

Bickley Brook

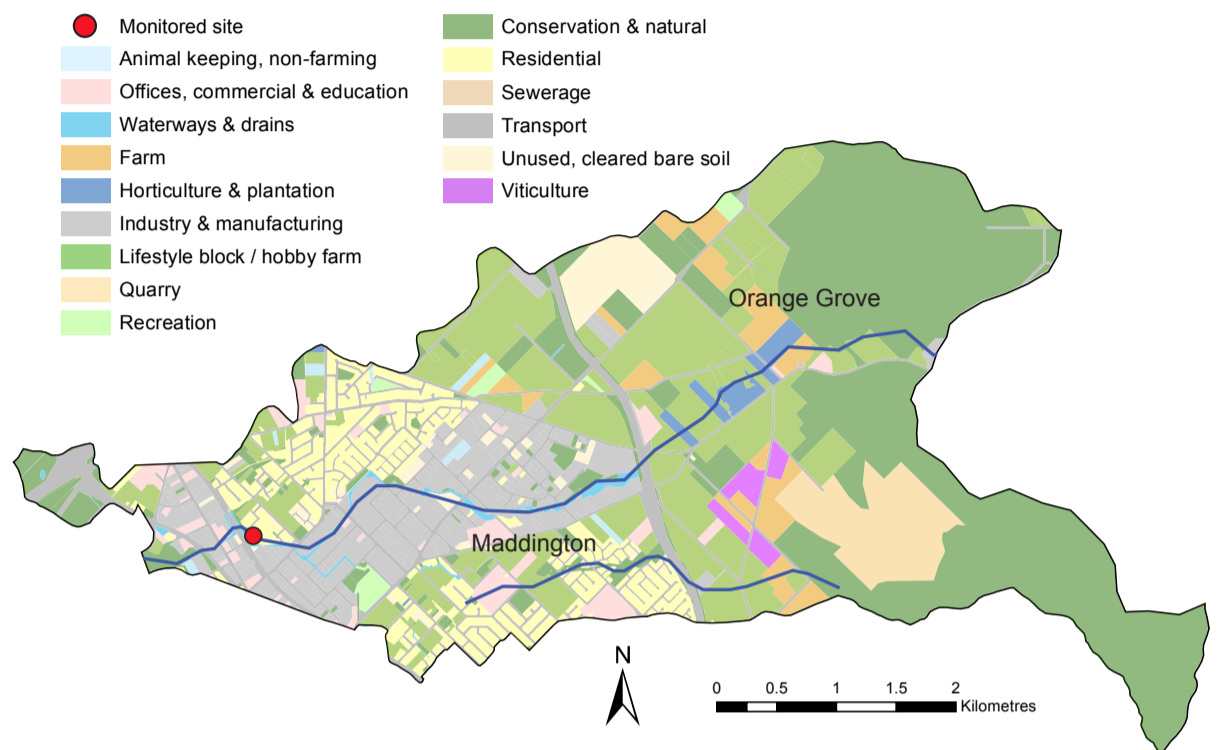
Bickley Brook is a natural system at its headwaters in the Darling Scarp, but changes to a deeply incised drain on the Swan Coastal Plain. It discharges into the Canning River in Maddington, upstream of the Kent Street Weir. The catchment is 21 km²; however the upstream Munday Brook catchment (not shown on map) also contributes flow to the Canning River through Bickley Brook, leading to a total catchment area of 72 km².

Much of the catchment has been cleared for agriculture and urban development. There is some remnant vegetation in poor condition at the top of the catchment. A large quarry is at the top of the catchment, near the southern edge. Erosion is a significant problem along firebreaks, roadsides, embankments and drainage lines. Weed infestation along watercourses is also widespread.

Bickley Brook flows west from the steep slopes and incised valleys of the Darling Scarp. Soils here are predominantly shallow red and yellow earths with rock outcrops. Moving west the brook passes through gravelly and sandy Forrestfield soils in the foothills of the scarp. Further west the brook is deeply incised into yellow duplex Guildford soils, finally intersecting a small area of alluvial red earth adjoining the Canning River. Bickley Brook soils have a relatively high capacity to retain nutrients. Groundwater in the catchment's coastal plain portion is reasonably shallow (about 4 m or less).

Water quality is monitored fortnightly at a site near the brook's lower end, close to Austin Avenue in Kenwick, where the Water Corporation also measures flow. This site monitors nutrients leaving the catchment, so the data may not accurately represent nutrient concentrations in upstream tributaries.

Legend



Bickley Brook – facts and figures

Average rainfall (2014–18)	~ 720 mm per year (Perth metro)
Catchment area	21 km ² (total of Bickley Brook subcatchment, the brook itself starts upstream of this)
Per cent cleared area (2005)	36% (Munday and Bickley Brooks)
River flow	Ephemeral Bickley Brook Reservoir is on Bickley Brook; one of its tributaries, Munday Brook, has the Victoria Reservoir on it. Both of these are upstream of the Bickley Brook subcatchment
Average annual flow	2.0 GL per year (2015–17 average)
Main land uses (2005)	Conservation and natural (Munday and Bickley Brooks).



Photo: Kelli O'Neil

Nutrient summary: concentrations, estimated loads and targets

Year	Site	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Annual flow (GL)	616047	2.9*	2.4*	0.8*	2.9*				0.7*	2.6*	2.6*	
TN median (mg/L)	SWS4	1.30	0.95 [#]	0.90 [#]	0.77 [#]	0.71 [#]	0.65 [#]	0.74 [#]	0.62 [#]	0.94 [#]	0.84 [#]	1.00 [#]
TP median (mg/L)	SWS4	0.031	0.041	0.030	0.049	0.054	0.046	0.037	0.041	0.044	0.084	0.044
TN load (t/yr)	SWS4	4.27*	3.42*	1.17*	4.24*				0.92*	3.60*	3.69*	
TP load (t/yr)	SWS4	0.09*	0.07*	0.02*	0.09*				0.04*	0.17*	0.17*	

TN short term target = 2.0 mg/L

TN long term target = 1.0 mg/L

TP short term target = 0.2 mg/L

TP long term target = 0.1 mg/L

insufficient data to test target
 failing both short and long-term target
 passing short but failing long-term target
 passing both short and long-term target

* Best estimate using available data. [#] Statistical tests that account for the number of samples and large data variability are used for testing against targets on three years of winter data. Thus the annual median value can be above the target even when the site passes the target (or below the target when the site fails).