

MEDIA RELEASE

October 13, 2009



Carp Busting champion named at Dirranbandi

Flagstone Creek's Luke Atkinson is the 2009 Carp Buster champion after hauling in 112 of the pest fish during the six-event fishing series.

Queensland Murray-Darling Committee (QMDC) Weeds and Pest Animal Technical Officer Lavinnia Fiedler said about 1200 carp were removed from waterways during the series.

"This is a great result; in 2008 more than 800 carp were caught and with almost 1400 anglers signing up this year, that number has increased substantially," Ms Fiedler said.

The 2009 series was supported by QMDC and the six fishing clubs involved – Thallon, Surat, Goondiwindi, Mungindi, St George and Dirranbandi – offered a prize pool of \$3000 with points awarded for the number of carp caught as well as the number of events entered.

Ms Fiedler said the strong participation underscored both the strong interest in recreational fishing as a family activity and also the wider community's commitment to improving waterway health.

"For QMDC, the Carp Buster events allows us to highlight a range of issues and activities that can impact negatively on our river and creek systems and that includes not just pest fish but also weeds, erosion, salinity, riparian clearing and de-snagging," she said.

"It's really exciting to see such an active sector of our Queensland Murray-Darling Basin community so keen to learn about how they can help, whether it's reporting new weed infestations or raising awareness about the impact of introduced species and other activities on our native fish numbers."

Ms Fiedler said the Carp Buster series was one of the biggest community awareness-raising programs in the region.

"As a natural resource management organisation we encourage a coordinated and integrated approach to river restoration, which will encourage the return of native fish species, by working with a wide range of stakeholders from anglers to landholders to school children to Traditional Owners," she said.

2009 Carp Buster Fishing Series Coordinator Nikki Pilcher said more than 230 anglers caught almost 180 carp at Dirranbandi, the final in the 2009 series, on October 10 and 11.

"Luke Atkinson won the overall series with an accumulated 2540 points, followed by Bruce Wilson (St George), Chris Lindsay (Dalby), Bruce Johnson (Thallon), Rodney Smart (Thallon) and Iris Troutman (St George) and in all, there were 12 anglers who attended every competition in the series," Ms Pilcher said.

The Queensland Murray-Darling Committee is a natural resource management organisation that supports communities within the Queensland Murray-Darling Basin to sustainably manage their natural resources. Visit www.qmdc.org.au for more information.

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Photographs are available upon request.