Waterwatch

2019 Water Quality Site Summary

Site Name and Description

ME_YMR112, Merri Creek, upstream of St Georges Rd Bridge, Fitzroy North
Monitors: Trevor Hausler and the Friends of Merri Creek Stream Team.

To look at further water quality data for this site go to the Waterwatch online database using the site code ME_YMR112.

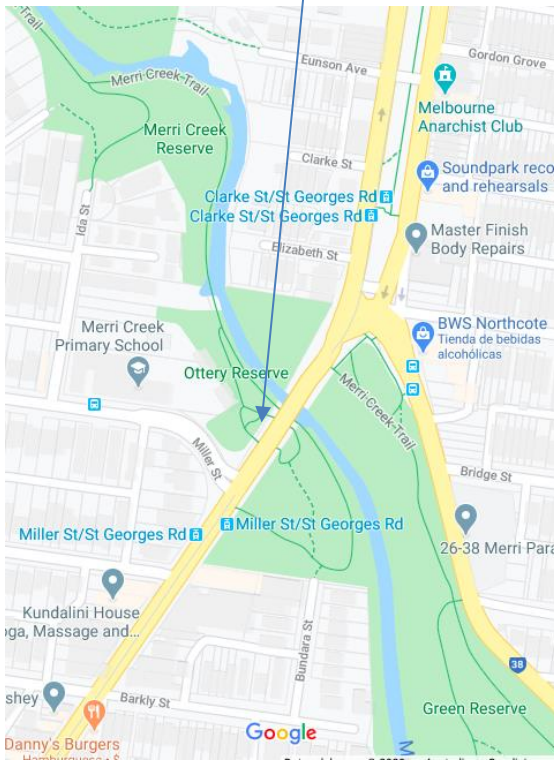
Objectives

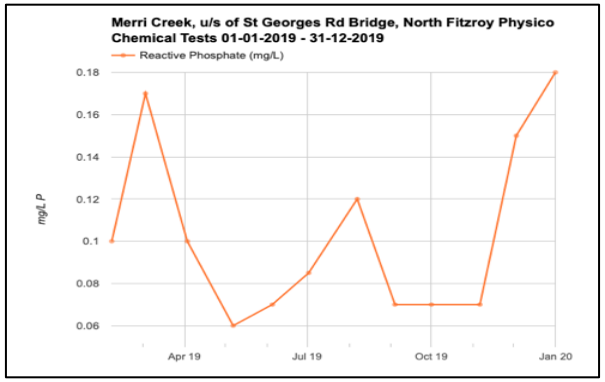
- Track the health of the creek over time
- Identify potential pollution source point(s)

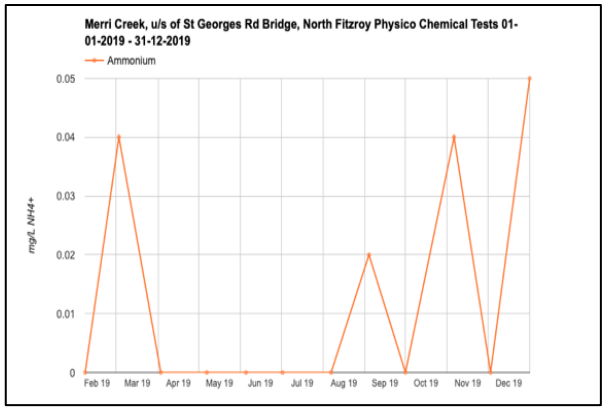
Monthly Parameters

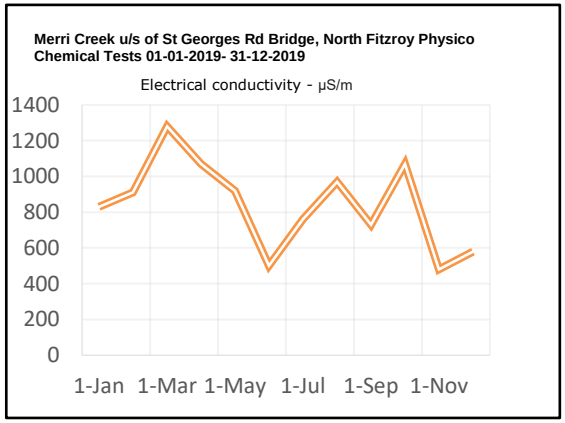
- Temperature
- Dissolved Oxygen
- pH
- Electroconductivity
- Turbidity
- Reactive Phosphate
- Ammonium
- Aquatic Macroinvertebrates

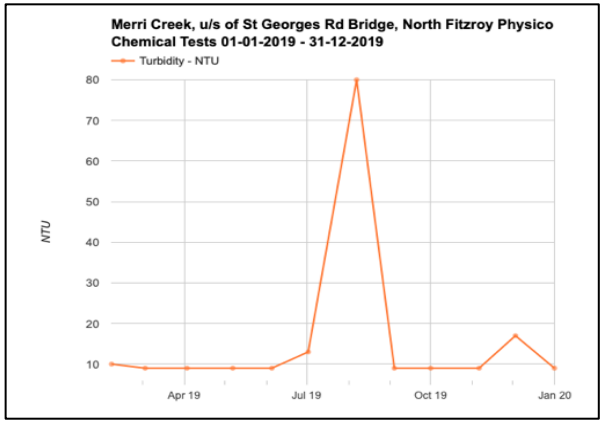
The Merri Creek runs from north of Wallan to the Yarra river at Dights Falls. In the urban areas, it is highly degraded and the upper reaches are threatened by urban growth. This sampling site is in the inner northern suburbs and has been continously monitored for close to 17 years.











Compared to previous years, 2019 was generally dry in Melbourne and this was reflected in the relatively low turbidity recorded throughout the year. The creek did not display the same light brown colouration, caused by the sodic soils around Kalkalo, that had been frequently seen in 2018. The one high turbidity event was recorded on the 7th of July but it did not correspond with a heavy rainfall event. The nearest significant rain was on the 30th of June and it is dubious that this was the cause of the high turbidity a week later.

Phosphate levels were generally high but they were in line with what has been seen over previous years. Ammonium was detected on a number of occasions indicating possible sewage pollution or other biological waste in the creek. The other parameters were all within normal levels. The percentage saturation of Dissolved Oxygen only dropped below 80% in February and March which is normal after dry periods.

The SIGNAL scores for aquatic macroinvertebrates (waterbugs) ranged between 3.4 and 3.6 which is low diversity and indicates poor instream habitat and pollution. Waterbugs are a major food source of many native fish, frogs, platypus and Rakali so with low waterbugs there is less likelihood of those species inhabiting this section of the creek.