

The Campaspe River is an important tributary of the Murray River with a catchment area of 4,000km². With its headwaters near Woodend, the north-flowing Campaspe is met by the Coliban River at Lake Eppalock and enters the Murray River at Echuca.

THE Campaspe River's JOURNEY

Campaspe River Lower Reaches

The lower Campaspe River flows 140km north from Lake Eppalock to the Murray River, through Axedale, Barnadown, Elmore, Rochester, Strathallan and Echuca. The major tributaries include Native Gully, Mosquito, Axe, Forest and Mt Pleasant creeks.

River flows are regulated to meet the needs of irrigators and to maximise river health benefits through the delivery of environmental flows. Lake Eppalock, Campaspe Weir and the Campaspe siphon are the major regulating structures.

River Red Gums commonly line the river banks. The shrub layer is generally sparse, including Blackwood, Wirilda Wattle and River Bottlebrush. Kangaroo Grass and Common Tussock Grass grow along the banks. The river is home to a variety of flora and fauna species, including the endangered Small Scurf-pea, Bush Stone-curlew and vulnerable Murray Cod. If you're quiet, you may also see Platypus, native Water-rats and the Common Long-Necked Tortoise in the river.

Barking Marsh Frog Photo: David Kleinert Photography

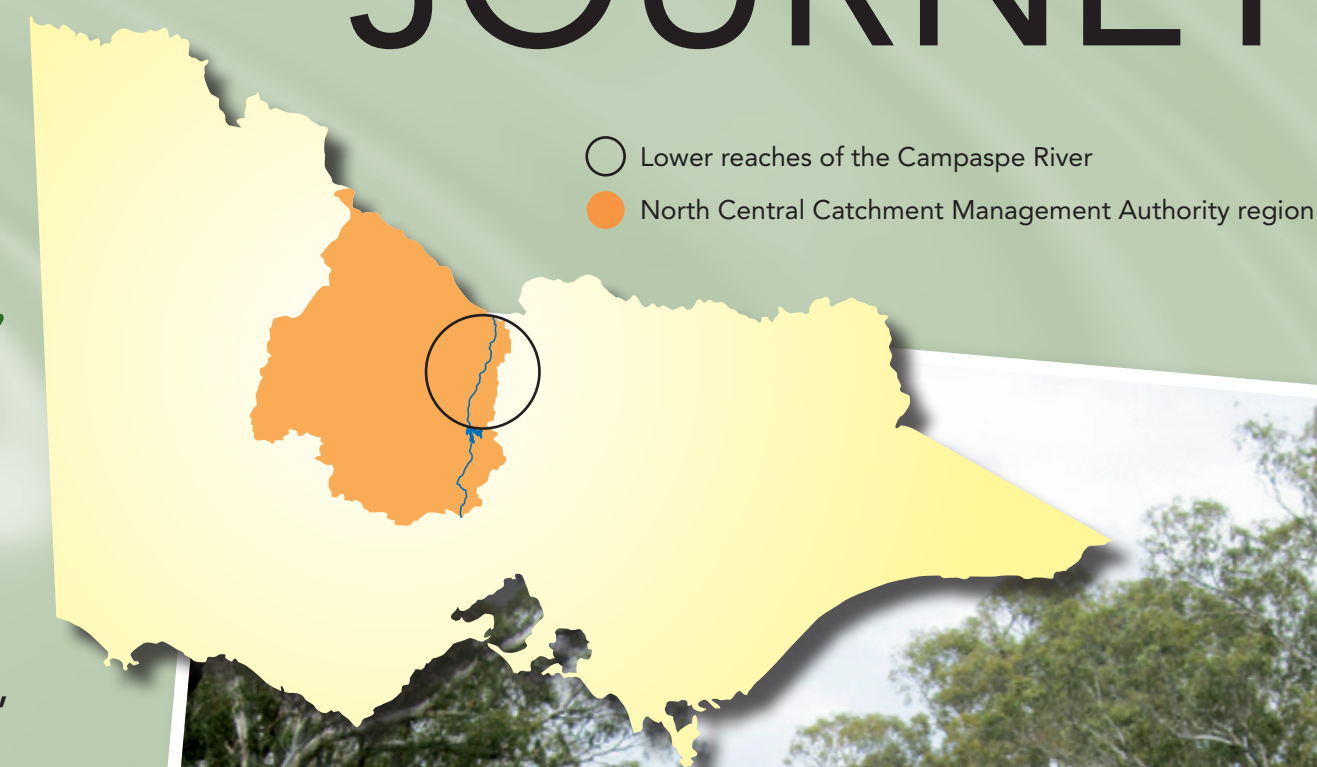
The Barking Marsh Frog grows 45–55mm in length. In dry times, they shelter in forest litter, under logs, and in cracks, crevices and yabby holes in the ground. Breeding occurs after rain in inundated grassy areas, where the males call from floating debris.

Bush Stone-curlew Photo: Peter Merritt

Curlews typically inhabit open woodland remnants surrounded by farmland. They require fallen timber, as it provides camouflage from predators, invertebrates to feed upon and material to build their ground nests.

Small Scurf-pea Photo: John Eichler/Viridans Images

The Small Scurf-pea is a trailing perennial herb with thin wiry stems (up to 50cm long) that rarely lives for more than nine months of the year. New stems re-sprout from the rootstock every spring. The flowers begin to appear in October and can persist until April. They vary in colour from bluish-pink to lilac.



○ Lower reaches of the Campaspe River
● North Central Catchment Management Authority region



Spring flows in the
Campaspe River, Barnadown

Campaspe River
at Strathallan



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THE Campaspe River's JOURNEY

Campaspe River Upper Reaches

The Campaspe River starts from natural springs in the hilly, moist forests of the Great Dividing Range. It flows approximately 95km through open grazing land on a northerly course through Ashbourne, Carlsruhe, Kyneton, Langley, Barfold and Redesdale to Lake Eppalock. The major tributaries include Five Mile and Pipers creeks and the Coliban River.

Beyond the forested headwaters, Swamp, Candlebark and Manna gums line the river above an understorey of Wattles and Tea Tree together with Blackberries and Gorse. Crack Willows largely dominate the riverbanks between Carlsruhe and Langley before a diversity of native species once again line the banks with exotic shrubs and grasses.

Barfold Gorge lies at the junction of the Campaspe River and Pipers Creek featuring waterfalls and a lava cave. The river environment contains many notable bird, fish, plant and animal species, including the Hairy Anchor Plant, Creeping Grevillea, Striped Legless Lizard and Powerful Owl.

Mayfly Photo: WaterBug Book by J Gooderham and E Tsyrlin

This particular mayfly is typically found amongst wood and aquatic plants. It has feathery gills that increase the surface area available to extract oxygen from the slow-flowing or still water in which it lives.

Hairy Anchor Plant

The rare Hairy Anchor Plant is a densely-branched, spiny shrub 0.5–2m high. Plants are usually multi-stemmed at ground level or can have a main trunk up to 15cm in diameter. Flowering is from November to February. The shiny, light-to-dark brown seeds are dispersed by explosive splitting of the seed pod.

Striped Legless Lizard Photo: Loddonvale Landcare Group

Though appearing snake-like, legless lizards differ from snakes by the presence of ear openings, a fleshy undivided tongue and a tail which is longer than the body. These endangered lizards shelter amongst dense Tussocks and lay eggs in deep soil cracks that provide protection from harsh weather.



Campaspe River,
near Redesdale



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