

# Taupo for Tomorrow newsletter



June 2007

Volume 1 Issue 2

## *Special points of interest:*

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## Why teach about trout?

It's obvious that trout are a major component of the *Taupo for Tomorrow* education programme as indicated by the programme's location at the Tongariro National Trout Centre. So why should an education programme pay so much attention to this introduced species?

The answer lies in the fact that trout are an excellent teaching tool for conveying important environmental messages related to the protection and conservation of freshwater environments. The first part to any learning experience is the necessity to get students interested. At the trout centre this is no problem, as student imagination is easily captured upon their arrival. The underwater viewing chamber, network of tanks in the hatchery and children's fishing pond are all areas where trout and their behaviour and habitat are easily viewed and studied. Also, within the trout centre flows the iconic Tongariro River and the crystal-clear, spring-fed Waihukahuka stream, both providing close-up encounters of the freshwater environment and the organisms that reside there.

Once student interest is sparked, it is then easy to deliver important lessons about freshwater. For example, one basic but fundamental lesson relates to the need to conserve freshwater environments in a cool, clear and clean state. Freshwater environments like this ensures the survival of healthy trout populations, as well as abundant and diverse macro-invertebrate and native fish populations whose livelihoods are delicately intertwined with that of the trout.

Learning about trout also



Trout are a great teaching tool.

offers much more comprehensive and complex lessons such as the comparison between historical trout advocacy efforts to protect the Tongariro River during the development of the Tongariro Power Scheme versus the working relationship that now exists between the Department of Conservation Taupo Fishery team and Genesis Energy (present-day owners and operators of the power scheme). Case studies like these are important lessons for young people today as there is no doubt that controversial debates and decisions regarding natural resource use amongst competing users will continue into the foreseeable future.

# Still no Didymo

By Nina Manning – Department of Conservation

After a busy summer of 2007, didymo still has not been detected in the North Island.

Didymo (*Didymosphenia geminata*), also known as ‘rock snot’, is a fresh water invasive alga native to northern Europe. New Zealand’s waterways are highly susceptible as didymo’s preferred habitat is that of moderate flowing, clear, cool rivers. When in bloom, didymo attaches itself to the stream bed by its multiple stalks, producing a dense brown, carpet like layer that smothers rocks, submerged plants and other material crucial to native invertebrate, fish and birds.

Didymo was first discovered in New Zealand in October 2004 and has now spread to multiple rivers and lakes across the South Island. On October 1, 2006 the Didymo Action Group, made up of a collaboration of representatives from Fish & Game, DOC, Genesis Energy, Tuwharetoa Maori Trust Board and the NZ Recreational Canoeing Association, was formed. Since then a ‘Stop Didymo’ public awareness and education campaign has gone ahead with vigour to spread the anti- didymo message by intercepting high risk parties travelling between waterways, and more specifically, those travelling to the North Island from the South Island.

The reality is if didymo gets into the central North Island the likely economic, environmental, cultural and social impacts will be large. The key is to prevent its spread to the North Island in the first place which means taking action now.

We all know about the threat but how many of us are actually cleaning our gear? The message is simple - Check, Clean, Dry all your equipment that comes into contact with fresh water. It’s not difficult and doesn’t take long but it needs to become routine as it only takes one microscopic cell to ‘hitchhike’ its way to infecting another waterway.

What to do if you suspect you have found didymo:

- Take a photo.
- Take a grid reference of the location (or map reference).
- Decontaminate all equipment that may have had contact with this freshwater.
- Phone the Biosecurity NZ hotline: 0800 80 99 66.

**To find out more information about didymo, visit: [www.biosecurity.govt.nz/didymo](http://www.biosecurity.govt.nz/didymo)**

Alternatively, for more information or if you would be interested in distributing didymo brochures to clubs, organisations or educational institutions, please contact me by email or phone: [nmanning@doc.govt.nz](mailto:nmanning@doc.govt.nz) or 07 386 9269

**Make sure you do your bit to spread this message!**



**CHECK**

**CLEAN**

**DRY**

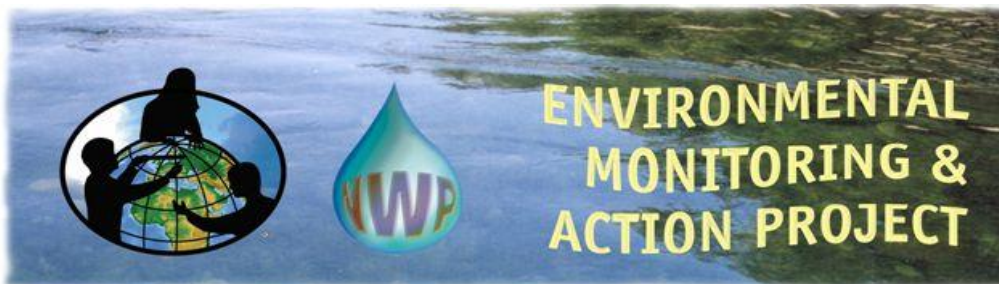
# On-line learning



Taupo for Tomorrow has joined up with LEARNZ programme to provide a virtual learning experience to the Taupo Fishery. The field trip is scheduled to take place on the 8-10 August. During this time, students will meet the professionals from the Department of Conservation Taupo Fishery team who work to manage and sustain this world famous, wild trout fishery. Students will be taken into the field where rangers and scientists—

- Monitor the trout population and freshwater habitat.
- Investigate the trout life cycle to better manage this self-sustaining fishery.
- And of course - take time out for a bit of fly fishing fun!

Visit [www.learnz.org.nz](http://www.learnz.org.nz) for more information.



EMAP, as the combined delivery of the National Waterways Project and GLOBE, provides an overview of environmental monitoring activities throughout New Zealand and endeavours to bring schools, local authorities, research institutions and others together to allow students to carry out monitoring of their local region in an environmental education context. The project is funded through the Ministry of Education LEOTC (Learning Experiences Outside the Classroom) fund.

Students will:

- \* Learn by gathering and interpreting their own data
- \* Obtain other data and make comparisons
- \* Achieve learning outcomes
- \* Involve their caregivers and family groups in environmental monitoring
- \* Be encouraged to take responsibility for the environment

We want young people to learn about and respect the natural environment. EMAP can provide a set of tools with which students can identify sound management processes. Through our regional co-ordinators we will encourage the development of strong links between schools, community groups and tangata whenua in the hope that our young people can see that New Zealanders can work together for a sustainable future for our environment. [www.emap.rsnz.org](http://www.emap.rsnz.org)

## Waipahihi wins with EMAP

In March, EMAP hosted March Monitoring Month whereby schools were encouraged to enter a competition by submitting data they collected during water quality testing activities.

Room 12 from Waipahihi Primary in Taupo (pictured below) submitted data collected from the Waihukahuka stream during their *Taupo for Tomorrow* programme. Their entry won GLOBE atmospheric monitoring equipment.

