

River Detectives is an exciting environmental education initiative of Catchment Management Authorities (CMA's) and one water authority, inspiring teachers and students to understand, appreciate and care for their local waterway and catchment through engaging, cross-curricular, citizen-science activities.



Currently five regions offer the River Detectives program to schools and youth groups/initiatives;

- North Central CMA region
- Corangamite CMA region
- North East CMA region
- Wimmera CMA region
- Melbourne Water area

River Detectives is an engaging, citizen-science, sustainability program helping your students value waterways as the life-blood of the land and empowering them to work with community in taking action.

You can watch our animation to get a feel for the program;
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u-Nuoum0rAc>

River Detectives - what's involved:

- the program is **FREE**
- registered schools/groups are supported by a regional River Detectives facilitator
- participants 'adopt' a site on a local waterway
- water quality monitoring kit provided with equipment for monthly testing
- Training sessions provided by regional facilitators to support implementation the program
- students test water quality each month and enter results/observations online at our website
- webinars offered on a range of topics
- access to website full of ideas, inspiration and resources; videos, posters, activity sheets, fact sheets, maps and links
- notifications/updates distributed through the Billabong Banter blog through our website
- connect and share with River Detectives schools/colleagues in your region or across the state
- invitations to special events



River Detectives - extremely flexible:

- suitable for primary/secondary, small groups/whole class, one class/many classes
- suitable for classroom setting, home schooling networks, after school care providers, student sustainability teams, extension programs, camp facilities, etc
- can be facilitated by a teacher, parent, Landcare / community member (with current WWC)
- adopted waterway does not need to be within walking distance of your school
- waterway can be a river, stream, wetland, lake, urban/rural, permanent/ephemeral
- testing can be done onsite at your waterway or at school with a collected sample
- can be implemented as little or as much as you like - ie. test water quality 4 times per year or test as often as you like and value add to the program with habitat surveys and waterbug sampling.
- water quality testing is the glue that ties the program together and is a springboard for further learning. Use website resources to explore a variety of waterway-related topics. These activities will add meaning to your monthly data and illustrate how everything in nature/life is linked.
- the program fits within science/sustainability studies or general classroom time with many cross-curricular links



River Detectives - many valuable learning opportunities:

- skills and knowledge in science, maths, literacy, humanities, sustainability, art . . .
- test for pH, electrical conductivity (salinity), turbidity, reactive phosphorus and temperature
- learn about river health, catchments, water science, flora, fauna, urban stormwater, litter, erosion, land management, life/water cycles, ecosystems and embed First Nations perspectives
- provide meaningful contexts for learning using real data from your local environment
- encourage students to become environmental leaders / change-makers advocating for waterways
- link with community groups and participate in hands-on environmental rehabilitation work
- strengthen community links ie. get involved with your local Landcare group/council/landholders to revegetate your waterway, learn about the history of your waterway, hear stories from older residents about the life and times of your waterway (droughts, floods, recreation), connect with traditional owner groups to learn about cultural practices
- link with other initiatives such as Clean Up Australia Day, National Tree Day, Science Week, Water Week, ResourceSmart Schools, etc

