

THE AVOCA RIVER'S JOURNEY



NORTH CENTRAL
Catchment Management Authority



action
Salinity & Water
AUSTRALIA

Yabby (below)

Yabbies are a special large crustacean species which survive in this dry region by burrowing into damp soil on the Avoca Riverbank to keep from drying out. Yabbies feed on the abundant vegetable matter and small aquatic animals.

Pictures and text from The WaterBug Book by J.Gooderham and E.Tsyrlin



Royal Spoonbill (above)

Royal Spoonbills frequently inhabit shallow wetlands and river floodplains. They move their large bill from side to side to scoop up frogs, small fish, worms, molluscs, yabbies, insects and other aquatic creatures.
Photo: Leon Keasey

White-bellied Sea Eagle (above right)

White-bellied Sea Eagles are a threatened and can at times be found around inland wetlands and lakes. They are normally seen perched high in a tree or soaring over waterways and adjacent land. The White-bellied Sea Eagle feeds mainly on aquatic animals, such as fish and tortoises. They are skilled hunters and will prey on rabbits, snakes and other animals found around wetlands.

Photo: Leon Keasey

Charlton to Lake Bael Bael

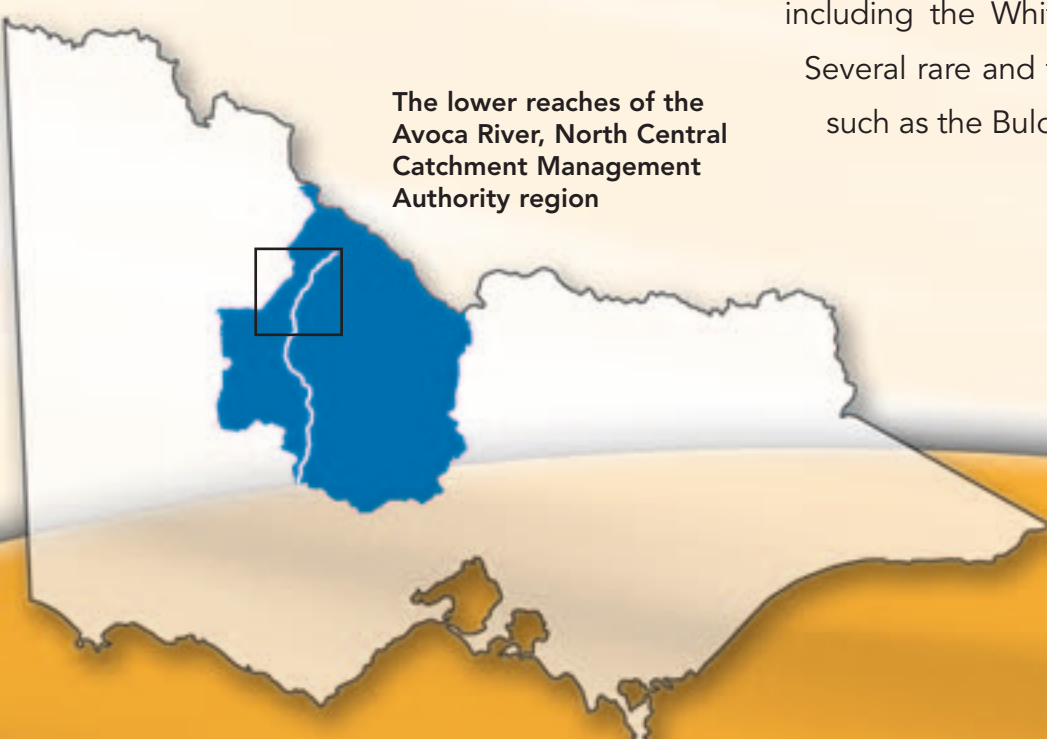
THE LOWER REACHES

The lower reaches of the Avoca River wind north across a relatively flat, open floodplain from Charlton through Quambatook to Lake Bael Bael. The anabranching river system has the most variable flow of all the Victorian rivers in the Murray–Darling Basin and ceases to flow for many months on end during dry years.

In high rainfall years, the Avoca River feeds into the many wetlands that make up the internationally significant Kerang Wetlands. This area is characterised by a number of swamps, lakes and marshes, including Lake Bael Bael, First and Second marshes and Yassom Swamp, which provide habitat for a wide variety of wetland birds.

The wetlands support significant Red Gum and Black Box communities, which provide habitat to many threatened fauna, including the White-bellied Sea Eagle and the Royal Spoonbill. Several rare and threatened plant species also occur in this area, such as the Buloke, Umbrella Wattle and the Red Swainson-pea.

The lower reaches of the Avoca River, North Central Catchment Management Authority region



Avoca River at Quambatook



Avoca River at Yawong Weir

Avoca River photos: Stephen Malone Photography

THE AVOCA RIVER'S JOURNEY

The Avoca River flows a distance of 250km on a northerly course from Mt Lonarch in the Great Dividing Range into the Ramsar-listed Kerang Lakes system at Lake Bael Bael.



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Dragonfly (below)

Dragonflies occur in a wide variety of habitats, living amongst aquatic plants and dead wood.

Pictures and text from *The WaterBug Book* by J.Gooderham and E.Tsyrlin



Peregrine Falcon (above)

Peregrine falcons are found all throughout Australia and are the fastest bird in the world, reaching speeds of up to 180km per hour. They feed almost entirely on other birds and are one of the most agile aerial hunters.

Photo: Garry Cheers

Murray Cod (above right)

Murray Cod lay up to 60,000 sticky eggs on fallen timber in spring/summer when water temperatures increase to around 20°C. These endangered fish are known to migrate upstream for many kilometres to spawn before returning to their home territory.

Photo: Rudie H. Kuiter

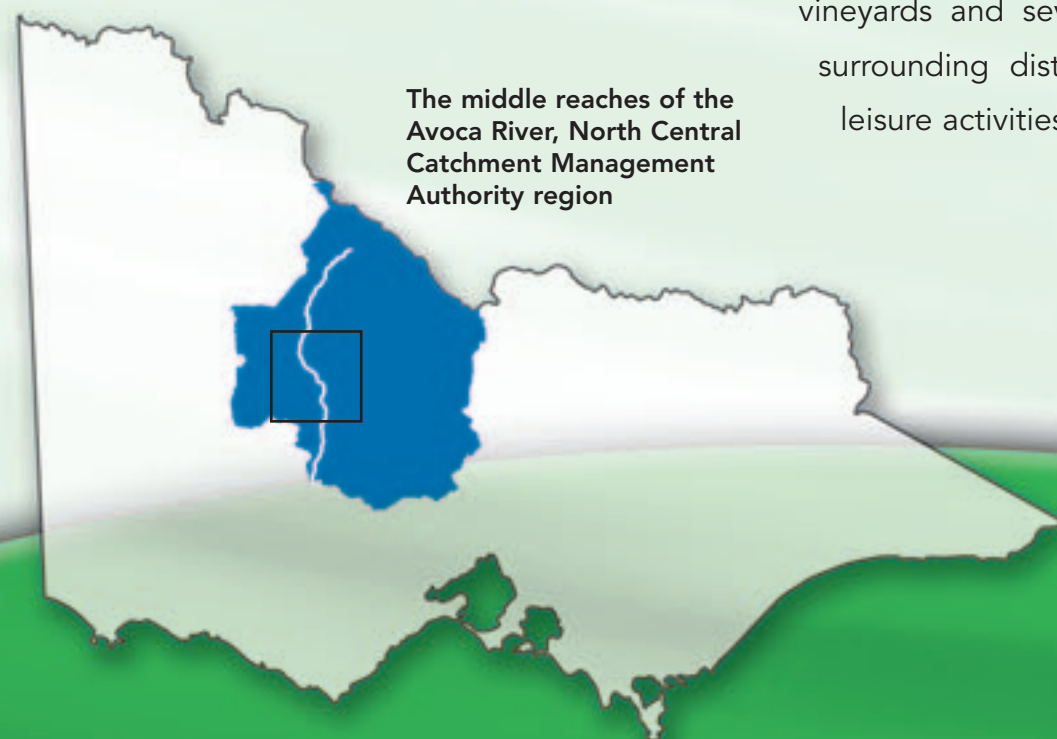
Avoca to Charlton THE MIDDLE REACHES

The mid reaches of the Avoca River flow downstream from a confined valley into a broader, deeper channel across an open undulating landscape. Here, the River flows through the towns of Natte Yallock, Bealiba, Emu, Logan and Charlton.

This reach is generally characterised by steep banks and a gravel or silt-lined streambed with large woody debris, pools and overhanging vegetation. This provides a diversity of habitat for Murray Cod, Golden Perch and the invertebrates they feed upon. The large River Red gums and Yellow gums, native shrubs and grasses along the River and adjacent flats provide important habitat for endangered or threatened species, such as the Murray Cod.

The Avoca River provides water for stock, irrigated farmland, vineyards and several towns both along the River and in the surrounding district. Here, fishing and camping are popular leisure activities, particularly at Yawong Weir.

The middle reaches of the Avoca River, North Central Catchment Management Authority region



Avoca River
at Natte Yallock



Avoca River
at Natte Yallock

Avoca River photos: Stephen Malone Photography

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Bibron's Toadlet (above)

Bibron's Toadlets are found in dry forest, woodland, shrubland and grassland, and tend to walk rather than hop. They shelter under leaf litter and other debris in moist soils and depressions. Their eggs are spawned in shallow burrows under litter in low areas that will later be flooded.

Photo: Tony Robinson

River Blackfish (above right)

River Blackfish have a small home range (about 40m) amongst instream woody debris in which they lay several hundred sticky eggs. The eggs are then guarded by the male, who also fans away any silt that may settle on them that can suffocate and kill the eggs.

Photo: Rudie H. Kuiter

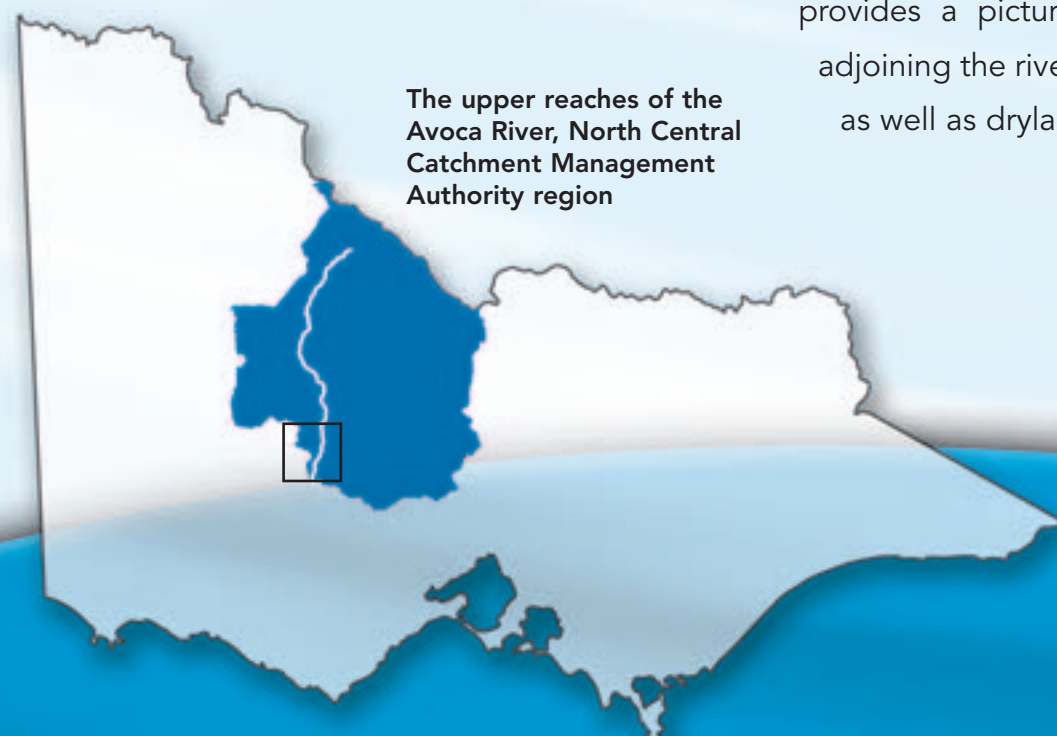
Mt Lonarch to Avoca THE UPPER REACHES

From its forested headwaters near Mt Lonarch, the upper reaches of the Avoca River descend through a valley before opening on to undulating open farmland. Along its course, the upper Avoca River flows through the towns of Amphitheatre and Avoca. Several waterways enter the river along this reach, including Glenlogie, Mountain and Greenhill creeks.

This reach is generally characterised by a well-shaded, clear, shallow, rocky stream with a high diversity of invertebrate fauna and small fish species. Blackfish and Mountain Galaxias are known to inhabit these upper reaches. River Red gums and Yellow gums border the stream as it flows out of the hills and provides habitat for a range of wildlife, such as Bibron's Toadlet and River Blackfish.

The Avoca River is a focal point in the township of Avoca and provides a picturesque area for locals and visitors. Farmland adjoining the river supports the region's many popular vineyards, as well as dryland cropping and livestock production.

The upper reaches of the
Avoca River, North Central
Catchment Management
Authority region



Avoca River
near Avoca



Avoca River
downstream of Amphitheatre

Avoca River photos: Stephen Malone Photography

Stonefly (below)

This stonefly nymph is showing a tuft of gills at the tip of its abdomen that it uses to breathe underwater.

Pictures and text from *The WaterBug Book*
by J.Gooderham and E.Tsyrlin

