

# De-reek the Creek Project



*Catchment Champion*

Riley Wilson, Georgia Clarke, Joannah  
McDougall and Blake Klump

Ladysmith Public School



## *Creative Catchment Kids*

Creative Catchment Kids is an initiative of the Murray Darling Association and Wirraminna Environmental Education Centre. It aims to improve engagement between the Murray Catchment Management Authority and school students by providing opportunities for positive and authentic ventures that encourage students to develop creative solutions to natural resource management issues. [www.murray.cma.nsw.gov.au/creative-catchment-kids.html](http://www.murray.cma.nsw.gov.au/creative-catchment-kids.html)

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## *Wirraminna Environmental Education Centre*

The Wirraminna Environmental Education Centre is located in Burrumbuttock, north of Albury in southern NSW. Since 1995, the centre, which is adjacent to Burrumbuttock Public School, has provided opportunities for discovery and learning about the natural environment, the ecology of the local woodlands and the beauty of native plants. [www.wirraminna.org](http://www.wirraminna.org)

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## *Murray Darling Association*

The Murray Darling Association has membership of over 100 Local Government councils in the Murray-Darling Basin, as well as community groups, businesses and individuals with an interest in ensuring that the Basin continues as a valuable asset for all Australians. Since 1950, the Association has initiated various school and community education programs on managing the Basin's land and water resources. [www.mda.asn.au](http://www.mda.asn.au)

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Enviro-Stories is an innovative literacy education program that inspires learning about natural resource and catchment management issues. Developed by PeeKdesigns, this program provides students with an opportunity to publish their own stories that have been written for other kids to support learning about their local area. [www.envirostories.com.au](http://www.envirostories.com.au)

# De-reek the Creek Project

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School: Ladysmith Public School

## *Catchment Champions*

In 2013, students involved in the Creative Catchment Kids program researched and wrote stories about 'Catchment Champions', people who have made important contributions to managing natural resources in their local community. The program was generously funded by the Murray and Murrumbidgee catchment management authorities.

The Catchment Champions books are part of the Enviro-Stories Education Program.



**Catchment Management Authority**  
Murray



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This story is about the Year 5 boys of 2012 at Ladysmith Public School.

The five boys, Lachlan, Edward, James, Ben and Riley, went to Charles Sturt University to the Enviro Champs workshop that Riverina Environmental Education Centre (REEC) organised. They learnt how to become leaders and to think of an environmental project within their community.



The boys chose a project called De-reek the Creek and this is their story...



Kyeamba Creek, before the De-reek the Creek project started.

The boys decided on this project because the creek reeked and they felt that “De-reeking the Creek” would solve their pollution problems. This creek is at the back of their school and the effects of when it floods is devastating.



Kyeamba Creek has a pollution problem and they wanted to help the bugs that live in the creek.



The boys carried out tests at the creek to see the exact condition it was in. With the help of Paul Greenwood from REEC, they used dip nets to collect a water bug sample. They found leeches and waterboatmen. The boys then froze the specimens so they could get a better look at them. They also tested the pH (acid) level and salinity. The results of the sample told the boys that the creek was unhealthy and dirty.

To help the creek, the boys decided to plant River Red Gums on the creek banks as they are native and would help the creek.



Some of the tools the boys used in the project included nets, shovels, spades, axes, buckets, thermometers, watering cans, pH indicators and a tray to collect the sample of bugs.



The boys came across some weeds that needed to be removed. Using their tools, they removed weeds such as privet, thistles and sticky cleaver. By removing these weeds, it would allow native plants to come back which would help the creek recover.



As part of the De-reek the Creek the boys had to organise an Enviro day at Ladysmith Public School. Each boy had to create an Enviro game for the day. The games on the day were:

**Obstacle Course:** where they had little plants that you couldn't step on when going over the course.

**Fish Game:** Where you use magnets to pick up pretend native fish.

**Memory Squares:** Where you had to step on the right square to get to the other side.

**Rubbish pickup:** Where you had to pick up the most rubbish in a certain amount of time.

**Weed throwing:** Competitions on who could throw the weeds furthest.

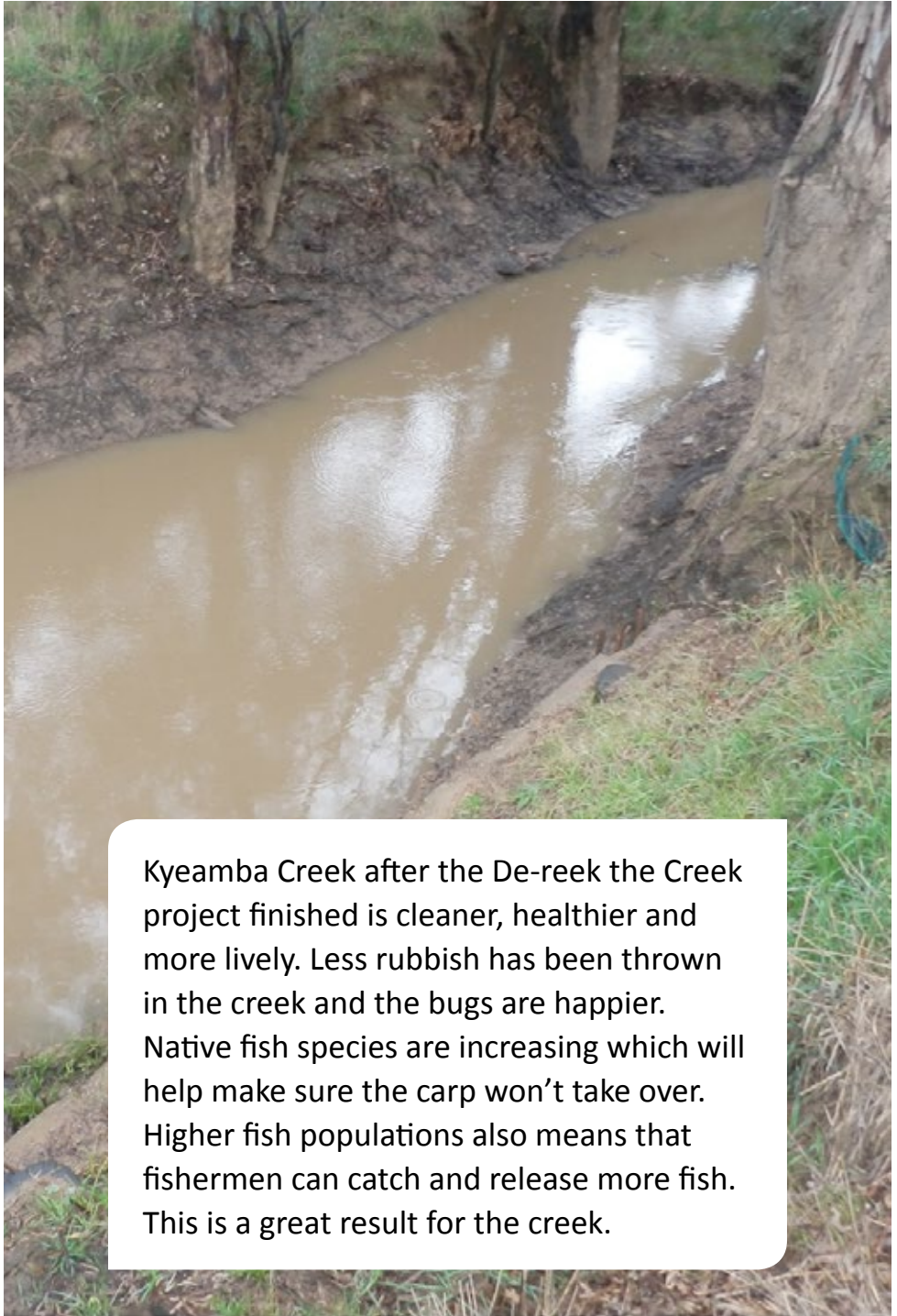




The boys decided to reintroduce some native fish back into the creek. Some of the target species were Murray Cod, Yellowbelly, Catfish and Silver Perch. The reason why they thought to reintroduce native fish was because this would help with breeding populations and enhance the creek's ecosystem.

Along the way the boys had a few ups and downs. Overall they learnt that the creek wasn't in a very good condition and that they could help fix it. By testing the water, planting some more trees and reintroducing native fish, they hope that the creek will become healthier. They have also created an environmental awareness in their school for years to come.





Kyeamba Creek after the De-reek the Creek project finished is cleaner, healthier and more lively. Less rubbish has been thrown in the creek and the bugs are happier.

Native fish species are increasing which will help make sure the carp won't take over.

Higher fish populations also means that fishermen can catch and release more fish.

This is a great result for the creek.

As the Year 5 2013 Creative Catchment Kids, we would like to thank our Year 6's for sharing their story about the De-reek the Creek Project.



We are very inspired by their work and hope we can follow in their footsteps with our project this year.





Riley Wilson, Blake Klump, Georgia Clarke and Joannah McDougall

2013 Year 5, Ladysmith Public School

The 2012 and 2013 Creative Catchment Kids writing program was showcased at the Seventh World Environmental Education Congress, held in Morocco during June 2013.



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