



CITY OF ONKAPARINGA



National Landcare Programme



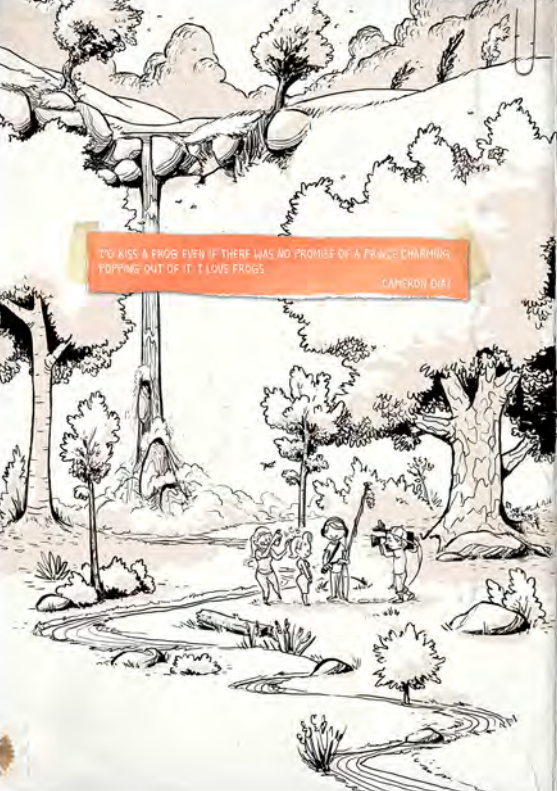
Government of South Australia
Adelaide and Mount Lofty Ranges
Natural Resources Management Board

This project is jointly funded through City of Onkaparinga, the Australian Government's National Landcare Programme, and the Adelaide and Mount Lofty Ranges Natural Resources Management Board

CREEK HEROES

IMPORTANT PLANTS & ANIMALS
OF ONKAPARINGA CREEKS





TO KISS A FROG EVEN IF THERE WAS NO PROMISE OF A PRINCE CHARMING,
POPPING OUT OF IT. I LOVE FROGS.

CAMERON DIAI

CREEKS ARE GREAT!

OUR CREEKLINES ARE A TREASURE TROVE! THEY'RE A HAVEN, WHICH MANY OF OUR NATIVE ANIMALS - SUCH AS FISH, FROGS, REPTILES AND BIRDS - CALL HOME. THEY ALSO GIVE US PLACES TO EXPLORE, SCENES OF BEAUTY, AND ARE A PEACEFUL SANCTUARY AMID OUR INCREASINGLY BUSY LIVES.

FOR OUR CREEKS TO STAY HEALTHY, THEY NEED TO HAVE A RANGE OF NATIVE PLANTS AND ANIMALS. CERTAIN LOCAL CREEK HEROES PERFORM VERY IMPORTANT ROLES IN MAINTAINING THE VITALITY OF OUR CREEKS.

AND NOW WE CROSS
TO DARLA FOR AN
EXCLUSIVE WITH THE
CREEK HEROES!

I BET YOU'VE BEEN
LOOKING FORWARD TO
MEETING YOUR FAVOURITE
CELEBS FACE TO FACE,
IS THAT RIGHT?

ARE YOU
KIDDING,
JIM?

I'VE BEEN WAITING
FOR THIS MOMENT
FOR MY ENTIRE
LIFE!

I'VE NEVER
BEEN SO EXCITED!

I'VE BEEN TO
THE BATHROOM
FIVE TIMES!

AND I
NEED TO
GO AGAIN!

POWER PATCHES:

TO LEARN HOW EACH HERO IS DIFFERENT, CHECK OUT THE HERO RATINGS BELOW AND FIND OUT WHICH POWER PATCHES THEY HAVE BEEN AWARDED.

CLEANS WATER

THESE HEROES TRAP OR BREAK DOWN POLLUTION THAT MAY FLOW THROUGH OUR CREEKS.



PROVIDES HABITAT

THESE HEROES PROVIDE FOOD, HIBING SPOTS OR A HOME FOR NATIVE ANIMALS.



FIGHTS PESTS

THESE HUNGRY HEROES OME ON INSECT PESTS, AND KEEP THEM UNDER CONTROL.

LOW FUEL LOAD

SOME NATIVE PLANTS DON'T DRY OUT IN SUMMER AND ARE LESS FLAMMABLE THAN WEEDS.



FOOD CHAIN LINK

IN THE CIRCLE OF LIFE, THESE HEROES ARE FOOD OR HABITAT FOR OTHER CREEK CREATURES.



MAKES US HAPPY

THESE HEROES CAN LOOK BEAUTIFUL, SMELL NICE AND MAKE COOL SOUNDS. IT MAKES US HAPPY!

BULLY REPLACER

WHEN CREEK BULLY WEEDS ARE REMOVED, WE HELP NATIVE PLANT HEROES TAKE OVER AGAIN!



HEALTH INDICATOR

IF THIS HERO LIVES IN YOUR CREEK THEN IT IS A SIGN THAT THE WATER IS HEALTHY.



SOIL STABILISER

THESE HEROES ARE EXCELLENT AT HOLDING THE SOIL TOGETHER AND STOPPING IT WASHING AWAY.



GET THE FROGSPOTTER APP!

FrogWatch SA

WWW.FROGWATCHSA.COM.AU

HELP COLLECT VALUABLE DATA ABOUT THE HEALTH OF THE ENVIRONMENTS OUR FROGS DEPEND ON! COLLECT AUDIO, PHOTOS AND HABITAT INFORMATION FOR EACH SURVEY YOU CONDUCT. LEARN ABOUT FROGS WITHIN SOUTH AUSTRALIA, INCLUDING AUDIO EXAMPLES OF THEIR CALLS.

COMMON FROGLET



ALIAS: *Cinia signifera*

HERO PROFILE:

SMALL IN SIZE BUT NOT IN VOICE, THIS LITTLE FROG REACHES ONLY 3CM IN LENGTH, BUT ITS "CRICK, CRICK" CALL CAN BE HEARD FOR HUNDREDS OF METRES.

AS TADPOLES, THEY FEED ON ALGAE, AND AS ADULT FROGS, THEY MUNCH ON INSECTS, INCLUDING PESKY MOSQUITOES.

BECAUSE THEIR SKIN ABSORBS TOXIC CHEMICALS AROUND THEM, THEY DIE OFF WHEN OUR CREEKS BECOME POLLUTED, SO THEIR PRESENCE INDICATES A HEALTHY CREEK.

POWER PATCHES:



MEMO: Record the Common Froglet on the FrogSpotter App!

Creek Heroes





FLAT-SEGE

ALIAS: *Cyperus vaginatus*

HERO PROFILE:

THIS HANDY PLANT HAS A FEW TRICKS UP ITS SLEEVE - IT HELPS HOLD THE RIVERBANK TOGETHER, KEEPING THE CREEK CLEAN; THE CATERpillARS FROM LOCAL BUTTERFLIES LIKE THE SOUTHERN GRASS-DART FEED ON IT; PLUS IT PROVIDES SHELTER FOR NATIVE ANIMALS SUCH AS FROGS.

NOT ONLY THAT - IT STAYS EVERGREEN, SO IT'S MUCH MORE FIRE-RESISTANT THAN MOST WEEDY SPECIES.

tiny seeds!

POWER PATCHES:



SACRED KINGFISHER

ALIAS: *Todiramphus sanctus*

HERO PROFILE:

THIS STRIKING BIRD DIVE-BOMBS LIZARDS, FROGS AND INSECTS FROM ITS HIGH PERCHES. IT CAN EVEN EAT PESKY FERAL MICE.

THE KINGFISHER IS CLOSELY RELATED TO OUR OLD FRIEND THE KOOKABURRA, AND EVEN LOOKS SIMILAR, BUT IS MUCH SMALLER AND HAS BLUE - GREEN WINGS AND HEAD, AND A WHITISH COLOURED CHEST.

KINGFISHERS HEAD NORTH IN WINTER, BUT COME BACK FOR SPRING AND SUMMER TO BREED IN A TREE HOLLOW, OR EVEN IN A HOLE WHICH THEY EXCAVATE IN THE BANK OF THE CREEK.



POWER PATCHES:



Creek Heroes



Creek Heroes



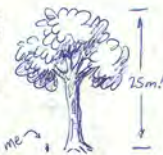
RIVER RED GUM

ALIAS: *Eucalyptus camaldulensis*

HERO PROFILE:

THIS FAMOUS AUSTRALIAN TREE REACHES OVER 25M HIGH, AND IS A MULTI-STORY APARTMENT FOR NATIVE ANIMALS. BIRDS FEED ON ITS NECTAR, INSECTS LIVE AND FEED ON ITS LEAVES AND ITS HOLLOWES PROVIDE SHELTER FOR NATIVE ANIMALS TO HIDE FROM FERAL ANIMALS LIKE FOXES.

RIVER RED GUMS GET SICK IF THEY DON'T GET ENOUGH WATER OR IF THE WATER IS POLLUTED. SO THEY CAN TELL US ABOUT THE HEALTH OF OUR WATERWAYS TOO.



POWER PATCHES:



CHRISTMAS BUSH

ALIAS: *Bursaria spinosa*

HERO PROFILE:

THIS SHRUB GROWS TO ABOUT 2-3 METRES TALL, AND HAS LITTLE PRICKLES THAT HELP KEEP OUR NATIVE BIRDS SAFE FROM INTRODUCED PREDATORS.

IT PRODUCES BEAUTIFUL SWEET-SCENTED WHITE FLOWERS AROUND CHRISTMAS TIME, HENCE ITS NAME. THE FLOWERS ARE AN IMPORTANT SOURCE OF NECTAR FOR BUTTERFLIES AND BIRDS.

HARMLESS NATIVE SPIDERS LOVE TO BUILD WEBS IN ITS TWIGGY FOLIAGE, AND THESE WEBS ARE THEN USED BY BIRDS - LIKE GREY FANTAILS - TO BIND THEIR NESTS TOGETHER. IT'S AN IDEAL REPLACEMENT PLANT WHEN REMOVING BULLIES LIKE THE NASTY, CREEPY BLACKBERRY.

POWER PATCHES:



Christmas Bush seeds



Creek Heroes



Creek Heroes



WATER BUGS



Damselfly nymph

Dragonfly nymph



HERO PROFILE:

IN OUR CREEKS LIVE A WEIRD AND WONDERFUL ARRAY OF CRITTERS THAT SCIENTISTS CALL MACROINVERTEBRATES, BUT WE AFFECTIONATELY CALL WATERBUGS.

THEY ARE VITAL LINKS IN THE FOOD CHAIN, PASSING NUTRIENTS FROM PLANTS AND ALGAE UP TO BIGGER CREATURES LIKE FROGS AND BIRDS.

MANY WATERBUGS EAT MOSQUITO LARVAE TOO, SO IF THERE ARE PLENTY OF DIFFERENT WATERBUGS, THERE WON'T BE MANY MOSQUITOES! THE BETTER THE HEALTH OF THE CREEK, THE GREATER VARIETY OF WATERBUGS.

POWER PATCHES:



NATIVE GRASSES

HERO PROFILE:

NATIVE GRASSES ARE AN IMPORTANT PART OF A THREATENED VEGETATION TYPE CALLED "GRASSY WOODLANDS."

THESE WOODLANDS ARE MADE UP OF WIDELY SPACED TREES AND SCATTERED SHRUBS, WITH LOTS OF TUSsocky NATIVE GRASSES. THE OPENNESS OF THESE AREAS PROVIDES SPACES FOR BIRDS LIKE OUR BEAUTIFUL BLUE WRENS AND ROBINS TO FEED.

NATIVE GRASSES ARE ALSO FOOD FOR THE CATERPILLARS OF OUR NATIVE BUTTERFLIES. PLUS THEY STAY GREENER OVER THE SPRING AND SUMMER MONTHS, AND DON'T GET AS TALL OR AS DENSE AS WEEDY GRASSES, SO POSE A LOWER FIRE RISK.



Kangaroo Grass

POWER PATCHES:



Creek Heroes



Creek Heroes





ROCKS & LOGS

HERO PROFILE:

HOW CAN A ROCK OR A LOG BE A CREEK HERO? DO THEY JUST LIE THERE DOING NOTHING? ACTUALLY, BOTH ARE VERY IMPORTANT.

WHEN ROCKS AND LOGS REST ON THE CREEK BED, THEY PROVIDE PERCHES FOR WATER BIRDS AND GREAT HIDING SPOTS FOR YABBIES.

THEY HELP STABILISE SOIL, AND PROVIDE A SAFE, PROTECTED, MOIST PLACE FOR SOME OF OUR MORE DELICATE NATIVE PLANTS, LIKE FERNS, TO GROW. SCIENTISTS HAVE SHOWN THAT WHEN WE LEAVE LOGS ON THE GROUND, THE NUMBER OF GROUND-FEEDING BIRDS INCREASES BY 30%!

POWER PATCHES:



YABBY

ALIAS: *Cherax destructor*

HERO PROFILE:

FISHING FOR YABBIES IS ONE OF THE JOYS OF CHILDHOOD. EVEN THOUGH WE USUALLY USE MEAT TO CATCH THEM, THEY ARE OMNIVOROUS, MOSTLY EATING DECAYING PLANTS. THIS, IN FACT, HELPS MAINTAIN WATER QUALITY.

THEY'RE A CRUCIAL LINK IN THE FOOD CHAIN, BEING AN IMPORTANT FOOD SOURCE FOR FISHES AND WATERBIRDS.

THE YABBY HAS THE ABILITY TO CONCENTRATE MERCURY AND LEAD INSIDE ITS BODY WITHOUT HARM, AND SO MAY BE USEFUL AS A BIOLOGICAL INDICATOR OF POLLUTION. WHEN WATER DRIES UP OVER SUMMER, YABBIES BURY THEMSELVES IN THE SOIL TO KEEP THEIR LUNGS MOIST.

POWER PATCHES:



Creek Heroes



Creek Heroes





SILKY TEA TREE

Superb Fairywren

ALIAS: *Leptospermum lanigerum*

HERO PROFILE:

THIS HANDSOME, SOFT SHRUB GROWS TO ABOUT 2M TALL AND FORMS A THICK PROTECTIVE HABITAT THAT SMALL BIRDS – LIKE WRENS AND THORNBILLS – USE FOR SHELTER.

BEFORE EUROPEAN COLONISATION, IT WAS ONE OF THE MOST COMMON WETLAND PLANTS, AND WOULD HAVE COVERED EXTENSIVE SWAMPLAND AREAS. UNFORTUNATELY, MOST OF THESE SWAMPS HAVE BEEN CLEARED AND DRAINED.

IT'S A VITAL PLANT ALONG CREEKLINES, BECAUSE IT STABILISES THE SOIL AND HELPS SLOW THE FLOW OF WATER, PREVENTING EROSION.

POWER PATCHES:



EASTERN WATER SKINK

ALIAS: *Eulamprus quoyii*

HERO PROFILE:

THIS CHARMING LIZARD REACHES NEARLY 30CM IN LENGTH.

THE EASTERN WATER SKINK LIVES ALONGSIDE PERMANENT STREAMS AND RIVERS, WHERE IT FEEDS ON AQUATIC INSECTS, SNAILS, TADPOLES, SPIDERS, SMALL FISH, NATIVE FRUIT AND EVEN OTHER LIZARDS.

IT LIKES STREAMS WITH ROCKY SECTIONS AND FALLEN LOGS, BUT DOESN'T LIKE AREAS WHERE WEEDS ARE TOO DENSE, OR OVERLY MANICURED LAWNS WITH TOO FEW TREES. BECAUSE OF THIS, ITS PRESENCE IS A GOOD INDICATION OF THE OVERALL HEALTH OF A CREEK.

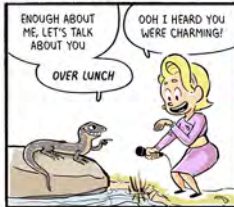
POWER PATCHES:



Creek Heroes



Creek Heroes



EASTERN BANJO FROG



ALIAS: *Linnodynes dumerilii*

HERO PROFILE:

THIS FROG MAKES ONE OF THE WONDERFUL SOUNDS OF SPRING EVENINGS - A MUSICAL "BONK" THAT SOUNDS LIKE A BANJO BEING PLUCKED.

IT'S A BIG, TOADLIKE FROG THAT GROWS TO NEARLY 10CM LONG. BANJO FROGS STAY ALIVE THROUGH THE HEAT OF SUMMER BY BURROWING INTO THE SOIL - LOCAL GARDENERS OFTEN GET A SURPRISE WHEN THEY DIG THEM UP!

THEY ARE A GOOD INDICATOR OF WATER QUALITY IN A CREEK, BECAUSE THEY LAY THEIR EGGS IN WATER, AND THESE EGGS CAN ABSORB TOXIC CHEMICALS. IF THE WATER IS POLLUTED, THE EGGS MAY NOT SURVIVE, AND IF THEY DO, THE FROGS MIGHT BE DEFORMED.

POWER PATCHES:



memo:
record the Eastern Banjo Frog on the Frogpotter App!

Creek Heroes



ALGAE



HERO PROFILE:

PEOPLE THINK ALGAE IS A DIRTY WORD, BUT ALGAE ARE ACTUALLY A CRUCIAL PART OF THE WORLD'S ECOSYSTEMS. ALGAE PRODUCE MUCH OF THE WORLD'S OXYGEN, THEY CONVERT SUNLIGHT TO ENERGY, AND FORM A CRITICAL PART OF THE FOOD CHAIN.

THEY CAN BE USED TO HELP TREAT AND PURIFY WATER. INTENSE GROWTHS OF ALGAE, CALLED ALGAL BLOOMS, SOMETIMES OCCUR WHERE THERE IS AN UNUSUALLY HIGH DENSITY OF ALGAE, BUT THIS IS OFTEN DUE TO HIGH NUTRIENT LEVELS THAT ARE USUALLY CAUSED BY POLLUTION.

ALGAE UNFORTUNATELY GETS BLAMED FOR BLOOMS THAT ARE ACTUALLY CAUSED BY CYANOBACTERIA (AKA BLUE-GREEN ALGAE - WRONGLY NAMED BECAUSE IT IS NOT ALGAE AT ALL).

POWER PATCHES:



Creek Heroes



THERE IS ONE MORE HERO WHO CAN SAVE OUR CREEKS...



THAT HERO IS

YOU!



You CAN HELP KEEP OUR CREEKS HEALTHY BY:

- PUTTING RUBBISH IN A BIN
- MAKING SURE CHEMICALS AND FERTILISERS DON'T GET INTO OUR CREEKS
- REMOVE CREEK BULLY WEEDS AND REPLACE WITH CREEK HERO LOCAL NATIVE PLANTS
- PICKING UP AND COMPOSTING FALLEN AUTUMN LEAVES BEFORE THEY CLOG OUR CREEKS
- LEAVING ROCKS AND LOGS IN THE CREEK FOR WILDLIFE
- FENCING CREEKS TO KEEP OUT LIVESTOCK WHO EAT NATIVE PLANTS AND MUDDY THE CREEK
- LETTING OTHERS KNOW WHY CREEKS ARE IMPORTANT!

IT'S BEEN A DREAM TO FINALLY MEET THE HEROES FACE TO FACE, JIM!

AND I'VE STILL GOT SOME ALGAE ON MY HAND

I AM SO LUCKY!

I'VE ALWAYS WANTED TO MEET THE HEROES

JIM?

BUT I'M JUST STUCK BEHIND THIS DESK

•SIGH•

AND THAT'S THE NEWS

FURTHER INFORMATION & ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

OH NO! OUR CREEKS ARE UNDER THREAT BY SINISTER WEEDS!
TO LEARN MORE ABOUT THESE VILLAINS, CHECK OUT THE CREEK BULLIES BROCHURE.

ALL BROCHURES ARE AVAILABLE TO DOWNLOAD FROM THE CITY OF ONKAPARINGA WEBSITE.



Onkaparinga River
National Park



Hey! Don't forget to try out the Froggy App!



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EASTERN BANJO FROG AND COMMON FROGLET PHOTOS BY STEVE WALKER

SACRED KINGFISHER PHOTO BY WILSON LENNARD

ALL OTHER PHOTOS BY JEREMY GRAMP

SUPERHERO CHARACTER INSPIRED BY IDA!