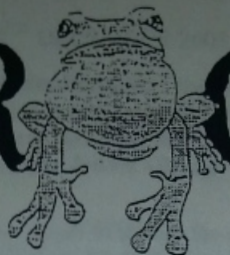


FROG CALL



NEWSLETTER No. 81
January 2006

THE FROG AND TADPOLE STUDY GROUP OF NSW INC

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Charcoal drawing by Punia Jeffery
"Bell Frogs, Taronga" December 2005

You are invited to our next FATS meeting
at 6.30 pm for a 7.30 pm start

Friday 3rd February 2006

Building 22, enter RANAD site from the
Northern end of Jamieson St., (off Holker St.)

Homebush Bay, Sydney Olympic Park

See page 2 for public transport services



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MEETING FORMAT for 3rd February 2006

- | | |
|---------|--|
| 6.45 pm | A small number of lost frogs need homes and are ready to collect from the Frog Rescue Service. Please bring your FATS membership card & Amphibian Licence. |
| 7.30 pm | Welcome and announcements |
| 7.45 pm | Main Speaker and other presentations |
| 9.15 pm | 5 Favourite Slides. Anyone wishing to speak about their recent frogging trips or experiences is most welcome to tell all. If you have slides or other images, please bring them along as well. |
| 9.30pm | Drawing of door prize, guessing competition
Light refreshments and pleasant conversation |

Spectacular lightning displays across the sky, an uninterrupted skyline and fast moving black clouds that raced overhead, heralded the start to our second successful meeting at Sydney Olympic Park, Homebush Bay.

Arthur White discussed recent field trips then we were treated to Lou Petho's video "Still Croaking". When a property developer finds the endangered green and golden bell frogs on his site, the multi-million dollar project grinds to a halt. In a rare case of co-operation the developer works with biologist, Arthur White, to build the frogs new ponds away from the construction site, at a cost of over \$1 million.....and hope that the frogs move in and call the new ponds home.

The filming started in 1998 and follows the frogs, Graham Pyke, Michelle Christy, Arthur White and many others to various sites such as Kurnell, Broughton Island and Marrickville, etc. Inexpensive copies of the 90-minute DVD were purchased at the meeting.

Bunnings (Ashfield) sausage sizzle on 29 October was successful. The sale of 500 BBQ'd sausages in buns, with tomato sauce, napkins, soft drinks and an unbelievable tens of kilos of fried onions ended in an \$800 profit and at least one new FATS member. Many thanks to Alistair MacDougall who organised the event, Robert Wall (onion cutter extraordinaire), Mark Kassa and Karen White for their tireless work.

Peter Spradbrow presented a talk with many excellent slides, on the Smith's Lake field trip. The region's landscape varies from sclerophyll forest to rainforest and is about 300 k North of Sydney. The NSW University's field station is situated in beautiful terrain, on the edge of the lake. FATS members identified 13 different frogs and reptiles over the weekend.

Arthur spoke about the October 2005 Cane Toad muster at Port Macquarie. The muster is the first attempt at Cane toad eradication in Australia. No one believed that the toads would be impacted on. It has been observed that the toads establish colonies well ahead of their main front. The "front" is unfightable however the "spot fire" colonies, which can be 100's of k away from the main front, may be able to be eradicated.

The port Macquarie muster collected 300 toads in 2000, 260 in 2001, 160 in 2002 and 20 in 2004. Each year more people registered to participate. The 2005 the muster was brought forward to before the breeding season commenced. By the end of the week no toads were collected by the "hit squad". Was the muster done at the wrong time of the year?

What they did find was a new great barred frog breeding site in the centre of the port. All up no toads longer than 2" were found.

Female toads can release up to 20,000 eggs in one go. Eggs, tadpoles and toads are all toxic.

In February 2006 the next Cane toad muster in Port Macquarie has a serious chance to exterminate them from the region.

In other parts of Australia extermination strategies include cane toad traps. The toad pushes the perspex flaps at the entry of the trap, with its head. The cane toad trap industry is so successful it is going on the stock exchange.

Punia Jeffery described her 11-day, 190 k walk on the Western Australian Bibbulmun track with 19 fellow trekkers. See page 3 & 11. She passed Gardiner's River, black with tannin filled, fast flowing water, swinging bridges, lush country, intensely coloured flowers such as climbing sundew, granny's bonnets, orchids, trees everywhere, reptile and bird life and dense heathlands full of frogs. Frogs either heard or sighted include *Crinia georgiana*, *Cr glauerti*, *Cr pseudinsignifera*, *Geocrinia lutea*, *G. rosea*, *Litoria adelaidensis*, *Spicospina flammocaerulea* - Sunset frog and more. No aircraft, no vehicles, just the wind in the trees. Thank you Punia for sharing your wonderful experience.

Many events involving the Frogmobile and building the Rosebery pond were organised by our ambassador, Lothar Voigt. Lothar continues to need helpers urgently. Even 2 hours gives someone a short break.

All the Corroboree frog fundraising calendars were sold. Thank you again to the ever-generous FATS members and friends. Contact www.frogs.org.au to order a \$10 magnificent calendar. Several door prizes were won, pond-plants were sold and pond sand and gravel given away by Ann Peaston. The meeting ended with a light supper and plenty of frog conversation. MW

**BUS 525 FROM STRATHFIELD STATION
TO HOLKER STREET HOMEBUSH BAY**

Janet Loomes wrote to FATS with details of bus route 525 from Burwood and Strathfield train stations. The bus leaves from the North side of Strathfield station, stand C at 6.37pm, travels through Newington, to Holker Street and then to Silverwater and Parramatta. It takes about 18 minutes for the bus to travel from Strathfield station to Holker Street. Jamieson Street is off Holker Street.

Other buses leave Strathfield station, hourly at 6.07pm and 7.07pm etc. One can alight at Holker Street at the bus shed opposite the Correctional Centre, then take a relaxing 10-minute stroll Eastward along Holker Street, turning left into Jamieson Street and to the armory site at the end of the street. If you call us in advance (ie give us some warning), we can collect you from the bus shelter.

In the evening the bus leaves outside the Correctional Centre in Holker Street, near Avenue of Africa, at about 9.19pm and 10.19pm, returning to Strathfield Station 18 minutes later. Check times with trip planner 131500 or <http://www.131500.info/realtime/newjourney.asp> website. Many thanks to Janet. MW

STRANGE CUSTOMS

The Customs House librarian rang in on the Helpline. A colleague had just come back from her lunch, still holding a take-away salad box. Inside, amongst the half eaten greenstuff and dressing and onion slices – yes, you guessed it, it just had to happen – inside there was this dear little struggling frog.

Whilst frogs are known to be very tasty, this customs officer exercised laudable restraint. The little frog got its French dressing wiped off again, was popped back into the take-away box and was rescued. It is now in safe hands (well, mine for the time being anyway). It turned out to be a *Litoria ewingi*, a Whistling Tree Frog or Southern Brown Tree Frog (e.g. <http://frogs.org.au/frogs/species/Litoria/ewingi/>). (left)

The stowaway Asian Black-spined Toad that briefly fell into my hands last year was also courtesy of Australian Customs – because the suitcase had slipped through their fingers. It was only when the holidaymakers, freshly back from Thailand, opened the case that Toad got to see its welcoming committee. Although only the second emissary of its kind known to have reached our shores, it was – as is our custom – about to be treated rather badly but humanely.

In the present wet weather the Helpline phone is ringing itself hoarse. There is not a day when someone or other is not upset over the neighbour's frog noise. Some say point-blank they want to get rid of them. Others at least ask nicely if someone could come and relocate them. I think they always mean the neighbours, really.

People who can't blame any neighbours blame their cats, usually (daily, at the moment; this must be prime vendetta time). I must come and Rescue the frogs from their garden straight away because they got this cat, you see. One lady had TWO cats, and she can't keep them indoors at night because her son is allergic to them! So I have to Rescue all the frogs out of Sydney and maybe out of Australia, because there are cats everywhere. Steve Irwin, you have a lot to answer for with your "Oh I LOVE Rescuing wildlife!", as you pull one animal after another out of the bush.

The docos, the nature mags, the Frogmobile even, have left one simple message even with the most well-meaning of citizenry: Frogs are endangered. That frog I just found in my garden must surely be lost and very rare and must be Rescued. "I have lived in Blacktown for 18 years and I have never seen a frog there. I know there are no frogs in Blacktown."

So by refusing to Rescue everything that moves, we can cause distress to frog fiends and frog friends alike. Fortunately the frog in the salad box did still move and was spotted by an alert customs officer. And was rescued. As is our custom.

I never asked what happened to the rest of the salad. L.V.



Litoria ewingi, Whistling Tree Frog or Southern Brown Tree Frog distribution

FROGBITS & TADPIECES

Congratulations to 14-year-old Amon, who bred his Dainty Green Tree Frogs in a plastic cage! He put the cage in his garden and flooded it. So they spawned, and the eggs hatched.

The Australian Reptile Park did it again – invited all the local herp societies, including FATS, to their Christmas party on 4 December. John Weigel laid on a great BBQ and got his staff to give us tours behind the scenes. Eric the crocodile didn't get to eat any of the keepers (it tried), but the monster Reticulated Python was more successful – with a goat. Thank you, ARP, for the perfect day we had!

On Sunday, 21 May is the Million Paws Walk Day in Centennial Park. If you want to be in that number, go marching in, walk up to the Frogmobile and say hello. By the Duck Pond as usual, between 10 and 3 o'clock. L.V.



Walpole

FROG PARTIES ON THE DORRIGO PLATEAU

We thought it long overdue that we updated FATS members on our more recent frog and wildlife experiences.

We first moved from Sydney to live on the Dorrigo Plateau five years ago. We changed homes 6 months ago to our present 20 acre property which borders Juluy Juluum National Park, some 10 kilometers due north of Dorrigo. We think of ourselves as 'caretakers' of this land which we hope to turn into a nature reserve. We care for 10 acres of rainforest and 10 acres of pasture. We will encourage the rainforest to regenerate most of the pasture over time by ceasing the previous cattle grazing. We are at approx 700-750 metres above sea level and our property is gently undulating.

Whilst we do not have a creek on the property we do have a man-made dam located in one of our existing rainforest remnants. Now that cattle no longer roam most of our property we hope to encourage our dam to become more frog friendly by introducing native reeds and water plants. Whilst we think we would like small native fish to control mosquito larvae in the dam and in various open water tanks we are a little nervous about whether to go down this path! Currently our dam is devoid of vegetation but it is completely surrounded by rainforest up to the water's edge with some over-hanging trees. It is shallow around the edges, deeper in the centre but not greatly. It has a clay bottom which cattle trod until last June. It gets very little sun in winter on the water with partially more sun in summer. Our rainfall is generally very good and in heavy rain two rainforest 'run-off' creeks flow clean water into the dam. Most of the year it is warm to hot but from late May to early September we are at risk of night frost but days can still be very warm.

We are excited to find ourselves surrounded by many amphibians and reptiles and love having plenty of wildlife around us. In addition to frogs we take a close interest in birds, butterflies & moths including caterpillars and snakes and lizards as well as a general interest in all nature's treasures. We maintain a monthly species list of everything we see or hear. Because our frog population is high so is our snake population. Our most common snakes are:

The Red-bellied Black Snake; *Pseudechis porphyriacus*

The Carpet Python; *Morelia spiloto variegata*

The Black-bellied Swamp Snake; *Hemiaspis signata*

The Golden Crowned Snake; *Cacophis squamulosus*

and The Eastern Tiger Snake; *Notechis scutatus*

To date the most common frog species seen around our home is the colourful *Litoria chloris*; Red-eyed Tree Frog, they call every wet or humid night (and we have quite a few) from mid September through to early May.

At times we have 30-50 of them close to the house in rainforest trees, on rocks, water tanks, lawns etc. Those in amplexus will spawn in almost any open container holding water. Thus we also have *Litoria chloris* tadpoles everywhere in various stages of development. Sometimes at night if we wish to listen to the radio or TV we have to turn the volume very high to hear as these lovely frogs can be deafening and will usually call until after 02.00 am but on really wet nights some continue calling until after dawn. Living in a remote location can be so peaceful after coping with noise in the city but you soon become accustomed to going to sleep with the huge frog parties going on!

Again on moist or humid warm nights in the shallow water on the edge of our rainforest dam can be found amplexing couples of the Great Barred Frog; *Mixophyes fasciolatus* and sitting on the ground in the surrounding leaf litter under the rainforest trees single *Mixophyes fasciolatus* can be heard calling and their eyes easily spotted by using a strong torch light held at your eye level. From a distance when a dozen or more frogs are calling it sounds somewhat similar to dogs barking some way off! Our dam has hundreds of very large tadpoles which we presume are also *Mixophyes fasciolatus*.

Each spring & summer we hear and see Fletcher's frog; *Lechriodus fletcheri* again close to the house often in or around our flower pots.

Another frog sometimes found close to the house is Lesueur's Frog; *Litoria lesueuri*. Again we have found them amplexing.

Other frogs we have recorded on and close to our property, some being common, are the

Bleating Tree Frog also known as Kefersteins Tree Frog; *Litoria dentata*

Dwarf Tree Frog; *Litoria fallax*

Peron's Tree Frog; *Litoria peronii*

Striped Marsh Frog; *Limnodynastes peronii*

Whistling Tree Frog; *Litoria verreauxii verreauxii*

Broad-palmed Frog; *Litoria latopalmeta*

Now that our involvement with cattle farming has ceased we hope to have more time to study our local wildlife including our many frogs and will try to provide the FATS Group with more detailed information next time we update you about our life in the country.

One frog we are disappointed not to have found on the Dorrigo Plateau is *Litoria caerulea*, it is perhaps our current favourite frog and we keep hoping we will one day discover it thriving in these slightly cooler climes.

Regards to all FATS members and keep up your interest in protecting Australia's frogs, **Carol and Trevor Deane**

SCIENTISTS PLAY LEAPFROG TO HELP SAVE A SPECIES



Go wild ... southern corroboree frogs take a moment before hopping off to a new life in NSW's Jagungal Wilderness region.

After three years in a refrigerated shipping container in Melbourne 200 desperately endangered corroboree frogs will see their first high-country dawn.

Once the southern corroboree frog was one of the more common alpine species, with hundreds of colonies living in the nation's highest swamps. But in the 1980s and '90s their numbers plummeted, and today a mere 18 colonies are left, most with fewer than five adults.

Climate change, drought and amphibian chytrid fungus disease have all been blamed for taking corroboree frogs to the edge of extinction.

Since 1997 the NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service and the Amphibian Research Centre in Melbourne have run a joint program in which about 4000 captive-reared tadpoles have been released into Kosciuszko National Park in the hope that they would mature into breeding adults.

Unfortunately that effort has failed because as tadpoles they are believed to come into contact with other species infected with the fungal disease.

The Parks Service Threatened Species Officer, David Hunter, said no matter how many tadpoles were released it did not seem to have any impact on the size of the adult population.

"All our data is suggesting they're likely to go extinct in the next five to 10 years," he said.

So scientists have decided to use the trick for which amphibians are famous - leapfrogging.

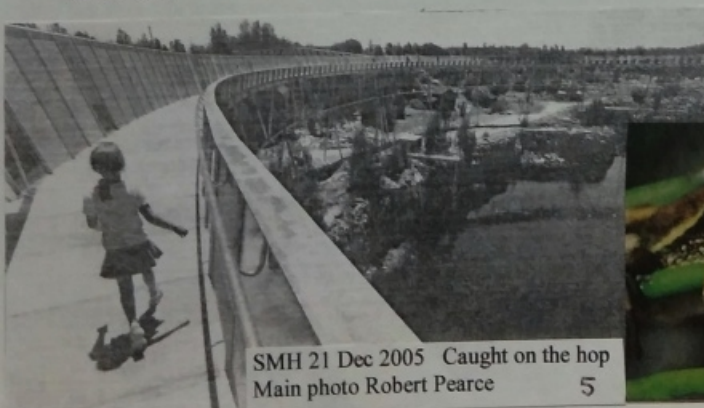
The Director of the Amphibian Research Centre, Mr Gerry Marantelli, said as adults the frogs were completely terrestrial.

"They don't go near the water again - they even lay their eggs on land and wait for the swamps to flood," said Mr Marantelli, who has raised the frogs released yesterday for the past three years.

"We have to leapfrog the tadpole stage, when they would normally come into contact with other species carrying the chytrid fungus."

Mr Hunter said a lot depended on the success of yesterday's release. "This is our best option for trying to prevent the extinction of this species in the wild."

Article sent to Frogcall by Punia Jeffery written by James Woodford SMH 11.1.06 Photo: Chris Lane



SMH 21 Dec 2005 Caught on the hop
Main photo Robert Pearce



IT'S the pits ... Verity Lees, 6, of Concord, is one of the first people to cross the aerial walkway over the historic brickpit at Sydney Olympic Park. The pit, which is more than 100 years old, had been marked for development as a tennis centre before the Olympics but was saved after the discovery of an endangered green and golden bell frog, above, on the site. The walkway, unveiled yesterday by the NSW Tourism Minister, Sandra Nori, will allow visitors to access the brickpit from above while preserving the habitat of the endangered frogs.
Aaron Timms



Fig. 189. Crapaud.



Fig. 186. Grenouille.



Fig. 188. Rainette.

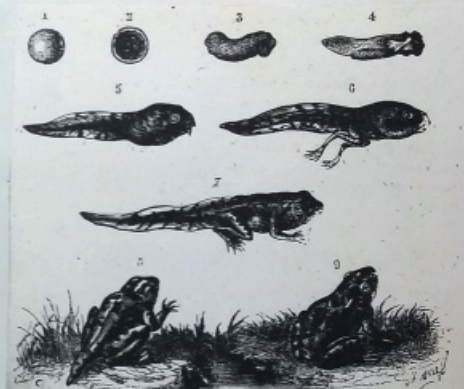


Fig. 187. Développement du Têtard.

Œuf de Grenouille. — 2. Œuf fécondé et entouré d'une vésicule. — 3. Premier âge du Têtard. — 4. Apparition des branches respiratoires. — 5. Développement des branches du Têtard. — 6. Formation des pattes postérieures du Têtard. — 7. Formation des pattes antérieures, suppression graduelle des branchies. — 8. Développement des ossements, réduction de la queue. — 9. Grenouille parfaite.

Studies on the endangered green and golden bell frog have identified the former Enfield marshalling yards as home to one of the species' most significant colonies in Sydney.

Tensions erupted over the small frog last week when the No Port Enfield action group (NOPE) and Sydney Ports Corporation (SPC) both rushed to do their own studies on frog numbers.

SPC has commissioned frog expert Arthur White to study the Enfield frog colony as part of an environmental assessment for a freight terminal on the land.

But NOPE said it had so far been refused permission to enter the site, which is owned by SPC.

SPC was inventing bureaucratic reasons to halt their study, NOPE spokesperson Gary Blaschke said.

"They have told us that we can't enter the site in the next eight



Endangered: Green and golden bell frogs have made Enfield their home.

weeks because they are doing a clean-up program," he said.

"Then before we go ahead we would have to do a site induction onto the site, fill out a program of where and when we will be there and have a Sydney Ports staff member with us at all times.

"All it is is a slow down of the process. We have been effectively halted."

The next eight weeks were the optimal time for a study on the frogs, Mr Blaschke

said. A spokesperson for SPC said a contractor had started doing demolition work on the site and no-one would be allowed access to it until the work was completed in eight weeks.

In a Department of Environment and Conservation's recovery report on the frog, released in February, the Enfield marshalling yards site was listed as housing one of the top three most important Sydney colonies of the frog.

Frog leaps to centre stage

The freight terminal proposed by SPC would operate 24 hours per day, seven days per week and accommodate 300,000 6-metre containers.

A similar proposal for a 40 per cent larger freight terminal on the site was made in 2002 but rejected a year later by the State Government after community outrage forced an independent inquiry, which found the plans were not acceptable in their current form.

CHYTRID AND FATS FIELD TRIPS

The Amphibian Chytrid Fungus is a new big problem. It is a serious and quickly spreading frog-killing disease. It is now sweeping through Australia and through many other countries, and it is being blamed for many frog extinctions. Because this microscopic fungus cannot survive upon drying out or if it is kept above 30° C, it is harmless to humans.

Chytrid is also fairly harmless to tadpoles, but they are carriers, and they usually die as soon as they turn into baby frogs. Older frogs may have some resistance to it – they probably keep fighting it off until they get stressed or fall upon hard times.

It is hard to recognise whether a frog has chytrid; it may look healthy until the end. And because it is very hard to tell whether a water body is infected, we have to make sure that no water droplets, no moisture at all, is taken from one site to another. Chytrid is water-borne! So here is what to do – only ten points to remember:

1. Make a sensible decision about what is a “site” that could infect another one.
2. Try to avoid going to more than one site on the same day or the same night. If that’s not practical, either only “earball” the next site from the road, without going in, or make sure that all equipment and footwear is disinfected or changed.
3. If you do need to go to more than one site, go first to the site that is the environmentally most sensitive one (e.g. one with rare frog species or with flowing water).
4. And don’t bring any chytrid back to your home or your suburb. Wear gum boots that you can get the mud off and wipe down with household disinfectant between sites, or have several changes of footwear bagged between sites. If you took a car right up to the site into the mud, scrape the tyres too (once you’re by the road), and if the next site is very sensitive, scrub disinfectant onto the tyres.
5. Before you start out, equipment must be disinfected or at least bone-dry. Or have separate sets that get bagged. Small items can be disinfected with alcohol wipes. Plastic bags must be new or have been disinfected before and very well rinsed. (They can be rinsed in water from the same site, as long as none of that water can contaminate the next site.)
6. For boots, waders, nets, torches, headlamps, tyres etc, use a clearly labelled spray bottle with undiluted household disinfectant (e.g. Toilet Duck). Rinse after five minutes. Do this at a safe distance from the water body.
7. One frog per bag. Don’t re-use frog bags between sites, and if possible not even within sites. There

are also some other frog diseases about which we still know very little.

8. Handle frogs only when necessary. Either use a new disposable glove for each frog or collect the frog through an inverted plastic bag.
9. Any spawn, tadpoles, detritus, water plants and spare water that you take from the site must be regarded as if they were infected, for as long as any of these will remain in your care. And never release any of these at another site.
10. Read the Frog Hygiene Protocol on www.nationalparks.nsw.gov.au/pdfs/hyprfrog.pdf LV



Peron's Tree frog with a leech hitch-hiker. Photo by Stewart Gemmill.

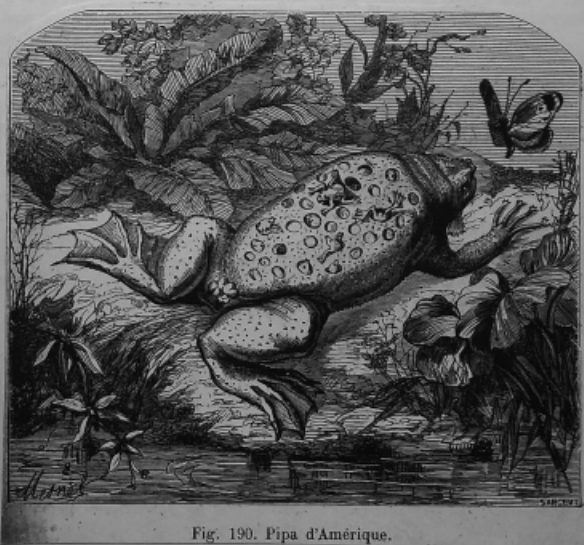


Fig. 190. Pipa d'Amérique.

Tableau de la Nature, By Louis Figuier
Ouvrage illustré à l'usage de la jeunesse
(Nature encyclopedia for young people) Paris 1876

TOADBUSTERS KEEN TO CATCH 10,000TH TOAD

Like their ghostbusting counterparts, Toadbusters are here to save the world - from cane toads at least. Scores of volunteers from Gladstone in Queensland's south-east will be celebrating a rather unusual milestone next week when they capture their 10,000th toad after years of hunting the reviled pest.

And like the Ghostbusters, who lived by the catchery "they're here to save the world", Gladstone's toad chasers are on a mission to save the environment - one toad at a time.

"I think people volunteer with the thought they personally can do something positive for their environment," Toadbusters coordinator Anna Hitchcock said.

"No one really likes toads either, so that helps."

Toad hunts, which attract up to 50 people, are held weekly during the summer breeding season.

Volunteers armed with torches, safety goggles and gloves flush out hundreds of the wary critters during the night at local duck ponds and housing estates.

They are then handed over to the Gladstone City Council, which humanely freezes them to death before incinerating the bodies.

Bush Telegraph articles forwarded by Noel May Frog-friendly ponds in Watagan State forests Spring 2004

Are frogs fussy when it comes to choosing a pond in which to breed? Do different species prefer different conditions? Researchers from Forests NSW are conducting a new study into the use of fire dams by frogs in State forests on the central coast to find answers to these questions.

"As their name suggests, fire dams exist for the primary purpose of supplying water during times of bushfire," Forests NSW researcher, Frank Lemckert, said. "What people might not realise is that they also provide important habitats for frogs."

Frank said researchers have constructed more than 30 dams of different shapes, sizes and depths in the Watagan State forests and plan to monitor their usage for the next five years.

"The immediate aim is to observe any preferences among the different frog species when choosing a pond," Frank said. "This should allow us to make reasonably accurate predictions about the types of pond environment that attract certain species."

Just as a person might consider certain features when buying a property, frogs will often look for particular conditions when choosing a pond. Frank said the persons tree frog, which is common in the Watagans, appears to prefer ponds with more emergent vegetation around the perimeter but minimal shade over the centre.

"This information could potentially be used to encourage frog communities to congregate in certain areas within the forest, making it easier to monitor their numbers and protect habitat during timber harvesting."

Frank said the Watagan State forests are home to around 25 species of frog, including the rare giant burrowing frog and heath frog, which make them an ideal site for the study.

- Emma McMahon Public Affairs, Sydney



Ms Hitchcock said 9,954 toads had been caught in the group's five years and next week's toad busting session would be a milestone.

Competition to catch the 10,000th toad was expected to be fierce.

"There's a lot of competition between different family groups," Ms Hitchcock said, describing toad hunting as a "fun, family activity".

"And it has been known for one group to realise that they were a couple of toads behind, to go and actually deliberately catch a few more just so that they beat someone else."

A record 850 toads were caught in an hour last December but most sessions average between 200 and 400 toads.

Cane toads were introduced to Australia in 1935 from Hawaii in what proved a vain hope that they would eat the beetles that were destroying sugar cane crops in north Queensland.

They have since marched across Australia, poisoning millions of native animals - from lizards to crocodiles - including in world heritage-listed Kakadu National Park.

<http://news.ninemsn.com.au/article.aspx?id=81565>

forwarded to Frogcall by Steve Weir

Bush Telegraph articles forwarded by Noel May Heath frogs move into repaired dam Winter 2005

Work by Forests NSW to give frogs in the Watagan Mountains a variety of homes is continuing, with habitat provided for several threatened and common frog species in the form of constructed or remediated dams.

Forests NSW ecologist Adam Fawcett said that a large number of frogs had moved into new dams in the central coast forests (as reported in *Bush Telegraph* Autumn 2004). Perons tree frogs (*Litoria peroni*), whistling tree frogs (*Litoria verreauxi*) and common froglets (*Crinia signifera*) are just a few of the species found so far.

Adam said that in addition to new dams, an existing leaking dam that was repaired by staff with assistance from 'Work for the Dole' participants and Conservation Volunteers Australia was now home to threatened heath frogs (*Litoria litjehohni*), leading to lovely night time serenades for campers in a nearby campsite.

"Buffer zones are established to protect the dams during harvesting operations by

the implementation of a buffer zone, particularly where threatened frog species are detected within the area," Adam said.

"Additional protection measures are implemented for individual threatened species during harvesting. These ensure the protection of breeding, shelter and foraging habitat and ensure the long-term protection of populations."

Adam said late spring and summer was the peak survey time for summer breeding frogs because they are most active at this time of year, with males calling regularly to attract females.

Weather conditions also play a key role in the detection of frogs during surveys, with warmer and more humid nights seeing greater activity.

"Dams within forests provide artificial breeding sites for frogs but many species within the Watagans prefer creeks and streams as their habitat of choice," Adam said.

"Much of the effort of pre-harvest surveys looking at frogs is directed at surveying creeks and streams for these species, such as the stuttering frog (*Mixophyes balbus*), to ensure that their habitat is identified and protected appropriately during forestry operations."

- Leah Flint Communications, Maitland



Rarely seen heath frogs have moved into a repaired dam in the Watagan State Forests. Photo by Frank Lemckert

The final component of the Sydney Metropolitan Strategy, City of Cities - A Plan For Sydney's Future, the NSW Government's 25 year plan for Sydney, was officially released on 4th December, 2005 by Premier Morris Iemma and Planning Minister Frank Sartor.

Two versions of the plan are available - a 64 page overview and a 316 page document with supporting information.

* Further information, including fact sheets and the supporting information document can be downloaded from: <http://www.metrostrategy.nsw.gov.au/dev/uploads/paper/introduction/index.html>

. A CD containing the full document is available upon request. For a copy of the CD and/or one free printed copy of the City of Cities overview, send an email with your name, telephone number and address to metrostrategy@dipnr.nsw.gov.au.

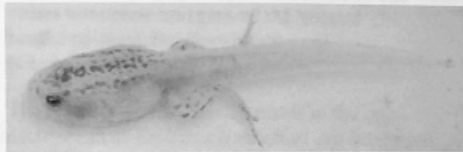
* For details on the Strategy, please visit the Urban Sustainability section of the NCC web site at <http://www.nccnsw.org.au/urbansustainability/index.php> and follow the links to A Sustainable Sydney. **Anne Miller**
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Field Trip Report - THE WATAGANS. 14.1.06.

Our rather large group met at Coorabong. The recent rain & warm temperatures were a good omen for us. Punia had already spotted a green tree snake & it was certainly a sign of things to come. We headed off into the Watagan ranges, stopping off at several water-bodies. We quickly rattled off *Litoria revelata*, *Litoria chloris*, *Mixophyes fasciolatus* and both *Uperolia fusca* & *laevigata*. – and our night had only just begun ! Driving along the firetrails we came across a diamond python. At one of the fire-dams we disturbed a red-bellied black snake which gave us an astonishing display of its swimming capabilities. We checked out many of the local fire-dams, creeks & other moist frog habitats.

Brad, Matthew & Grant kept us busy with a constant flow of various tree frogs, marsh frogs & innumerable barred frogs – the barred frogs being a particular favourite amongst FATS members. At Boarding House Dam, Brad nonchalantly stepped out of the car & picked up a *Mixophyes iteratus* – not many froggers can do that ! As well as a leaf-tailed gecko we added the very interesting *Lechriodus fletcheri* to our list, a new species for most of our group & a good way to round off our night.

A fantastic night with many demands that we do it again next year. Many thanks to Brad, Matthew & Grant for lending their talents on the night & for all their obvious hard work in planning & organising a great fieldtrip. R.W.



About six weeks ago Julie Farrell spotted this black-eyed pale Striped Marsh Frog pond in Avalon. She then kept it separate and kindly gave Lothar updates on its progress. Two weeks ago she even brought it in. It is now a rumbustious metamorph, measuring 71 mm.

Assuming all goes well, we will see more pics when it's a frog. Bets will be taken and opinions appreciated.

Steve suggests it may be hypo-melanistic, or possibly anerythritic. If she gets the orange/red dorsal stripe she's not anerythritic.



Old Growth Paperbark (Site 2 - Lumleys Lane)

Woodburn to Ballina portion
of the proposed Pacific Highway Upgrade

Threat to Wallum Froglet, Wallum Sedge Frog

As we approach the end of the holiday season here on the far north coast, associated with the ongoing tragic loss of lives on the Pacific Highway is a less publicised but very extreme threat to biodiversity from the RTA. The RTA has just released it's preferred route for the Woodburn to Ballina portion of the proposed Pacific Highway Upgrade. Refer www.bhag.org.au

Please try to gain awareness and support for comments. Include in your submissions that extensive environmental assessments be carried out and that they be made available to the public immediately on completion.

I ask you to make a public submission during the exhibition of this final proposed preferred route before 31 January to the RTA on this matter. The RTA website link is <http://www.woodburntoballina.com.au/>

There are appalling environmental losses that the RTA is proposing to be accepted. Those of you who understand how the loss of biodiversity anywhere affects us everywhere should be very concerned at the incorporated email from local ecologist, Mark Graham, who is extremely concerned at how the RTA is failing to acknowledge the problems. Until recently Mark was the Senior Ecologist on staff at Coffs Harbour City Council.

If nothing else I ask you to just scan his list to understand the scope of the loss. Take a look at how many species of plants and animals are listed in the following email. Virtually ALL OF THEM are 'protectively' scheduled under the Threatened Species Conservation Act schedules 1 or 2. Losing a handful or even two of threatened species is par for the governmental course, but on this selected route I'm staggered. These losses will be huge! Even if you don't take it any further you should be aware of just how extensive these impacts will be.

The preferred route - 2C (2km longer than the existing Pacific Highway) - will destroy the entire southern margins of the second southern-most Big Scrub remnant (Coolgardie).

The alignment will directly result in the destruction of *Endiandra muelleri ssp bracteata*, *Isoglossa eranthemoides* (southern most recorded occurrence), *Syzygium hodgkinsoniae* (southern most recorded occurrence), *Archidendron hendersonii* (southern most recorded occurrence), *Marsdenia longiloba*, *Macadamia tetraphylla* (southern most recorded occurrence), *Oberonia titania*, *Archidendron mullerianum* (southern most recorded occurrence), *Cordyline congesta* and a host of regionally significant flora species.

The following threatened fauna species will lose essential habitat from the construction of Route 2C (all recorded during independent assessments) Coxens Fig Parrot, Albert's Lyrebird (southern most recorded occurrence and isolated population), Bush Stone Curlew, Powerful Owl, Masked Owl, Brolga, Spotted Tailed Quoll, Grey Crowned Babbler, Squirrel Glider, Koala, Rose Crowned Fruit Dove, Wompoo Fruit Dove, Barred Cuckoo Shrike, White Eared Monarch, **Wallum Froglet, Wallum Sedge Frog**, Bush Hen, Red Legged Pademelon, Planigale, Eastern Blossom Bat, Northern Long Eared Bat, Long Nosed Potoroo, Grey headed Flying Fox - for some of these species the only remaining populations in the Lower Richmond Valley will be destroyed. **EXTRACTS of message from Alan Rich BA BAppSc(Hons) JP Ballina Councillor for B Ward Rous (Water) County Council, Deputy Chairman Phone / facs: 02 66 877 092 Ballina Shire Council 66 86 4444 Web site www.nsww.quik.com.au/alanrich**



Old Growth Paperbark (Site 2 - Lumleys Lane)



Site 8 - Tuckean Broadwater

In addition to clearance of significant native vegetation, wildlife corridors from the Blackwall Ranges, Coolgardie and Tuckean Broadwater will be split from the Wardell Wetlands by the Route 2C, a proposed six lane motorway/tollway. There are no mitigation options available for the majority of the rare and threatened fauna species occurring in the area.

HYGIENE PROTOCOLS

As our members would be aware, our frogs are faced with the serious threat of chytrid fungus. To help prevent the spread of this insidious pathogen, FATS will be introducing a range of hygiene protocols that will be adopted on all fieldtrips. Currently, we are working with various authorities with the aim of developing suitable, standardised hygiene protocols for all fieldworkers. These protocols will eventually be adopted on all FATS fieldtrips. We will publish further details when a uniform policy is in place. In the meantime, we will adopt interim measures on our fieldtrips. We would also urge all members to follow hygiene protocols

when undertaking private excursions (particularly when visiting more than one water-body during the evening). Fieldtrip participants should understand that they may experience some inconveniences on fieldtrips (mainly wet shoes). Please remember however, that these small inconveniences will help protect our froglife. Members who regularly attend fieldtrips may wish to seriously consider the purchasing of gumboots. For others, please bring a dry change of shoes & socks for a comfortable drive home. If you have any questions about these new protocols, please phone me. Regards **Robert Wall**



FIELD TRIPS

Please book your place on field-trips; due to strong demand, numbers are limited (phone 9681-5308). Be sure to leave a contact number. Regardless of prevailing weather conditions, we will continue to schedule & advertise all monthly field-trips as planned. It is YOUR responsibility to re-confirm, in the final days, whether the field-trip is proceeding or has been cancelled. Phone Robert Wall on ph. 9681-5308.

February 24-26.

Jervis Bay National Park Camp-out.

Leader : To Be Confirmed.

The coastal heaths, woodlands & littoral vegetation of NSW have become much-threatened ecological communities. This weekend, studying the pristine & spectacular coastline of Jervis Bay, we will look at the wide variety of habitats that occur along undisturbed coastline sites & we will look at some of the frogs that make their home here. We will also discuss the implications of extensive, & often times uncontrolled, coastal development. Against the backdrop of the awesomely beautiful Jervis Bay / Booderee National Park, members will also have the opportunity of swimming, fishing, bushwalking or exploring the nearby Botanical Gardens. For enquiries phone Robert 9681-5308. BE QUICK

This concludes our Spring/Summer program. The 2006/2007 program recommences in September.

In the event of uncertain frogging conditions (e.g. prolonged / severe drought, hazardous and/or torrential rain, bushfires etc.), please phone 9681-5308. Remember ! - rain is generally ideal for frogging! Children must be accompanied by an adult. Bring enclosed shoes that can get wet (gumboots are preferable), torch, warm clothing and raincoat. Please be judicious with the use of insect repellent - frogs are very sensitive to chemicals! Please observe all directions that the leader may give. Children are welcome, however please remember that young children especially can become very excited and boisterous at their first frogging experience - parents are asked to help ensure that the leader is able to conduct the trip to everyone's satisfaction. All field trips are strictly for members only - newcomers are however, welcome to take out membership before the commencement of the field-trip. All participants accept that there is some inherent risk associated with outdoor fieldtrips & by attending agree to; a release of all claims, a waiver of liability & an assumption of risk.

Our specialist research field trips with Graham Pyke & the Australian Museum. Ideal for all students & serious enthusiasts. Locations at Long Reef, North Avoca & Broughton Island. Contact Robert Wall for info.

FROGWATCH HELPLINE 0419 249 728

FATS COMMITTEE CONTACTS

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INSURANCE DISCLAIMER FATS has public liability insurance for its various public functions. FATS members should be aware that this insurance does not cover FATS members (it covers the public & indemnifies FATS). We are currently checking with insurance firms to see whether a realistic group policy can be organised to cover FATS volunteers and people who attend field trips.

FATS meetings commence at 7.30pm and end about 10.30pm, on the first Friday of every EVEN month (February, April, June, August, October and December), at Building 22, RANAD, Jamieson Street, Sydney Olympic Park, (SOP) Homebush Bay. We hold six informative, informal, topical and practical meetings each year. Visitors are welcome. We are actively involved in monitoring frog populations and other field studies, produce the newsletter FROGCALL and FROGFACTS information sheets. All expressions of opinion and information are published on the basis that they are not to be regarded as an official opinion of the Frog and Tadpole Study Group Committee, unless expressly so stated. Material from Frogcall MAY NOT BE REPRODUCED without the prior consent of the Editor or President of FATS. Permission from FATS and/or author/s must be obtained prior to any commercial use of material. The author/s and source must be fully acknowledged. Always confirm date and location of the next meeting.

Thank you to the many FATS members and committee for articles and assistance in producing Frogcall.