



**February 2 2017**

## **Understanding Snowy Fish**

Fishers have a reputation for being a little secretive about their favourite fishing haunts but there was no doubt that the Marlo Angling Club was the place to be on Monday night.

Fishers and community members alike attended a presentation by Dan Stoessel, from the Arthur Rylah Institute, who has studied the natural breeding cycles of Australian Bass and Estuary Perch in the Snowy River over the past three years.

The study, commissioned by the East Gippsland Catchment Management Authority, sought to understand the effects that environmental flows have on the ecological condition of the river and determine whether these flows can be used to benefit the breeding cycles of both Bass and Perch.

The audience was pleased to hear that currently there are healthy fish populations with a good source of food and the ability to survive comfortably from juveniles to adulthood.

Sea grass beds, nutrient levels and overall estuarine health were discussed with research suggesting that environmental factors, including water temperatures and the timing of flows, were most likely to trigger spawning events. Environmental flows on their own are not sufficient to determine breeding success.

Mr Stoessel has called on the local community to become citizen scientists to assist in further research of fish stock health. "I'd be really interested to get recollections of breeding events, particularly in regards to Australian Bass and Estuary Perch. When are you seeing these little fish in the system? Are you seeing them every 10 years or more frequently than that? There's a lot of knowledge out there and I'd be keen to draw that out."

"The amount that we don't know about them is far greater than what we do, so there's still a lot of work to be done."

For further information please contact:

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(L-R) Marlo Angling Club Chairman, David Ballinger, Dan Stoessel from the the Arthur Rylah Institute, club Vice Chairman Frank Van Ekeren and Robert Caune, club member, at the Snowy Bass Information Evening.



(L-R) Robert Caune, Marlo Angling Club member, Dan Stoessel from the the Arthur Rylah Institute, Marlo Angling Club Chairman, David Ballinger and Vice Chairman Frank Van Ekeren at the Snowy Bass Information Evening.

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