

## EstuaryWatch Report

October 2019

Bruce Ferres

EstuaryWatch activities now take place on the third Sunday of each month so Bruce Ferres and Colin Wilkinson completed observations and readings on Sunday 20 October.

The estuary waters at the mouth were perched well above the bay. There had been very little physical change to the sandy berm's size, location appearance since the previous month. Despite lower rainfall the estuary remained quite full with water levels only just below the rotunda jetty. Wash over by waves at high tide made regular contributions to the water pooling in the estuary but at no stage threatened to break through the berm barrier and create an all-tide clean entrance. So the effect is the same as that experienced by the famous Icebergs pool in Bondi where waves break over the rocks and fill the sea pool at high tide but there the similarities end!



Estuary Mouth Sunday 20 October

The reported problems with our meter's dissolved oxygen readings are yet to be resolved. The probe's membrane was replaced, yet again, before EstuaryWatch activities on Sunday, but the much higher than expected readings persist. My emails to the Melbourne Water EstuaryWatch Coordinator have brought no response. I have now arranged with Sue Milton (WaterWatch) to meet and cross check readings together on Wednesday 30 October. WaterWatch uses a chemical based colour test for dissolved oxygen so it will be interesting to compare results side by side.

The results at all tests sites in September were the poorest in terms of water clarity that we have seen for some time and outside of the acceptable standards for estuarine waters. This month test results were still poor at the rotunda jetty but back to within an acceptable range elsewhere. It seems as though a really strong entrance breakthrough will be required to clear the murky waters.

Thanks to Bev Fryer for bring my attention to an article about the seagrass nursery established by Dr Emma Jackson of the Central Queensland University. She is researching the possibility of re-vegetating seagrass beds using seeds or transplanting plants.



Dr Emma Jackson inspects seagrass plants being grown by CQ University



As Bev notes, wouldn't it be wonderful if we could stabilise the sedimentation situation and then re-establish the seagrass meadows that once underpinned the diverse ecology of our estuary?

Our thanks to Helen and George for their on-going assistance with EstuaryWatch.