

WORLD WATER MONITORING DAY - 18 SEPTEMBER

World Water Monitoring Day is an international education and outreach program aimed at building public awareness and involvement in protecting water resources around the world by encouraging citizens to conduct basic monitoring of their local rivers, lakes, estuaries and other bodies of water. Volunteer monitoring groups, water quality agencies, students, and the general public test four key indicators of water quality: temperature, pH, dissolved oxygen, and turbidity. People are encouraged to choose any borehole, river, stream, dam, or other water body to monitor the water quality. One can monitor the drinking water quality from household or community taps or rivers and streams for effects on fish and other aquatic life.

Many readers of the ***Meander Chronicle*** live in the uMngeni river catchment. The source of this river is not from the mountains of the Drakensberg, as many of KwaZulu-Natal rivers are, but from a vlei situated in the foothills between Kamberg and Loteni. It has a number of major tributaries being the Msunduze, Lions, Karkloof and Impolweni Rivers and is dammed four times by the Midmar, Albert Falls, Nagle and Inanda Dams before reaching the sea in Durban. The uMngeni catchment is a region of widely varying land uses from conservation to intense urban and industrial development and supports an ever increasing population.

Do we know the ecological health of the rivers within this catchment? Do we take the good health of the catchment for granted and leave these worries up to the powers that be? It is the responsibility of all of us, young and old, to ensure the good health of the rivers within the catchment.

How do we do this? We can be the eyes, ears and noses by keeping tabs on what is happening in and near our rivers, streams and wetlands.

Obtain water testing kits, (mini SASS – South African Scouring System), the SW AP Starter Kit and various educational resources regarding water quality monitoring from the WESSA's Share Net office in Howick. Call 033 330 3931 ext 124 and speak to Hazel.

You can also go online and measure your water footprint. And you can join a group such as DUCT (Duzi-Umgeni Conservation Trust) by calling Pam Haynes on 033 330 5693 or 083 456 9202 and join their river clean up day on the 18th September.

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