

Matt Herring - Wildlife Ecologist



John Paul Landini, Felicity Macauley
and Leonard McClay

Wakool-Burraboi 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

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

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



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

Matt Herring - Wildlife Ecologist

Authors: John Paul Landini, Felicity Macauley and Leonard McClay

Teacher: Carly Doyle

School: Wakool-Burraboi 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



CARING FOR OUR COUNTRY



Catchment Management Authority
Murrumbidgee

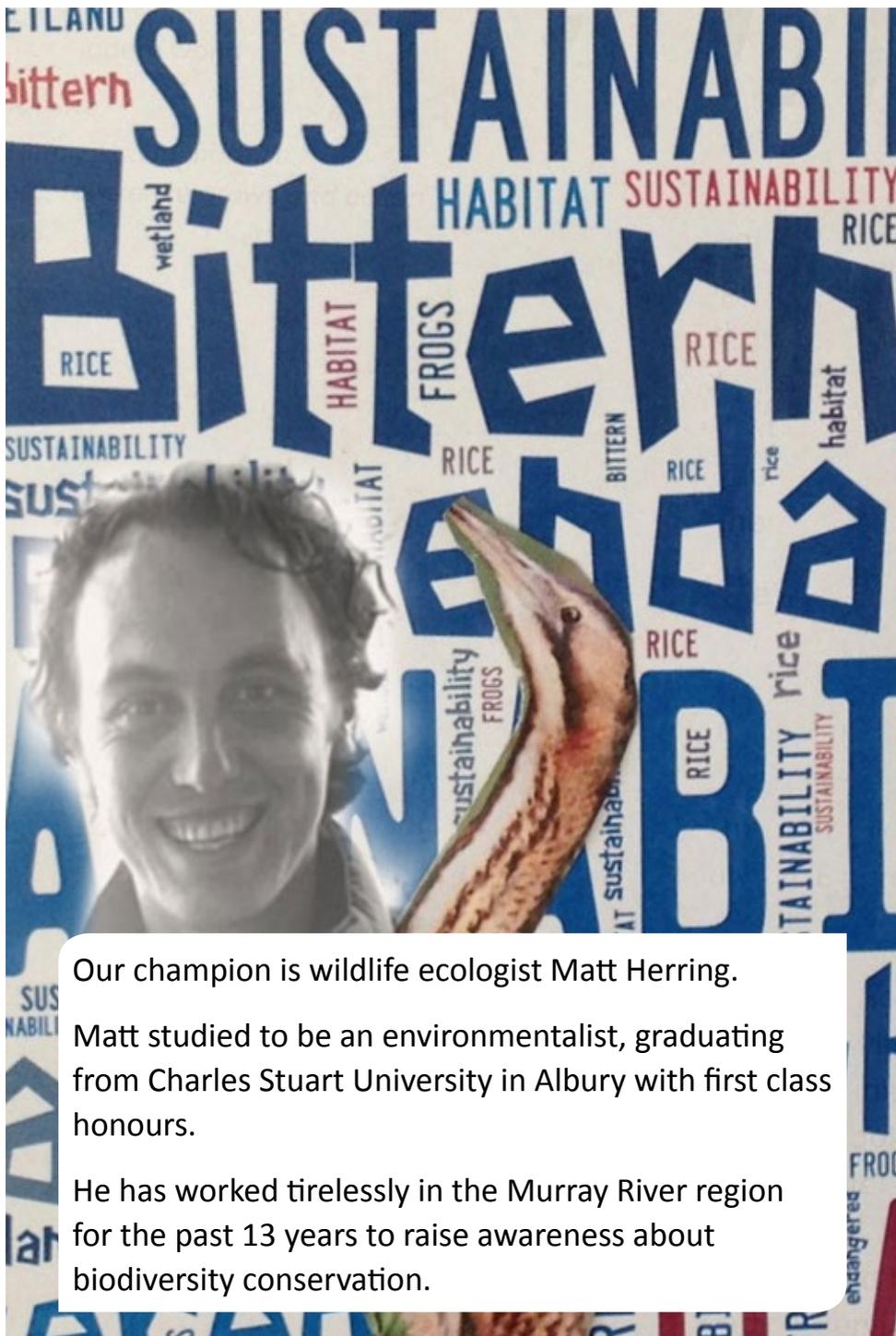
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At Wakool Burraboi Public School when we talk about our environment, we mean everything in the world around us which can affect our lives. We know that there are a lot of people who have worked out ways to help our environment and who are passionate about preserving it. These people are champions!

This tale is told by John Paul Landini, Felicity Macauley and Leonard McClay and we are the Creative Catchment Kids from Wakool Burraboi Public School.



Our champion is wildlife ecologist Matt Herring.

Matt studied to be an environmentalist, graduating from Charles Stuart University in Albury with first class honours.

He has worked tirelessly in the Murray River region for the past 13 years to raise awareness about biodiversity conservation.



Matt has worked closely with over 3000 farmers, conducted wildlife surveys, produced large amounts of educational materials in his quest to encourage the broader community to take care of their environment.

Matt has conducted more than 253 seminars, field days and workshops about biodiversity, ecology and conservation. He is even a published author with many newspaper articles, papers, books and booklets to his name.

Matt recognises that to help protect the biodiversity of our region, we must try to get the whole community involved.

He believes that it is important to actually get to know the people who are in the environment he tries to help. He travels from far and wide to be a part of the communities he works in.



Matt has published books and has a wonderful website that shares information about how to care for our environment.

www.murraywildlife.com.au



The image shows a screenshot of the Murray Wildlife website. The header includes the logo and navigation links: Home, Bridges, Farm Dams, Major Projects, Matt Herring, Photo Gallery, Community Wildlife Surveys, Waterbird Posters, and Contact. The main content area is titled "Welcome to Murray Wildlife" and features a profile for Matt Herring. The profile includes a photo of Matt Herring, a quote from him, and a detailed biography. Below the biography is a section titled "Selected Publications" with a list of his work.

Murray Wildlife
Murray Wildlife is a biodiversity research, education and conservation consultancy, led by Wildlife Ecologist Matt Herring. We specialise in wildlife conservation on farms, community engagement, wetland ecology and waterbird conservation.

At our resident wild ...
"The best thing we can do for nature is simply spend more time in it. Plant trees, sow native grass and water birds."

M. Herring, 2010

Contact: Matt Herring

Matt Herring

As an ecologist and environmental education professional with over 15 years experience, Matt Herring has developed a deep knowledge of environmental issues and their solutions. He has worked closely with more than 3000 farmers, applying a community wildlife survey and engagement model across 3 million hectares in the Murray River region. He has produced a vast amount of educational material, and has worked on a broad range of ecological research projects, such as the breeding habitat requirements of bridges, the role of mistletoe as a keystone resource, prioritising environmental foci in wetlands on farms, and the response of woodland birds to revegetation.

He recently helped establish a natural resource management school in the remote Escuderie Amazon in the Western province. He works closely with the Kimberley Land Council training Indigenous Rangers in biodiversity monitoring and wildlife conservation. As the Director of Murray Wildlife Pty Ltd, an independent consultancy specialising in wildlife on farms, community engagement, wetland ecology and waterbird conservation, he is regularly contracted by government and non-government organisations. He has been employed by the Institute for Land Water and Society at Charles Sturt University, the Arthur Ryland Institute for Environmental Research, and the New South Wales Department of Primary Industries.

Since graduating from Charles Sturt University with first class honours in 2007 after a semester study in Beijing, Matt has personally established and surveyed more than 8000 biodiversity study sites across 820 farms, together with numerous public reserves. He is a well known and respected ecologist, particularly in communities across the southern Murray-Darling Basin. He has published more than 40 peer-reviewed articles and booklets, mostly as the lead author. He has also presented papers and books for the Environment and Restoration and Australian Zoologist. He has conducted more than 253 seminars, conference presentations and workshops pertaining to biodiversity, ecology and waterbird management. His work has resulted in over 152 newspaper and television appearances.

Selected Publications

- Herring, M. W., Robb, M., Bull, N. Silcocks, A., & Gibbs, D. (submitted 2013). Bitterns Boom in Rice: Identification of the global hotspot for the Australasian Bittern (*Botaurus poiciloptilus*).
- Herring, M., Benjamin, M. & Beattie, K. (submitted 2013). A Win-Win for Wildlife and Water. National Wetlands Update.
- Herring, M. (2013) Balangarra Ranger Wildlife Surveys Summary Booklet. Kimberley Land Council.
- Herring, M (2012) Wah Wah Wildlife: from tanks to troughs. Hay Landcare, Murrumbidgee Landcare Inc. and Murray Wildlife.
- Watson, D. W. & Herring, M (2012) Mistletoe as a keystone resource: an experimental test. *Proceedings of the Royal Society – Biological Sciences*. Published July 2012. <http://rspb.royalsocietypublishing.org/content/early/2012/07/03/rspb.2012.0856.full.pdf.html>
- Herring, M (2012) Nykina-Mangala, Nyul Nyul and Wungurr/Congarra Indigenous Ranger Wildlife Survey Summary Booklets. Kimberley Land Council.

We have read through Matt's books in literacy sessions and are proud to empower ourselves to learn more about looking after the environment.

Boom! Was the sound all the kids heard when Matt Herring came to visit Wakool Burraboi Public School. Matt contacted our school and asked if he could visit, to teach us about the amazing Australasian Bittern.

We were as excited as kids on Christmas morning when he told our principal Miss Doyle that we could be a part of his documentary! We, the Creative Catchment Kids Team, were particularly excited to be involved in such a special program.



We discovered the documentary was called 'Bitterns Boom in the Rice'.

Care to check out our famous faces?

Visit <https://vimeo.com/68458195> and learn just like local farmers and our community about the Bitterns in our area.



Bitterns Boom in Rice

from **BitternsBoomInRice** 2 months ago [NOT YET RATED](#)

Bitterns Boom in Rice is a short film about an endangered waterbird - the Australasian Bittern (*Botaurus poiciloptilus*) - and its use of rice crops in the NSW Riverina, Australia. It is brought to you by the Bitterns in Rice Project, a collaboration between Birdlife Australia, the Rice Growers' Association of Australia and a number of other key organisations (see credits at end of film).

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Matt is very passionate about educating the community about the Australasian Bittern so we can protect their numbers.



The Australasian Bittern is a large heron-like bird that has very camouflaged plumage. They can grow to 76 centimetres long and have a wingspan up to 1.18 metres.

Australasian Bittern is usually a very solitary bird that lives alone or in a breeding pair.

They like to forage in shallow water less than 30 centimetres deep with lots of reeds grasses and shrubs. They eat a variety of small animals including frogs, crustaceans, fish, lizards, birds and rats and mice.

The Australasian Bittern is classified as an endangered animal in New South Wales. It is extremely important to learn about them so we know how to take care of them to preserve the species.

Matt told us that the future of the Australian Bittern is in the children's hands. We thought this was very true because it is up to us to pass the information down to future generations. We want to create a sustainable approach to living and that means being aware of our environment and being gentle with it.





Matt visited Felicity's grandparents farm to film some of the documentary about Bitterns. He managed to get Felicity's grandad to dress as a Bittern! This shows us that Matt can be funny and uses humour to teach people, kids especially about the environment. We loved this because at our school we believe learning should be fun!



Wakool Burraboii Public School would like to thank Matt as he was the perfect person for us to honour and recognise as a 'Catchment Environmental Champion'.

We saw that Matt was passionate and enthusiastic about letting everyone know in our community how to help care for our environment. He is an inspiration to us all.



John Paul Landini, Felicity Macauley and Leonard McClay

2013 Year 5 & 6, Wakool-Burraboi 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.



Catchment Management Authority Murray



CARING FOR OUR COUNTRY



Catchment Management Authority Murrumbidgee