



NORTH EAST
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MEDIA RELEASE

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Beat the heat - leap into World Wetlands Day activities

People of all ages can join frog walks, bus tours and informative talks at major wetlands near Rutherglen, Albury Wodonga and Wangaratta during February.

The free activities are being organised to celebrate World Wetlands Day.

“Given the significance of wetlands in our region, we’re extending the celebration beyond the official day of 2 February,” said Sarah Daniell from the North East CMA.

“People who join these free activities can enjoy the cool, magical surrounds and learn how wetlands support plants and animals, particularly waterbirds that depend on them for food, shelter and breeding.”

North East Victoria has almost 2,000 wetlands - 90 per cent of these on private land.

The key community activities being jointly organised by the North East CMA, Parks Victoria, Albury City, Wonga Wetlands, Rural City of Wangaratta, Wangaratta Urban Landcare Group, Riparian Management Services, Murray Wetlands Working Group and the Murray CMA for 2009 World Wetlands Day are:

Event	Lake Moodemere, Black Swamp and Dockers Plains Wetland Tour	Wonga Wetlands Frog Explorer	Kaluna Park Walk and Talk
Date	Sat, 7 February	Thurs, 5 February	Mon, 2 February
Time	8.30am – 1pm	5.30pm-7.30pm	5:00pm – 7:00pm
Venue	Lake Moodemere Lake Reserve, Murray Valley Highway, Rutherglen	Wonga Wetlands, Riverina Highway, Albury	Merriwa Park, Ryley Street, Wangaratta
Detail	Join an informative wetland bus tour of many environmental projects undertaken to protect plains river red gum and grassy wetlands around Black Swamp	Explore the frogs at Wonga Wetlands during an evening information session, frog walk and free nibbles afterwards	Join the Wangaratta Urban Landcare Group for a walk and talk and free BBQ. Stay cool under the shady river red gums !

For further information about World Wetlands Day or to request file images of wetlands please contact:

- Sarah Daniell, North East CMA – Tel: **(02) 6043 7627** or **0428 256 247**
- Mary-Anne Scully, CMA Media & Communications – Tel: **0408 685 225**

Additional background re wetlands on following page.....

Wetlands – a snapshot

- Wetlands are areas that have acquired special characteristics through being wet on a regular or semi-regular basis. The term 'wetlands' includes swamps, billabongs, lakes and saltmarshes, bogs, soaks, mudflats and mangroves.
- Eight wetlands in North East Victoria are listed in the "*Directory of Important Wetlands in Australia*" - Black Swamp, Ryans Lagoon, Davies Plain, Mount Buffalo Peatlands, Lake Hume, Lake Dartmouth and the Ovens and Mitta Mitta rivers.
- The North East region provides a home to 1,952 wetlands that cover almost 40,000 hectares; including shallow freshwater marshes, freshwater meadows, deep freshwater marshes and Victoria's largest collection of mossbeds in the alpine and subalpine areas.
- World Wetlands Day marks the date of the signing of the Convention on Wetlands 2 February 1971, in the Iranian city of Ramsar. The theme for 2009 is "Upstream Downstream: Wetlands connect us all."