

FROG CALL

THE FROG AND TADPOLE STUDY GROUP NSW Inc.

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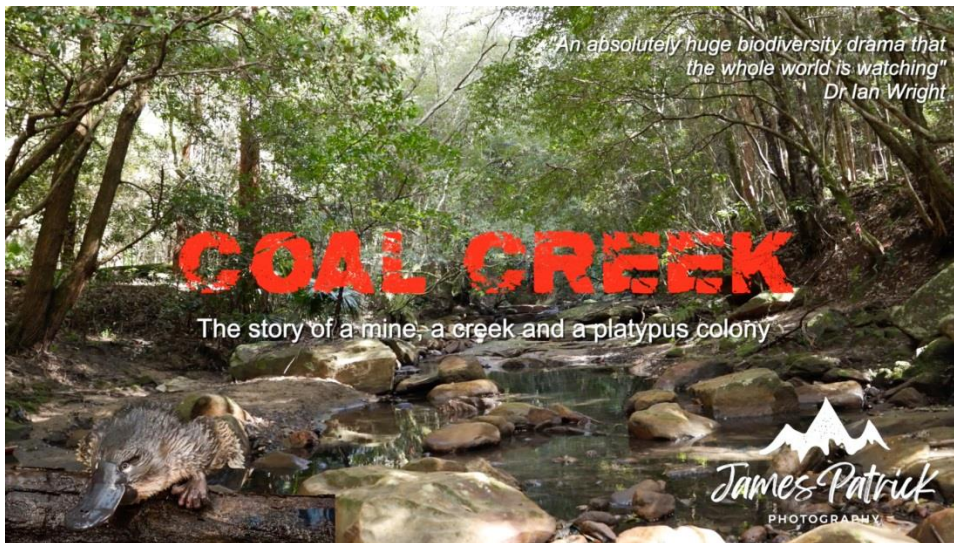
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NEWSLETTER No. 189 FEBRUARY 2024

WHAT DOES IT TAKE TO STOP A COAL MINE POLLUTING OUR WATERWAYS?



A new short film highlighting the work of concerned citizens will shine a spotlight on the damage to the Royal National Park waterways. Screening at the Servo Food Truck Bar, Port Kembla, on Sunday evening 28 January. The film can also be seen at Hazelhurst Arts Centre Theatre, Gymea on Sunday 1.15pm 4 February. See pages 6 to 9.

FATS MEETING 7PM FRIDAY 2 FEBRUARY 2024

6.30 pm Lost frogs seeking forever homes: Please bring your membership card or join FATS on the night and \$50 donation. **CREDIT CARDS ACCEPTED** but bring cash for the raffle, unless you spend over \$10. 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.

8.00 pm Main speaker: Luc Streit "Frogs and Toads jump a surprise?"
Arthur White "Greenacre Open Day."
Arthur White "Smiths Lake Field Trip report November 2023"

9.30 pm Show us your frog images. Tell us about your frogging trips or experiences. Guessing competition **Credit cards can be used for raffle purchases over \$10, but we prefer cash**, frog adoptions continue, supper, relax and chat with frog friends and experts.

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

Arrive from 6.30 pm or a 7pm start.

Friday 2 February 2024

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.

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MAJOR NEW FEDERAL INVESTMENT TO EXTEND THE FIRE ANT FIGHT



The Federal Government is renewing its fight against red imported fire ants, approving an unprecedented investment to extend the National Fire Ant Eradication Program. An additional investment of \$268 million to the National Fire Ant Eradication Program has been allocated over the next four years, to intensify activities to control and contain this significant pest. The announcement builds on the \$411 million in joint state and federal funding already provided in the past six years.

Australia's new response plan addresses recommendations of the recent Strategic Program Review and builds on more than two decades of learnings the National Program has developed while delivering the world's most successful fire ant eradication program.

The new funding will expand the program to include 350 new workers, a new depot, new vehicles, new aerial eradication contracts and an additional 1400 tonnes of bait each year. It will support the program operations, doubling the size of the treatment and surveillance area—including high-density residential areas.

Fire ants are an aggressive and invasive ant that swarm and inflict painful stings on people, pets and livestock. They can destroy crops and damage electrical utilities including air conditioners, streetlights and telecommunications networks.

Without the program, fire ants would now infest around 100 million hectares in an arc of country from Bowen in the north, west to Longreach and south to Canberra. If they aren't eliminated, these ants will quickly migrate across the country and that would cause economic, health and social impacts in excess of \$1.25 billion annually, forever. Fire ants are one of the world's worst super pests and have the potential to spread across 97% of Australia. They have the potential to do more damage to our agriculture and environment than all of the worst invasive pests combined.

22 October 2023 Federal Treasurer, the Hon Dr Jim Chalmers MP Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry and Minister for Emergency Management, Senator the Hon Murray Watt Queensland Minister for Agricultural Industry Development and Fisheries and Minister for Rural Communities, the Hon Mark Furner MP For more information, visit: www.fireants.org.au.

THE INVASIVE SPECIES COUNCIL SEEKS YOUR HELP

A second fire ant infestation was found in Northern NSW on Saturday. We've never been closer to a life sentence with one of the world's worst super pests. Fire ant eradication now sits on a knife's edge. We have one last shot to stop these tiny killers from devastating our environment, agriculture and communities. Eradication cannot be allowed to fail. You are critical to that success.

Stand with us and demand an emergency response to this looming national disaster. Ensure government action and funding ramps up in time to stop the fire ant emergency.



Notaden weigeli Kimberley Spadefoot George Madani



NORTH COAST HERPETOLOGY GROUP PRESENTS...

REPTILE EXPO 2024



SATURDAY 27TH APRIL 2024
10AM- 3PM



PORT MACQUARIE
PANTHERS AUDITORIUM



ADULTS: \$5
CHILDREN (UNDER 12): \$2
UNDER 4: FREE



WWW.TICKETEBO.COM.AU/NCHGREPTILEEXP02024



WHY WE BOTHER

*Because many people haven't seen frogs for a long time.
Because many kids have never seen one.
Because we want to tell the public and the media about the plight of frogs.
Because frogs need our help.
Because we can sometimes help people to help frogs and their habitats.
Because we can sometimes make a difference.
Because there is much more to discover about frogs.
And because we are the FATS Group. L.V.*

FATS NEEDS YOUR HELP

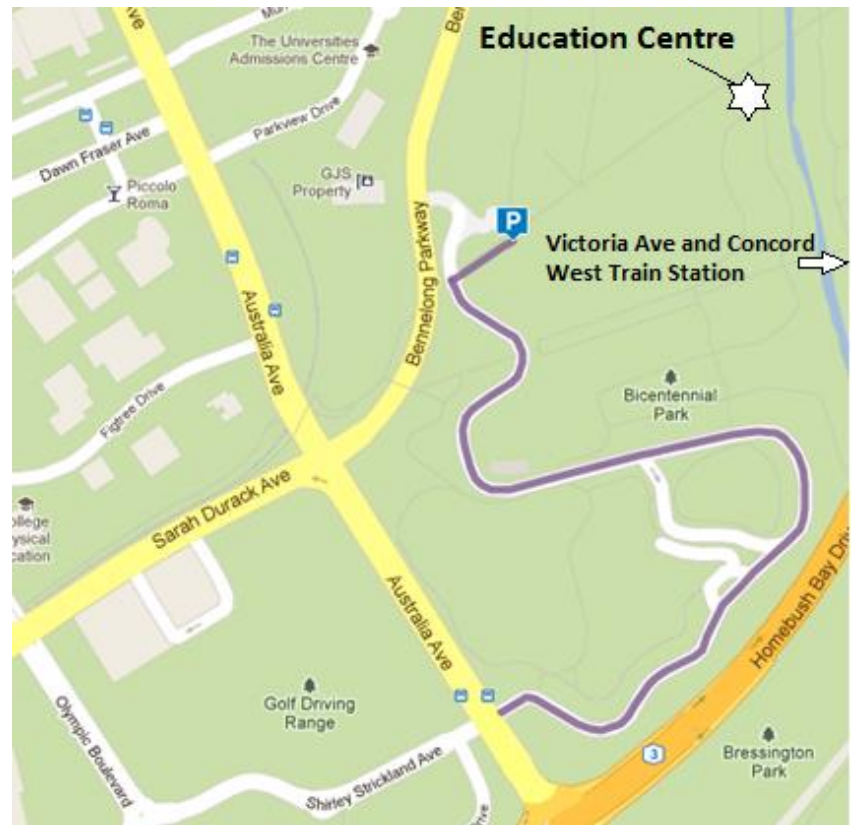
At the recent Annual General Meeting, I addressed those present to inform them of a dire situation facing FATS. The executive of FATS was re-elected without any new faces. This is not new - the same people get re-elected to the same positions year after year. A number of FATS councilors have been running the Society for more than 25 years. It is not good for any Society to have the same people in charge for a long period of time. While saying this, I acknowledge that the executive is very competent and willing- but they (and I) have been there too long.

I have asked the membership for a number of years now to consider stepping up and joining the executive. This request has not produced new blood. Quite the reverse, the members keep telling us that they are happy with what we are doing and for us to continue on. We have reached crunch time. A number of the executive (including myself) have indicated that they will stand down at the next AGM. If there are no people prepared to take up the vacant positions, the Society will fold. FATS is an incorporated society and must have a number of designated executive officers.

So this is a call for help and a warning. Societies survive through the input of its members and not through the input of the same people over and over again. Please think carefully about how you might help FATS. If you are worried about not being able to do the tasks at hand, don't. The outgoing executive will still be around to help you with the work and to show you the ropes. A new executive may choose to operate FATS quite differently to the present administration and may choose to drop a number of our current activities, or they may choose to add new ones.

The future of FATS is in your hands. As a member of FATS, you need to think carefully about how much you value the Society and whether you want to see it continue or not.

If you want to discuss any of this, feel free to contact any of the FATS executive (including myself). Be brave and do what you can for FATS. **Arthur White President 1999-2023**



MEET TWO OF AUSTRALIA'S NEWEST FROG SPECIES

The Western Laughing Tree Frog *Litoria ridibunda*!

It has a longer laugh-like call & less brightly patterned thighs compared to Roth's Tree Frog *Litoria rothii*.

Led by the South Australian Museum, this work incorporated FrogID recordings from across the range of both species, demonstrating differences in calls. Thank you to everyone that helped us better understand Australia's frog diversity!

Image by Jodi Rowley



A medium-sized species of frog reaching up to 6cm in body length. It has a grey, brown, reddish-brown or yellow-brown back, often with pale brown mottling. There is often a thin black stripe from behind the eye to the arm. The belly is white, and the male has a white throat. The pupil is horizontal, and the iris is red in the upper half, and silver in the lower half. The armpits, groin, and back of the thighs are dull, matte brown or black, with bright orange or yellow patches. Fingers are one-third webbed and toes are nearly fully webbed, both with large discs. This species was previously considered to be *Litoria rothii*, but recent research involving the Australian Museum and using FrogID recordings (published October 2023) has revealed the two species to be distinct, with western populations formerly thought to be *Litoria rothii* now known to be *Litoria ridibunda*. Distribution map below.



<https://www.frogid.net.au/frogs/litoria-ridibunda>

Geocrinia sparsiflora Otway Smooth Frog

The fourth species in the genus, and the third species of the genus in Victoria. Congratulations to my coauthors on the paper, Tom Parkin, Steve Donnellan, Ben Parkin and Jodi Rowley for their hard work in doing most of the work for the paper, and I particularly thank Tom for inviting me onto the paper to contribute the historical consideration of the provenance of the types of the existing eastern Australian species. The link to the description should allow for unpaywalled access to the paper for the next 50 days. **Glenn Shea Facebook 8 October 2023**

<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S1055790323002348?dgcid=coauthor>

A small frog species reaching up to 3.5 cm in body length. Highly variable in colour, ranging from golden-yellow, red-orange, to brown sometimes with bright yellow or white spots, blotches or ocelli encircled with black. Dark stripe from the tip of the snout to behind the eye. The belly is blue-grey to fleshy pink usually with dark spots, blotches or reticulations. Fingers and toes are unwebbed, both without discs. This species was previously considered to be *Geocrinia victoriana* but recent research led by the Australian Museum and using FrogID recordings (published October 2023) has revealed the two species to be distinct.

Eggs are laid terrestrially as globular egg masses which stick to matted reeds, vegetation or debris beneath leaf litter or at the base of tussock grasses. Males are often found near the egg masses which may contain multiple clutches of eggs in varying stages of development. Larval development spans 150–178 days with metamorphosis usually occurring in spring following flooding of the terrestrial nest. Tadpoles then hatch and complete their development aquatically. Breeds during late summer to autumn.

Photo by Thomas Parkin



Restricted to southwestern Victoria
in the Otway Plains and Ranges.

<https://www.frogid.net.au/frogs/geocrinia-sparsiflora>

https://australian.museum/blog/amri-news/smooth-operators/?fbclid=IwAR1hMClwJ_VYj3oJGImvvhLZNjb_5QWNv_ebUsVhUesduJFxp_EPZwwC3CA

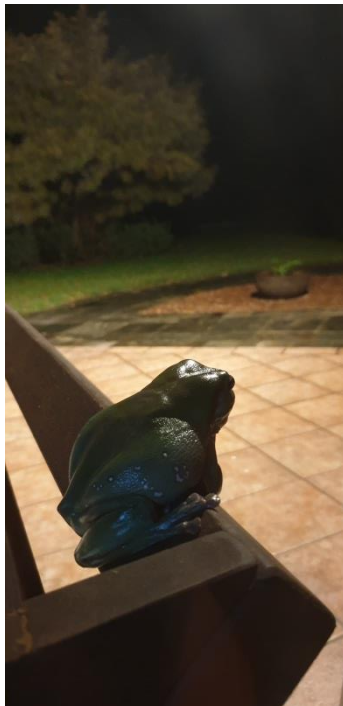
FROG HEAVEN ON THE NSW MID NORTH COAST



Here is our beautiful old man *Litoria caerulea* Green Tree Frog. He's huge and prefers to stay in the gutter (near horizontal downpipe, actually) by our patio, during the day, where he also torpors over winter.



He's been with us since we arrived 7 years ago and is quite comfortable around us. During the bad drought and fires in 2019 I provided him and the other green tree frogs with crickets and beetles, and a water bowl by the house. They made full use of it... and still do today. Although now they use it as a bathtub to wash off the grass and soil before retiring to the guttering and other hiding places around the house. It requires daily replenishing. In winter they go into torpor, including one female who is making use of one of my frog poles in a dense garden bed. **Margot Pickering**



**FILM PREMIERE COAL CREEK:
"WHAT DOES IT TAKE TO STOP A COAL MINE
POLLUTING OUR WATERWAYS?"**

**Sutherland Shire screening
4 February 1:30pm – 4:00pm**

James O'Connor's new short film about the coal pollution in the Royal National Park is screening at Gymea's Hazelhurst Arts Centre Theatre, on Sunday, 4 February at 1.15pm. There'll be an earlier screening in Port Kembla down at Wollongong on Sunday evening, 28 January.

Seating is limited at Hazelhurst Arts Centre Theatre, to book:

<https://www.ssec.org.au/event/film-premiere-coal-creek-what-does-it-take-to-stop-a-coal-mine-polluting-our-waterways-sutherland-shire-screening/>

There's no booking for the Port Kembla screening, it's first come, best seats.

Film premiere "Coal Creek"

A new short film highlighting the work of concerned citizens to shine a spotlight on the damage being done to the Royal National Park by a neighbouring mine will be screened at Port Kembla at the Servo Food Truck Bar on the evening of Sunday, 28 January. The film can also be seen at Hazelhurst Arts Centre Theatre at Gymea on Sunday 4 February, at 1pm.



“Coal Creek” documents repeated pollution events by the neighbouring Peabody Metropolitan Colliery into Camp Gully Creek, which carries the pollution into the Hacking River, a major artery of the Royal National Park. To add to these concerns UNSW scientists have relocated a colony of Platypus into the river.

The documentary will have a limited run of premier screenings, and the release coincides with the upcoming case against the mine in the NSW Land and Environment Court brought by the NSW Environmental Protection Authority (EPA).

Each of the five alleged offences under the Protection of the Environment Operations Act 1997 carries a maximum penalty for a corporation of \$1 million.

The NSW Land and Environment Court case is listed for a directions hearing on 2 February.

Citizen scientists have been advocating for the mine to be held accountable for the damage wrought over the years. They were joined by renowned water scientist Dr Ian Wright who investigated coal waste pollution in the creek in August 2022, and Wild Magazine Editor James McCormack who stumbled onto another major pollution event in September. With the ensuing publicity voices calling for the issue to be addressed grew louder. Lobbying by the local Environment Centre, and members of the public, resulted in the EPA tightening the mine's pollution license.

Sutherland Shire Environment Centre members have observed that coal waste remains visible through the Hacking River, and the company's own water monitoring shows escalated levels of salinity (conductivity) downstream of the mine site are continuing to impact Camp Gully Creek.

Sutherland Environment Centre spokesperson Dr Catherine Reynolds said, "Salinity levels downstream of the mine the day before Christmas were 2,496 $\mu\text{S}/\text{cm}$. The levels upstream of the mine were only 247 $\mu\text{S}/\text{cm}$."

Just before Christmas the company advised they were going to apply to modify their current approval to put in a new long wall tunnel for their mining operation underneath Woronora Reservoir.

Dr Reynolds said, “It is concerning that the company believes the government will grant approval for this modification. If it does go through it will be the first extension of the current mine since it was approved by the NSW government in 2009.”

“Any extension will also form a precedent. Peabody Energy is currently exploring for coal under an additional 2,042 hectares in the upper part of the Woronora Reservoir catchment. I suspect the last thing Sutherland Shire and Illawarra residents want is another mine under our water catchment.”

Filmmaker James O’Connor is based in the Illawarra. His other recent coal mine documentaries include “Mining in the Blue Mountains” (which has won international awards), and “The People Against Russell Vale Mine”.

In addition to an introduction by James O'Connor, panel speakers for the Gymea screening include –

- Dr Ian Wright, a recognised expert in the field of water quality, freshwater ecology, water policy and the science and management of water pollution. The Environmental Defenders Office has previously engaged him as a specialist consultant, and he has separately provided independent expert testimony on environmental science matters for the NSW Land & Environment Court.

- Sue Higginson, Greens MLC, and former principal solicitor and CEO of the Environmental Defenders Office, who inspected Camp Gully Creek in early September and raised the issue in parliament and media.

- Shannon Kaiser and Dr Chad Beranek, scientists who carried out extensive surveys examining the health of the local frog population in the Royal as part of their research analysing the impact of foreign chemicals introduced to freshwater ecosystems. Dr Beranek is a research associate at Newcastle University. Shannon Kaiser is currently completing his PhD at Macquarie University in aquatic toxicology.

- Cooper Riach, Sutherland Shire Environment Centre Board member. With other members of the Centre he's been actively monitoring the pollution in the Royal since 2021. He's currently a member of the group's Camp Gully Creek Streamwatch program.

- Bob Crombie, former Royal National Park head ranger who first flagged the issue of coal waste in the Royal, and who has been monitoring water quality there since the 1970s. Bob was a key figure in Sutherland Shire Environment Centre's advocacy for World Heritage listing for the park, and he took many of the photos that showed the terrible impact of the coal waste pollution in Camp Gully Creek, and down through the Hacking River to Audley.

Panel speakers for screening of the film on the evening of 28 January at the Servo Food Truck Bar at Port Kembla include Dr Ian Wright, Cooper Riach, and Bob Crombie. They'll be joined at Port Kembla by Jess Lumbroso, the Streamwatch Coordinator for Greater Sydney Landcare. The Streamwatch program fosters environmental stewardship across the Greater Sydney Region, providing training, support, and equipment that allows community groups to monitor water quality and to protect their local waterways. Jess Whittaker, a resident of the Illawarra who has a passion for preserving and restoring local waterways will also speak. Jess is a citizen science participant who has worked with the NSW EPA and Dr Wright to investigate pollution in local waterways.

Dr Rada Germanos, a GP and Wollongong local, who has been organising with [Protect Our Water Alliance \(POWA\)](#) since 2019 will also be on the panel. She was a speaker at [POWA's Creek Convoy](#) earlier this year.

The screenshot from the Peabody Real time water monitoring showing salinity / conductivity levels downstream of the mine in Camp Gully Creek on 24 December, 2023 is on page 9.

The Peabody notice of intent for a modification to extend the current mine can be seen at:

<https://www.planningportal.nsw.gov.au/major-projects/projects/modification-4-longwall-317-and-318-modification>

For more information please contact -

Dr Catherine Reynolds
ciao@catherinereynolds.au

James O'Connor
james@jamespatrickphotography.com.au

Sutherland Shire Environment Centre members went to the Hacking (Deeban) River in November 2023 for waterbug (macroinvertebrate) testing and training. Huge thanks to Greg McDonald former Streamwatch coordinator for sharing his knowledge. Seeing the normally invisible bug life in the river up close was fascinating.

We saw how different environments close together support different waterbugs, and learnt how conditions over time can alter what types of waterbugs can inhabit the same spot at different times. So many variables.

Continued on page 8



The river has been subject to a bit of rain over the last few weeks. The waterbugs we saw were all quite young, and it's possible that mature waterbugs were washed downstream in the floods. We added what we found into the Waterbug Blitz app, and received a "your site is impacted" result. Salinity, turbidity, and too many fine sediments might all play a part in that disturbance.

We still saw tadpoles (see image below) in the river, glass shrimp, and very small fish. There were dragonflies, and dragonfly nymphs, beetles, caddisflies all of these are platypus food. Where we did the testing was several kms downstream from Camp Gully Creek.



Salinity / conductivity levels in Camp Gully Creek downstream from the mine the day before Christmas skyrocketed to 2,424.5 $\mu\text{S}/\text{cm}$. The maximum salinity / conductivity level for this type of stream should be 350 $\mu\text{S}/\text{cm}$ according to ANZECC guidelines.



Scientist Dr Ian Wright at Camp Gully Creek after one of the spills.

No discharges from the mine occurred over this period - it again suggests contaminated groundwater is seeping from the site.

So despite our relatively positive water bug testing results, the Peabody Metropolitan Colliery is continuing to impact on a waterway that feeds into the Royal National Park. To allow this sort of discharge from an industrial mine site to continue to flush into Australia's oldest National Park is not acceptable.

Here's hoping the NSW EPA can work toward a solution.

You may recall the April 2023 FrogCall 184 newsletter where we included an article about the Hacking River pollution in the Royal National Park. Shannon Kaiser was our FATS main speaker in February 2023.

“Each of the five alleged offences under the Protection of the Environment Operations Act 1997 carries a maximum penalty for a corporation of \$1,000,000. The matter is listed for directions in the NSW Land and Environment Court for 2 February 2024.” **Extract from <https://www.theillawarraflame.com.au/news/nsw-epa-takes-action-against-metro-colleries>**

Greens MP and spokesperson for the environment Sue Higninson said: “The investigation undertaken by the EPA has established that Peabody Metropolitan Colliery have failed to maintain adequate water management at the coal mine and then failed again to address the issue after the first incident. The damage that has been caused by the Metro Coal Mine to the Royal National Park is distressing and is worth far more than the potential maximum fine of \$5 Million.”

I visited the Royal National Park when the pollution was occurring and what I saw was disgraceful. We had coal sludge flowing into the waterways of a National Park. The consequences of this should be proportional to the damage caused - what Peabody has done to the Royal National Park is far worse than the few millions dollars they may have to pay in fines.”

“In the first quarter of this year Peabody generated revenue of \$1.36 USD Billion.

The potentially permanent damage to the Royal National Park caused by this pollution will only cost Peabody less than half a percent from a quarter of their annual profits.

“Fines only act as a deterrent if the cost of the fine is worth more than the profit generated by the crime. For a multi-billion dollar entity like Peabody, a \$5 Million fine does nothing to discourage future breaches and will be incorporated into the ongoing and future operating costs of the mine.

The Metropolitan Colliery has proven that they cannot manage contaminated water on the site and it is inevitable that future pollution of the Royal National Park will occur.

“We have reached the point where Peabody Energy and the Metropolitan Coal Mine should have their Environment Protection Licence pulled to ensure that the Royal National Park is not threatened with future spills of toxic and contaminated water.

The Royal National Park is too valuable to continue to be put at risk from this old coal mine that can not guarantee safe operation. We cannot allow this situation to happen again. The EPA needs to prioritise the health of the environment over the operation of mining giant Peabody Coal,” Ms Higginson said.

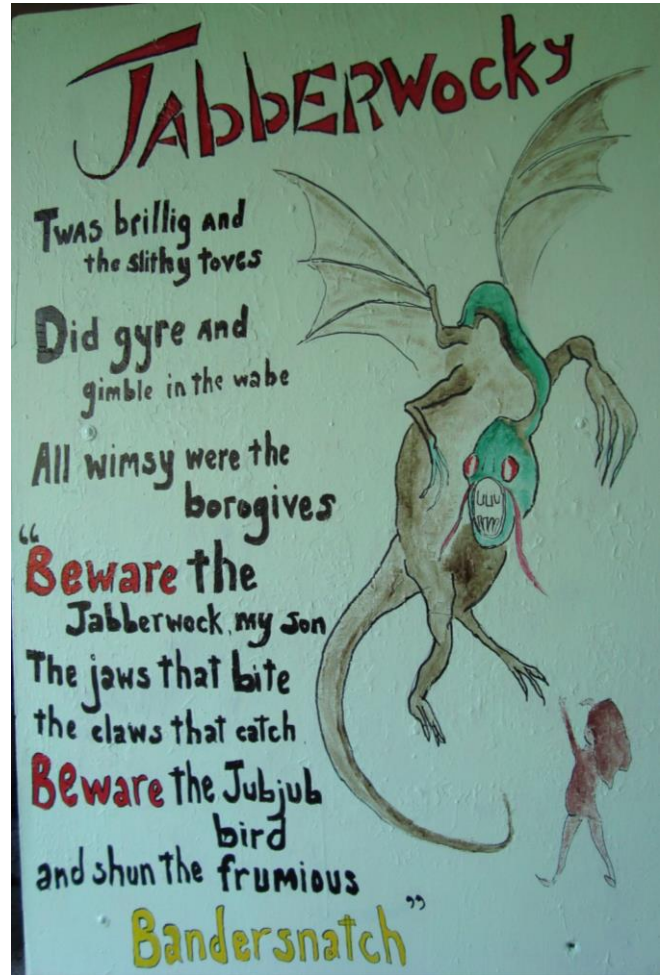


For media contact call: Sue Higginson 0428 227 363 or Dan Reid 0421 926 233 Authorised by D. Hayden, The Greens NSW, 19a/1 Hordern Place Camperdown NSW 2050
<https://greens.org.au/nsw/news/media-release/pollution-royal-national-park-leads-prosecution-peabody-metropolitan>

Peabody Metropolitan Coal Mine
 This page provides an overview of water quality at the Metropolitan Coal Mine. To use this page, simply click one of the pins to show current monitoring data for that location.

Timestamp	pH	Specific Conductivity (µS/cm @ 25°C)	Temperature (Deg °C)	Turbidity (NTU)
24-Dec-2023 08:25	8.65	2476.28	20.37	0
24-Dec-2023 08:10	8.65	2486.77	20.36	0
24-Dec-2023 07:55	8.65	2456.4	20.3	0
24-Dec-2023 07:40	8.64	2402.23	20.26	0

HOW TO GET TO
SMITHS LAKE FIELD
STATION



All photos are by Radu Zamfirescu

Red-Backed Toadlet *Pseudophryne coriacea*



SMITHS LAKE FATS FIELD TRIP



Whirring Tree Frog *Litoria revelata*



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 Easter Friday), June, August, October and December. **If the FATS meeting falls on Easter Friday, then the meeting will probably be one week earlier. Occasionally meeting dates are changed. Please check our website and your emails for notices.** 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. Credit cards can now be used for raffle and other purchases over \$10.

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FATS ON FACEBOOK: FATS has over 4,830 Facebook members and visitors 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 11 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, Andrew Nelson, Wendy & Phillip Grimm, Marion Anstis, George Madani and Punia Jeffery.



FROGWATCH HELPLINE 0419 249 728

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Andre Rank and Luc Streit	General Committee members		

FIELD TRIPS

Please book your place on field-trips; due to strong demand, numbers are limited. Be sure to leave a contact number. Regardless of prevailing weather conditions, we will continue to schedule and advertise all monthly field-trips as planned. It is YOUR responsibility to re-confirm in the last few days, whether the field trip is proceeding or has been cancelled. Phone Robert on 02 9681 5308.

In the event of uncertain frogging conditions (e.g. prolonged/severe drought, hazardous and/or torrential rain, bushfires etc.), please phone 02 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 fieldtrips are strictly for members only. Newcomers are welcome to take out membership before the commencement of the fieldtrip. All participants accept that there is some inherent risk associated with outdoor fieldtrips and by attending agree to; a release of all claims, a waiver of liability and an assumption of risk.



Image by Arthur White

23 - 25 FEBRUARY Smiths Lake Leaders: Karen and Arthur White

Our Smith's Lake trip has become a popular field trip destination. To ensure that everyone gets a chance to go, we have changed the booking arrangements in recent years, including a **non-refundable pre-payment** for the booking. Most people will still be able to attend. This arrangement is in case we have too many people wanting to go on the field trip.

1. For the next Smiths Lake field trip, you must email Karen White white.kazzie@gmail.com by the 7 February and indicate that you (and others in your group) want to attend and what day you intend to arrive. Karen will then put your name on a list. If you attended the previous Smith's Lake field trip you will automatically go on the Reserve List.
2. Karen will send you a reply email to let you know which list you are on. If you are on the A list you must pay your accommodation by 12 February to confirm your booking. If you do not pay by this date you will be removed from the A list. You can pay electronically to the FATS account:-

Account Name: Frog and Tadpole Study Group -

BSB 082 342 Account No. 285 766 885. Cost is \$20.00 per person, per night.

3. Karen will send you confirmation of your booking when your payment has been received.
4. Karen will email people on the Reserve list, at least 2 weeks before the field trip. You will be told if there are spaces available for you or not. If you are able to go, you will now need to forward your payment to guarantee your place. Payment must be received by the 15 February. If not, your place will be given to the next person on the list. We think that this will be the fairest way to ensure that everyone gets a chance to go to Smiths Lake.



Smiths Lake field trip 3/2017 photo by Scott Martin



Smiths Lake 2012