

FROG CALL

THE FROG AND TADPOLE STUDY GROUP NSW Inc.

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NEWSLETTER No. 179 JUNE 2022

Our April main presenter Sarah Stock (below right) spoke about the genetic isolation of *Litoria littlejohni* and *Litoria watsoni*.

Pictured with her is Samantha Wallace (below left)



You are invited to our FATS meeting. It's free. Everyone is welcome.

Arrive from 6.30 pm or a 7pm start.

Friday 3rd June 2022

FATS meets at the Education Centre, Bicentennial Pk, Sydney Olympic Park

Easy walk from Concord West Railway Station and straight down Victoria Ave.

Take a torch in winter.

By car: Enter from Australia Ave at the Bicentennial Park main entrance, turn off to the right and drive through the park. It's a one way road. Turn right into P10f car park.

Or enter from Bennelong Rd/Parkway. It's a short stretch of two way road. Turn left.

Park in P10f car park, the last car park before the Bennelong Rd. exit gate.

FATS MEETING 7PM FRIDAY 3RD JUNE 2022

There are no COVID meeting restrictions.

6.30 pm Lost frogs seeking forever homes: Please bring your membership card and cash \$50 donation. Sorry, we don't have EFTPOS. Your NSW NPWS amphibian licence must be sighted on the night. Adopted frogs can never be released. Contact us before the night and FATS will confirm if any frogs are ready to rehome.

7.00 pm Welcome and announcements.

7.30 pm The main speaker is George Madani talking about "How do we sleep while our beds are burning? Impacts of the 2019-20 mega-fires on the Golden-tipped Bat." See page 4

9.30 pm Show us your frog images. Tell us about your frogging trips or experiences. Guessing competition, frog adoptions continue, supper, relax and chat with frog friends and experts.

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DESIGN A MURAL FOR THE GREENACRE BELL FROG SITE

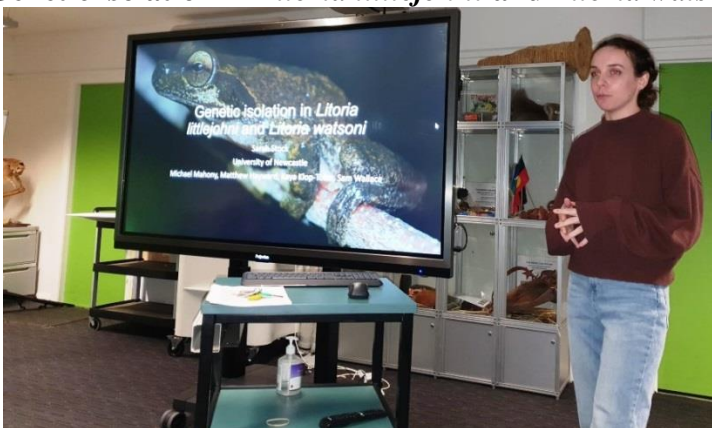


The Greenacre Bell frog site is beside the Enfield railway yards. The long entranceway into the site is bounded on one side by a 4 metre high noise wall. This wall is an ideal location for a large mural depicting the frogs and the conservation area. We know that we have some talented people in the FATS membership and invite all to think about what would be an eye-catching mural. The mural, obviously must have a Bell frog in it, but should also convey something of the importance of the site. Greenacre is a highly industrial suburb and green spaces are rare. Perhaps the mural could reflect a return to a more natural world, or it could incorporate the idea of community strength and frog conservation. I can't tell you what to include in your mural design, but please have a think about it.

If you have an idea, do a sketch and email it to Arthur White at arfawhite@gmail.com. There is no prize for this except the prestige of having your design depicted on a 4m wide and 3 m high canvas. Get those grey cells working. **Arthur White**

LAST FATS MEETING APRIL 2022

Genetic isolation in *Litoria littlejohni* and *Litoria watsoni*



Sarah Stock main presenter talking about *Litoria watsoni* April FATS meeting Image above and below by Phillip Grimm



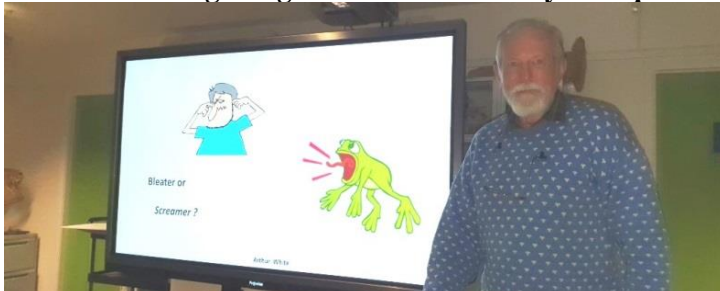
Fabian Byers with a Leaves of Smiths Lake shirt. Image above and below by Phillip Grimm



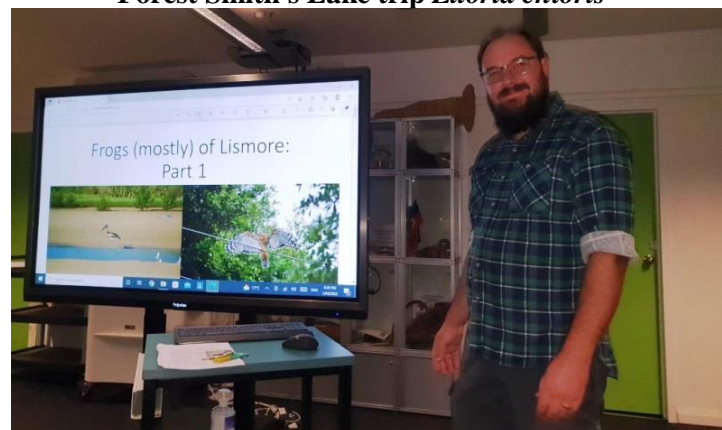
Michelle Toms speaking about Smiths Lake FATS trip



Image above by Peter Spradbrow Wallingat State Forest Smith's Lake trip *Litoria chloris*



Arthur White spoke about the Berowra Fauna Fair and Bleaters or Screamers at the April FATS meeting.



Peter Spradbrow speaking of Lismore area frogs Image by Phillip Grimm



Sarah Stock FATS main speaker in April 2022 with *Litoria littlejohni* male and female

FATS AT 2022 BEROWRA FAUNA FAIR



In March 2022, the restrictions on public gatherings were being eased and FATS was able to present a display at the Berowra Fauna Fair. This was a new event and was held in a small community hall and grounds. Despite the newness of the event, it was well patronized.



We had lots of locals coming in to see what was on show and many stayed for the various talks that were given throughout the

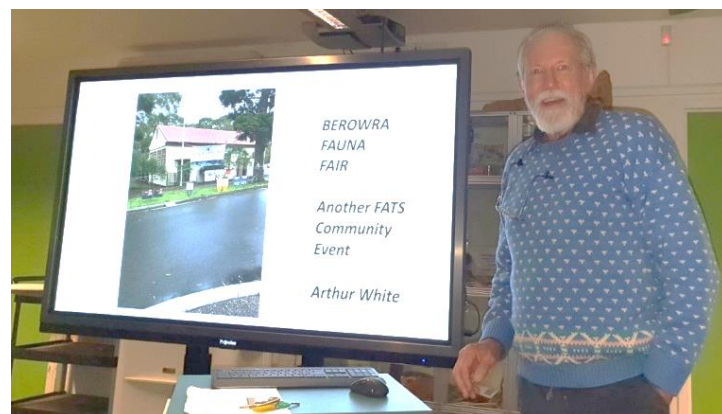
day on various aspects of the wildlife in the Berowra area. Marion Anstis spoke about the amphibians in the area, Arthur did two talks: the first on the turtles that inhabit the creeks, and the second was on the fossils found in the local area. Martyn Robinson, (bottom left image) a past FATS president, was also there. He spoke about the general ecology of the Berowra valley.



The FATS stall was very popular. We had lots of frog stories and questions from people and lots of interest in the various frogs on display. As usual, Kathy (below) and David Potter did most of the hard work and set up the display. Harriet Potter and Karen and Arthur White helped out on the stall. Other FATS stalwarts, Wendy and Phillip Grimm (left and above) manned the native plants stall at the fair.



In all, it was a fun event and one that FATS will probably be part of again next year. **Arthur White**



**Arthur White (above) image by Phillip Grimm
Other images on this page by Arthur White**

**IN NSW, FROG KEEPER
RECORD BOOKS NEED TO BE LODGED
BETWEEN 1 & 30 APRIL 2022**

See <https://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/licences-and-permits/wildlife-licences/native-animals-as-pets/frog-keeper-licences> and <https://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/licences-and-permits/wildlife-licences/native-animals-as-pets/native-animal-keeper-record-book>

FATS FROG-O-GRAPHIC COMPETITION

The FATS members Frog-O-Graphic competition opens on the 1st May and closes on the 31st August 2022.

Categories: Best Frog Image, Best Pet Frog Image, Most Interesting Image and People's Choice.

Winners are decided by a panel of judges.

People's Choice is voted for by everyone present at the October FATS meeting. Alternate arrangements will be made if we can't meet in October.

All entries are by email to photos@fats.org.au

Please state:

- * your name,
- * confirm that you are a financial member,
- * identify the frog species preferably by scientific name (in the file name) and location, if known,
- * whether the image is a pet frog and
- * your contact phone number

Max 6 entries per person

Max attachment size 6 MB

Fabulous prizes awarded. Entries must be original and your own work. They don't have to be recent images. The entries may appear in FrogCall, FATS Facebook, our web site and other FATS publications. **Arthur White**

FATS JUNE MAIN SPEAKER GEORGE MADANI

How do we sleep while our beds are burning? Impacts of the 2019-20 mega-fires on the Golden-tipped Bat.



Golden-tipped Bat Golden-tipped Bat *Phoniscus papuensis*

The 2019-20 megafires penetrated normally resilient and refugial habitats including Gondwanan rainforest and sheltered gullies impacting fire-sensitive plants and fauna. The impact of fire on micro-bats, particularly rainforest specialists, is poorly known. The golden-tipped bat (*Phoniscus papuensis*) images above and below, is an enigmatic and unique clutter specialist, which roosts in the suspended nests of two rainforest bird species.

We undertook an enormous survey effort for this infrequently captured species across its range in NSW to quantify how the 2019-20 megafires affected habitat occupancy.

We also radio-tracked bats to see how fire may have influenced roost selection on a local scale. We trialled artificial roosting habitat in burnt and unburnt areas and collected genetic samples to investigate the connectivity of populations.

Our study quantifies how fire reduces habitat suitability for this rainforest specialist and provides a baseline for future comparisons. High intensity fires threaten the local persistence of species like golden-tipped bats that are dependent on rainforest habitat, especially if such events become more common under a climate-driven change in fire regimes.

Images above and below by George Madani



FATS AGM NOTICE FRIDAY 5 AUGUST 2022

The FATS AGM will be held on Friday 5/8/2022, commencing 7pm. FATS meets at the Education Centre, Bicentennial Park, Sydney Olympic Park.

If you would like to ask any questions about joining the FATS committee, please give us a call. Contact our President Arthur White at least two weeks before the meeting for further information or to submit items.

We appreciate fresh ideas and new members on our committee. No experience required. The committee meets 6 times a year. No task commitments or time expected of committee members, other than what you are able to spare.

See contacts details on page 11. **Arthur White**



Workers at morning tea

**GREENACRE WORKING BEE
GREEN AND GOLDEN BELL FROG SITE**

The seemingly endless rain in Sydney finally ended (for a short time at least). FATS members were able to converge on the Green and Golden Bell Frog conservation area that is managed by FATS at Greenacre. The site was established late in 2021, new ponds were created and two large basins were formed to hold three plastic ponds each. Late in 2021, the first Green and Golden Bell Frogs moved onto the site, in response to broadcasted Bell frogs mating calls. Once at the site, the Bell frogs quickly bred and before we knew it we had lots of little Bell frogs around the ponds. While this was very exciting, it all happened too quickly as the site was not fully prepared for these little frogs.



Northern basin

The arrival of sustained rainfall was very helpful for the little frogs and many were able to grow and metamorphose on site, before dispersing into the surrounding areas. Fortunately, some Bell frogs have stayed at the site and it hoped that these frogs will be the founders for a permanent population at Greenacre.

The rain caused the vegetation at Greenacre to grow quickly, including many unwanted exotic weeds. Saturday, 7 May was only our second chance to attack the weeds on site, as well as start erecting a shed that will hold display tanks, monitoring equipment and tools.

We had nine willing workers on site, Wendy and Phillip Grimm, Punia Jeffery, Stuart Summer, Sara Mahoney, Peter Vickery, Robert Wall and Karen and Arthur White. First task was to remove the woody weeds that had become established. This proved harder than expected as the weeds resisted most attempts to dislodge them. Still a lot of small mulberry seedlings, coral tree seedlings, Cape Wattles (*Albizzia* sp.),

wattles, pampas grass, cotoneaster and Castor Oil plants were wrenched out and cast onto the large mounds of green waste.



**Green and Golden Bell Frog Greenacre May 2022
all images on page 5 by Wendy and Phillip Grimm**

During this work, Wendy Grimm found the only Green and Golden Bell frog seen that day- a mature male that was basking near the edge of one of the ponds. Phillip Grimm later found a Blue-tongue lizard hiding in the undergrowth.



Assembling shed panels

Robert and Arthur started assembling the panels for the site shed. Peter Vickery went home and came back with his lawn mower and he set to work to complete the ring track around the ponds. Later, Peter was given the task of repairing the holes in the boundary fence. The site is periodically visited by foxes and cats and we would like to keep them out, if possible. Stuart Summer, beavered away, slashing tall weeds around the rock refuge areas. Karen and Punia also set upon these areas, and when they had finished the rock slopes were a real landscape feature to behold.



Shrubby growth

We intend to hold another working bee within the next month. All FATS members who want to help improve this new conservation area are invited to attend. Check with Arthur to find out the date of the next working bee. **Arthur White**

FATS AT THE ROYAL EASTER SHOW 18-19/4/22



FATS at the 2022 Sydney Royal Easter Show

The lifting of many restrictions on community events because of COVID has finally allowed FATS to resume community displays. In April, FATS was able to host a stall in the main display pavilion at the Easter Show for the last two days of the show 18 and 19 April. For the other twelve days, this space was occupied by champion cats and dogs.



Sarah and Ryan Kershaw set up the display on the Monday morning, before the teeming hordes descended upon the pavilion. It didn't take long, before there were queues three and four deep of people trying to see the frogs or talk with Sarah, Ryan and Punia Jeffery. It was quite chaotic but nice to see so much interest in the frogs. Nearby, the judging of the best snakes on show was being held.



Tuesday, the last day of the show was less chaotic but still very busy. Kathy and David Potter and Karen and Arthur White manned the stalls. We had lots of questions and

comments from the public, as usual the cane toad evoked some unsympathetic comments. The younger kids enjoyed the challenge of trying to find the more cryptic or concealed frogs. The last day was the judging of the best lizards and frogs on show.

Thanks to the Potter family for arranging a great display and thanks to those who helped man the stall. We will be at the Easter Show again next year. So, if you would like to help on the stall, continue to read your FrogCall and look for details of upcoming community events. **Arthur White**



Images above and left on page 6 are by Rob Burns
Images below by Arthur White



Karen White and David Potter



Karen White and Kathy Potter



ANTHONY STIMSON SCORED A WONDERFUL ACKNOWLEDGEMENT AT THE EASTER SHOW “CHAMPIONS OF THE RAS”.



ANTHONY STIMSON'S CHAMPIONS OF THE RAS AWARD

Today was as very exciting day for Wild Expo, @Australian Wildlife Displays and Animals of Oz with Anthony Stimson awarded a Champions of the RAS award.

Each year the Royal Agricultural Society of NSW acknowledges and celebrates individuals who have made an outstanding contribution to the Sydney Royal Competitions.

Anthony's Champions of the RAS award was for the Domestic Animals.

Since 2011 Anthony and his team of amazing volunteers have been organising and delivering the Sydney Royal Easter Show Frog and Reptile Competition. And with that, we would like to thank all our volunteers, competitors and sponsors for their support, year after year ♥ **Vetafarm Livefoods Unlimited DoLittle Farm**



Royal Easter Show prize winners Image by Rob Burns



80 critically endangered spotted tree frogs *Litoria spenceri* have been released into Kosciuszko National Park.
Supplied: Alex Pike/Dept of Planning & Environment

RACE AGAINST TIME : SCIENTISTS' DESPERATE MOVE TO SAVE RARE FROG

Tucked away in the alpine region of the Kosciuszko National Park, 80 frogs are settling into new homes as scientists race against the clock to protect these valuable animals from extinction.

The spotted tree frog is critically endangered in NSW, just one step away from being extinct, and is one of many species battling a range of threats, including diseases and changing climate. This year, the NSW government released 80 spotted tree frogs into Kosciuszko National Park after they were severely affected by the unprecedented 2019-20 summer bushfires.

NSW Minister for Environment James Griffin said the species disappeared in the state in 2001 due to the chytrid fungus that almost wiped out the southern and northern corroboree frogs. Through work between the government's Saving our Species program and the Amphibian Research Centre in Melbourne, the frogs have been given a second chance. "In 2015, our threatened species experts released spotted tree frogs from this breeding program into the wild, and it's estimated that there were between 250-300 frogs in the wild," Griffin said. "Tragically, it's estimated that only about 10 of those frogs survived the devastating 2019-20 bushfires."

Department of Planning and Environment senior threatened species officer David Hunter said the fragile alpine ecosystem where the frogs lived was unique to NSW and Victoria and featured native wildlife found nowhere else on Earth.

"The spotted tree frog is fundamental to the maintenance of ecosystem health in the NSW upland rivers where it lives. It occupies many streams where they are the only frog species, and tadpoles of this species consume nutrients and algae in large numbers," Hunter said. "They are also food for other species such as snakes, birds, mammals and predatory invertebrates, playing an important role in the food web."

Only 12 populations of the spotted tree frog have been located in Victoria, predominantly on the north-western side of the Great Dividing Range, between the Central Highlands and Mt Kosciusko in NSW.

The Victorian Department of Land, Water and Planning said the species had disappeared from half of its known historic sites and was expected to become extinct without intervention.

The Australian Museum amphibian biologist and conservationist Dr Jodi Rowley said frogs played a vital part in the environment and were known as bioindicators, which are used to assess how healthy an ecosystem is. Without them, entire ecosystems can collapse. "They are the glue that sticks ecosystems together. In places where frogs have had dramatic declines there are nothing that steps up to fill that role," she said. "There are irreversible changes: the streams are full of algae because the tadpoles aren't there to eat it, animals that rely on frogs waste away. We need frogs." She added that the recent wet summer could create the perfect conditions for chytrid fungus to spread among frog populations, with scientists planning to conduct field research in coming months to see how severely the species had been impacted.

One of the main threats facing frogs was the chytrid fungus, she said, but the additional pressures of introduced predators – such as cats and foxes – as well as bushfires, droughts and climate change were severely affecting the species. They are not the only animal struggling in a rapidly changing climate.

The [latest NSW State of the Environment report](#) found almost 20 animals and plants have been added to the threatened species list in the past three years. Modelling predicts that only 496 of the 991 terrestrial species listed as threatened are predicted to survive in 100 years' time.

"It is a race against time," Rowley said. "One of the major challenges with frog conservation is that we are struggling to get the information we need to make the best decisions." While there are projects that rely on the help of citizen scientists to document frog populations, there was so much more information needed. "We're at a pivotal time in history which is terrifying and exciting: we have the ability and power to turn things around," she said.

<https://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/news/spotted-tree-frogs-released-into-national-park> to see video

<https://www.smh.com.au/environment/conservation/race-against-time-scientists-desperate-move-to-save-rare-frog-20220415-p5ado4.html> [Laura Chung](#) 18 April 2022 Sent to FrogCall by Punia Jeffery and Marion Anstis See story at https://www.abc.net.au/news/2022-04-18/spotted-tree-frogs-released-kosciuszko-national-park/100996770?fbclid=IwAR0lfHQrptfVXuS7OLCnqCQMckTIRHicbu_ajb8Uoq3UAT5LpU7APff4m f4 for image.

FROGS RETURN TO THE CENTRAL WEST WETLANDS

Frogs are striking up a chorus in the State's central west, taking advantage of wet weather and environmental flows to hatch a new generation.



Environment Minister James Griffin said it's great news that breeding activity has been detected at multiple sites in the Macquarie Marshes following 3 years of drought, with frogs heard calling for mates throughout the wetland system.

'The warmer weather and the La Niña event means continued breeding activity is predicted in the months ahead,' Mr Griffin said. 'Six frog species, which depend on water flows in the wetlands, had been heard calling during the November surveys. Scientists from the Department of Planning and Environment visited 14 sites and heard frogs calling at 12 of them.'

The species detected in the Macquarie Marshes include the barking marsh frog, broad palmed frog, eastern sign-bearing froglet, Peron's tree frog, salmon striped frog and the spotted marsh frog. Mr Griffin said frogs were a positive indicator of wetland recovery and are a critical part of the wetland food chain. They can respond quickly to water flows and their huge numbers make them a significant source of food for turtles, snakes and birds.

'In addition to recent rainfall, the Macquarie Marshes has also been supported by environmental flows to enhance river health and dependent plants and wildlife,' Mr Griffin said. 'Water for the environment plays a critical role in the Macquarie Marshes, supporting habitat and breeding opportunities for a variety of frog species between natural flow events.'

To find out where you can experience wetlands in NSW national parks, visit [Wetland environments](#). Check access before you go at [Alerts for NSW National Parks](#).

<https://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/news/frogs-return-to-the-central-west-wetlands> 10 February 2022
Forwarded to FATS by Punia Jeffery

TADBITS AND FROGPIECES

What the duck?! with Ann Jones ABC podcast

Fostering curiosity and passion for the natural world, in people young and old, is what we love to celebrate at FrogID. Lead Scientist, Dr Jodi Rowley, Australian Museum and Uni of NSW, share words of encouragement with a six-year-old frog-enthusiast named Lyra. If a young person around you has a question for the FrogID science team, please don't hesitate to contact us. We'd love to hear from them!

<https://www.abc.net.au/radionational/programs/what-the-duck/a-girl-walks-in-the-woods/13827868>

The Colong Foundation for Wilderness has officially changed its name to Wilderness

Australia. The new organisation will continue its fifty year tradition: fighting campaigns of great persistence, which have precise goals and high impact in the media and upon government.

Right now, ecosystems are becoming more fragile and ecological processes are facing collapse. Over 1,400 plant and animal species that live in Australian forests are threatened with extinction. Recent fires and floods have only worsened their plight, with 1 billion animals killed in the 2019/20 fires alone.

<https://www.wildernessaustralia.org.au/>

Australian Museum Herpetology and Uni of NSW PhD candidate Tim Cutajar has been awarded the Ernst Mayr Fellowship to spend three months working at the Smithsonian Tropical Research Institute, Panama! Tim will be researching how invertebrate-derived DNA, 'vacuumed' airborne DNA, and environmental DNA from water can be used to detect and understand threatened amphibian communities.

Tim is interested in innovations that can improve our understanding of biodiversity and species' distributions to inform conservation. Tim's research involves the development of iDNA (invertebrate-derived DNA) methods for increasing the detectability of amphibian species that are difficult to detect using traditional techniques. We can't wait to see what he finds!



MINDEROO FOUNDATION GRANT

Congratulations to Professor Rick Shine and Dr Georgia Ward-Smith from the School of Natural Sciences (together with the WA Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions) who were awarded \$600,000 from the Minderoo Foundation for their project “Cane toads in arid landscapes”.

The project aims to identify ways to control toads spreading into arid areas and therefore keep toads out of key biodiversity hotspots in the Pilbara. The researchers hope to identify effective methods to eradicate satellite populations founded by toads via inadvertent translocation in trucks and tourist vehicles.

They also hope to assess how native predators are persisting at the fringes of the toads’ invasion into arid areas behind the frontline, and whether this can inform the best methods of impact mitigation ahead of the frontline, in the Pilbara. **Professor Rick Shine from the School of Natural Sciences was featured in this piece by The New York Times regarding cane toads evolving towards cannibalistic behaviour. Macquarie University Faculty of Science and Engineering NEWS April 2022 Forwarded to FATS by Wendy Grimm**



Garth Coupland’s beautiful watercolour is copied above. He has kindly allowed FATS to share the Green Tree Frog *Litoria caerulea* sketch below, copy, enlarge and colour if you, the family or children are interested.

FROG HOUSE POLAND



Frog House is an example of Art Nouveau architecture in the city of Bielsko-Biala, in southern Poland’s Silesia Province. It features two frogs seated over the entrance, one smoking a pipe and the other playing a mandolin, while beetles roam freely over the walls.



The FATS meeting commences at 7 pm, (arrive from 6.30 pm) and ends about 10 pm, at the Education Centre, Bicentennial Park, Sydney Olympic Park, Homebush Bay. FATS meetings are usually held on the **first Friday of every EVEN month** February, April (except Good Friday), June, August, October and December. Call, check our web site, Facebook page or email us for further directions. We hold 6 informative, informal, topical, practical and free meetings each year. Visitors are welcome. We are actively involved in monitoring frog populations, field studies and trips, have displays at local events, produce the newsletter FROGCALL and FROGFACTS information sheets. FATS exhibit at many community fairs and shows. Please contact Events Coordinator Kathy Potter if you can assist as a frog explainer, even for an hour. No experience required. Encourage your frog friends to join or donate to FATS. Donations help with the costs of frog rescue, student grants, research and advocacy. All expressions of opinion and information in FrogCall are published on the basis that they are not to be regarded as an official opinion of the FATS Committee, unless expressly so stated.

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FATS ON FACEBOOK: FATS has over 4,100 Facebook members worldwide. Posts vary from husbandry, disease and frog identification enquiries, to photos and posts about pets, gardens, wild frogs, research, new discoveries, jokes, cartoons, events and habitats from all over the world. The page was created 10 years ago and includes dozens of information files – just keep scrolling to see them all. <https://www.facebook.com/groups/FATSNSW/>

RESCUED FROGS are at our meetings. Contact us if you wish to adopt a frog. A cash donation of \$50 is appreciated to cover care and feeding costs. Sorry we have no EFTPOS. FATS must sight your current amphibian licence. NSW pet frog licences, can be obtained from the NSW Department of Planning, Industry and Environment (link below). Please join FATS before adopting a frog. This can be done at the meeting. Most rescued frogs have not had a vet visit unless obviously sick. Please take you new, formerly wild pet to an experienced herpetological vet for an annual check-up and possible worming and/or antibiotics after adoption. Some vets offer discounts for pets that were rescued wildlife.

<https://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/licences-and-permits/wildlife-licences/native-animals-as-pets/frog-keeper-licences>

FATS has student memberships for \$20 annually with electronic FrogCall (but no hard copy mail outs).
<https://www.fats.org.au/membership-form>



Thank you to the committee members, FrogCall supporters, talented meeting speakers, Frog-O-Graphic competition entrants, event participants and organisers David, Kathy and Harriet Potter, Sarah and Ryan Kershaw. The FrogCall articles, photos, media and webpage links, membership administration and envelope preparation are greatly appreciated. Special thanks to regular newsletter contributors:

Robert Wall, Karen & Arthur White, Wendy & Phillip Grimm, Marion Anstis and Punia Jeffery.



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FATS MEETS AT THE EDUCATION CENTRE SOP



Rogue Bush
Used in baking and pickling, it's both aromatic and tangy.

Lily's Hammers
This Danish flower fills a room with the scent of tree bark.



odditymall.com shared by Donna Burns

Keep your toilet lush and beautiful.

Look for genuine Obeir maintenance accessories to make the best seat in the house even better.



SAVE THE FROGS TALK BY KERRY KRIGER

<https://fb.watch/cJBQJB5Zu9/>

HOWTO IDENTIFY A FROG MAD HOUSEHOLD



Shared with FATS by Giselle Howard

The grass toilet seat covers come in a set of 6 total pre-seeded covers so you can get a grass seat on each toilet in your home!

