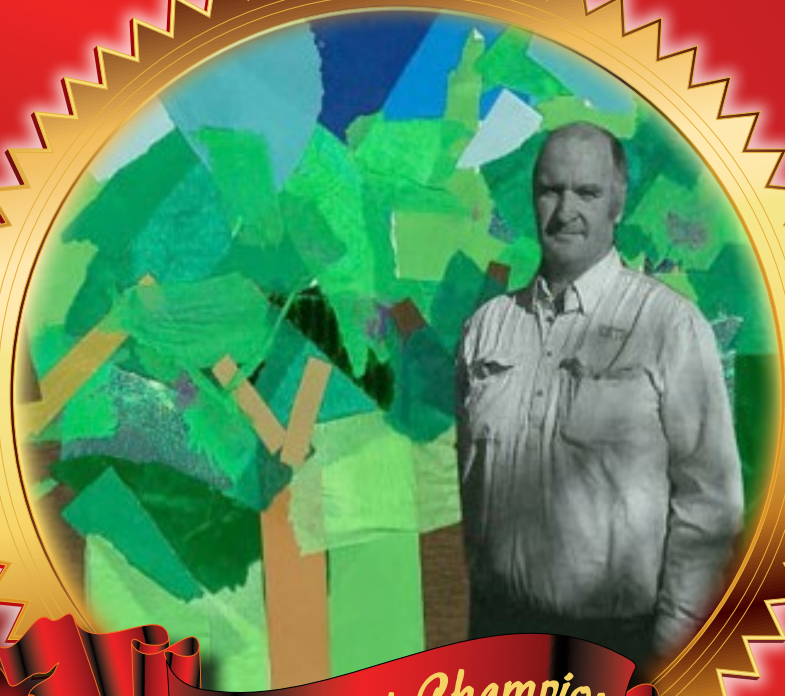


Our Local Ranger: The Story of Mighty Mick Mullins



Catchment Champion

Ella Mullins, Tim McDonnell and
Damien Fullerton

Conargo 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**

Our Local Ranger: The Story of Mighty Mick Mullins

Authors: Ella Mullins, Tim McDonnell and Damien Fullerton

Teacher: Melissa Williams

School: Conargo 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
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This story is about Mr. Michael “Mick” Mullins. He is a ranger with Riverina Livestock Health and Pest Authority. He is an environmental warrior for our area, ensuring our natural resources are protected and sustained.

This is an interesting story of how ‘Ranger Mick’ works with farmers and landholders of our district, to help eradicate feral pests and maintain the environment for future generations.



The Making of 'Ranger Mick'

Michael grew up on a farm north of Denilquin in the Pretty Pine area. Michael's mum and dad, John and Pat, had five children of which Michael was the eldest. He loved the outdoors. He spent his time on the farm riding horses, shooting and helping out with farm life. Mick has fond memories of shooting and trapping rabbits and foxes around the farm. These experiences and his love of the outdoors, helped shape Michael's decision to become a ranger.

Moments in Mighty Mick's Life

Following Michael's schooling in Deniliquin he studied at an Agricultural College. His first job was on a farm and then he began working with the Pastoral Protection Board then the Rural Protection Board and he is now currently working for the Riverina Livestock Health and Pest Authority (Riverina LHPA).

Through his interest in horse riding he met Julie on the Bicentennial Horse Trail riding from Mt Kosciusko to Canberra in 1988. They married and are now proud parents of John, Ella and Holly. They live on a property near the Edward River.





Mick Outside of Work

In Michael's spare time, he enjoys spending time with his family. He has a keen interest in horse riding, shooting, vegetable growing, poultry, keeping birds, agriculture and natural resources. He also breeds and shows Irish Wolfhounds competitively and has been very successful with winning many competitions and awards. He particularly enjoys this as it's an activity he does with his family.



Ranger Mick's Job

Mick has been a ranger for over 32 years. His role at Riverina LHPA is to manage and advise farmers and landholders in helping with land sustainability and pest problems such as foxes, rabbits, locusts, wild pigs, mice and other feral animals. He also works with drovers moving their livestock through stock routes and local vets ensuring the health and well-being of farmer's livestock.

He has been directly involved with fox baiting programs, plague rabbit control, plague locust control, plague mice control, equine influenza outbreak and weed and vegetation control. These programs have had a sustained impact on the environment by controlling introduced species and the impact they have had on threatened fauna and flora.

Ranger Mick's Pest Control

This page displays illustrations of some of the many pests Ranger Mick has helped eradicate and control. Some of these animals prey on not only livestock but native species and they all can impact harshly on native vegetation causing damage to the environment.



Rabbits



Feral Pigs



Feral Cats



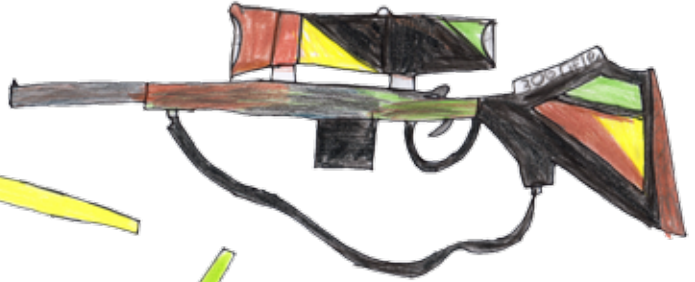
Foxes

Ranger Mick's Equipment

Ranger Mick uses lots of different equipment to help him with his work. These illustrations show some of these.



Mick has been part of an aerial baiting and shooting program from a helicopter.



Ranger Mick is licensed to use a gun on feral pests when required.



Traps are used to humanly catch feral pests.



A machine is used to cut up foods such as carrots. They are then poisoned using chemicals to eradicate feral rabbits.



Ranger Mick's Current Project

Ranger Mick is currently working with Aboriginal Groups and the local Catchment Management Authority within the Werai State Forest, carrying out pest animal control programs. A main focus of this is trapping and fumigating feral pigs. These pest animals can damage the natural environment of the forest and even degrade Aboriginal sites of cultural significance. He is teaching the young Aboriginal groups how to control feral pests so they can contribute to the sustainability of the forest.



The Australasian Bittern has a booming call which can be heard up to a kilometer away. It inhabits fresh water swamps, drainage channels and rice crops.



The Superb Parrot is a bright grass green parrot. They are found in river red gum forests.



The Plains Wanderer is a small quail like bird and can be found in the Western Riverina.



The Bush Stone Curlew is a large ground-dwelling bird found in woodlands and often on farms.

Threatened Species and Ranger Mick

Ranger Mick has helped maintain habitats for some local threatened species. Some of these species are the Plains Wanderer, The Superb Parrot, The Australasian Bittern and the Bush Stone Curlew.

Interesting things about Ranger Mick

Awards

Ranger Mick was nominated for his pest animal work and made the state finals.

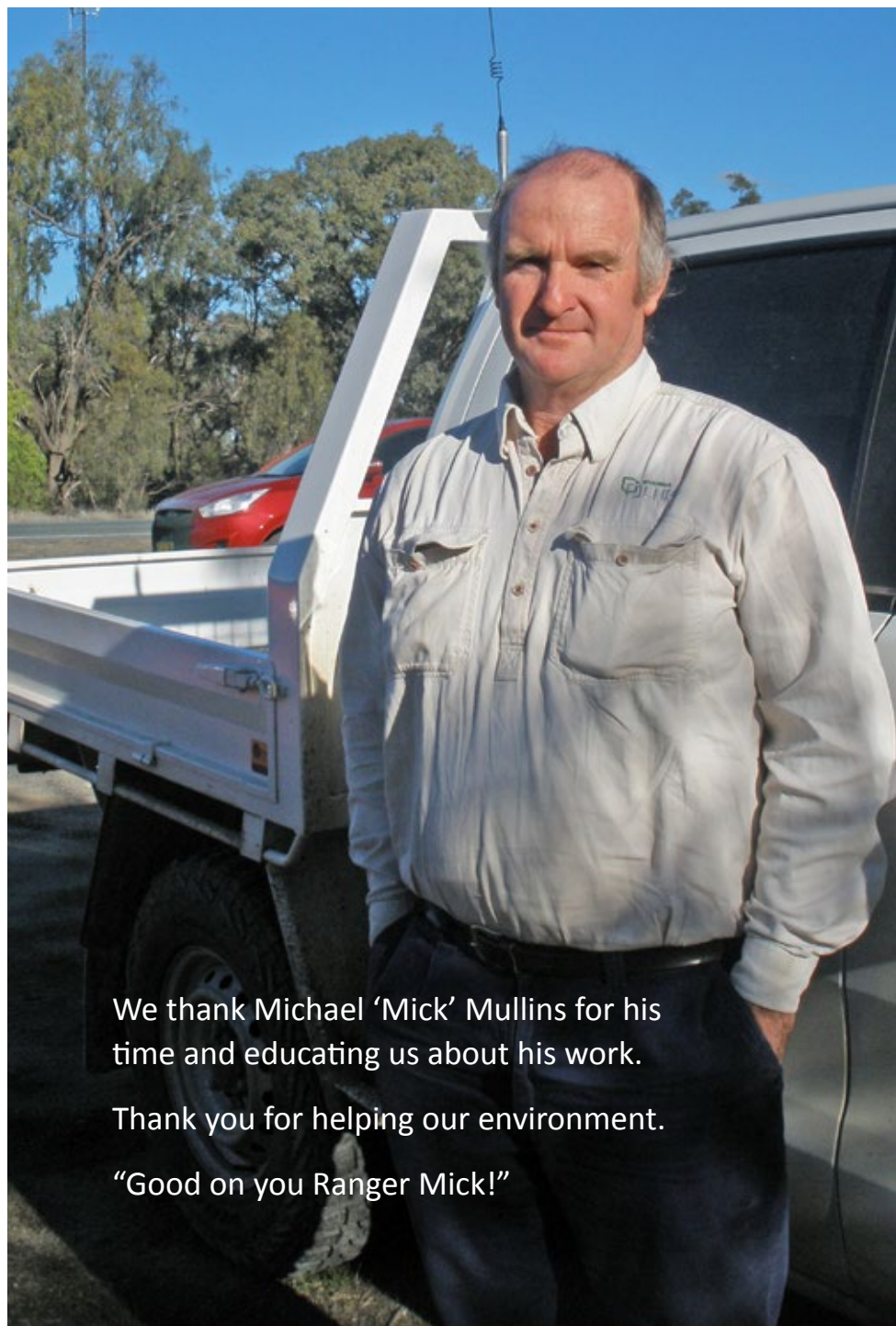
Favourite Animal Encounters

Ranger Mick enjoys observing the animals in the environment through his work. His favourite sightings have been the powerful wedge-tailed eagle and a group of eleven deer grazing in the forest.



Scariest Moment

Mick said that one of his scariest moments on the job was being between a wild pig and where it wanted to go.



We thank Michael 'Mick' Mullins for his
time and educating us about his work.

Thank you for helping our environment.

"Good on you Ranger Mick!"



Ella Mullins, Tim McDonnell and Damien Fullerton

2013 Year 5/6, Conargo 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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