[GROUP NAME] HELPS TO PUT AUSTRALIA’S WATERWAYS UNDER THE MAGNIFYING GLASS

A snapshot of Australian river health will soon be revealed thanks to citizen scientists across the country participating in the National Waterbug Blitz. The project empowers the community to become ‘citizen scientists’ for a day and explore their local freshwater creeks, rivers and wetlands to learn about the fascinating world of waterbugs.

[INSERT YOUR PARAGRAPH HERE: *What event is your group hosting? How are you getting involved with the blitz? Example - "The Smithtown Riverwatch Friends Society (SRFS) is excited to be participating in the Waterbug Blitz and will be hosting an information lunch and planning session for all those in the community who wish to get involved."*]

Lead scientist and freshwater ecologist, John Gooderham said the Waterbug Blitz aims to assess the status of waterways nationwide by surveying aquatic macroinvertebrates - known as waterbugs – that inhabit rivers, creeks and lakes.

“These ecosystems are intrinsically connected to the lives of all Australians and play an important and often underestimated role in our environment and economy. Waterbugs are good biological indicators of the state of freshwater systems. Some species such as stoneflies and mayflies are highly sensitive to pollution while beetles and bloodworms are more tolerant. The greater number and variety of the more sensitive bugs, the healthier the system is" said Mr. Gooderham.

[INSERT YOUR PARAGRAPH HERE: *How can people get involved with your event? E.g. "The SRFS Waterbug Blitz information and planning lunch will be held at the Smithtown community centre, this Saturday September 15th from 11am. Please bring a plate to share or a gold coin donation for the barbeque."*]

Mr. Gooderham added “The sessions are ‘hands on’ involving everyone to collect the bugs and use the latest technology to identify and record the sample using the Waterbug App. It’s free to download and fun to use. The data is then uploaded and every survey site is mapped to relfect local water quality, as indicated by the bugs collected in the survey. The maps are publicly available on the website [www.waterbugblitz.org.au](http://www.waterbugblitz.org.au)’

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