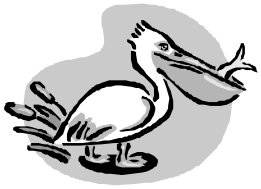
Something Fishy!



Y E A R S E V E N

Interpreting Information. Read the following information carefully before answering the questions below.

Only 26 species of native freshwater fish can be found in the waterways of the Murray-Darling system. This is very low compared with other river systems – the Amazon Basin for example has more than 1300 species!

Native fish species have been adversely affected by environmental changes such as the regulation of the river. Dams and weirs have interrupted the volume of the river's flows and how often it floods. Other environmental changes affecting native fish stocks include agricultural practices, pollution and introduced species such as European carp. Since we only have a few native species in the Murray-Darling, it makes sense to take care of them – we don't have many to spare!

Source: What's What About Native Fish of the River Murray (Fact Sheet 8)

Murray Cod

Scientific Name
Maccullochella peelii peelii

Size

Commonly to about 60 cm/3-4 Kg
Maximum Recorded size: 1.83 m, 113 Kg

Distribution

Found throughout the Murray-Darling system, although greatly reduced in abundance today. Murray cod were originally extremely common and supported a substantial commercial fishery in the nineteenth century and in the early decades of the twentieth. Prior to European colonisation cod was a major food source for aboriginal people.

Yabby

Scientific Name
Cheerax destructor

Conservation Status

Common/Widespread

Habitat

Capable of living in virtually any body of fresh water, yabbies are active burrowers and are very hardy, able to withstand poor water quality and long periods of drought. If a particular water course dries up, yabbies burrow deep into the bottom until they reach moist soil. The scientific name destructor refers to the yabby's habit of burrowing into levee banks and dam walls where they can cause considerable damage.

Callop

Common Names:
Golden Perch, Murray perch, Yellowbelly

Diet

Carnivorous, eating mainly Yabbies and shrimps, insects, molluscs and small fish.

Reproduction

Spawning is reported to occur at night from spring to summer when water temperatures are between 23 and 26°C. Spawning appears to be triggered by increased daylight and rising water levels. Will not spawn unless yabbies are part of the diet. Adult fish will move very considerable distances (up to 1000 Km) upstream to spawn if possible.

www.nativefish.asn.au

1. What have been some causes of low native fish stocks? _____

_____

2. Why is the yabby's scientific name cheerax destructor? _____

_____

3. What does 'abundance' mean? _____

4. What is the Murray Cod's maximum recorded size and weight? _____

5. What can yabbies do if drought occurs? _____

_____

6. What does the callop eat? _____

7. What conditions need to be in place for the callop to spawn? _____

_____

8. Where is the Amazon? _____

Enviro-Scramble.

Unscramble the names of fish found in the Murray. Unscramble the letters in the circled boxes to find a habitat known as the 'nursery' to most life in a river system.

PARC

DOC

HECPR

HISCAFT

LLOAPC

BAYBY

REBMA

W N

Green Quiz.

Energy from the sun is called _ _ _ _ _ energy.
We must _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ our energy resources.
Blue-green _ _ _ _ _ can be dangerous to the river environment.
Once a species is destroyed forever it is _ _ _ _ _ _ _
Coal, oil and gas are _ _ _ _ _ _ energy sources.
When land is damaged by wind, water and time, _ _ _ _ _ _ _ has occurred.

finite
algae
erosion
conserve
solar
extinct

Word Sort.

Sort these nouns, verbs and adjectives into the correct sections. Some words may fit in more than one section!

flood fish species plant exotic wetlands indigenous wildlife travel explore energy Cod protect diverse pollute degraded introduce

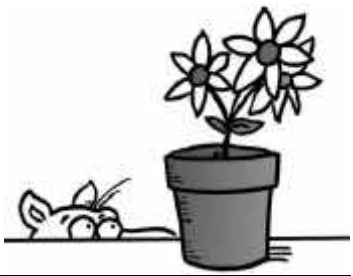
Nouns	Verbs	Adjectives

Number Block

			7	18
	9			21
	3	4		16
		3	8	17
10	20	15	27	24

14

Try to fill in the missing numbers.
The missing numbers are integers between 0 and 9.
The numbers in each row add up to the totals on the right.
The numbers in each column add up to the totals along the bottom.
The diagonal lines also add up to the totals on the right.



Biodiversity.

Biodiversity is like the web of life – everything alive relies on some other living thing to keep it alive.
Draw a picture of a river scene – you might include the river itself, wetlands, trees and creatures living in and around the river.
Draw a line between living and non-living things and in 1 or 2 words, explain how these things are connected. (e.g. trees need soil, leaves from trees fertilize soil)

Eugene's Challenge.

Design a colourful and informative brochure with the theme 'Protecting Our Environment'.

Web Links.

Native Fish Australia: www.nativefish.asn.au
Waterwatch: www.sa.waterwatch.org.au

Parent signature: _____