



personal profile

Benjamin Cook

principal ecologist

B.App.Sci., B.Sc.Hons I, Ph.D.

Ben is a highly regarded freshwater ecologist providing technical leadership in the assessment of the ecology, biogeography and management of freshwater-dependent ecosystems in Australia and overseas. With specialist skills in biodiversity assessment and hydroecology of surface water and groundwater ecosystems, Ben has contributed variously as researcher, resource manager and consultant.

Ben currently serves as **frc environmental's** Principal Ecologist – Freshwater, and has a continuing appointment as an Adjunct Research Fellow with Australian Rivers Institute at Griffith University. His strong professional and publishing records demonstrate his commitment to technical excellence and research-based outcomes.

Ben has contributed substantially to the understanding of aquatic biodiversity and ecology in Australia and overseas, and has undertaken research in places as varied as the Murray-Darling Basin, South East Queensland, the Wet Tropics, Cape York Peninsula, the Northern Territory, the Kimberly region of Western Australia, and islands of the Caribbean.



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freshwater

estuarine

marine



ben cook profile

“Ben’s qualifications, skills and experience provide clients with credible and cost-effective solutions.”

Ben’s field skills include electrofishing, macroinvertebrate sampling, aquatic plant surveys, water quality testing, freshwater turtle surveys and stygofauna assessments. He also has a wide range of laboratory skills, including microscopy, molecular ecology and molecular taxonomy, and stable isotope analysis, and is experienced in analysing ecological data using univariate and multivariate approaches.

Ben’s Ph.D studies involved innovative approaches using both genetic and stable isotope data to assess population connectivity in freshwater fauna, and the role that connectivity has in determining how stream biota respond to on-ground management, such as stream habitat restoration.

As a postdoctoral research fellow Ben continued to focus on the development of techniques to assess stream connectivity and patterns of biodiversity; whilst with the Water Planning Group within the Department of Environment and Resource Management, Ben lead research into groundwater-dependent ecosystems and stygofauna diversity in the lower Burdekin River alluvial aquifer.

key achievements

- A strong academic publishing record, including over 18 scientific papers and several book chapters relating to freshwater ecology and biodiversity.
- Involved with the discovery of several new species of freshwater shrimps and fish in Australia and overseas.
- Invited guest speaker to international conferences, and invited to contribute to papers for special issues in scientific journals.
- Provided peer review of scientific papers for a wide range of journals, including Freshwater Biology, Freshwater Sciences, Aquatic Conservation: Marine and Freshwater Ecosystems, Austral Ecology, Journal of Fish Biology, Environmental Biology of Fishes, and others.
- Ongoing involvement with academic institutions (Adjunct Research Fellow, Griffith University Australian Rivers Institute) and primary research into aquatic biodiversity in Australia since joining **frc environmental**