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SA's SCHOOL CHILDREN GET TO KNOW AQUATIC CRITTERS

The critters inhabiting South Australia's wetlands, rivers and creeks are the subject of a new State Government publication released today.

Minister for Environment and Conservation John Hill will launch the State Government's *Critter Catalogue* with students from Blackwood High School and Seymour College at the Warriparinga Wetlands at Marion today.

"There are lots of resources for scientists but this catalogue is the first detailed guide aimed at the community about South Australia's aquatic invertebrates. It was developed for anyone with an interest in the inland waters of this state," the Minister said.

"The *Critter Catalogue* was developed by the Environment Protection Authority over the past three years and is a guide to this state's aquatic invertebrates which include different types of insects, crustaceans, molluscs and dozens of other less familiar creatures.

Aquatic invertebrates are an important part of the food chain in our waterways. These tiny aquatic creatures can be affected by changes in water quality and their presence and diversity tells us if an ecosystem is in good health or if it has been adversely affected by pollution.

"The *Critter Catalogue* is being distributed to all SA secondary schools, the Waterwatch network, SA public libraries, Catchment Water Management Boards, community water monitoring groups and other interested parties.

"A lot of schools, tertiary students and community groups spend time studying the inland waters of South Australia, now we have a resource which will tell them about the important role of critters in our aquatic ecosystems.

"I hope this guide will encourage the community to continue its expanding interest in the health of our waterways and to be aware of the water pollution problems which can be caused by human activities.

The *Critter Catalogue* can also be downloaded from the EPA website www.epa.sa.gov.au or the Waterwatch South Australia website www.sa.waterwatch.org.au.