

FLY LINES

Official monthly newsletter of the Victorian Fly Fishers' Association



VICTORIAN
FLY FISHERS'
ASSOCIATION

OCTOBER 2026



A typical small stream brown caught recently. The Victorian trout season is well under way.

October Meeting:
PNG Black Bass &
Lombah Weir Project

Thursday 15th October
6.30pm
The Kelvin Club

Booking essential if you would like a meal on the night

BOOK NOW

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"YOUR ASSOCIATION NEEDS

YOU"

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TRIP REPORTS · PHOTOS · FLY PATTERNS · YARNS

From Council

a new council, a farewell, a change to auction night and the season under way

With the AGM done and dusted, things have been fairly quiet on the VFFA front while the dust settles. That is pretty normal for this time of year, and it gives us a chance to catch our breath before things pick up again.

Thanks, John

The AGM brought some new faces to council, and also meant saying goodbye to one we will miss. John Wieladek has stepped down after a promotion at work. We are pleased for him, but it is a real loss for council.

Over the past two years John has been a steady, sensible voice around the table. He always had sound advice to offer and never shied away from putting in the work. On behalf of council and members, thanks John. The door is always open if you find yourself with some spare time down the track.



John Wieladek steps down from council after two years of sound advice and hard work. Thanks John.

Your council

Your council for the year ahead is Andrew Fuller, Bernard Chu, Bill Jeans (Librarian), Daniel Lovecek (Secretary), Richard McCormack, Rob Scambler (Editor), Rod Hirst, Scott Raggatt, Paul Benson and Richard (Dick) Close.

It is a good mix of experience and fresh energy, and I think there are exciting times ahead for the club.

Thorpdale washed out

Unfortunately our Thorpdale trip with the Latrobe Valley Fly Fishers had to be cancelled. The weather simply did not play ball, and with conditions that wet it was the right call. Hopefully we get another crack at it soon.

Trying something new at Millbrook

Our first Millbrook trip on Thursday 8th October was limited to six members on a first in basis as we trial a new format. We will see how it goes and report back in next month's Fly Lines. We will also publish the VFFA's available dates then, as our usual booking dates have changed under the new arrangement.

Auction night moves to November

Due to unforeseen circumstances, the VFFA Annual Auction has moved to Thursday 19th November at The Kelvin Club. Hugh Maltby tells me he has a great selection of fly fishing goodies lined up and waiting for the hammer to fall.

It is one of the best nights on the club calendar, so bring a mate, bring your wallet and come along. We would love to see a big turnout.

In its place on Thursday 15th October we have Gordon Baker on chasing black bass in Papua New Guinea, with a short talk from me on volunteering at Loombah Weir. Please [book online](#) if you want a meal. Details are in Coming Up.

The season is open

The Victorian trout season is under way and we are already hearing good reports from a number of rivers and streams. We would love to hear how you are going, whether it has been fish after fish or a long walk for nothing. Send through around 100 words and a few photos to info@vffa.com.au and we will share them in Fly Lines.

Regards,

John Spragg
President

Meet Your Council

five quick questions for the people running your club

Your council has a mix of long standing members and new faces, so we asked each of them the same five questions. Here is the first batch.

John Spragg, President



John Spragg.

Joined the VFFA: 2012, via Tony Mitcham.

Favourite water: The Steavenson River at Buxton, or Four Springs Lake in Tasmania (boat fishing).

One fly for a whole day: A hopper.

Favourite VFFA trip or function: The Taupo trip, summer and winter. Best function was the 2025 Christmas Dinner.

End of the day drink: A large apple cider or a CC and Dry.

Andrew Fuller



Andrew Fuller.

Joined the VFFA: 2008, though many visits with Marty Rogers and Jim Allen prior to that.

Favourite water: When it's on, Great Lake in Tassie.

One fly for a whole day: Philbrick's nymph. Rare to get a refusal on that. Have even stripped it fast on smelt feeders.

Favourite VFFA trip or function: Annual Dinner. Lots of fun this year.

End of the day drink: Beer for the ride home, G&T when back to civilisation.

Rod Hirst



Rod Hirst.

Joined the VFFA: I joined in September 2020, and then you all know what happened. Zoom meetings for two years. Once I finally made the meetings the beauty of our association was revealed: great people, and all love fishing.

Favourite water: Anywhere I can catch a fish, but smaller rivers win hands down. I love the Eucumbene, Victoria, Big River above the Bundara, Mitta Mitta, and will fish the Howqua one day soon.

One fly for a whole day: This question is impossible: river, lakes, saltwater... but a dry fly to rising fish is always a

winner, with a nymph to begin. Recent saltwater forays open up a new world of opportunity for joy and disappointment. Closures, Crazy Charlies.

Favourite VFFA trip or function: Auction night is fun, member celebrity nights are cool, and on the water, Cressy was my first, so special.

End of the day drink: An ice-cold beer, draught, lager or a dark ale; none of that craft fruity stuff.

To be continued. More of your council in the next issue of Fly Lines.



Lyndon's Web

a regular column from Lyndon Webb

Fishing diaries, so invaluable

Following a few recent reminders from my dear wife I made a start a couple of days ago at cleaning up our garage. I pulled out some bits and pieces from an old wardrobe in the garage and came across a tired looking and well-thumbed ancient school exercise book. It was significant. It was my first attempt at a fishing diary, one that I had set up in my early years fishing for trout when we were living in Warrnambool so many years ago.

I had had some success fishing the rivers around Warrnambool (and that was not hard in those days), and it struck me that it might be useful, for all sorts of good reasons, to keep a record of my outings and my various captures.

My early fishing diary entries were predictable: the date (day, month and year), the time of day and the hours I had spent fishing, the venue where I had been fishing, weather conditions, the state of the river or lake I had visited (height, clarity and water temperature), the flies I had used and which ones had been successful, the fish I had caught (if any), and of course the size of fish caught. Then to finish, a brief paragraph or two describing my feelings about the outing, recording anything significant or special about the day. And of course, on most occasions I managed to remember to take a small camera to gather some sort of photographic evidence.

Of course the habit of keeping a fishing diary was thus established, and has continued over the ensuing years of my fishing experiences.

In the early 1980s we returned as a family to Melbourne, where I had a teaching position at a large secondary school. As a teacher I was required, obviously, to write regular reports on the progress of the students I taught, and thus gathered piles of assessments and exam results. To help us with our record keeping and subsequent report writing we were issued with laptops. (I think from memory we had to pay for them.)

To help us with our record keeping our laptops came with a very useful data keeping application called FileMaker Pro. It

was easy to use, and thus easy to check details on any area of a student's work.

Where is all this going?

Well, it soon struck me that FileMaker Pro would be an ideal application for recording my fishing experiences. So a new file was set up, and student attendances and exam results were replaced with the associated fishing fields mentioned before: dates and times and locations, weather details, names of fishing companions, our successes, best flies, etc etc.

Obviously keeping detailed records of our trout trips has a multitude of uses. David Scholes, in one of his early books, writes about the importance and value of keeping a detailed fishing diary. Nowadays of course there are obvious advantages in keeping our records on a computer, a laptop or a desk computer. I guess any sort of convenient filing system will work, but a database program such as FileMaker Pro (or similar) has obvious advantages because you can quickly call up information in any field.

So, when was the last time I fished the Goulburn? How many trout did I catch from the Yarra at Warburton last December on my three visits there? What flies were most successful when I fished the Rubicon recently? What was the date of my last visit to the lakes I enjoy fishing near Leongatha? What were the weather conditions like on the day I last fished Little Pine? All so easy to check on the right computer application.

Ah, the memories, and the many precious photos tucked into those now countless reports. The memories vary of course: the snakes I nearly trod on, the bull that chased me, the day I stepped too far and sank to my chest in a freezing hole on that river in Gippsland...



Lyndon holding a lovely small stream brown.

But heaps of countless positive memories too, of delightful days in good company when the trout liked what I presented to them and they rose consistently and ate my offerings.

Regardless, whatever you use and however you go about it, ensure you spend some time keeping a record of your fishing experiences. The memories recorded will invariably become just so precious.



SEASONAL FISHING INTELLIGENCE

Word on the Water

from Andrew Fuller

Well, we got the rain. Nearly a month's worth in just two days, and both the Otways and the North East streams copped the lot. Expect it to take a week or two for things to clear.

It is not all bad news. Everything was looking pretty good for this time of year, but the rivers could do with a decent flush, and now they have had one.

Western lakes. Out west, the lakes are looking unbelievably good. As I mentioned last month, the lack of fish is still really disappointing, but the odd fish over 2 lb has been turning up, built like a football. Fingers crossed that when the mayflies arrive, the trout that are there will show themselves and give us some good spring mayfly fishing. It cannot be long now.

Tasmania. Down in Tassie, they are off to an absolute flyer. Pulling streamers has been the most productive approach on the lakes, but there has been some great river fishing as well. The evening rise on the South Esk has been really good.

North East. A few of the VFFA crew headed to the Howqua a week or two back and were greeted with big flows that made fishing very tough. Sadly, it sounds like they pulled the pin early and came home.

That same weekend, we had a cracking report from the Delatite. So often one valley cops a deluge and the next one over barely sees a drop. If things do not look great when you arrive, it pays to do a bit of driving around.

The Goulburn has been hit and miss, as it so often is. The good news is that plenty of big fish are being caught, and not all of them look like the stonkers the VFA have stocked.

Our team have been hitting the King Parrot and Murrindindi pretty hard and doing quite well. Do not mess around with small stuff. Give them something that gets them excited.

Flies and tactics. At this time of year, make sure you are carrying some heavy nymphs. Duracell jigs, pink tag jigs and perdigons all fish really well in higher water. Go up a bead size or so on what you would normally use.



The King Parrot looking perfect a couple of weeks ago.

If you find more moderate flows, do not forget the dry dropper. In the milder weather, the dry fly fishing has been nothing short of spectacular.

As is often the case in early spring, you will need to wait for the sun to hit the water, so activity tends to start a bit later in the day. And do not leave early. Stick around till dark if you want to chase rising fish.

Along with the King Parrot and Murrindindi, the Acheron, Steavenson and Taggerty have all been fishing really well.

From the shop. The shop has been very busy for this time of year, which is a pretty accurate reflection of how good the fishing has been. We are keen for the rivers to drop a little so we can get back into it, and the mayflies on the Western Victorian lakes cannot be far off either.

I bloody love this time of year.

FLY OF THE MONTH

*Nimbus 2000**from Craig Coltman**The Nimbus 2000, a flashy claret shuttlecock for bright days.*

A mayfly lake pattern for those bluebird days when the trout will not look at a standard dun. Craig first tried it at Little Pine Lagoon in full sun with no breeze, about as bad as it gets on the Pine, and finished the day with 12 good fish. A mate reckoned it looked like a witch's broom, so it was named after Harry Potter's broomstick.

MATERIALS

HOOK	medium wire wet fly, size 12 or 14
THREAD	black 8/0
TAIL	brown cock hackle fibres
RIB	thin pearl mylar
BODY	dark claret possum fur
WING	dark possum tail guard hairs

TYING SEQUENCE

- 1 Tie in a clump of brown cock hackle fibres for the tail, about two thirds the length of the shank.
- 2 Tie in the pearl mylar at the same point.
- 3 Cut a generous clump of possum tail and stroke out all the underfur, leaving only the long, stiff guard hairs.
- 4 Tie the guard hairs in at the front so they protrude out over the eye.
- 5 Dub a slim, carrot shaped body with the claret possum.
- 6 Rib with three or four open turns of mylar.
- 7 Dub the thorax.
- 8 Take the thread between the wing and the eye and build up several wraps to push the wing back off the shank at about 45 degrees.
- 9 Whip finish and trim the wing to length with curved scissors.

Tip: tie a few with bushier wings for extra float and visibility in rough water.

On the water

Fish the Nimbus on the point with one or two less visible emergers on the droppers, a bit like a washing line. You will not always see the emergers, so respond to any movement between the Nimbus and the end of your fly line. The way it hangs in the film also makes it a handy anchor for a trailing nymph tied off the bend.

Originally published at FlyStream. Watch Craig tie it at vimeo.com/929189557.



Aitutaki Dreaming

bones, brutes and trout talk in the Cook Islands

I spent a week fishing the Cook Islands, specifically Aitutaki, and it reminded me that saltwater fly fishing does not play by the same rules as trout. Sure, it is still a fly, still a line, still that same satisfying feeling when you connect, but the whole vibe is different from the first cast.

Trout fishing is all about being precise and patient and trying not to spook anything. Saltwater is faster, louder and a lot more “go time”. The fish do not seem to hesitate the way trout sometimes do. If you are there and your fly is right, you get a moment. If not, you are watching a tail disappear like it has got somewhere better to be.

I went over with a small group of four, and the trip was run by James Norney, who is well known around Victoria as a guide. He made everything feel easy, even when the day got busy. Good guides bring a particular kind of calm, and James had it in spades. That is pretty comforting when the flats look picture perfect and totally innocent, but you know the fish are out there deciding whether you are worth the effort.



Aitutaki skies and some serious fishing ahead.

We had heaps of action on bonefish, with plenty of them running over 70 cm. GTs showed up too, and blue trevally were in the mix as well. Permit and triggerfish were around, but no cigar. There is always a species or two that make you work a bit harder for the story, and those two were it for us.

Then there is the “so how did you go?” part, which is where I should probably stick to my own rules. The author, who shall remain nameless, lost one bonefish over the entire five days and nights of fishing. One. That is it. I will just say the ocean was generous with the rest of the crew, and I did my best to stay in the boat’s good graces.

Aitutaki itself was unreal. Great people, great food, and a setting that makes you want to take a deep breath even when you are flat out chasing a fish.



Paradise.

By the end of the week it did not feel like we had just gone fishing. We had hung out with the sea for a week, been thoroughly spoilt, and brought home a pile of memories, plus a few stories you will only tell people who understand why you would willingly do this in the first place.

If you have been thinking about saltwater fly fishing, or you have been meaning to get away somewhere special with a small group and a good guide, I would seriously recommend giving James Norney a call about his July and August 2027 trips. It is the sort of trip you will be looking forward to long before you start packing.

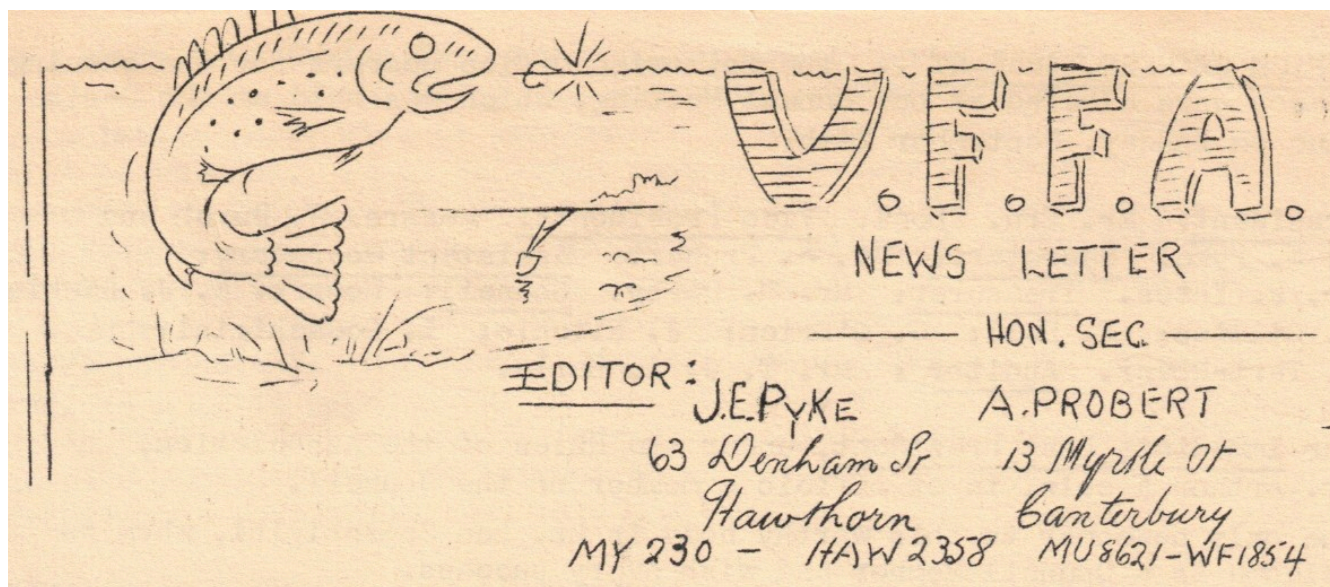
Cheers from the bloke who caught none, but still came home very happy.



THIS MONTH'S YARN

Genesis of the V.F.F.A.

extracts from the VFFA newsletters of December 1955, March 1956 and June 1956, from Peter Whitelaw



The header from our original newsletter.

For these historical notes we are indebted to Mr. Noel Hepworth. They will be continued in later issues. The first meeting of a Fly Fishers' Association in Victoria was held at the Port Phillip Hotel on 18th June 1906 under the chairmanship of Sir George Jenkins. Committee members were Colonel Charles Ryan; Colonel Owen; Messrs. D. R. Halell, A. T. Brown, Chas. Hutton, A. Marshall, S. McCulloch, F. A. Campbell, R. Gibson, H. L. Ford, - McIlwraith, F. S. Officer, H. W. Allen. Annual subscription was one and a half guineas (probably paid in gold).

The first major activity of the new Association took place shortly after its formation. This was to liberate all the Rainbow Trout yearlings - then a "new" fish in Victoria - from the Ballarat Hatchery. There were just 800 of them. It was decided to place them in the Upper Yarra, beyond Warburton, and arrangements were made accordingly - by members of the Association. It was no light task.

The fish were sent by rail to Warburton, then by special horse-drawn waggons along a rough earth road to McVeigh's, twenty miles away in the mountains. On the way some fish were liberated at McMahon's Creek, 12 miles out. More fish were put into Walsh's Creek, which joins the Yarra at McVeigh's.

Next day, after a stop-over at the once famous hostelry at McVeigh's, the rest of the fish were placed in the Yarra some miles above the hotel. There was no road going up the river beyond this spot, and it was necessary to take the fish-cans to the point of liberation by a horse-sled - a rather jerky procedure. However, the fish obviously survived. Another factor in their survival, no doubt, was that two men were put on each night during transit, to look after the cans and give them the requisite attention. What we could now do in half a day then took at least three days.

In spite of all this effort the cost of distributing trout was much less in those days, for we learn that in the following year (1907) the expense of liberating 1,000 yearling rainbows in Alderman's Creek (three miles beyond McVeigh's) was only £30.

(Original Editor's Notes: Prior to the successful planting of Rainbows by the Association in the McVeigh's area, there were plenty of Browns in the Upper Yarra, the first having been introduced into the lower waters so far back as 1860. For space reasons, we have held over some of Mr. Hepworth's notes till our next issue. He informs us that the Association referred to above was not the V.F.F.A. as at present constituted, but an earlier body.)

Early History of the V.F.F.A.

Our last published notes from Mr. Noel Hepworth dealt with the first major activity of the Association, which was the initial liberation of Rainbow Trout in the Upper Yarra and some tributaries. The next important thing that concerned the Committee was a Hatchery:

In the year 1907 the Society (as the Association was then called) had thoughts of starting its own hatchery. But this ambitious project needed finance. The then Premier, Sir Thomas Bent, was approached, and he agreed to give £250 towards the scheme - provided the hatchery was placed in Landcox Park, Brighton. At this date it is not known why the astute Sir Thomas insisted on that condition, but perhaps he anticipated that his proviso would not be acceptable on account of the unsuitability of the site and so hoped that the offer would be declined.

The Society wished to establish the hatchery at Warburton, an excellent location, but was at the time unable to find sufficient money. A drive for new members was instituted - but still no hatchery.

Early in the following year (1908) the idea of installing a hatchery was dropped. It is good to note, however, that about this time the Premier (still Sir Thomas Bent) was thanked by the Society for increasing an annual government grant to the Geelong and Ballarat Acclimatisation Society.

It may be interesting to interpolate here a reference to the Ercildoune Ponds, situated in an historic Victorian estate, in the Western District. In these were bred, back in the Sixties of the last century, the first trout released in Victoria. The Ponds may justly be described as the birthplace of Australian Trout Fishing. (But not Fly Fishing, as the native Grayling - now very rare - were caught on artificial flies by early settlers. - Ed.)

The name of Sir James Wilson (owner of Ercildoune) should long be revered, for it was he who after many trials and failures was finally successful in bringing ova from abroad, and breeding fish therefrom - at Ercildoune. No airmail, no cars, no deep freeze. Shades of zinc poisoning, how did he do it?

By December 1908, the Society got further into the doldrums and ceased altogether to function for some years. So the matter of the Warburton Hatchery remained forgotten for a while. But it - and other matters - were revived later, as we shall see in subsequent notes.

History of the V.F.F.A.

As mentioned in our previous issue, the inaugural meeting of our body, as at present constituted, took place on August 1932, so that next year we will celebrate our silver anniversary. The objects for which the Association was formed were (and are) as follows:

- (a) The cultivation of the art of fly fishing
- (b) The protection of trout, and the stocking and care of trout streams and waters
- (c) The encouragement of the spirit of sportsmanship in trout fishing
- (d) The working in co-operation with Government Departments and other bodies or persons, public or private, for the furtherance of the above-mentioned aims by means of affiliation or in any other way.
- (e) The promotion of social intercourse amongst trout fishermen.

For the moment we must leave our history of the V.F.F.A. at this point.



BEYOND YOUR NEXT FISHING DAY

Conservation, Access & Advocacy

trees, coffee and creek lessons: news from the Australian Trout Foundation



AUSTRALIAN TROUT FOUNDATION

It has been a busy start to the season for our friends at the Australian Trout Foundation. Between planting thousands of trees in the high country, presenting at a national stream conference and keeping the coffee flowing on opening day, the ATF has been doing plenty of the unglamorous work that keeps our trout waters healthy. Here is what they have been up to.

2,300 trees at Jubilee Bridge

From Wednesday 9th to Friday 11th September, volunteers from the ATF, Omeo Angling Club, Friends of the Mitta, the Omeo Walking Group and Bairnsdale Fly Fishers spent three days planting around 2,300 trees and shrubs near Jubilee Bridge, each one fitted with a large tree guard.

Owen Davies from North East CMA led the planting, with Phillip and Joanne Jones representing the ATF and looking after the catering.



The Friday team at Jubilee Bridge.

It was not easy going. The ground was rock hard and every guard stake had to be driven in with a heavy sledgehammer. The older members of the crew were well and truly cooked by the end of it, but the team still got all 2,300 plants in the ground within the three days. Daryl Grant earned a special mention for being tireless throughout.

The planting is part of a larger project to improve water quality and lower water temperatures in Livingstone Creek. The aim is better waterway health, more stable banks and more habitat for trout, Macquarie perch and platypus. The work is funded by Victorian Fisheries and North East CMA.



Rows of new plantings, every one with its own tree guard.

Sharing the hard lessons

ATF President Paul Stolz and Treasurer Ray Ferguson represented the Foundation at the 12th Australian Stream Management Conference, held over three days at Kingscliff, just south of the Gold Coast. The program featured a wide range of keynote speakers and workshops, with awards for standout projects presented at the gala dinner.

The ATF presentation focused on its large planting effort along Livingstone Creek in 2025, and was refreshingly honest about it. That project took a huge amount of work for very little outcome, and the ATF shared what it learnt so others can avoid the same traps. That kind of candour is rare at conferences and is worth applauding.

Opening day at Eildon

The trout season opened on Saturday 5th September, with festivals again held at Ballarat and Eildon. The ATF was at Eildon, where the weather pushed proceedings inside to the Eildon Community Centre. The ATF catering trailer was parked out the front serving hot coffee to everyone heading in out of the cold.

Thanks to Tom White, Diana and Bryan King, along with the President, for flying the flag.

Representing Victoria in Jindabyne

The ATF was also invited to present at the NSW Fisheries Roundtable in Jindabyne on Friday 2nd October. The roundtable looked at the preservation of both native aquatic species and trout, and NSW Fisheries asked the ATF along because of its strong record in stream rehabilitation that benefits native and introduced species alike.

With diesel prices where they are, it was a long and expensive trip, but an important one. The partnership between the VFA, the CMAs and the ATF was also set to get a good run, given how much it has done for both the trout fishery and environmental recovery in Victoria.



ATF members and volunteers out in the field.

Coming up

- ATF AGM: Tuesday 20th October 7.30pm, online
- Australian Fishing and Outdoor Expo: Saturday 7th and Sunday 8th November, Bendigo Showground

Get involved

If you fish Victorian trout water, the ATF is doing work that directly benefits you. Membership helps fund projects like Jubilee Bridge and gives you the chance to roll up your sleeves at the next planting day. Join through the [ATF membership page](#).

Adapted from the Australian Trout Foundation newsletter, Issue 14, Volume 26.



What Is Flowing in the Goulburn?

from VRFish, the Victorian Recreational Fishing Peak Body



The Goulburn River holds a huge mix of native and introduced fish. Below Shepparton, the northern stretch is outstanding water for Murray cod and golden perch, while trout are stocked through the year. In early September, large retired broodstock trout were released between Eildon and Alexandra ahead of the season opening.

If you fish the Goulburn, you will know the flows can change a lot, and it is not always obvious why. The good news is there is now an easy way to see exactly what is going down the river.



Water on the move in the Goulburn system.

The science behind the flows

The Commonwealth Environmental Water Holder runs a science program called Flow Monitoring, Evaluation and Research, or Flow MER for short. It brings together scientists, water managers, First Nations groups and the community to understand how rivers and wetlands across the Murray Darling Basin respond to environmental water.

Environmental water is water set aside specifically to keep rivers and wetlands healthy, along with the plants and animals that rely on them. What Flow MER learns feeds straight into how the Goulburn is managed, including when and how environmental water is released.

No early spring fresh this year

Each early spring, the Goulburn Broken CMA usually releases environmental water down the Goulburn. This “spring fresh” gets native fish moving and wets the banks, which then encourages new plant growth as the water drops back. It also boosts habitat and food for Murray cod, trout cod, golden perch, platypus and waterbugs.

This year it has not been needed. Wet conditions since July have produced natural flows that did the same job, so the CMA decided to skip the early spring fresh. Planning for a late spring fresh is continuing, but it will depend on river conditions, water temperatures and scientific advice.

A decade of monitoring

The Goulburn River and Northern Victorian Tributaries program, known as GRANT, covers the Goulburn, Broken, Campaspe and Loddon systems along with some wetlands in the Goulburn Broken catchment. For the past ten years, the team has tracked how environmental water helps native fish breed, grow and move freely.

This country is the land of the Yorta Yorta and Taungurung people, Traditional Owners of the Goulburn and Broken catchments, and the Dja Dja Wurrung, Barapa Barapa and Wamba Wemba people, Traditional Owners of the Campaspe and Loddon catchments.

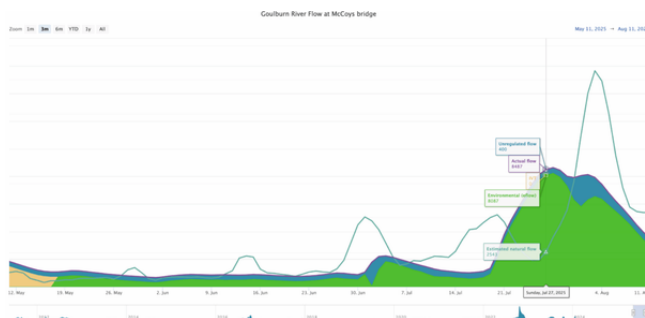
Check the flows for yourself

Fishers often ask what is actually in the river at any given time. It could be natural flow, water being moved between valleys for irrigators (known as inter valley transfers, or IVTs), or environmental water.

The Goulburn Broken CMA now publishes a [hydrograph](#) that answers exactly that. It shows flows in the lower Goulburn measured at McCoys Bridge and is updated weekly.

A hydrograph is simply a graph of river flow over time at one spot. This one splits the flow into its parts, so you can see how much is operational water such as IVTs, how much is environmental water, an estimate of the natural flow, and the actual flow on the day.

For more detail, the Murray Darling Basin Authority also publishes flows, levels, salinity, water temperatures and flow forecasts on its [River Data website](#).



An example of the Goulburn Broken CMA hydrograph at McCoys Bridge.

Further resources

- [Goulburn River hydrograph at McCoys Bridge](#)
- [Flow MER: Goulburn River and Northern Victorian Tributaries](#)
- [Goulburn Broken CMA: Goulburn River](#)
- [MDBA River Data: McCoys Bridge](#)

This article was written by VRFish, the Victorian Recreational Fishing Peak Body, and is reproduced with acknowledgement. For the latest Victorian recreational fishing news, visit vrfish.com.au.



Change of Program for Thursday 15th October

Gordon Baker on chasing black bass in Papua New Guinea

Due to unforeseen circumstances, our annual auction night has been postponed until November. It will still go ahead, now on Thursday 19th November at our November General Meeting.

That leaves a free Thursday night, and we have filled it with something well worth turning up for.

When: Thursday 15th October 6.30pm

Where: The Kelvin Club, Melbourne Place, Melbourne

Speakers: Gordon Baker, with John Spragg

Bookings: essential if you want a meal. [Book online here](#)

Gordon Baker: chasing black bass in Papua New Guinea

Gordon Baker has just returned from Papua New Guinea, where he went after black bass. These fish have a fearsome reputation. They hit like a train, head straight for the nearest snag and live in some of the most remote river country on the planet.



A Papua New Guinea black bass. Hear all about them from Gordon Baker on Thursday 15th October.

Getting there is an adventure in itself, and landing one is another thing entirely. Expect great stories, plenty of photos and probably a few lessons learnt the hard way.

Also on the night: John Spragg at Loombah Weir

Our President, John Spragg, will round out the night with a short talk on what it is like to volunteer on the Australian Trout Foundation's Loombah Weir project near Benalla, where brown trout are being moved out of a closed water supply catchment to make room for endangered Macquarie perch.

Volunteers live on site in small teams, watch a trout trap around the clock, and get to fish water the public never sees. John will tell you what that is really like.

See you on the 15th

Come for Gordon's black bass stories, stay for John's tales from Loombah. Bring a mate, and [book online](#) so we can sort a meal for you on the night.



VFFA Annual Auction

now moved to our November General Meeting, Thursday 19th November, 6.30pm at The Kelvin Club

It is that time of year again, just a month later than planned. Due to unforeseen circumstances the auction has moved from October to our November General Meeting. Our annual auction is one of the most popular nights on the VFFA calendar and always pulls a good crowd.

We are now looking for donations of fly fishing gear to go under the hammer. Rods, reels, lines, vests, flies, fly boxes, fly tying gear, boots and waders, and anything else a fly fisher might bid on. No books this year, and please, no boots or waders that are past their best.

How it works

Items donated outright: 20 per cent of the winning bid goes to the association. Items with a reserve: if the item sells above reserve, 20 per cent of the total winning bid goes to the association and the rest comes back to you.

Money raised goes straight back into running the club and supporting members.



Hughie in full flight.

Hugh Maltby is running the gavel again and is putting the lots together now. If you have got gear sitting in the shed that deserves a better life, get in touch with Hugh at redtag@hotmail.com so it can go in the catalogue.

A full list of lots will go out to members before the night. We hope you can make it.



Veterans Who Fly Fish: Learn to Fly Fish Days

Saturday 31st October, sponsored by Melbourne RSL



A Melbourne RSL sponsored experience for military veterans and ADF serving members, with a one-day guided event on Saturday 31st October 2026 in Victoria's pristine trout streams.

Learn more at melbournersl.org.au/event/learn-to-fly-fish-days.



The 2026 Warrnambool Trip

Friday 6th to Sunday 8th November, from Hugh Maltby

Our annual trip to Warrnambool is happening again in November, where we will be hosted by our friends from the Warrnambool Fly Fishers Club and will have the opportunity to fish the district's fabulous trout streams, including the Merri, the Mount Emu, the Hopkins and the Moyne.

These rivers offer a variety of fishing to some very large brown trout. We will be guided in groups of two on the Saturday, and will return in the evening to Jim and Trish Blakeslee's fabulous Napa Merri Vineyard to enjoy a wonderful meal prepared by Jim and Trish and the local members. This is the highlight of the trip and is always a truly delightful event. A donation of \$30 per person is required to cover the costs, and bring your own alcohol.

The weekend will commence with our arrival at the Surfside Park caravan park on the Friday night, when we will then head off to Bojangles Pizza Bar and restaurant for dinner, again bring your own alcohol. Saturday is the opportunity to enjoy the fabulous local fishing and then the meal at the Blakeslees'. Sunday is free.

The four rivers in Warrnambool have traditionally offered fabulous fishing over the years, and spring is a good time to be there and enjoy the fishing that is available, guided by some very experienced local members. I would extend a special invitation to recently joined members, and to members who have never experienced the fishing in this district, to take the opportunity to fish some fabulous new water.



Peter Whitelaw got the chocolates last year with this superb brown.

Accommodation is limited, so do not delay. Contact Hugh Maltby at redhtag@hotmail.com to secure your place.



Tasmania Trip: Hayes on Brumbys

Sunday 31st January to Saturday 6th February 2027, Cressy, Tasmania



Places are still available. Six days fishing out of Hayes on Brumbys Fly Fishing Lodge at Cressy with fellow VFFA members. Fish in small groups by day and swap stories over dinner at night. Bed, breakfast and dinner are sorted, so the only decision is where to fish tomorrow.

In the middle of Tassie's best water

Cressy sits in the heart of northern Tasmania's trout country. Brumbys Creek and the Lake River are on the doorstep, the Macquarie, South Esk and Meander are a short drive, and the Central Plateau lakes are about an hour up the hill. Small creeks to huge highland lakes, all from one base. Some spots are easy access, some are remote and hard work.

Where and when

Arrive Sunday 31st January 2027 in the morning, leave Saturday 6th February in the afternoon. Hayes on Brumbys, 1696 Cressy Road, Cressy TAS 7302. It is 30 minutes from Launceston and two hours from the Devonport ferry. No 4WD needed.

Cost

\$1,250 per person, around \$210 a night. This covers lodge accommodation, linen and towels, breakfast and dinner.

Get guided by Peter Hayes

Casting legend and one of Tasmania's most respected guides. Peter has discounted his rate for VFFA members to \$650 per person, per day, twin share, cash to Peter. Highland lakes, including "shark fishing" on the Great Lake, or wading rivers and creeks if that is more your thing. Available Monday 1st to Friday 5th February.

How to lock in your spot

- Register your interest with event coordinator John Spragg as soon as possible, on 0407 555 621 or

johnrs3175@gmail.com. Places are limited. Wait for your VFFA confirmation before booking any travel to Tasmania.

- Book your travel. Flying or driving, you sort your own way there and around. Taking the Spirit of Tasmania? Book early to get a car spot and cabin.
- Tell John if you are taking a car. Others are, and it is a good way to share transport and fishing days, and to get gear across if you are flying.
- Pay your \$700 deposit by Wednesday 30th December 2026 and the \$550 balance by Wednesday 20th January 2027, to BSB 182512, account 960547289, reference "Brumbys 2027" plus your surname.
- Email John your signed Event Registration Form before you arrive. Grab it from the VFFA website or ask John for a copy.
- Want a day with Peter Hayes? Let John know and he will book it. Please do not book with Peter directly.

Good to know

Facilities at the lodge are shared for the week. Dinners at local pubs, or roast chook and salads at the lodge. Breakfast is cereal, toast, juice and coffee. Lunch is up to you. BYO wine, beer and spirits. You will need a Tasmanian fishing licence, online at ifs.tas.gov.au. Phone coverage is patchy away from towns and highways.

Members and Friends Dinner: Thursday 4th February from 6.30pm, smart casual. Tassie based members and friends are invited. Extra nights are available, ask John. Worth reading before you go: *Tasmania Trout Waters* by Greg French.

What to pack

Waders and wading boots, gaiters for wet wading, brimmed hat, polarised sunnies, sunscreen, rain jacket, warm layers, insect repellent, wading staff, PLB, torch, phone in a waterproof case, handheld UHF and a first aid kit. The UHF is essential out of sight of others. Remote spots: add a compression bandage, water and any medication.

Notice of Event: Taupo, New Zealand

Waitahanui Lodge, Lake Taupo, March 2027

A week at Waitahanui Lodge, on the shores of Lake Taupo, at the height of the brown trout season. Nymph or wet line fishing on the local rivers and lakes, in groups or individually, during the day and the night, and sharing the stories of the day over dinner in the Boiler Room at the lodge.

Fifteen positions are available.



The reason we keep going back: a Taupo district brown from the 2026 trip.

Dates

Arrive Tuesday 2nd March 2027 in the morning, depart either Tuesday 9th March 2027 or Friday 12th March 2027, so either seven days or ten days.

Additional days have been added to the 2027 trip to accommodate those who wish to spend more time fishing the waters around Taupo, and to allow as many as possible to access guided still water fishing, which proved a very popular guiding choice on the 2026 trip. The dates have been chosen

to give participants the opportunity to access Lake Otamangakau, which is generally closed to fishing for the month of February.

Where

Waitahanui Lodge, 116 State Highway One, Waitahanui, Taupo RD 2, 3378, New Zealand.

Cost

Seven days: AU\$1,700 with a guided river day, or AU\$1,745 with a guided still water day. Ten days: AU\$2,430 with a guided river day, or AU\$2,475 with a guided still water day.

This provides share accommodation, linen including towel and face washer, breakfast and dinner, a daily fishing update, and one day of guided fishing in pairs with a local guide. The amount is payable on or before 1st February 2027. Payment arrangements in the form of a bank account or card facility will be provided when places are confirmed.

Travel

You will need to make your own travel arrangements to and from Waitahanui, and arrange any travel insurance cover you feel necessary. Taupo Airport is 5 km north of the lodge, and Air New Zealand has daily flights from Auckland of about an hour. You are also responsible for arranging your transport while in New Zealand. By road, the lodge is approximately 3.5 hours from either Auckland or Wellington. Once participants are confirmed, arrangements can be made to share hire vehicles. Vehicles can be hired from either Taupo or Auckland airport, and four wheel drive vehicles are not required.



Waitahanui browns run thick through March, and the lodge sits 120 metres from the mouth of the river.

Accommodation, meals and drinks

Five Kiwi Bach cabins at Waitahanui Lodge are available, each with several bedrooms and two or three separate beds. You will be expected to share a cabin with several other members for the week, and depending on numbers you may be required to share a room. All cabin facilities are shared for the duration of your stay.

Two course evening meals will be provided by an external caterer, served in the Boiler Room at 7pm each evening. A continental breakfast will be supplied, with a range of cereals, toast, juice, coffee and tea. Lunch will be your responsibility each day. Bring your own wine, beer and spirits.

Fishing locations

Waitahanui Lodge is on the lakefront of Lake Taupo, 120 metres from the mouth of the Waitahanui River, the Rip. Upstream of the mouth, the river offers some 5 to 6 km of fishable water, all readily accessible on well defined tracks, with few sections of terrain more than moderate in difficulty.

Other well known trout waters within a 40 minute drive include the Hinemaiaia River, 12 km south, the Tauranga-Taupo River, 25 km south, and the Tongariro River, 40 km south. As well as Lake Taupo, local still water fisheries include Lakes Rotoaira, Kuratau and Otamangakau. For those wishing to travel a little further, Lake Rotorua and associated waters are 75 km north, the headwaters of the

Whanganui River 100 km south west, and the Rangitikei River 135 km south.

Licences

A current Taupo District fishing licence is required, and can be [bought online](#) before you leave through the Department of Conservation. Those wishing to fish outside the Taupo district will need a separate licence for adjoining fishing districts, available through [Fish and Game](#). Note that there is a separate category of licence for non-residents of New Zealand.

Equipment and safety

Strongly recommended: waders and wading boots (hard sole boots only, felt and absorbent soles are not permitted), gaiters for wet wading, brimmed hat, sunglasses, sunscreen, wet weather gear, warm clothes, insect repellent, wading staff, personal locator beacon, torch, mobile phone in a waterproof container, handheld UHF radio and a first aid kit. For those interested in fishing the Waitahanui River delta, the Rip, a lifejacket is strongly recommended.

All fishing gear, particularly waders and boots, will need to be clean and dry before it is allowed into New Zealand. A UHF radio is essential if you intend to fish out of direct sight of other participants. For remote locations, carry a handheld UHF radio, water, any prescribed medicines you need, and a mobile phone where coverage allows. Coverage is good in most townships and on major highways, but can be poor or non-existent in more remote fishing areas.

Weather varies from very hot to very cold, and it can be windy and wet. An updated forecast will be at the lodge every morning.

Guiding

The cost of the event includes one day of guided fishing with another participant, either river fishing or, at a small additional cost, still water fishing from a boat. In your email registering your intent to participate, please say which you want. If you would like guided fishing in addition to the included VFFA day, say so as well. Depending on demand, Rodger will endeavour to arrange guides for pairs of anglers on a daily basis. That additional guiding costs NZ\$1,100 per day per pair for river fishing and NZ\$1,200 per day per pair for boat still water fishing, in both cases in addition to and independent of the VFFA cost above.

How to register

Members wishing to participate should email the event coordinator registering their intent to attend. Please make sure your email clearly sets out whether you will participate for seven days or ten days, whether you would prefer still water or river guided fishing on your VFFA guided day, and whether you are seeking additional guided fishing days and if so how many river or still water days you want.

A number of members have already indicated they wish to participate. Those members need to respond to this notice confirming they still intend to participate, and provide the information above.

- Register your intent to participate as soon as you can, with the information above.
- Do not book travel to New Zealand until you receive VFFA confirmation.
- Check that your passport will be current for travel as of March 2027. If not, begin the renewal process now.
- VFFA will then advise whether you have a place in the group trip.
- Book your travel once you have that confirmation, allowing for travel to and from Taupo at both ends.
- Pay your share of costs to the VFFA on or before 1st February 2027.
- Complete and sign the Event Registration Form and get it to Rodger before you arrive in New Zealand.

The Event Registration Form is on the VFFA website under Club Forms in [The Club Room](#). Download it, complete and sign it, and email it to the event coordinator.

Event coordinator: Rodger Muir, 0414 253 890, muirrodger@gmail.com. Notice dated 31st August 2026.



WITH OUR THANKS

The VFFA thanks our loyal sponsors in 2026



Sponsor enquiries welcome

Email info@vffa.com.au

Please support the businesses that support the VFFA. Tell them you saw their name in Fly Lines.



THE MONTHS AHEAD AT A GLANCE

Upcoming Events & Activities

unless otherwise notified, meetings are at The Kelvin Club, 14 to 30 Melbourne Place

October

Thursday 15th	General Meeting, 6.30pm: Gordon Baker on chasing black bass in Papua New Guinea, with John Spragg on Loombah Weir; book for a meal	<i>The Kelvin Club</i>
Tuesday 20th	Australian Trout Foundation AGM, 7.30pm	<i>Online</i>
Thursday 22nd	Council Meeting, 6.30 for 7pm	<i>The Kelvin Club</i>
Saturday 24th	CVFFC Annual General Meeting, in person with a Zoom option, lunch provided	<i>Melbourne, venue to be confirmed</i>
Saturday 31st	Veterans Who Fly Fish: Learn to Fly Fish Day, a guided day for veterans and ADF serving members; details from Melbourne RSL	<i>Victorian trout streams</i>

November

Friday 6th to Sunday 8th	Annual trip to Warrnambool; contact Hugh Maltby, accommodation is limited	<i>Warrnambool</i>
Saturday 7th and Sunday 8th	Australian Fishing and Outdoor Expo	<i>Bendigo Showground</i>
Thursday 12th	Council Meeting, 6.30 for 7pm, the last for the year	<i>The Kelvin Club</i>
Thursday 19th	General Meeting and Annual Auction, 6.30pm (moved from October)	<i>The Kelvin Club</i>

December

Tuesday 1st	Christmas Dinner, guest speaker Travis Dowling, CEO of the VFA	<i>Albert Park Yachting & Angling Club</i>
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THE MONTHS AHEAD AT A GLANCE

Upcoming Events & Activities

*continued***January 2027**

Wednesday 27th	First Council Meeting for 2027, 6.30 for 7pm	<i>The Kelvin Club</i>
Sunday 31st January to Saturday 6th February	VFFA Tasmania trip, places still available; register with John Spragg	<i>Hayes on Brumbys, Cressy</i>

February 2027

Thursday 11th	Council Meeting, 6.30 for 7pm	<i>The Kelvin Club</i>
Thursday 18th	General Meeting, 7.30pm: Liars' Night, members report on their summer fishing	<i>The Kelvin Club</i>

March 2027

Tuesday 2nd March to Friday 12th March	VFFA trip to Taupo; coordinator Rodger Muir	<i>Waitahanui Lodge, New Zealand</i>
Wednesday 10th	VFFA members visit Millbrook Lakes; coordinator John Spragg; date to be confirmed under the new booking arrangement	<i>Millbrook, past Ballan</i>
Thursday 11th	Council Meeting, 6.30 for 7pm	<i>The Kelvin Club</i>
Thursday 18th	General Meeting, 7.30pm, guest speaker to be confirmed	<i>The Kelvin Club</i>
Friday 19th to Sunday 21st	Big River Weekend; convenor John Pilkington, 0407 356 676	<i>Enoch's Point</i>