provide EPA with the appropriate results it would need to establish the ecological guidelines and more importantly prevent another fish kill. Four major fish kills occurred in Lake Modewarre between December 2004 and February 2006. However, EPA has advised the Victorian community to be ready for further eel and fish deaths this coming summer.
- **VRFish Board** – VRFish recently announced the Board election results, Bob Pearce remained Chairman, as well as Board Members, John Corbett, Geoff Cramer, Franz Grasser, John Hotchin and Rob Loats. New editions to the VRFish Board were Doug Evers-Buckland and Lindsay Grenfell. All at VRFish welcomes the Board to a new term and looks forward to working with them over the next 12-months. A special thanks to parting Board Member, Priya Cardinaletti, whose valuable contributions and expertise in the recreational diving sector has been valuable.
- **Fish Research Seminar** – The Goulburn Valley Association of Angling Clubs is hosting a free Seminar on Fish Research projects that have been undertaken in the Goulburn and Murray Rivers over the past three years. Key speakers will present findings on spawning & recruitment of fish, fish movement and populations. The Seminar will be held at the Department of Primary Industries Tatura Centre, Thursday 26th October, commencing at 7pm. For more information contact Paul O'Conner on 0417 162 597.

- **Fishtrack** – The Minister for Agriculture, Bob Cameron, recently launched a new Fishtrack website showing the movement patterns of black bream in the Gippsland Lakes. Determining where, when and why fish move is critical in understanding the distribution and availability of fish for fishing, and forms the basis for the sustainable management of fisheries. For more information, check out www.dpi.vic.gov.au.
- **Lake Eppalock** – Goulburn-Murray Water has advised they will not be making any application seeking approval to remove standing trees from any part of Lake Eppalock. VRFish Member, John Corbett, has been extremely hard to protect the woody habitat. It is well recognised the water levels of Lake Eppalock are at extremely low levels, it must also be identified large standing trees (woody habitat) will form an extremely vital refuge/habitat column that must be retained as a high priority asset when higher water levels are again available. VRFish congratulates Goulburn-Murray Water in its decision.
- **Aim to Increase Open Days in Central Zone** – VRFish has been negotiating with Fisheries Victoria to increase the number of available open days for recreational abalone fishing in the Central Zone. Current management practices limit the number of days to just 60. It is VRFish's aim to achieve a fairer resource allocation for abalone, as recent management changes have decreased the recreational catch by 50%. The outcome of these negotiations will be a small step toward a better allocation model.
- **Melbourne Fishing and Outdoor Expo** – The 2006 Fishing Show will again be held at the Exhibition Centre. VRFish will have a stand at this event, so if you're going to the Show, pop by and say hello, meet Alison and some of our VRFish Members.
- **Mallacoota Inlet Fisheries Reserve Management Plan** – The Department of Primary Industries have released the Mallacoota Inlet Fisheries Reserve Management Plan. This Plan specifies how Fisheries Victoria will manage fishing activities in the Inlet over the next 10 years. Mallacoota Inlet is one of three fisheries reserves in Victoria that were declared as part of the Bracks' Governments election commitment to recreational fishing. For a copy of the Plan check out www.dpi.vic.gov.au/fishing.
- **Tagged Trout in the Rubicon** - In partnership with the Council of Victorian Fly Fishing Clubs Researchers are studying the movement of trout in the Rubicon River in response to riparian willow management and in-stream habitat improvements. A number of brown trout have been fitted with internal acoustic tags so that their locations and movements can be monitored. These fish have also been marked with an external coloured tag so that they can be recognised. If you catch a marked fish it would assist the research if it were released immediately. However, should you wish to keep the fish, please return the acoustic tag and report the tag number to the Department of Primary Industries Snobs Creek 03 5774 2208.
- **Great Victorian Fish Count** – Reef Watch Victoria aims to conduct an annual census that will increase Parks Victoria's understanding of the geographical distribution and abundance of 25 key reef fish species. Volunteers will chart the area between Cape Conran to Portland during 1 to 16 December 2006. For more information contact, Wendy Roberts on 03 8341 7446 or visit www.reefwatchvic.asn.au. *Source Canopy Issue # 30 – Parks Victoria.*
- **Upcoming events** -
 - 15-18/10 – Youth Coastal Conference, Port Phillip Bay www.youthcoastalconference.com
 - 26/10 – Fish Research Seminar, DPI Tatura
 - 26-29/10 – Melbourne Fishing and Outdoor Expo, Melbourne Exhibition Centre www.fishingshow.com.au
 - 3-4/11 - Mornington Peninsula Tea Tree, Snapper Fishing Competition www.teatreesnapper.org.au