

Adventure to the Avon River

Written and illustrated by Year 2/3
Toodyay District High School



ENVIRO

stories



Enviro-Stories

Enviro-Stories is an innovative literacy education program that inspires learning about natural resource 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

Wheatbelt NRM

Wheatbelt Natural Resource Management Incorporated (Wheatbelt NRM) is an independent community-based organisation involved with natural resource management endeavours within the Avon River Basin.

www.wheatbeltnrm.org.au

Adventure to the Avon River

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Hotspot Heroes

The Hotspot Heroes Enviro-Stories Program involved schools from the Wheatbelt region of Western Australia learning about the biodiversity, threatened species and feral animals in the wheatbelt area. A Hotspot Hero is someone who is willing to stand up and take action to help prevent our threatened plants and animals from fading into oblivion.

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National
Landcare
Program



wheatbelt
natural resource
management

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In the Avon Valley there is a small country town called Toodyay. One of the favourite places for families and tourists to visit around Toodyay is a place called Duidgee Park.

The beautiful Avon River flows through the park, making it a great place for everyone to enjoy, especially in winter time.

One cloudy, cold and foggy morning a family decided to go for a drive to Toodyay to try out their canoes. Lily and Tom were extremely excited as their parents, Lisa and Jimmy, packed the car.

“I can’t wait to explore the river in our canoes,” said Lily.

“I’m super excited too,” said Tom.



Duidgee Park was amazing! There was a plenty of room to run around and even a playground that had slides, monkey bars, swings and a seesaw.

The best part though was the beautiful Avon River. It was full of water and there was a fast flowing current, as well as some little stagnant pools to explore.



They walked through the sloppy, muddy sand to get closer to the river.

Lily said, “Tom, look over there at that strange tent, I wonder what’s inside?”



The family walked over to the tent and it had an 'Eco Action Group' sign on the top.

Lily asked the lady, who introduced herself as Laura, what they were doing at the Avon River. Laura replied, "We are taking macroinvertebrate samples to find out what species are living in the river".

Tom asked, “What’s a macrovert... sorry, macrointebtrate... ahh, macroinvertebrate?”

“A macroinvertebrate is an animal that doesn’t have a backbone (spine) and are large enough to be seen with the naked eye. They include things like insects, snails, clams, crayfish and worms,” explained Laura.

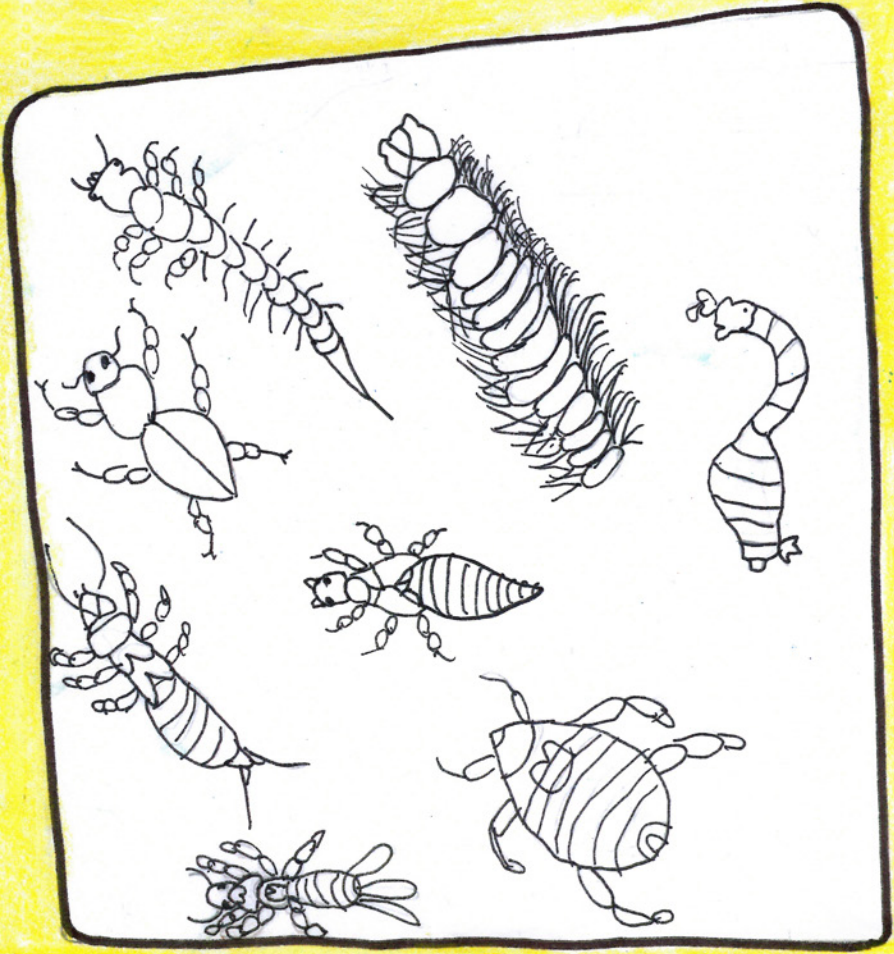
She continued, “Today we are looking at aquatic macroinvertebrates, which means they live in waterways. They are valuable to the ecosystem because they provide food for other animals and help keep the place clean as they recycle nutrients back into the rivers and streams. Would you like to take a sample and see what types of aquatic macroinvertebrates we can find?”

“That sounds awesome!” said Tom excitedly.

Laura gave them a net, a spoon, an eyedropper, a magnifying glass, a sorting tray, an aquatic macroinvertebrate identification sheet (ID sheet) and an ice-cube tray.

Lily and Tom walked to a stagnant part of the river and started scooping with the net.

Macroinvertebrates



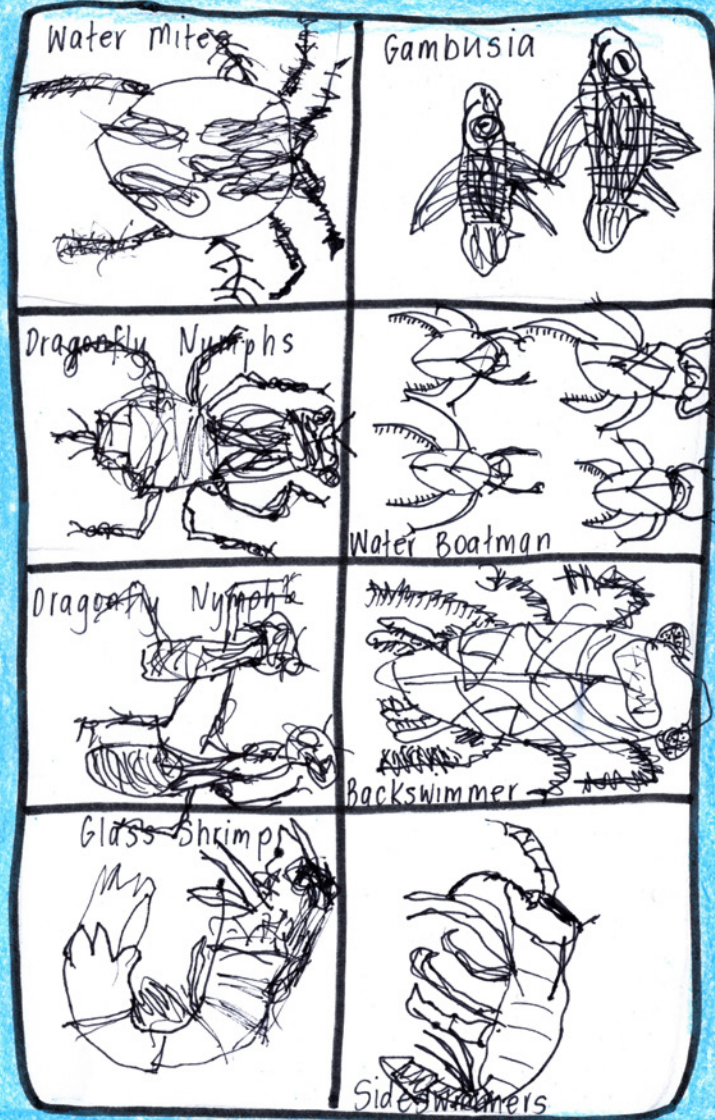


Lily tipped the net into their sorting tray, which had a little bit of river water in it. They could see tiny macroinvertebrates darting around.

Lily and Tom gently used the eyedropper and spoon to catch the macroinvertebrates and sort them into the ice-cube tray. They grabbed the magnifying glass and ID sheet to try and identify what different types they could find.

They found 2 feral fish called Gambusia, 4 Water Boatman, 1 Backswimmer, 2 Side Swimmers, 3 Water Mites, 3 Dragonfly Nymphs and 1 Glass Shrimp.

“Wow!” said Tom, “how cool is that!”

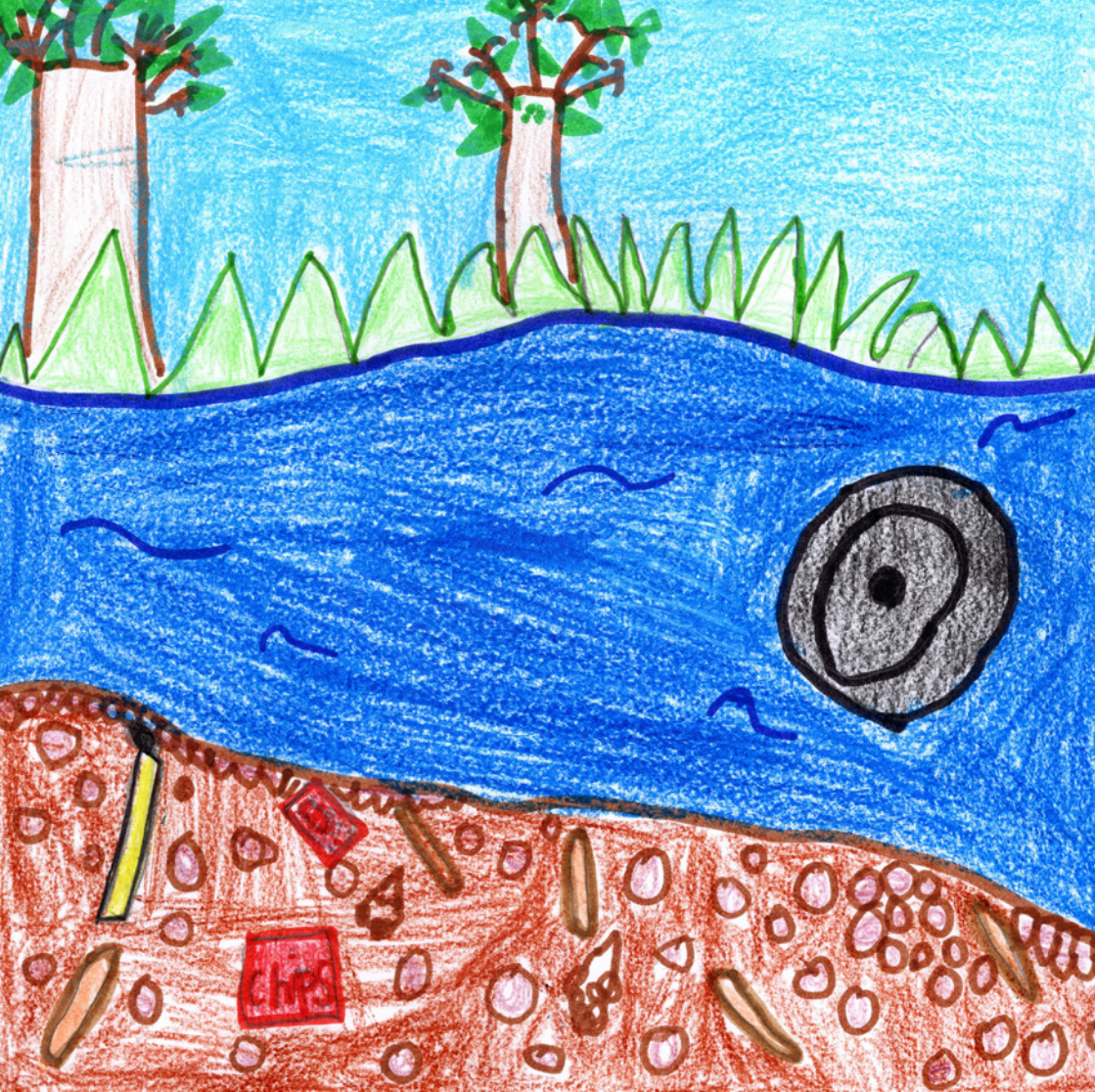


They asked Laura why it was important to take samples from waterways.

Laura replied, “We take samples of macroinvertebrates, also called waterbugs, from the waterways so we can see how healthy a waterway is. The different types of waterbugs we find, and the total amount present, give us an idea of what the water quality is like.”



“Each type of waterbug has a different tolerance to pollution in the water. So, if we can find some really sensitive ones we know the water quality is good and the river is healthy,” she explained.



Lily and Tom decided to go for a wander to check out a different part of the river. While they were walking, they found a glass bottle, an old tyre, plastic chip packets and some icypole sticks.

Lily said, "Look at all the rubbish Tom!"

"That's terrible," he replied.

“Pollution is bad for the environment and all the animals that live in the water or close to the river,” said Tom.

Lily and Tom picked up all the rubbish and rolled the tyre out onto the riverbank. They talked with each other about how they could help care for the environment and waterways.



Tom and Lily walked back to the tent and spoke to Laura about the rubbish they had found.





“What can we do to help?” asked Tom.

Laura’s friend Dimity had arrived to help Laura pack away her research. Dimity told them that it is important to put rubbish in the bin, don’t drop litter in the water and always respect the river. Everyone can help look after our waterways.



Lily and Tom were excited to go for a paddle in their canoes. While they were paddling, they thought it was a good idea to help the waterways by getting all the rubbish and plastic out of the river. They knew how important it was to care for the environment and help keep the river healthy for the next generation.

PUT RUBBISH
in the bin.



Take
Care
Of
Our
land.

Look after our
waterways.



When they got back to school, they told their friends to not litter otherwise their rubbish will wash or blow into the river. This rubbish that is in, or close to, the water can then hurt all of the animals that live there.

The students decided to make posters about keeping the environment safe. Lily and Tom put the posters up around the school.



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