



# Vicki 'hooked' on looking at moss

**EDUCATION**  
**By VICTORIA MACDONALD**

WORK experience in the nation's capital cemented a Wodonga woman's determination to further her studies in plant research.

La Trobe University's Vicki McCartney will undertake her honours in the Department of Environmental Management and Ecology, focusing on alpine bryophytes — commonly known as mosses, liverworts and hornworts.

Mrs McCartney performed a month's work experience with the CSIRO National Herbarium and the Australian National Botanic Gardens in Canberra last year.

The placement, a compulsory part of her studies, had Mrs McCartney "hooked" on a career in research.

She looked forward to doing practical work in the Alpine National Park as part of her honours studies this year.

"That's the most fun part of it, getting out into the field and

seeing how things work," she said.

"It's about getting answers."

Department head Dr Phil Suter said Mrs McCartney's work on the little-known alpine bryophytes would be important.

"They are complex and unique organisms that obviously play a key role within the headwaters of our freshwater system," he said.

"We need to know much more about their ecology, genetic diversity and response to drought and climate change."



● La Trobe's Vicki McCartney will look at moss in her environmental management honours study. Picture: MATTHEW SMITHWICK