

Still swamped by rising tide of pollution

By MICK ROBERTS

MORE than 60 tonnes of rubbish has been collected from the Georges River catchment between Bankstown and Liverpool during 2012 and 2013.

Though litter and dumping continue to be a problem in urban areas, the Georges River Combined Councils' Committee (GRCCC) says its Riverkeeper teams are meeting the challenge by continuing to remove large volumes of rubbish.

The Riverkeeper Program Report Card 2012-13, released last Wednesday, reveals cleanup and bush regeneration results of the program for the year.

For the second straight year, the GRCCC Riverkeeper Program has rid the river's foreshores, parklands and tributaries of in excess of 100 tonnes of rubbish and logged 28,332 hours at 130 sites across nine local government areas between July 2012 and June 2013.

Bush regeneration teams have also worked to improve bushland across over 18,406m² of foreshore bushland.

From the upper tributaries of Liverpool's Cabramatta Creek to Bankstown's Saltpan Creek, 60 tonnes of rubbish was collected during the 12 month period. Over the period, more than 11 tonnes of rubbish was collected from 11 sites along the upper reaches of Saltpan Creek. Another one and a half tonne of waste was collected over 22 days over the same period from the lower reaches of Salt-



Volunteer James Brooker, 19, collects data on the ecosystem health in the Georges River catchment.

Sample life as volunteer to monitor river health

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VOLUNTEERS are sought to take part in the Community River Health Monitoring Program to monitor ecosystem health in the Georges River catchment.

Community volunteers will assist with field sampling in streams and foreshore sites of the Georges and the Cooks rivers.

Community volunteers will work alongside ecologists and receive free training in macroinvertebrate (waterbug) monitoring.

Volunteer James Brooker, 19, said he had his first experience with river health during a Year 11 geography assessment.

"We were asked to investigate a local area and my uncle invited me to come out to a sampling at Little Salt Pan Creek," James said. "Through high school, I've always liked geology and geography. With my engineering degree, it really makes a difference understanding how ecosystems work and how they coexist with developments." The next round of sampling will be at Mill Creek, Menai on Sunday, October 27, from 9am to 1pm and Little Salt Pan Creek, Padstow, on Saturday, November 2, from 9am to 1pm. Bookings are essential on 9330 6010.

Elders help restore bush

DEGRADED bushland at Padstow will be improved and regenerated under funding received by the Georges River Combined Councils' Committee (GRCCC).

The 'Building Indigenous Knowledge and Skills to Restore Urban Waterways' project will be supported by a \$1.78 million grant over

three years.

Bankstown City councillor and GRCCC chairperson Naji Peter Najjar said working with elders within the river catchment had been the key to the success of the project. Works will be performed by an Aboriginal bush regeneration team and is expected to commence in March 2014.