

# MEDIA RELEASE



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"Working together – healthy landscapes, viable communities"

## Exotic pest rich prize for anglers: Carp Buster 2009

Anglers from across the Queensland Murray-Darling Basin will be in Thallon this weekend for the first of the Carp Buster Series 2009, all hoping for their share of \$3000 in prize money.

Carp Buster Coordinator Nikki Pilcher said the second annual Carp Busters was part of the Queensland Murray-Darling Committee's (QMDC) commitment to raise awareness of exotic fish in regional waterways.

"In 2009, the fishing clubs in Thallon, Surat, Goondiwindi, Mungindi, St George and Dirranbandi are offering a prize pool of \$3000 with points awarded for the number of carp caught as well as the number of events entered," Ms Pilcher said.

"Last year, anglers caught more than 800 carp during the six-event series. While this does not significantly impact on carp numbers, it's a great way to raise awareness of a host of issues impacting on our river systems and native species."

Ms Pilcher said QMDC would have a display at every event in the series to highlight noxious fish and water weeds to encourage anglers to report sightings.

"If new infestations are reported early, we can prevent these noxious species from establishing larger populations," she said.

"The Carp Buster series is one of the biggest community awareness-raising programs in the area, encouraging a coordinated and integrated approach to river restoration which will encourage the return of native fish species."

Ms Pilcher said while the carp could not be considered good eating, the species was originally introduced in the 1800s as a "sport fish" and provided a challenge for anglers.

"Sadly, because they can survive in a wider range of conditions and water temperatures, they also pose a major challenge to our native fish which simply cannot compete," she said.

"Added to this, carp feed by 'roiling' which means they suck in and spit out mud which not only uproots water plants but also increases the muddiness of the water, cutting light and hampering plant growth and the available oxygen.

"While this doesn't worry the carp, it certainly isn't the ideal environment for many native fish."

The dates for the 2009 six-event series are:

- Thallon Carp Buster – March 21-22
- Surat Carp Buster – April 11-12
- Goondiwindi Carp Buster – April 25-26
- Mungindi Carp Buster – August 22-23
- St George Carp Buster – September 26-27
- Dirranbandi Carp Buster – October 17-18.

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