Greater Shepparton City Council
90 Welsford Street, Shepparton 3630
Locked Bag 1000, Shepparton, VIC, 3632

Email: council@shepparton.vic.gov.au
Phone: (03) 5832 9700
Fax: (03) 5831 1987

GMV Fruit Fly Area Wide Management Program Outlook May 2026

Summary

Most of the Goulburn Murray Valley's commercial horticulture is harvested over the next couple of months. These crops are especially prone to attack by Queensland fruit fly (Qff). At the same time Qff is moving away from the protection of fruitful refuges in urban areas of the GMV to the more attractive commercial orchards surrounding many GMV towns and villages. As harvest there continues Qff moves further out into outlying orchards following a pathway of ripening fruit.

Weather forecasts for the GMV suggest that Qff buildup will continue at least until May due to maximum and minimum temperatures remaining in Qff's comfort range. Maximum temperatures for most of April are likely to be from about 17°C to 30°C and minimum temperatures mostly from 6°C to 15°C. A small amount of rainfall is forecast for the week from 6 April. Relative humidities will be medium to high favouring Qff survival and spread.

Sunset temperatures are starting to decrease as winter approaches. Currently sunset temperatures are generally but not low enough to stop Qff from mating so new eggs will be laid into any available fruit. This is an especially dangerous time for commercial harvests currently occurring.

Removal of fruit (or the whole plant if it is not wanted) now is an important measure in reducing future fruit fly problems – especially in urban and peri-urban areas that are close to commercial orchards.

Trapping data reveal a buildup of the Qff population from late February to March.

Qff numbers are still relatively high in some areas of the GMV especially in the towns of **Kaarimba** and **Merrigum**. **Lemnos** and **Nagambie** are in the next highest category of Qff risk and **Mooroopna**, **Yarrawonga** and **Gunbower** are of concern.

New Campaspe trapping grid

A new Qff trapping grid was installed throughout the Campaspe Shire around 19 February 2026. Trap inspectors deployed 32 new Lynfield traps charged with the Qff attractant, cue-lure, and the toxicant, malathion across 8 areas: Echuca (7 traps),

Tongala (2 traps), Kyabram (7 traps), Girgarre (2 traps), Stanhope (4 traps), Rochester (5 traps), Torrumbarry (2 traps) and Gunbower (3 traps). Campaspe traps were deployed in urban (17 traps), peri-urban (9 traps) and rural (6 traps) locations.

Current GMV trapping grid

The current trapping grid across the GMV consists of 301 Qff traps covering 4 shires including 51 locations.

Results

Traps were inspected between 19 December 2025 and 3 April 2026 – i.e. a period of just over 16 weeks. A total of 2,355 adult Qff was trapped from a maximum of 301 traps in that time. Qff populations fluctuated in that time (Fig. 1). There is, at present, an upward trend in Qff numbers trapped per fortnight since early February (Fig. 1).

Autumn is often a time of increased Qff due to proliferation of ripening and ripe fruit in commercial orchards and home gardens.

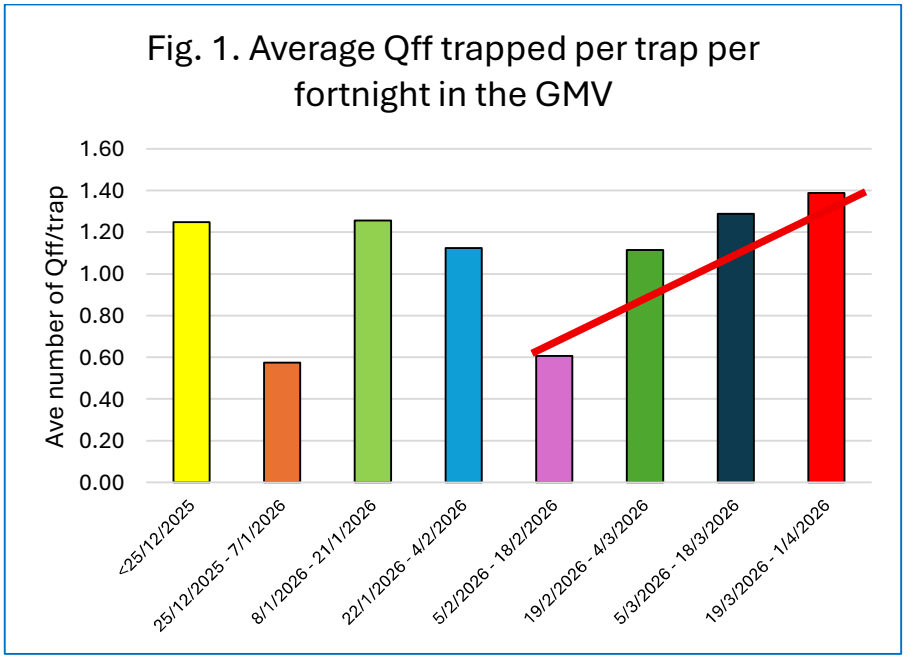
88 of these traps did not trap any Qff. This figure is down from last month (102 traps) and the previous month (116 traps) suggesting that Qff are spreading out further into the region.

Over the last 4 weeks 15 traps captured more than 10 or more Qff (Table 1). The majority of these traps, 11 of the 15, are located on rural sites. This reflects a significant migration of Qff from nearby townships and buildup of Qff populations in these sites.

Table 1. Trap sites with high numbers of captured Qff from 5 March 2026 to the current date.

Total no. of Qff	Trap site	Land use
66	KAARIMBA	RURAL
63	MERRIGUM 1	RURAL
40	MERRIGUM 2	RURAL
36	MOOROOPNA 1	RURAL
28	LEMNOS 1	RURAL
23	MERRIGUM 3	PERI-URBAN

15	COOMBOONA	RURAL
13	NUMURKAH	URBAN
13	LEMNOS 2	RURAL
12	SHEPPARTON EAST	RURAL
12	COBRAM	URBAN
11	MOOROOPNA 2	RURAL
11	SHEPPARTON	RURAL
10	MOOROOPNA 3	URBAN
10	COBRAM EAST	RURAL



Trends

Fig. 1 shows that, in total, Qff numbers trapped are currently on an upward trend, especially during the period commencing 5 February 2026. Unless there is significant impact on community led Qff management programs in the GMC this trend will continue as the weather becomes milder, more humid and when more local fruit, especially those on commercial blocks, become ripe.

Greater Shepparton City Council
90 Welsford Street, Shepparton 3630
Locked Bag 1000, Shepparton, VIC, 3632

Email: council@shepparton.vic.gov.au
Phone: (03) 5832 9700
Fax: (03) 5831 1987

Towns

The order of highest Qff prevalence has changed over the past 4 to 6 weeks with Qff becoming more dominant in peri-urban and rural locations. Table 2 shows that Qff populations are now high in Kaarimba and Merrigum with 4 or more Qff per trap over the last 4 weeks. Qff numbers on the rural locations of Lemnos and Nagambie have also increased while Mooroopna, Yarrawonga and the new trap site of Gunbower also have significant numbers present.

Table 2 shows that by early April 2026 some towns had larger Qff populations than others. This is reflected by the volume and type of Qff host plants in each location as well as the level of fruit fly management being employed there.

Table 2. GMV towns ranked in descending order of Qff prevalence (data from traps (n=249) monitored from 19 Dec 2025 to 3 April 2026).

Greater Shepparton City Council
90 Welsford Street, Shepparton 3630
Locked Bag 1000, Shepparton, VIC, 3632

Email: council@shepparton.vic.gov.au
Phone: (03) 5832 9700
Fax: (03) 5831 1987

RANK	AVE QFF/TRAP	TOWN
1	10.00	KAARIMBA
2	4.06	MERRIGUM
3	2.50	LEMNOS
4	2.00	NAGAMBIE
5	1.31	MOOROOPNA
6	1.13	YARRAWONGA
7	1.00	GUNBOWER
8	0.87	COOMBOONA
9	0.81	ORRVALE
10	0.80	NUMURKAH
11	0.79	SHEPPARTON
12	0.63	KIALLA
13	0.50	CONGUPNA
14	0.50	KOONOOMOO
15	0.50	SHEPPARTON NORTH
16	0.50	STRATHMERTON
17	0.50	TONGALA
18	0.50	TORRUMBARRY
19	0.50	TUNGAMAH
20	0.46	SHEPPARTON EAST
21	0.43	COBRAM
22	0.43	ECHUCA
23	0.38	TATURA
24	0.33	AVENEL

Greater Shepparton City Council
90 Welsford Street, Shepparton 3630
Locked Bag 1000, Shepparton, VIC, 3632

Email: council@shepparton.vic.gov.au
Phone: (03) 5832 9700
Fax: (03) 5831 1987

25	0.33	KATAMATITE
26	0.33	TATURA EAST
27	0.33	VIOLET TOWN
28	0.29	KYABRAM
29	0.25	MUCKATAH
30	0.25	STANHOPE
31	0.23	ARDMONA
32	0.17	COBRAM EAST
33	0.17	KATUNGA
34	0.17	MOOROOPNA NORTH WEST
35	0.17	TOOLAMBA WEST
36	0.15	GRAHAMVALE
37	0.15	TOOLAMBA
38	0.13	EUROA
39	0.08	INVERGORDON
40	0.00	BUNBARTHA
41	0.00	COOMA
42	0.00	GIRGARRE
43	0.00	KIALLA EAST
44	0.00	MOOROOPNA NORTH
45	0.00	MUNDOONA
46	0.00	ROCHESTER
47	0.00	TALLYGAROOPNA
48	0.00	UNDERA
49	0.00	WUNGHNU
50	0.00	YARROWEYAH
51	0.00	ZEERUST

Greater Shepparton City Council
90 Welsford Street, Shepparton 3630
Locked Bag 1000, Shepparton, VIC, 3632

Email: council@shepparton.vic.gov.au
Phone: (03) 5832 9700
Fax: (03) 5831 1987

Hot spots

There are two methods of describing hot spots used here. They are based on:

1. Threat to home gardens and nearby commercial horticulture and
2. Threat to commercial crops

Threats to home gardens and nearby cropping were labelled as urgent (1 site) or, worse, critical (3 sites) (Table 3).

Based on the Risk Matrix employed by Agriculture Victoria for the designation of Qff hot spots eleven trap sites satisfied high (10 sites over 6 towns) or, worse, very high (1 site) risks of Qff to commercial production (Table 4).

NOTE - Definition of a Qff Hotspot: Under current Qff populations, this early in the Qff season for the GMV, a trap site where more than 2 Qff are trapped per week is considered a Qff hotspot

Table 3. Urban hot spots (highest Qff averages to lowest)

LOCATION	THREAT
KAARIMBA	CRITICAL
LEMNOS	CRITICAL
MOOROOPNA	CRITICAL
MERRIGUM (2 locations)	CRITICAL
MERRIGUM	URGENT

Table 4. Hot spots potentially affecting commercial crops

LOCATION	THREAT
KAARIMBA	VERY HIGH
LEMNOS	VERY HIGH
MERRIGUM (3 locations)	VERY HIGH

Greater Shepparton City Council
90 Welsford Street, Shepparton 3630
Locked Bag 1000, Shepparton, VIC, 3632

Email: council@shepparton.vic.gov.au
Phone: (03) 5832 9700
Fax: (03) 5831 1987

MOOROOPNA	VERY HIGH
ARDMONA	HIGH
COBRAM (4 locations)	HIGH
COBRAM EAST (2 locations)	HIGH
COOMBOONA	HIGH
INVERGORDON (2 locations)	HIGH
KOONOOMOO	HIGH
LEMNOS (3 locations)	HIGH
MOOROOPNA (2 locations)	HIGH
ORRVALE	HIGH
SHEPPARTON (2 locations)	HIGH
SHEPPARTON EAST (3 locations)	HIGH
TATURA	HIGH
TATURA EAST	HIGH
TORRUMBARRY (2 locations)	HIGH

People living in all areas, especially those listed in Tables 3 and 4, should be vigilant in checking traps and for fruit infestation.

Tip: make sure your traps are charged with new lures and are not damaged. Otherwise replace. Also make sure that the traps are clear of foliage and branches and out of the sun in the hottest part of the day.

Tip: Make a habit of checking any nearby fruit for sting marks and/or infestation with maggots – even if the fruit is a roadside feral plant. If there are signs of infestation remove the fruit or the entire plant if you can.

Qff in the Strathbogie and Campaspe Shires

In the 6 and 2 trapping weeks since the deployment of Strathbogie and Campaspe traps, respectively, some Qff have been found. Avenel and Nagambie trapped more Qff than the other locations in the Strathbogie Shire (Table 5). Torrumbarry, Tongala and Kyabram topped the list for the Campaspe Shire (Table 6).

Table 5. Qff trapped in Strathbogie Shire traps from 18 February 2026 to 3 April 2026.

LOCATION	Ave. QFF/trap
AVENEL	1.56

EUROA	0.38
NAGAMBIE	1.56
VIOLET TOWN	0.33

Table 6. Qff trapped in Campaspe Shire traps from 19 February 2026 to 3 April 2026.

LOCATION	Ave. QFF/trap
ECHUCA	0.62
GIRGARRE	0.00
GUNBOWER	1.00
KYABRAM	1.04
ROCHESTER	0.55
STANHOPE	0.27
TONGALA	1.13
TORRUMBARRY	2.33

Land use type

Urban trap sites are the usually main source for higher populations of Qff when compared to peri-urban and rural location. As urban fruit ripens and drops, is harvested or is eaten by birds Qff migrates from urban areas into peri-urban sites and then into commercial crops. This is currently occurring in the GMV as evidenced by the high Qff population pressure in peri-urban and rural trap sites. There is an upward trend in Qff numbers trapped in rural locations currently (Fig. 3).

Peri-urban crops are now at higher risk of infestation. This means that nearby commercial horticulture is at an elevated risk of future infestation.

Currently, some rural trap sites have recorded significantly high Qff numbers. Kaarimba and Merrigum have higher capture rates then most other urban and peri-urban sites. This is a dangerous situation for commercial horticulture properties close to these locations.

Greater Shepparton City Council
90 Welsford Street, Shepparton 3630
Locked Bag 1000, Shepparton, VIC, 3632

Email: council@shepparton.vic.gov.au
Phone: (03) 5832 9700
Fax: (03) 5831 1987

Table 7 shows several towns with moderate levels of Qff activity in urban locations. Table 8 shows elevated Qff activity in peri-urban Merrigum. Table 9 shows that Kaarimba has very high Qff activity despite being in a rural location. People managing gardens and orchards close to these areas should exercise Qff monitoring and control. These areas act as conduits to nearby commercial horticulture. Peri-urban and rural Qff should be of high concern to growers in these areas. Growers should have implemented regular Qff monitoring and control.

Table 7. Towns where URBAN locations have significant Qff presence (highest Qff averages to lowest) since 5 MARCH 2026.

LOCATION	Ave. QFF/trap
COOMBOONA	3.75
NUMURKAH	3.25
MERRIGUM	3.13
GUNBOWER	2.33
KOONOOMOO	2.25
LEMNOS	1.50
KIALLA	1.38
KYABRAM	1.33
MOOROOPNA	1.25
TONGALA	1.17
YARRAWONGA	1.00

Table 8. Towns where PERI-URBAN locations have significant Qff presence (highest Qff averages to lowest) since 5 MARCH 2026.

LOCATION	Ave. QFF/trap
MERRIGUM	5.25

Greater Shepparton City Council
90 Welsford Street, Shepparton 3630
Locked Bag 1000, Shepparton, VIC, 3632

Email: council@shepparton.vic.gov.au
Phone: (03) 5832 9700
Fax: (03) 5831 1987

LEMNOS	3.25
ECHUCA	3.00
NAGAMBIE	2.00
NUMURKAH	1.67
COBRAM EAST	1.58
AVENEL	1.00
CONGUPNA	1.00
KATAMATITE	1.00
TATURA EAST	1.00

Table 9. Towns where RURAL locations have significant Qff presence since 5 MARCH 2026.

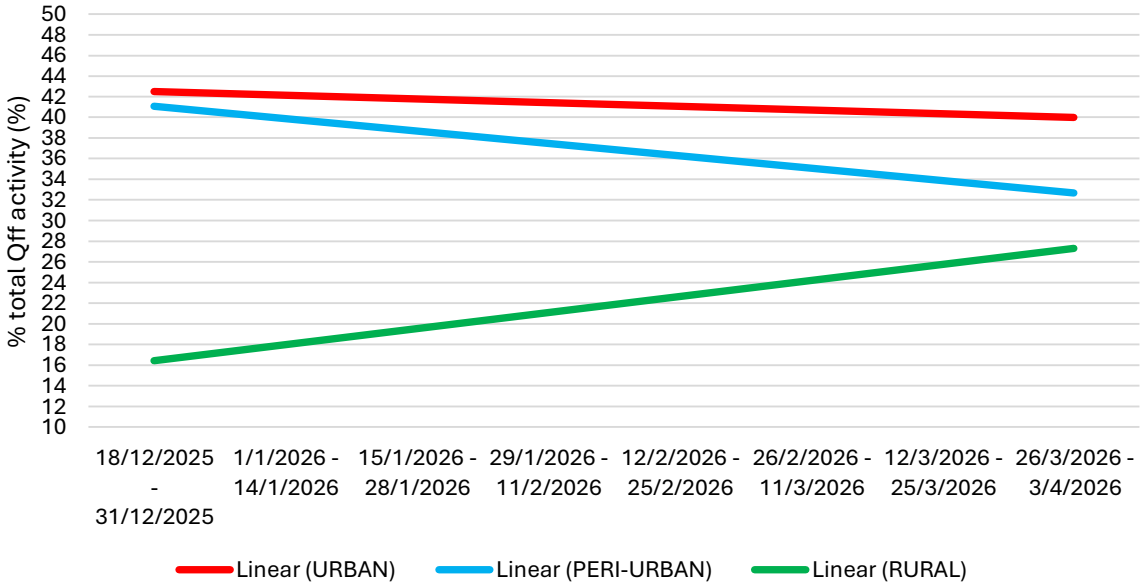
LOCATION	Ave. QFF/trap
KAARIMBA	8.25
MERRIGUM	3.58
TORRUMBARRY	2.33
LEMNOS	1.65
MOOROOPNA	1.20
SHEPPARTON	1.00
YARRAWONGA	1.00

Tip: Urban gardeners should feel a responsibility to reduce Qff populations in their yards not only to produce good quality fruit in their own gardens but also to reduce the influx of Qff into other areas – especially commercial orchards.

Greater Shepparton City Council
90 Welsford Street, Shepparton 3630
Locked Bag 1000, Shepparton, VIC, 3632

Email: council@shepparton.vic.gov.au
Phone: (03) 5832 9700
Fax: (03) 5831 1987

Fig. 3. Relative Qff population trends (% of total Qff activity based on Qff/trap/fortnight) in the GMV (Qff/trap since 18 Dec 2025) according to land use type



Forecast

In the GMV, fruit fly numbers generally increase in severity from late November and peak in December with a second peak in the autumn. From November and through December Qff builds up very rapidly in urban and peri-urban sites where there is usually a mixture of high amounts of untended fruit, garden irrigation and evergreen refuges while rural sites remain quite low as there is still not much ripe fruit around. Any rural sites which have high Qff numbers at this time are likely to have persistent Qff populations surviving in untended home gardens and untended non-commercial fruit trees on the block.

Tip: Even if your commercial crop is well-managed with respect to Qff you must ensure that all other fruiting plants in and near your orchard are well-managed (or removed), too. Qff will move from the old apricot tree in the fowl yard into the next ripening crop nearby.

As urban crops decline with harvest and bird predation in the summer Qff populations also decrease while peri-urban and rural increase. This reflects the movement of Qff from urban, through peri-urban and into rural areas from mid-summer to autumn. This occurs due to the "pull" of large volumes of commercial crops ripening in rural areas at this time.

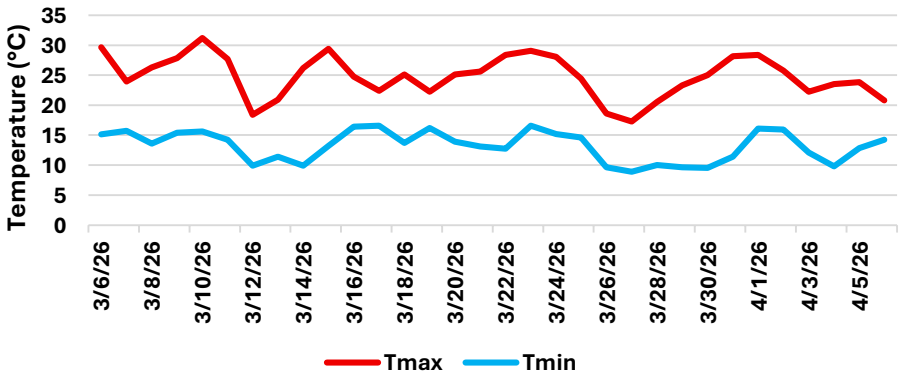
It appears that this is occurring right now as seen in Fig. 3. It is expected that similar upward trends will occur during autumn 2026. The size of the peaks and their timing will depend on weather and fruit fly management measures implemented during the spring and early summer.

Weather

Past 4 weeks

March temperatures in the GMV were lower than February's but they are still relatively comfortable for Qff survival and spread (Fig. 4). There has been little rain, but the relative humidity has remained at medium to high levels throughout March. These conditions favour Qff survival and spread (Fig. 5).

Fig. 4. Daily maximum and minimum temperatures (°C) during the past 4 weeks in Shepparton



Greater Shepparton City Council
90 Welsford Street, Shepparton 3630
Locked Bag 1000, Shepparton, VIC, 3632

Email: council@shepparton.vic.gov.au
Phone: (03) 5832 9700
Fax: (03) 5831 1987

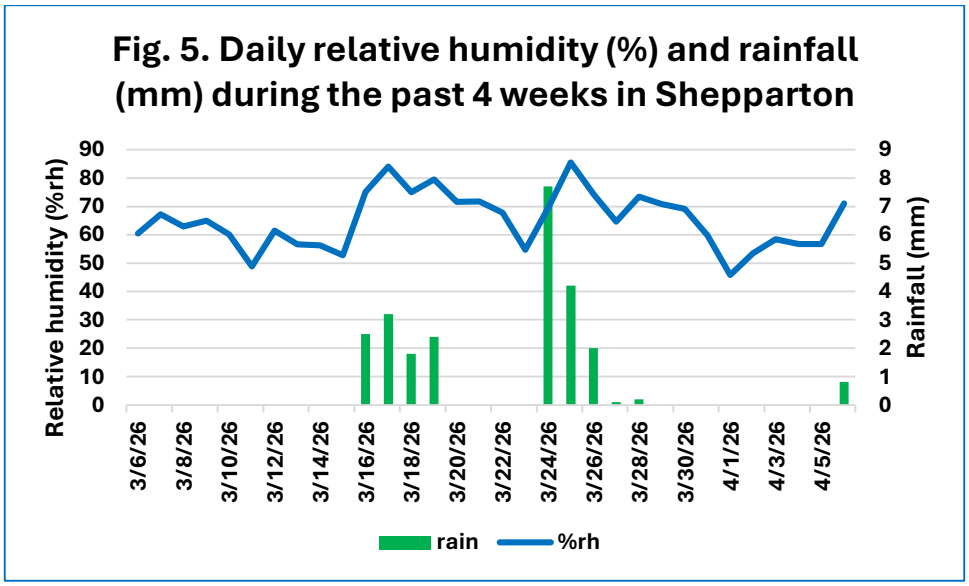


Fig. 5. Daily relative humidity (%) and rainfall (mm) during the past 4 weeks in Shepparton

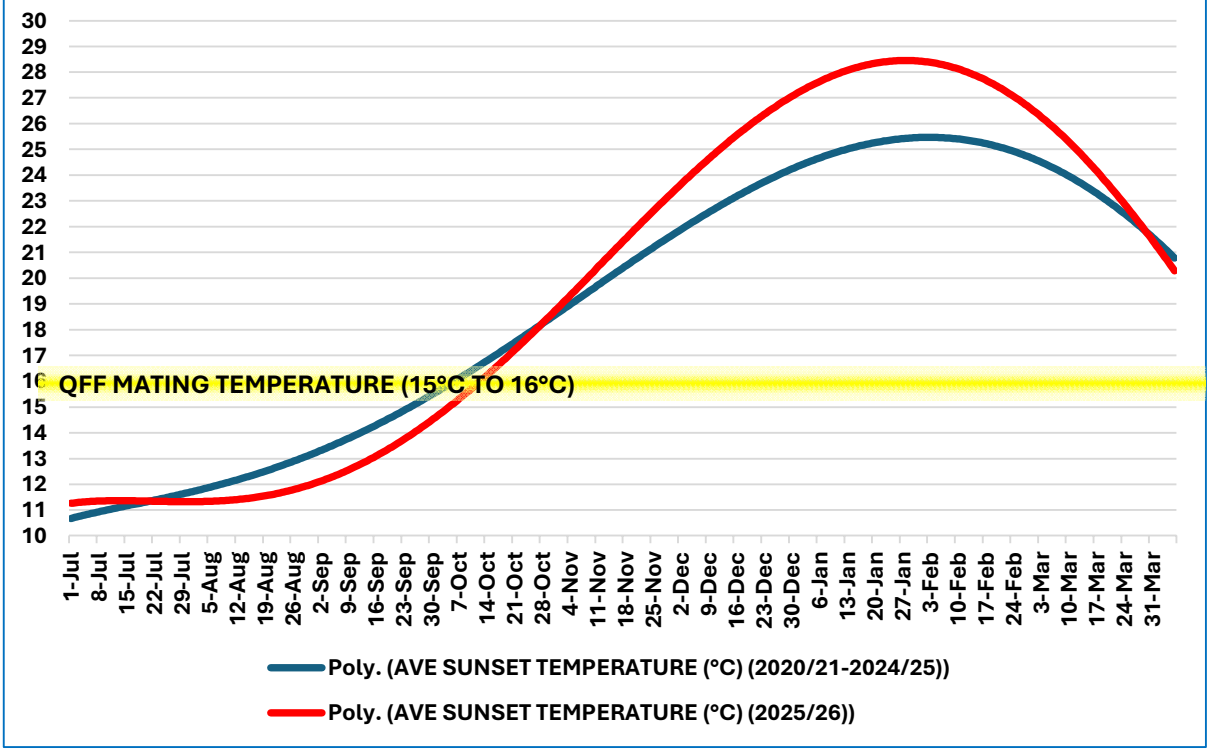
Is it too cold for Qff to mate?

Qff mates only at sunset and only when temperatures exceed 15°C. These conditions have persisted throughout March and, when current sunset temperatures are compared with the average, they have been somewhat higher than normal up until mid-March (Fig. 6). Consistent low temperature sunsets are not anticipated until mid-May.

Greater Shepparton City Council
90 Welsford Street, Shepparton 3630
Locked Bag 1000, Shepparton, VIC, 3632

Email: council@shepparton.vic.gov.au
Phone: (03) 5832 9700
Fax: (03) 5831 1987

Fig. 6. Temperatures at sunset (Qff mating time) comparing the current season (2025/26) with the average for the period from 2020/21 to 2024/25 for SHEPPARTON



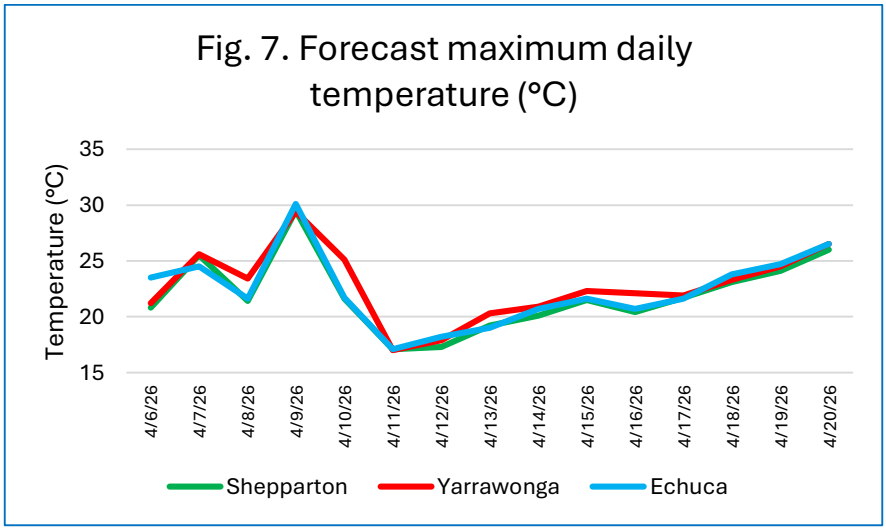
Short term forecast

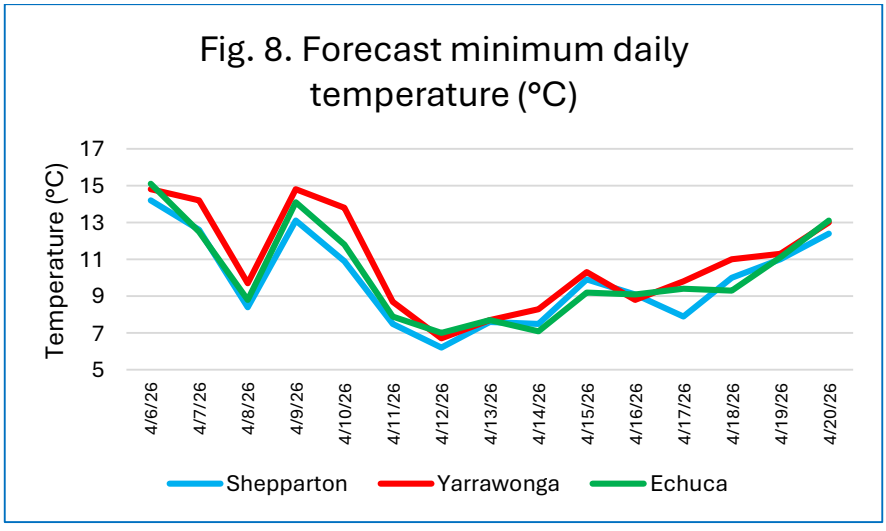
Forecast weather conditions for Shepparton for 6 – 20 April 2026 (https://www.visualcrossing.com/weather/weather-data-services - accessed 6 April 2026) indicate less severe conditions experienced during January 2026.

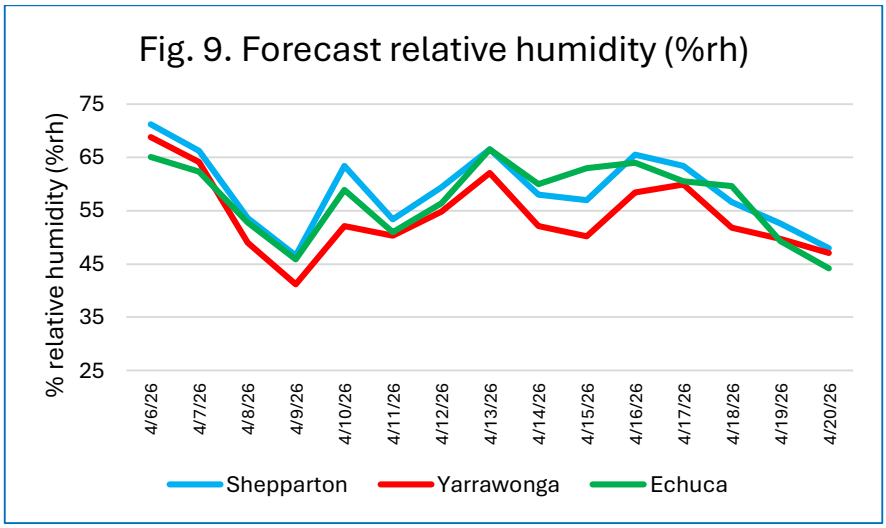
During March there will be lower max. (Fig. 7) and min. temperatures (Fig. 8) , higher relative humidity (at the start of March but lower towards mid-March) (Fig. 9) than for the previous month and probably less rainfall (except at the beginning of March). These are close to ideal conditions for Qff survival and population spread. This is especially problematic as commercial crops, in the main, are now beginning to ripen and therefore will become highly attractive to Qff infestation with potential consequent crop loss.

Greater Shepparton City Council
90 Welsford Street, Shepparton 3630
Locked Bag 1000, Shepparton, VIC, 3632

Email: council@shepparton.vic.gov.au
Phone: (03) 5832 9700
Fax: (03) 5831 1987







Longer term forecast

MAY 2026 - The Bureau of Meteorology forecasts (Figs 10, 11 and 12), for the GMV, higher maximum temperatures (an 80% chance of being higher than the average of 15°C to 21°C) and average minimum temperatures (3°C to 6°C) for May 2026. Rainfall is likely to be less than average (only a 25% to 30% chance of exceeding the average of 10mm to 25mm for March). Daily minima will impact adversely on Qff survival, especially if the insect is at an immature stage (i.e. egg, larva or pupa) and is exposed to these temperatures and durations. Qff adults are likely to have found warm refuges somewhere on the landscape by this time and may overwinter there if not killed off or controlled by predators, subsequent exposure to cold or wet weather or by strategic baiting.

Vigorous area-wide management programs will enhance Qff control significantly if set in place.

Adapted from the Bureau of Meteorology:
http://www.bom.gov.au/climate/outlooks/#/overview/summary/ - accessed 6 April 2026:

Greater Shepparton City Council
90 Welsford Street, Shepparton 3630
Locked Bag 1000, Shepparton, VIC, 3632

Email: council@shepparton.vic.gov.au
Phone: (03) 5832 9700
Fax: (03) 5831 1987

Rainfall—Summary

Below average April to May rainfall likely for most of Australia

- Rainfall for the 3-month period from April to June is likely to be below average (60% to more than 80% chance) for most of Australia.
- There is an increased chance of unusually low rainfall[1] (over 50% chance) for large parts of the Murray Darling Basin.

[1]Unusually low rainfall is that in the driest 20% of April to June records between 1981 and 2018.

Temperature—Summary

Warmer than average days and nights across much of Australia April to June

- Maximum temperatures for April to June are very likely to be above average (more than 80% chance) across much of Australia.
- The southern two thirds of Australia have an increased chance of unusually high maximum temperatures[2] (over 50% chance), with the highest chances (over 80% chance) across New South Wales and neighbouring border regions.
- For parts of inland eastern and southern Australia, there is no clear signal for either warmer or cooler than average minimum temperatures.

[2]Unusually high maximum and minimum temperatures are those in the warmest 20% of April to June days and nights, respectively, between 1981

Greater Shepparton City Council
90 Welsford Street, Shepparton 3630
Locked Bag 1000, Shepparton, VIC, 3632

Email: council@shepparton.vic.gov.au
Phone: (03) 5832 9700
Fax: (03) 5831 1987

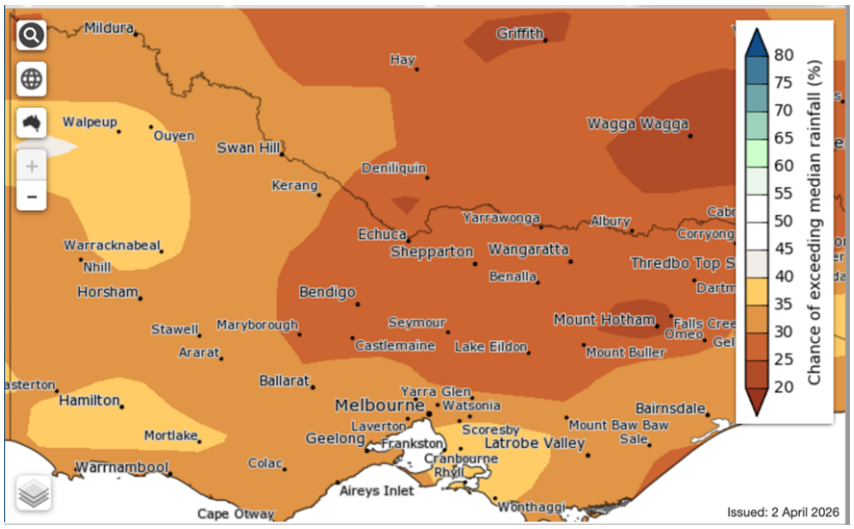


Fig. 10. Chance of above median rainfall for May 2026

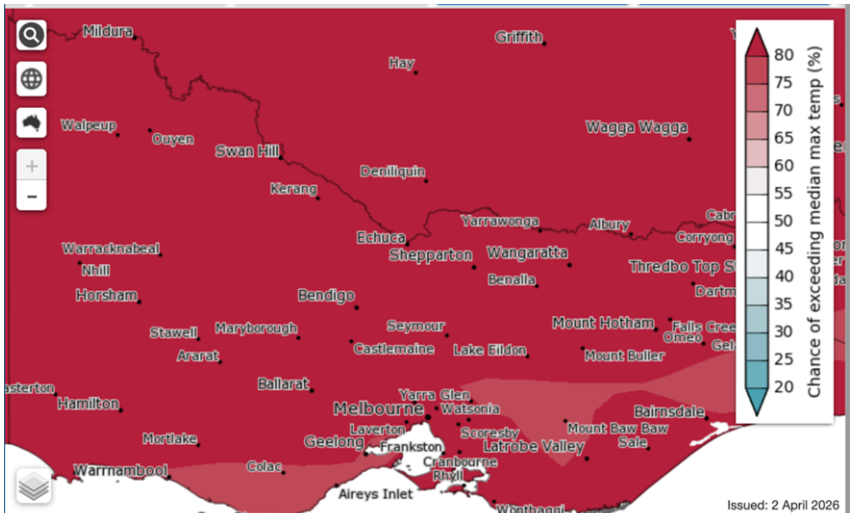


Fig. 11. Chance of above median maximum daily temperature for May 2026

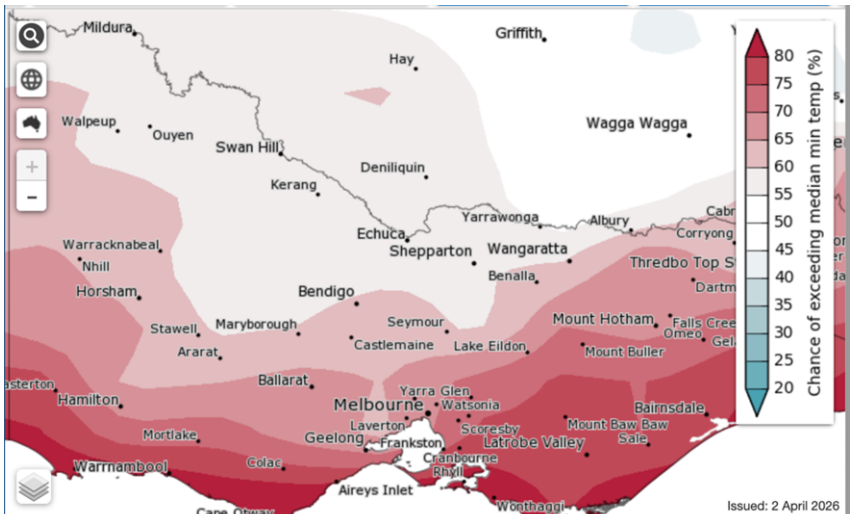
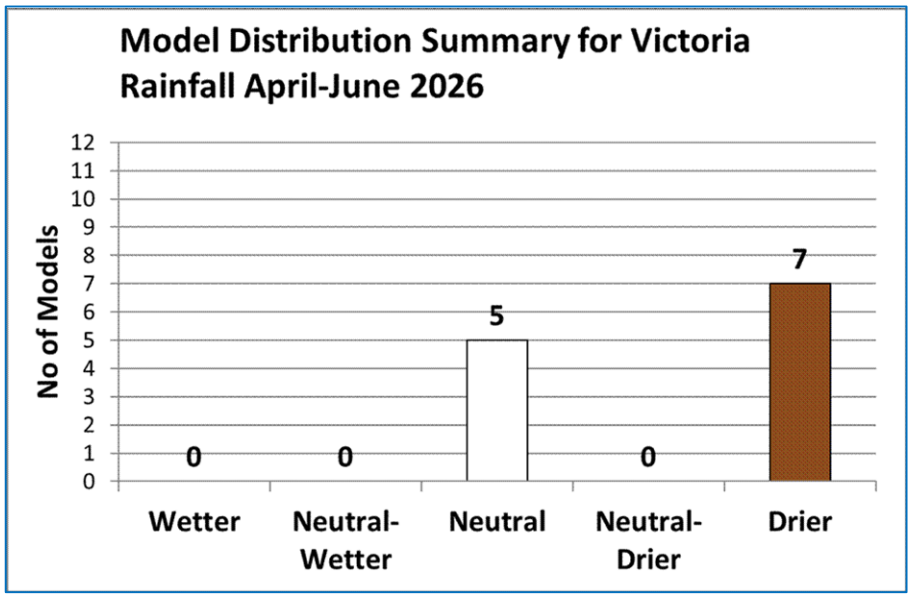


Fig. 12. Chance of above median minimum daily temperature for May 2026

Another weather forecast program, Agriculture Victoria's "The Fast Break" (https://agriculture.vic.gov.au/support-and-resources/newsletters/the-break/the-fast-break-victoria - accessed 6 April 2026), also supports the likelihood of a neutral to drier and warmer period than normal from April to June 2026 based on model outputs.

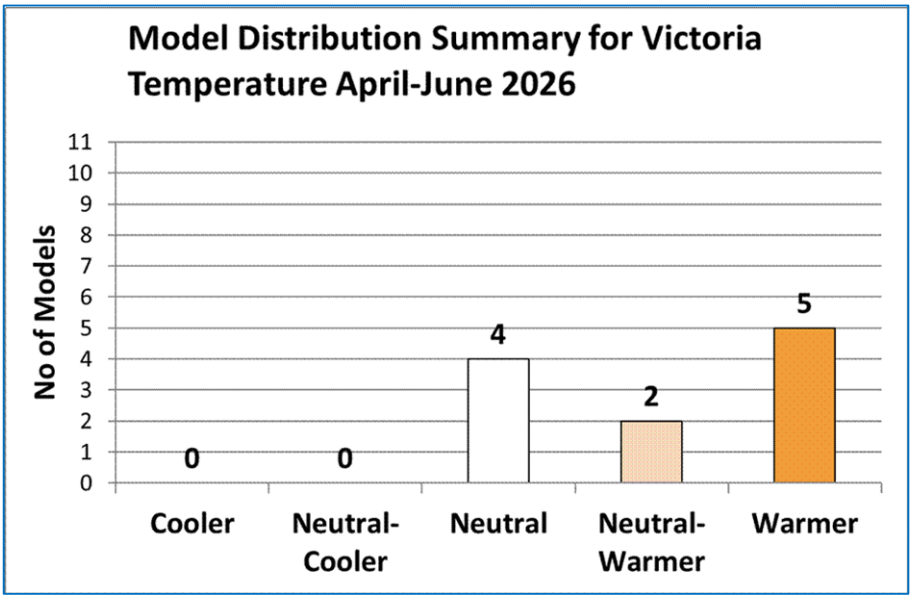
Fig. 13.



Greater Shepparton City Council
90 Welsford Street, Shepparton 3630
Locked Bag 1000, Shepparton, VIC, 3632

Email: council@shepparton.vic.gov.au
Phone: (03) 5832 9700
Fax: (03) 5831 1987

Fig. 14.



For more information on fruit fly control and Area Wide Management strategies, visit www.fruitflycontrol.com.au or scan the QR code below.

This report was produced by Janren Consulting Pty Ltd for the GMV Fruit Fly Area Wide Management Program in collaboration with the Program Coordinator. The Program is supported by the Victorian Government.