



## MEDIA RELEASE

03 June 2025

### CRITICALLY ENDANGERED MURRAY HARDYHEAD FIND NEW HOME IN MERBEIN

THE small but mighty, critically endangered Murray Hardyhead (*Craterocephalus fluviatilis*) fish have found a new home in Brickworks Billabong at Merbein.

The collaborative project between Mallee Catchment Management Authority, Nature Glenelg Trust and First People of the Millewa Mallee Aboriginal Corporation saw the tiny fish, typically between 30mm to 80mm in size, translocated from Lake Koorlong to Brickworks Billabong, with the aim of further continuing the population growth.

Mallee Catchment Management Authority Executive Manager Waterways, Wetlands and Statutory Functions Nicole Wishart said high numbers of Murray Hardyhead in Lake Koorlong made the translocation possible.

“From April 2024 to April 2025, we found the number of Murray Hardyhead in Lake Koorlong had increased massively,” she said.

“That speaks volumes about not just the health of the fish themselves, but also the health of the waterway – the Murray Hardyhead are thriving in a really healthy environment in Lake Koorlong, and we’d like to see that progress continue into Brickworks Billabong.”

Ms Wishart said work had been underway for some time to ensure Brickworks Billabong was a suitable environment for the Murray Hardyhead to survive in.

“There’s been a lot of preparation work in order for this translocation to happen,” she said.

“We had to do testing to ensure the water quality was suitable, and ensure pest fish were not present in Brickworks Billabong to compete with the Murray Hardyhead”.

“Due to their small size, we wanted to give the Hardyhead the best fighting chance possible, so FPMAC constructed and supplied wooden structures known as “fish hotels” for them to seek shelter from larger predators in”.

“It’s really been a collaborative effort from all parties to help give the Hardyhead the best chance possible in their new environment, and we will continue to monitor their numbers and growth in their new home.”



CAPTION: Mallee Catchment Management Authority, Nature Glenelg Trust and First People of the Millewa Mallee Aboriginal Corporation came together for the release of the Murray Hardyhead into Brickworks Billabong.

To stay up to date with planned watering activities, follow Mallee CMA on social media and visit the website at <https://malleecma.com.au/waterways/>

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## **ENDS**

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*Background information:*

*The Mallee Catchment Management Authority (CMA) is a statutory authority established to ensure that natural resources in the region are managed in an integrated and ecologically sustainable way. Its work is based on science and delivered through meaningful partnerships with local organisations such as Landcare, community groups, and government agencies in the Victorian Mallee.*

*For more information visit [www.malleecma.com.au](http://www.malleecma.com.au)*