

# Derwent Estuary Program

## e-bulletin



edition 20 - *June 2012*

### IN THIS EDITION

- [Clean Up Australia Day - 2012 Results](#)
- [Controlling Karamu - An Invasive Weed](#)
- [Helping the Spotted Handfish](#)
- [Background](#)

### Welcome

This is the 20th newsletter from the Derwent Estuary Program (DEP). The newsletter is designed to keep partners and stakeholders informed of the DEP's activities on a quarterly basis. If you are happy to keep receiving the newsletter, great. If you would like to be removed from the mailing list please reply via the link at the bottom of this page.

### Clean Up Australia Day - 2012 Results

For Clean-up Australia Day 2012, the DEP and the Southern Coastcare Association of Tasmania coordinated a regional Derwent litter campaign resulting in the collection of over 12 tonnes of rubbish. This equates to over 450 bags of rubbish, 150 bags of recycling and 10 skip loads of litter.



On 28 February, the DEP coordinated a Business Clean Up Day event at Prince of Wales Bay - one of Hobart's busiest industrial areas and a major litter hotspot. Thousands of items of litter had accumulated along the high tide line at this location due to the urban and industrial nature of the catchment and the shape of the bay, which traps rubbish along the shoreline.

Veolia Environmental Services provided rubbish skips for the regional clean-up campaign and also joined the Business Clean-up Day at Prince of Wales Bay, along with volunteers from the EPA and Southern Water. Veolia has been a partner of Clean up Australia since 2000.

The DEP would like to thank all the volunteers who participated in collecting litter this year from sometimes difficult areas of the Derwent foreshore.

### Controlling Karamu - An Invasive Weed

Karamu, a woody shrub native to New Zealand, is a declared weed in a number of locations around Tasmania. The most extensive outbreak occurs in the upper Derwent estuary in the wetlands and along the foreshore between new Norfolk and Dromodary. It thrives in wet environments and has the potential to displace native vegetation and disrupt the normal functioning of the wetland. Healthy wetlands provide breeding areas for fish and birds, help filter pollution and sediment from the water and mitigate floods.



Treating karamu near New Norfolk

Since 2010 the DEP with support from the Australian Government

commenced a control program of karamu. This involved surveying the extent of the infestation and treating outliers to confine its spread and protect the wetlands downriver. In 2011 the treated sites were revisited revealing higher than expected survival. This has prompted a rethink of the methods used and a number of techniques were trialled in 2012 to identify the most effective treatment. The trial included ten different herbicides or mixes, and five different methods of applying it. Karamu found along approximately 8 km of river bank has been treated so far, with follow up treatment required to control emergent seedlings.

The major aim of the three year program is to not only make a start on treatment, but to produce a management plan that outlines best practice for monitoring and control, and the cost effectiveness of different on-ground actions. This plan will be available for all land managers, landowners and community groups to encourage a coordinated and strategic approach in managing karamu.



Spotted handfish guarding eggs laid around a plastic rod  
Photo: Mark Green, CSIRO

### Helping the Spotted Handfish

The rare spotted handfish, endemic to the Derwent estuary, has been given a boost through the efforts of the DEP, CSIRO, IMAS, Reef Life Survey, Veolia Environmental Services, and Aquenal with funding support from the Australian Government. The 2011 -12 spring and summer saw the plant out of artificial substrate (plastic rods) to provide egg laying sites, and population surveys of spotted handfish at a number of sites. Surveys in past years have revealed that spotted handfish numbers have remained steady at two sites. Juveniles were also found indicating that breeding and recruitment is occurring. Survey results from a number of other areas are less promising, with lower numbers sighted, and few, or no juveniles. Resurvey of the plastic rods during spawning showed that they were being used for egg attachment, confirming the value of 'plant outs' to the fish population.

Heinz Australia included the spotted handfish as one of 4 iconic species in their 2012 national Clean Seas Campaign and have pledged financial assistance to the DEP to support monitoring and recovery actions.

### Background

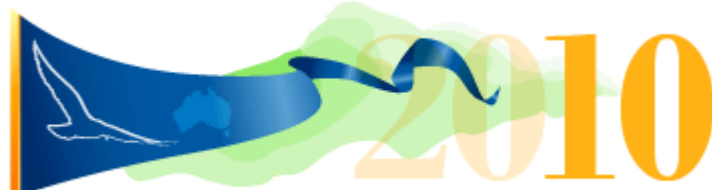
The Derwent Estuary Program (DEP) is a regional partnership between the Tasmanian State Government, local governments, commercial and industrial enterprises, and community-based groups to restore and promote our estuary.

The DEP was established in 1999 and has been nationally recognised for excellence in coordinating initiatives to reduce water pollution, conserve habitats and species, monitor river health and promote greater use and enjoyment of the foreshore.

Our major sponsors include: the Tasmanian State Government, Brighton, Clarence, Derwent Valley, Glenorchy, Hobart and Kingborough councils, Southern Water, TasPorts, Norske Skog Boyer, Hydro Tasmania and Nyrstar Hobart.

We also work collaboratively on projects with CSIRO Marine and Atmospheric Research, University of Tasmania, Institute of Marine and Antarctic Studies, NRM South, Southern Coastcare Association of Tasmania, Veolia Environmental Services and Greenseas (Heinz Australia).

INTERNATIONAL RIVERFOUNDATION RIVERPRIZE



2010 NATIONAL RIVERPRIZE WINNER

---

For further information please contact  
Christine Coughanowr p: 03 6233 6547 or  
Ursula Taylor e: [Ursula.Taylor@environment.tas.gov.au](mailto:Ursula.Taylor@environment.tas.gov.au)  
[www.derwentestuary.org.au](http://www.derwentestuary.org.au)

If you do not wish to receive further editions of this ebulletin, please  
unsubscribe by sending an email to:  
[majordomo@environment.tas.gov.au](mailto:majordomo@environment.tas.gov.au). Please ensure your email has  
"unsubscribe dep-ebulletin" in the subject line.