

## Champion of Fish Habitat - Michael 'Harry' Davey



**Name:** Harry Davey

**From:** Tenterfield, NSW.

**Job:** Supermarket Manager.

**Loves:** Freshwater Fishing.

Michael or 'Harry' as his mates call him, grew up fishing for bream whiting and flathead around Lake Macquarie with his Dad. After moving to Tenterfield with his family for a 'tree change,' he fell in love with the region's freshwater fishing.

*"Not many people know this, but we have the best of both worlds in Tenterfield. Perched at the top of the Great Dividing Range we have Murray cod and yellow belly fishing to the west and bass fishing to the east."*

Coming from the saltwater scene Harry noticed how fragile the freshwater environment was.

*"In the ocean fish habitat is more expansive. Freshwater fish habitat is much more subject to influences such as farming practices. The clearing of river banks to create productive farmland has robbed our native fish of habitat."*

Harry's passion for fishing prompted him to act. His first step was to undertake a Fish Care course that would later prove to be a valuable stepping stone in building his knowledge base of fish habitat; most importantly what fish need to thrive and survive.

Another key moment for Harry in understanding the need for helping protect and restore fish habitat was the OzFish Inland Summit held last year at Lake Burrendong in central west NSW.

*“After the Summit I was keen to start an OzFish Chapter. We now have 8 very dedicated members in the OzFish Tenterfield Chapter who love volunteering their time to improve our local fish habitat.”*

The group’s first project was a riparian (river bank) planting on a private property along the Mole River where the previous owner had stripped the river bank clear of vegetation. Riparian plantings buffer the river against a variety of unfavourable things and provide much needed shelter for fish. OzFish provided the funds and the local nursery supplied 120 native trees; river redgums, bottle brush and wattles.



*“It only took about 3 hours to plant the trees and to think the legacy we have left there could last for generations. Also, the land owner was absolutely stoked with the outcome.”*

His next project was a simple clean-up of rubbish at a property with a planting planned for the spring. Harry also has his eye on a couple of causeways he would want to remediate to allow fish to migrate.

*“We would also like to put some ‘snags’ back into the river for fish shelter. There is plenty of timber laying around in the paddocks and the farmer has the machinery to move it into the river.”*

Harry’s efforts go beyond physical restoration. Using the format from the Fish Care Program, Harry initiated an Indigenous Fishing Day. The day was such a success, the local council has requested he run similar events for the whole community. Harry has also planned a Gone Fishing Day on October 15 at Tenterfield Dam.

*“Every kid (big or little), will receive a fishing rod and reel from Shimano and a tree to plant each. We will teach the kids fish handling, knot tying, water safety, fish ID and of course fish habitat education.”*

The Get Hooked Education Program is something else Harry is passionate about and he’s preparing to pass some of that knowledge onto the next generation by introducing the program into Tenterfield’s local primary schools.

*“What I love about this is I’m just a normal bloke come rec’ fisher and I know I can make a difference.”*



RESOURCE LINKS;

[Mole River Riparian Planting](#)

[OzFish Tenterfield Chapter](#)

[Get Hooked Workshops](#)

[Fish Care Volunteers](#)



Funded by the Fisheries Research and Development Corporation