



## Sunday 17 October at 4 pm: Explore Your Backyard - Online Launch

What will happen when **Costa the Garden Gnome** and Coliban Water’s Managing Director **Damian Wells** sit down for a Sunday afternoon chat? They will discuss gardening and water use, of course! Plus, they will be launching our fantastic online festival for National Water Week, 18 -24 October 2021.

While it’s an informal chat, you can expect to hear from them about:

- How the popularity of gardening and exploring our local neighbourhood has surged during Victorian lockdowns.
- How climate change, population growth and water availability is an important part of garden planning.
- How to future-proof our gardens.
- How our gardens can contribute to waterway health.

So, grab a cuppa and [join the LIVE conversation](#), where we will celebrate the amazing ways Victorians save water, and you might even be inspired to Explore Your Backyard!

**Costa the Garden Gnome** started out as a concrete garden ornament, ‘living’ in dirtgirl’s veggie garden. That was before the ‘costavator’ and before the ‘transformation’. He knows everything about nature and gardening.

**Damian Wells** is Managing Director at Coliban Water. He has worked at Goulburn-Murray Water, North Central Catchment Management Authority and the Environment Protection Authority Victoria.

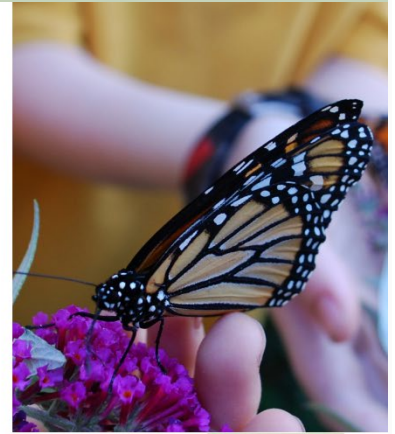


**Wednesday**  
**20 October**  
**12.30 pm**

## **Bee & Butterfly Encounter**

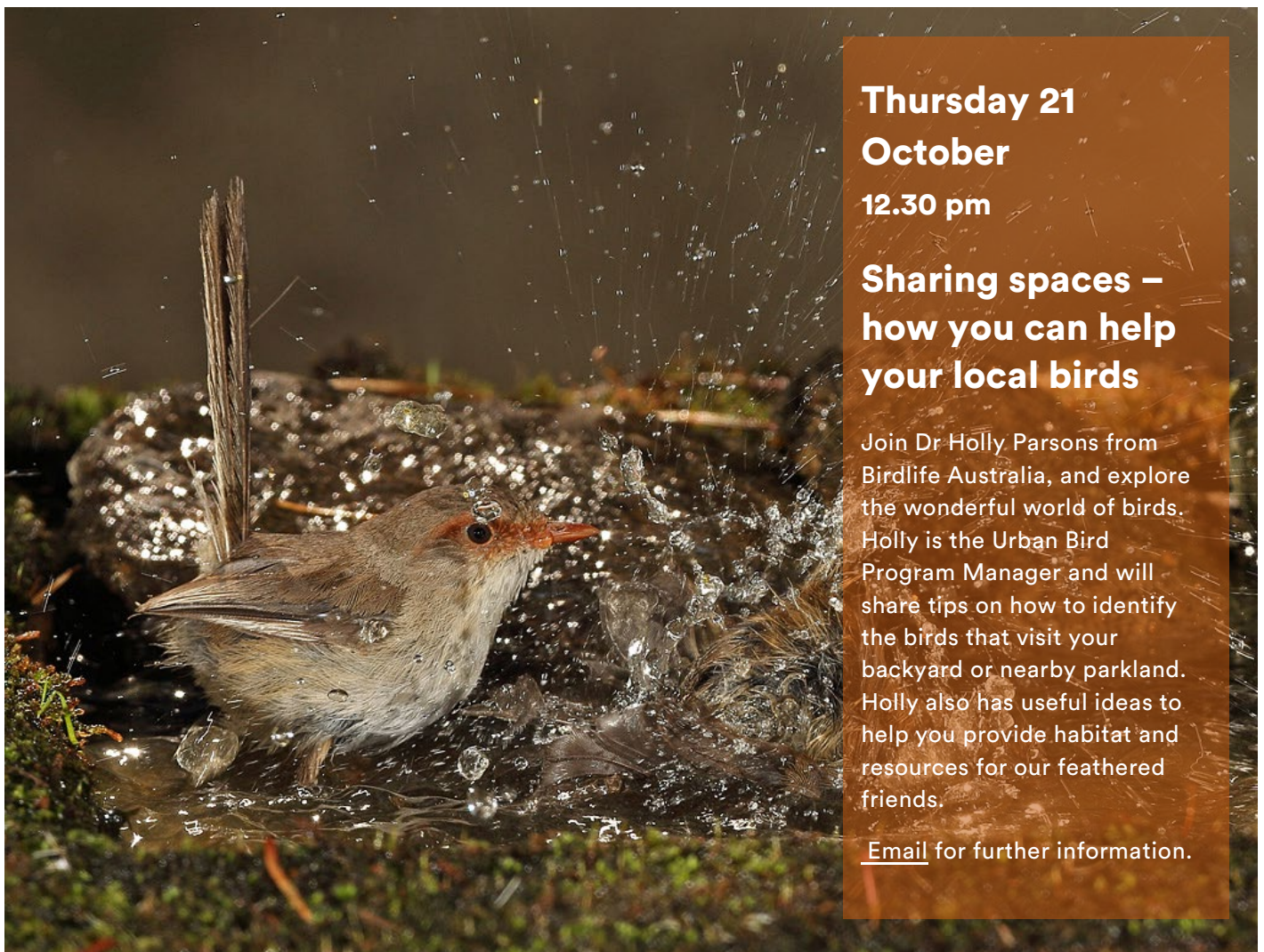


## **EXPLORE YOUR BACKYARD Bee & Butterfly Encounter**



Join Sam from [Labcoat Learning](#) for an up-close look at bees and butterflies!  
Learn why bees and butterflies are great for our gardens. Plus, find out about the importance of water for invertebrates and how you can help.

View on [Facebook](#) or [YouTube](#).



**Thursday 21  
October**  
**12.30 pm**

## **Sharing spaces – how you can help your local birds**

Join Dr Holly Parsons from Birdlife Australia, and explore the wonderful world of birds. Holly is the Urban Bird Program Manager and will share tips on how to identify the birds that visit your backyard or nearby parkland. Holly also has useful ideas to help you provide habitat and resources for our feathered friends.

[Email](#) for further information.

Superb Fairy-wren © Ian Wilson 2014 [birdlifephotography.org.au](#)

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Email: [communications@westernportwater.com.au](mailto:communications@westernportwater.com.au) for further information.

## On demand videos and resources sorted by theme:

*Suggested audience in italics. We recommend teachers preview resources to ensure they are suitable for their group. Ensure children are adequately supervised when participating in these activities.*

### Traditional Owners – connection to land and water

**Rodney Carter and Rueben Berg on Cultural Values in Waterways** Filmed at VicWater's 2021 conference, Rodney Carter and Rueben Berg speak about First Nation's cultural values in waterways. Rodney is a descendant of Dja Dja Wurrung and Yorta Yorta people and Ruben is a proud Gunditjmara man from Melbourne. They offer suggestions that not only work to preserve our waterways but provide a broader perspective on how we can all keep working towards reconciliation. *Secondary & adult*

**Creation of a Scar Tree:** Join Wadawurrung Traditional Owners and Central Highland Water staff to see how a modern scar tree is created. (3 min video, on demand) *Secondary & adult*

### Backyard water experiments

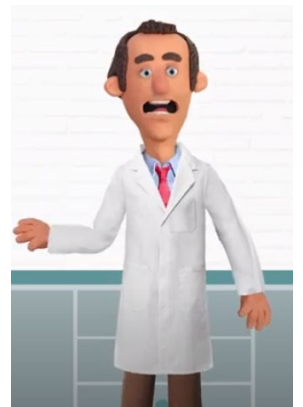
School and pre-school aged children will love these animated experiment videos with Wally the Water Scientist. Created by Goulburn Valley Water, each experiment is supported with a worksheet. *Primary & kindergarten with adult support.*

**Wally & The Water Cycle:** learn about the water cycle and how to make your own in a bag. [worksheet](#)

**Wally & Rain Gauges:** learn what a rain gauge is and how to make your own. [worksheet](#)

**Wally & Walking Water:** learn how water moves and discover primary/secondary colours. [worksheet](#)

**Wally & The State of Water:** did you know that water behaves differently when its temperature changes? [worksheet](#)



### Waterwise Gardening

**Mulching your garden** can save up to 70% of water from evaporating. Find out about different mulches and help your garden thrive in this 4-minute video from North East Water. *Primary, secondary, adults*

**Outdoor water use** accounts for 25-50% of the average home's water consumption. Gardens are an area where huge amounts of water are wasted. Visit Smart Approved WaterMark's website to read about ways you can save water. *Secondary & adult*

### Nature study & nature play

**Nature study & nature play activity matrix:** Build greater awareness, appreciation and understanding of the natural world! The matrix combines Bloom's Taxonomy and Multiple Intelligences to provide students with tasks that are accessible and appealing. *Primary & kindergarten with adult support.*

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## Backyard mini projects

**The ins and outs of a bug hotel:** Explore the benefits of insects in helping to pollinate plants, and learn how to make a bug hotel to encourage more insects into your garden. Barwon Water shows you how. *Primary with adult help, all ages.*

**How to plant native grasses and shrubs:** Learn how to select and plant native and indigenous plants in your garden to improve the biodiversity of insects and native fauna that visit your patch. *Primary.*

**Upcycle a jar into a rain gauge:** A perfect rainy-day activity from East Gippsland Water. Make a rain gauge from a jar and measure how much rain you collect.

**Providing Water for Wildlife:** Healesville Sanctuary Vet Kath will show you the best way to leave water out for local wildlife during the summer months. More tips on [helping wildlife in summer](#). *Primary, all ages.*

**Water Wise Chatterbox:** Download and print this origami chatterbox to help teach children about the importance of using water wisely! *Primary*



## Caring for local waterways

**Going Green when we Clean:** Discover some simple recipes for cleaning products to use around the home. Many store-bought cleaners contain harsh chemicals, you'll also discover some of the impacts that these chemicals can have on the environment. [Recipes available](#). *All ages, children with adult help.*

**Willow control in our waterways:** Find out the benefits in removing willows from our waterways. *Secondary and adult.*

**How does Revegetating near Waterways Improve Water Quality?** Learn about how planting indigenous plants around waterways and on cleared farmland improves raw water quality. Find out more in this short video made by Westernport Water, with special guests Bass Coast Landcare Network. *Senior Primary School, Secondary and adult.*

## Storytime & Mindfulness

Take your device outside for a story or mindfulness activity (then see what outside play happens next!)

**The Rhythm of the Rain by Grahame Baker Smith:** A beautifully illustrated story that ventures from home to another country and back again, describing the water cycle. More [water cycle activities](#) are available. *Primary.*

**Water Cycle yoga:** Join yoga teacher, Victoria, on a journey through the water cycle. Made in Bendigo, this calming video helps tactile learners process and retain information about the water cycle. *Primary*

## Where does our tap water come from?

**Email Coliban Water** for an activity book! The book is jam-packed with puzzles, games, a Water Hero pledge and more. *Primary.*



Alternatively, find out where your tap water comes from [here](#). *Primary to Adult*

**HAVE YOUR SAY on the future of water prices and services and help earn funds for your chosen local charity/group!** Take Westernport Water's [surveys for the upcoming price review process](#). *Adult.*

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