

Why is the lagoon or creek brown?



Plant Power

The water in quiet creeks and wetlands, where plants decompose very slowly, is often yellowy-brown in colour. This is because plants contain natural compounds called tannins and lignins, which are brown and yellow in colour.

Tannins were once used to treat, or 'tan,' leather.

You can produce tannin yourself by soaking tea leaves, grape seeds or stems or bark from some trees in water and letting it steep for a few days to weeks.

Sediment and Storms

During and after heavy rain you may notice that the water in the lagoon is quite brown. This is because the rain carries fine sediments (clays and silts) to the lagoon via gutters, stormwater pipes and creeks.

These sediments are suspended in the water and give it a brownish colour. Eventually the sediments settle at the bottom of the lagoon or wash out to sea and the water will return to its more usual colour.

The heavier grains in the soil, such as sand and gravel, may not make it all the way to the lagoon. And you may see sand and gravel blocking gutters or lodged in creeks after rain.

If you see any sediment running off a building site, or any large deposits of sand or gravel blocking gutters or pipes in creeks, please call us on 1300 434 434



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