

Merbein Community Update

The Merbein Community Update is just one way for Mallee Catchment Management Authority (CMA) to keep the community up to date with the latest work underway across Merbein Common.

From events to environmental watering, exciting new projects and updates, you'll find it all right here in the Merbein Community Update.

It's published seasonally and helps keeps us connected – we share your passion for the wonderful Merbein Common, and we hope you enjoy this update.



ABOVE: Brickworks Billabong at Merbein Common

Catfish Billabong environmental water delivery

Catfish Billabong at Merbein Common is set to receive up to 900ML of environmental water in the coming weeks.

This water will help improve fish, waterbird and vegetation outcomes at the wetland and surrounds, making the Common an even more beautiful and healthy environment for our native flora and fauna to call home.

Environmental water will be pumped through the retaining wall using temporary pumps, with the track access

closed for approximately two weeks during the water delivery period.

The water will be held at target levels for a short period of time and then be slowly released back into the Murray River.

We're looking forward to seeing the billabong, native wildlife and vegetation continue to flourish!



The rehabilitation of Brickworks Billabong at Merbein Common

It's been a busy time at Brickworks Billabong!

Historically, Brickworks Billabong had low numbers of invasive fish species such as carp, thanks to its saline environment.

However, during the 2022-23 floods, the billabong was inundated by flood water, which brought with it carp and other pest species. This resulted in a decline in the water quality and forced native species to compete for food sources and shelter.

A managed drying phase was undertaken to help eradicate carp, reset the wetland and allow vegetation to grow and set seed, establishing lakebed hermland.

Mallee CMA worked closely with First Peoples of the Millewa-Mallee Aboriginal Corporation to construct "fish hotels" from locally sourced wood. These hotels

provide important shelter for native fish during breeding, refuge from predators and will be vital in setting up the wetland as a suitable environment for native fish.

In spring 2024, 170ML of water for the environment was delivered to Brickworks, with a further 145 ML delivered in autumn 2025 and most recently, 35ML in early September. A 3mm fish filter was used during the re-filling process, to limit the numbers of small carp that could enter the wetland through the pumps.

Netting surveys were then undertaken by fish ecologists to confirm there was no carp detected in the wetland, making it the perfect environment for the translocation of 150 endangered Murray hardyhead from Koorlong Lake. A second translocation is on track to happen in the coming months.

Environmental water deliveries are already making a positive impact, with Shelduck ducklings, Hardhead, Caspian tern, Eastern spotted froglets and the critically endangered Spiny lignum being spotted recently at the Billabong!

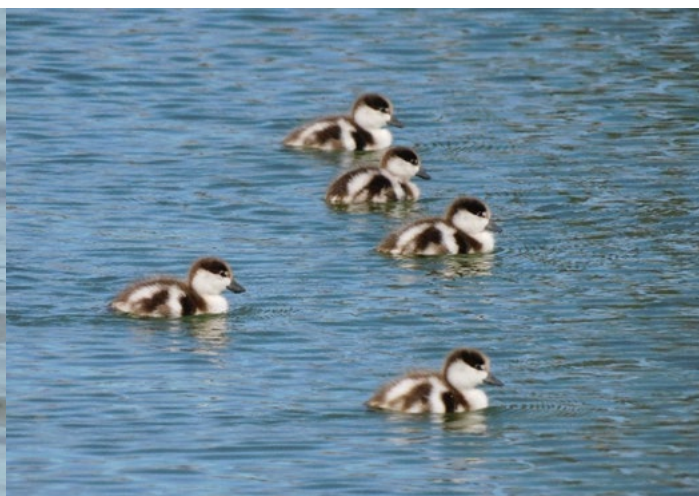
Water levels will now be maintained though summer and autumn, with additional top ups if needed.

Thanks to the important work undertaken, Brickworks Billabong will continue to thrive into the future!

To watch the process, click below:
[Rehabilitation of Brickworks Billabong - Merbein Common](#)



Pied stilt



Shelduck ducklings



Hardhead ducks



Spiny lignum

Catfish Billabong bank stabilisation

Stabilisation works have recently been completed at Catfish Billabong, Merbein Common, helping to protect the river bend and regulator structure on site.

Over the last decade the Murray riverbank adjacent to Catfish Billabong has been eroding as a result of widescale overbank flooding (2011, 2016 and 2022).

Recently, the bank was filled in and stabilised with large rock, helping to ensure its durability and preservation for the future.

BELOW: Catfish Billabong riverbank facing downstream before (left) and after (right) works.



Have your say on environmental water

Our local waterways are an integral part of life here in the Mallee - from boating, kayaking and fishing to bush walking, bird watching and bike riding, there's a site in our region that offers it!

We want to know more about which sites you visit, what activities you enjoy doing there and which sites Mallee CMA may look at delivering environmental water in 2026-27.

Seasonal Watering Proposals outline Mallee CMA's proposed priorities for delivery of water across our region's waterways. It's important that these proposals reflect the priorities for the environment and values of our communities, so scan the QR code and tell us your thoughts!

HAVE YOUR SAY:
ENVIRONMENTAL WATER DELIVERY 2026-27



We would love to hear your ideas and thoughts on our local sites and where we may look at delivering environmental water in 2026-27!

SCAN ME





Mallee Farmer

The latest edition of Mallee Farmer is now available!

It's a great insight into the latest dryland farming research, training, trends and programs in the Mallee. Visit malleecma.com.au/publications to have a read and don't forget to sign up to the next edition to get it delivered straight to your inbox!

2026 Mallee CMA bird calendar returns

Mallee CMA is pleased to announce the return of our popular birdlife calendar in 2026! The calendar will showcase the best images of the birdlife in our region as voted by the public. Voting is now open, and we want to hear from you!

Scan the QR code to vote for your favourite image.



2026 MALLEE CMA BIRD CALENDAR



How can I find out more?

For more information on partnering with Traditional Owners and community members to enhance Merbein Common, contact:

Nicole Wishart - Executive Manager Waterways, Wetlands and Statutory Functions **0427 514 303**

We acknowledge the Traditional Owners, Aboriginal communities and organisations of the Victorian Mallee. We recognize the diversity of their cultures and the deep connections they have with their lands and waters. We value partnerships with them for the health of People and Country. We also pay our respects to Elders past, present and emerging; and recognize the primacy of Traditional Owners' obligations, rights and responsibilities to use and care for their traditional lands and water.

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