



International Day of Women and Girls in Science 2025

What is your name and title?

My name is Emma Johnston and I'm a project officer for environmental water with Mallee CMA.

How do you use science in your role with Mallee CMA?

I use environmental science in ecological surveys, bird monitoring, flora and fauna assessments, as well as water quality testing and analyzing data.

How did you get into the field of science?

I was really interested in science all throughout high school - I always enjoyed monitoring, looking at and analyzing data and wanted a career that incorporated all of those things.

I completed a Bachelor of Sustainability, which is more geared towards natural resource management and then I actually applied for the Youth Employment Program at Mallee CMA when I was 21 - a fresh uni graduate!

I worked as a natural resource management assistant throughout the 9-month program, which was such a great opportunity, and I absolutely loved it!

When a permanent role became available in the environmental water team, I knew I wanted it. That was 3 years ago and I'm still with the Mallee CMA team today.

What has been a highlight or memorable moment of your career in science so far?

Going electrofishing with the Arthur Rylah Institute at Mullaroo Creek at Lindsay Island was a highlight - the project involved catching, measuring and tagging native fish for monitoring and it was awesome - a great chance to see science at work.

What advice do you have for girls and women considering a career in science?

Find study and volunteer opportunities within the science fields, give everything a go and don't be held back by fear!





International Day of Women and Girls in Science 2025

What is your name and title?

My name is Demi-Rose Walter and I'm a project officer, wetlands and waterways with Mallee CMA.

How do you use science in your role with Mallee CMA?

Having an understanding of how science works, and scientific concepts is really handy.

When I was studying, I wouldn't have thought that geography would be one of the skills I'd be using regularly, but it is, particularly being able to map out sites and the ability to interpret information and statistical data.

How did you get into the field of science?

I really enjoyed learning about ecology in high school, and I went on to study environmental management at the University of Queensland.

That degree was a combination of some really interesting and diverse things like ecology, geography, legislation and law, people management and even archeology and cultural heritage, and it gave me a great foundation of knowledge for my role now.

What has been a highlight or memorable moment of your career in science so far?

Having to dress up in a giant brush-tailed glider costume, with an ice vest strapped to my body in the Queensland heat, hugging little kids at a tree planting event was definitely a memorable moment!

I've also been enjoying the research we do on the Winged Peppercross - it's this really unassuming, boring looking green plant, but there's only 13 populations of it across Victoria and New South Wales and we have one here at Hattah-Kulkyne National Park. The conditions have to be exactly right for it to spring up, so researching, monitoring it and trying to work out it's habits that has been really fun.

What advice do you have for girls and women considering a career in science?

There's a bit of a notion that science is a male-dominated field, and that's true for certain areas but in my experience there are other areas, like ecology and environmental science, that tend to be female-dominated!

Regardless, if science is your passion, just stay committed and be prepared to have setbacks - it's a diverse and rewarding career.





International Day of Women and Girls in Science 2025

What is your name and title?

Zoë Beer - Integrated Catchment Management Project Officer

How did you get into the field of science?

I studied ecology and conservation at University of Adelaide. I got into science via a love for bushwalking and birdwatching and a drive to give back to the environment. I stayed in it because I met some incredible mentors and friends along the way.

What has been a highlight or memorable moment of your career in science so far?

Whenever I get to spend time working out in remote and challenging places with a good team is memorable. Because you get the reward of seeing the really candid moments in nature. You see uncommon or endangered species and you also see life and the landscape interacting in ways that are really rare and special to witness. Doing that alongside people you can learn from and who become friends is so rewarding. It always makes me overjoyed to be working in this field.

What advice do you have for girls and women considering a career in science?

Be as outgoing as you can be - I have found even the “superstars” of science are typically really approachable and willing to give advice and opportunities if you just ask. Too often women tend towards deference or ‘politeness’ at the cost of their own advancement. Ask questions, introduce yourself to everyone and ask if they need help on anything, you’ll end up in some really cool scenarios. You’re only underqualified the first time.



Me with a Beardy while Reptile Trapping north of Coober Pedy S.A - December 2023



International Day of Women and Girls in Science 2025

What is your name and title?

My name is Meg Arney, and I am an Environmental Water Project Officer at Mallee CMA.

How do you use science in your role with Mallee CMA?

I use science to aid in determining management actions for wetlands, which include environmental watering events and other projects. We do this through monitoring activities, including flora and fauna surveys and water quality testing. This is particularly important in investigating the benefits of environmental water on the landscape.

How did you get into the field of science?

I grew up locally near the Koorlong State Forest and spent a great amount of my childhood exploring the bush, looking for cool plants and animals. This influenced me to study a Bachelor of Environmental and Conservation Science at uni. I started at Mallee CMA in 2023 in a Project Support Officer role and eventually progressed to a Project Officer role in the Environmental Water team.

What has been a highlight or memorable moment of your career in science so far?

A highlight of my career was the time I had the opportunity to kayak on Lake Powell near Robinvale to capture the Cormorant and Darter breeding event that occurred following an environmental water delivery last year. It was amazing to witness firsthand the positive effect of environmental water on local wildlife.

What advice do you have for girls and women considering a career in science?

My advice would be to take every opportunity that comes your way. Volunteering is a great way to gain experience, build connections and find your passion within science.





International Day of Women and Girls in Science

What is your name and title?

Sophie Hansen - Project Officer Environmental Water

How do you use science in your role with Mallee CMA?

During environmental watering events, we need to be able to assess the impact watering has had on the landscape. One way to evaluate this is monitoring vegetation and wildlife responses pre and post watering. I also find that many skills learnt while studying science are transferable to my role here at Mallee CMA such as critical thinking and problem-solving skills.

How did you get into the field of science?

In year 12 I always knew I wanted to work in the environmental space in some capacity and selected subjects in the sciences and followed those pursuits into university.

What has been a highlight or memorable moment of your career in science so far?

I love being able to get out in the kayaks. During environmental water delivery at Lake Powell in 2024, we were able to go out for a paddle in the lake to collect trail cameras, to assess aquatic birdlife response to the watering and identify if any birds were still nesting.

What advice do you have for girls and women considering a career in science?

Choose a field that you're genuinely passionate about. Choosing a career in science that you're passionate about is very fulfilling as it can lead to having important, positive, real-world impacts.





International Day of Women and Girls in Science 2025

What is your name and title?

Francine Scott, Biodiversity Project Officer (Threatened Mallee Birds Project, BushBank Restoring Mallee Connections Project)

How do you use science in your role with Mallee CMA?

Applying monitoring methods and analysing data for investment reporting including vegetation condition (species diversity/cover/recruitment/survival rates), grazing pressure and weed extent. Strategic thinking for project planning such as selection of revegetation sites and restoration methods.

How did you get into the field of science?

Growing up on a farm in the Mallee surrounded by bush reserves I have always been interested in native flora and fauna and the interaction of ecosystems. I completed a double degree in Business/Science with a major in Environmental Science but initially headed down another career path. On deciding to get into the NRM field I put a lot of thought into what transferable skills I had and the type of role I would be suited to.

What has been a highlight or memorable moment of your career in science so far?

Recent floristics monitoring for the MCMA Threatened Mallee Birds Project and analysis for the MCMA 'Biodiversity and Agricultural Natural Capital Emergency Preparedness and Response Plan: Victorian Mallee.'

What advice do you have for girls and women considering a career in science?

Be persistent in pursuit of your goals. Look at job advertisement requirements for positions that you aspire to and consider what steps you need to take to meet the criteria ie. Study path and short courses, volunteer opportunities, current skills that could be adapted.

