

THE RICHARDSON RIVER'S JOURNEY



Richardson River,
upstream of
Banyena Weir



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upstream of
Banyena Weir



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

The Avon-Richardson catchment is a land-locked river system in the eastern Wimmera and covers approximately 1.5% of Victoria. The Richardson River extends northwards from the Pyrenees foothills south-west of St Arnaud to Lake Buloke near Donald. The Avon River is its major tributary.

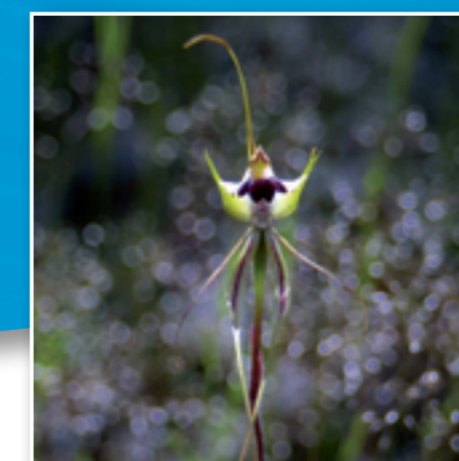
Richardson River – Upper Reaches MORRL MORRL TO BANYENA

The upper Richardson River flows from Morrl Morrl to Banyena, where it is joined by the Avon River. Its major tributaries include Wallaloo, Richardson and Swedes creeks.

Scattered River Red Gums, Grey Box, Yellow Gum, Buloke, wattles, native grasses and rushes line its banks. Water Ribbons grow in the more permanent pools where Water-rats are commonly observed.

The Banyena Weir was built in the 1880s and is recognised by Heritage Victoria for its historical significance. The weir pool provides good habitat for many native fish species and is enjoyed by the local community.

Indigenous communities continue to place a high value on the Richardson River, which they see as culturally and spiritually significant.



Bow-lip Spider-orchid

This small greencomb spider orchid flowers in spring. It is thought that spider orchids are generally pollinated by male wasps. This orchid is classified as vulnerable in Victoria.



Native Water-rat

Photo: Tony Robinson/ Viridans Images

The Australian native Water-rat is commonly confused with a platypus however the Water-rat has a long, narrow tail with a conspicuous white tip. It spends time both in the water, sitting on exposed rocks and logs or running along the bank.



Damselfly

Photo and text: WaterBug Book by J Gooderham and E Tsyrlin

A combination of colour and shape helps make Damselflies well camouflaged. Sometimes, Damselflies of the same species, in the same water body, can be brown or green depending on whether they spend their time on dead wood or aquatic plants.

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Richardson River,
upstream of
Rich Avon Weir



Richardson River,
upstream of
Rich Avon Weir



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

The Avon-Richardson catchment is a land-locked river system in the eastern Wimmera and covers approximately 1.5% of Victoria. The Richardson River extends northwards from the Pyrenees foothills south-west of St Arnaud to Lake Buloke near Donald. The Avon River is its major tributary.

Richardson River – Lower Reaches BANYENA TO LAKE BULOKE

The lower reaches of the Richardson River continue flowing north-easterly through Donald to the nationally significant Lake Buloke.

For several months of the year water is transferred from the headworks of the Wimmera-Mallee stock and domestic water storage system to the Richardson River. Water is then diverted via the Rich Avon Weir to Lake Batyo Catyo – the only water storage in the catchment, or via the Donald Main Channel for stock and domestic customers.

River Red Gums, Buloke and Grey Box are scattered along the banks above native grasses, rushes and reeds. Black Box, lignum and saltbush grow along the river closer to Lake Buloke. Chariot Wheels is considered vulnerable in Victoria and occurs on the floodplain surrounding Lake Buloke which is habitat to an abundance of birdlife, including the endangered Freckled Duck.

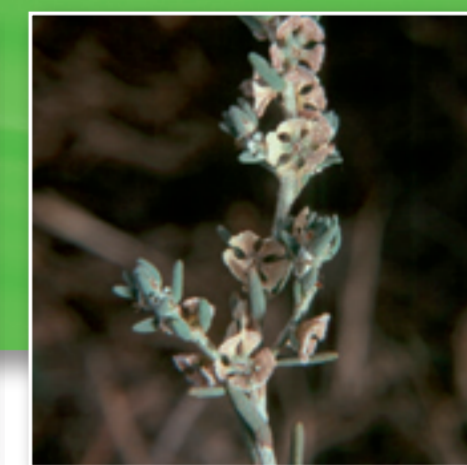
Both the Banyena and Rich Avon weirs provide good habitat for the critically endangered Silver Perch, endangered Freshwater Catfish and vulnerable Murray Cod and Golden Perch.



Freckled Duck

Photo: Paul Gullan/Viridans Images

Freckled Ducks can often be seen in small groups in heavily vegetated freshwater swamps. They may move to fresh or salty open lakes, especially in droughts. They spend their days perched on stumps, rocks or in the shallows. When breeding, the bill of the male Freckled Duck is bright red at its base.



Chariot Wheels

Photo: John Eichler/Viridans Images

Chariot Wheels is a small perennial herb generally growing up to 20cm tall. During spring and early summer, it has tiny green flowers and wheel-shaped woolly fruit consisting of five spreading wings. The fruit can often be seen in piles around the entrance of ant nests as they gather the fallen fruits and eat the seed inside.



Freshwater Catfish

Photo: Tarmo Raadik DSE ARI

Pairs of catfish construct a saucer-shaped depression (or nest) 0.5m–2m in diameter on the streambed, usually in areas of coarse sand, gravel or rocks. After the female deposits up to 20,000 eggs, the male remains by the nest.