

FROGS OF THE SYDNEY REGION



Introduction

Sydney has a wide variety of habitats that suit a diverse range of frogs. Although our city region has nearly all been disturbed or greatly altered by humans, there are still over twenty different species of frogs that can be found in and around the city limits. This poster introduces you to most of them. Apart from the Red-crowned Toadlet, all these frogs are also found outside of the Sydney region. Seven are ground frogs that do not normally climb and don't have discs on their fingers and toes, and the remainder are tree frogs, some of which are climbers and live in trees, the guttering and pipes around houses (or even toilets) and others which have adapted to living on the ground. Depending on their need to climb, they have larger or smaller discs on their fingers and toes.

Some frogs are threatened, such as the unique Red-crowned Toadlet known only from the Sydney Basin, and others are in decline as a result of habitat loss and/or a disease known as 'chytrid' (pronounced kitrid) fungus, that is specific to frogs and is sweeping through many populations all round the world. Despite this, some frogs are still quite common, and although they may have come in contact with this fungus, they appear to be much less affected by it.

The four frogs you are most likely to see in gardens, bushland or semi-rural areas where there are ponds or dams, are shown here in the top row of photographs. The first two are ground frogs, and being the most common, they are likely to be the first to colonise a frog-friendly garden pond.

The next two are tree frogs and like more bushy suburbs or semi-rural areas where there are trees and dams.

To help you get to know our frogs, the snapshots below show what an interesting variety of frogs we have, and you can learn more about helping frogs survive in Sydney by visiting the FATS website (see below) and coming along to meetings and field trips to see live frogs. The Frogs Australia Network website <http://frogsaustralia.net.au> has a wealth of information about frogs from around Australia and also includes many recordings of their calls to help you identify them. Another useful website is www.frogs.org.au produced by the Amphibian Research Centre.



4 Common Frogs



Striped Marsh Frog

Limnodynastes peronii
Very common around most areas of Sydney still and if you have a garden pond you are likely to have it come to breed. It has a fairly pointed snout and is brown with darker stripes and blotches and sometimes a pale cream stripe down the middle of the back. The familiar short 'tock' call of this frog can go all night and they lay a foamy white mass of eggs which floats.

Up to 75 mm



Eastern Froglet

Crinia signifera
One of our smallest Sydney frogs and also one of the two most common species still found in many suburbs. It is very variable and can be brown, rusty red, grey, yellow or dark brown with or without darker stripes or smaller markings. Sounds a bit like a low pitched cricket when calling and likes any small or larger pond, creeks, dams, swamps etc.

Up to 30 mm



Dwarf Tree Frog

Litoria fallax
A very small green tree frog with a white stripe along the side of its head and very common in farm dams, plant nurseries with ponds and water plants on display and some suburban gardens with ponds all around Sydney. It likes to sit on tall reeds, where it is very well camouflaged.

Up to 32 mm



Peron's Tree Frog

Litoria peronii
Quite a large grey-brown tree frog usually with some darker mottling, and tiny green specks if you look closely. It has lovely big silvery eyes with a fine network of dark veins visible and large discs on fingers and toes. Its loud laughing call (likened to a maniacal cackle), is easily recognised, and it is still fairly common in gardens in bushy areas around Sydney, as well as in rural or semi-rural suburbs with large dams to the north and west or south-west to the mountains.

Up to 90 mm



Green-Thighed Frog

Litoria brevipalmata
A chocolate brown, ground-dwelling tree frog with lime green thighs. Rarely encountered, it hides under leaf litter, in forests around Urimbah and further north of Sydney. Patchy distribution in wet coastal forests, and north to SE Qld.

Up to 47 mm



Green Tree Frog

Litoria caerulea
A well-known favourite frog, large and green with big toe discs. Sometimes has a few white spots. Still found in the outskirts of Sydney, e.g. Windsor, Dural and some northern and southern suburbs, but much less common in most suburban areas. Likes to live in toilets or down pipes, where its very loud, low-pitched call echoes.

Up to 110 mm



Red Eyed Tree Frog

Litoria chloris
Beautiful large green tree frog with a bright yellow belly, striking orange-red eyes and large discs on fingers and toes. Found in Gosford region and further north. Likes rainforest and moister areas.

Up to 70 mm



Blue Mountains Tree Frog

Litoria citropa
A stream-dwelling frog with a green and dull gold back and brick red thighs. It likes rocky stream areas and is found south of Sydney in the Woronora River catchment, Royal National Park and other sites, north of Sydney in the Watagan Forest and west of Sydney in the Blue Mountains

Up to 58 mm



Bleating Tree Frog

Litoria dentata
A small brown tree frog with a broad darker brown band down its back and an extremely loud high-pitched bleating call. Found near Liverpool and further west, the Gosford area and may turn up in suburban gardens near bushland or farmland.

Up to 45 mm



Freyinet's Frog

Litoria freycineti
A mottled brown ground-dwelling tree frog with a pointed snout and small warts on its skin. It is a very good jumper with long hind legs and likes swampy areas, rocky creeks and coastal heathland in the Helensburgh area and further south, as well as in less built-out bushland areas north of Sydney.

Up to 42 mm



Dainty Tree Frog

Litoria gracilentia
Another beautiful, green tree frog with reddish eyes, a yellow belly and purple thighs. It is related to the Red-eyed tree frog, but smaller and likes coastal forest and semi-cleared farmland in the central coast and further north.

Up to 45 mm



Jervis Bay Tree Frog

Litoria jervisiensis
A medium-sized brown tree frog with a dark stripe on the side of its head. It likes dams and swamps with permanent water and tall thick reeds. Found at Kurnell (but will need habitat protection to survive there), south of Sydney round Darke Forest and other coastal sites north and south of Sydney.

Up to 45 mm



Broad Palmed Tree Frog

Litoria latopalmata
A pale beige ground frog with a dark stripe along the side of its head (may have a few darker markings), yellow under its legs and smooth skin. Very good jumper and found near dams on larger rural or semi-rural properties just north and west of Sydney, as well as a broad distribution mainly in NSW and Qld.

Up to 42 mm



Stoney Creek Frog

Litoria lesueuri
A medium to large ground frog that is usually brown with a dark stripe along the side of the head and may have some smaller dark patches on the back. Males calling at night can be quite yellow. They are good jumpers and like rocky creeks, but will also breed in farm dams in semi-rural areas. Streams in the Woronora Catchment and similar south of Sydney, and in the forests to the north, as well as the Blue Mountains and adjacent areas

Up to 63 mm



Littlejohn's Frog

Litoria littlejohni
A medium-sized pale grey-brown tree frog usually with a darker band down the back, some indistinct mottling and reddish-orange thighs. Now much less common, likes small creek lines and swamps or dams to the north and south of Sydney in heath or bushland and also the Blue Mountains.

Up to 70 mm



Littlejohn's Frog

Litoria phyllochroa
A small green frog that is mainly found along creeks, but as most of these are now polluted around Sydney, you are lucky if its quaint soft call is heard in your garden. Still around in some lush moist gardens in the northern and southern suburbs and parts of the Blue Mountains, and in the absence of creeks it will breed in ponds or dams.

Up to 40 mm



Giant Burrowing Frog

Heleioporus australiacus
A large endangered black or dark grey burrowing frog with a broad head and big grey eyes. Males have sharp black spines on their fingers. They burrow in sandy soil beside small creeks and sometimes dams, and their eggs are hidden in the burrows until they hatch. They have a soft 'owl-like' call and are now rarely seen except in a few bushland areas around the city outskirts to the north and south where water in the creeks is unpolluted.

Up to 100 mm



Eastern Pobblebonk

Limnodynastes dumerilii
A large brown burrowing frog with a yellow throat, yellow patches along the sides and a thick raised yellow stripe on the sides of the head below the eye to the arm. They have a raised gland on the top of each leg and big brown eyes. Found less often now, they will breed around dams and creeks in bushland or semi-rural areas and have a distinctive call like the twang of a banjo resonating in the bathroom.

Up to 100 mm



Spotted Marsh Frog

Limnodynastes tasmaniensis
A medium-sized ground frog that likes swamps, ponds, dams and even flooded ditches. It has a pale grey back with numerous darker blotches and often a pale cream stripe down the middle of the back. Around Sydney they are more common on the Cumberland plain areas of Camden, Campbelltown, Penrith, Windsor etc. but are very common across much of eastern Australia.

Up to 47 mm



Red Crowned Toadlet.

Pseudophryne australis
A small, very special, endangered frog unique to the Sydney region. It is grey with a distinctive red-orange triangular patch on the head and red stripe at the bottom of the back, as well as some reddish tubercles over the back. The belly is strikingly marbled with black and white patches. They are still found in bushland areas around Sydney, associated with bush rock and small temporary creek lines.

Up to 30 mm



Dusky Toadlet

Uperoleia fusca
This small ground frog gets called a toadlet because of its glandular skin, but it is not a toad. They are still found in some areas around Sydney, but prefer grassy dams in semi-rural or woodland areas rather than suburban gardens. They have orange-red flash colours in the groin and numerous small darker markings on the back.

Up to 32 mm



Red-crowned Toadlet

Litoria verreauxii
A small light brown frog with a divided darker brown band down the back, dark stripe along the side of the head and red over the inner surfaces of the hind legs with pale yellow and a few black spots in the groin. Found around dams and ponds to the south, north and west of the CBD, still turns up at times in some suburban gardens, found at Kurnell, Windsor area and many other bushland or semi-rural areas nearer to Sydney and further out, but not as common as it once was woodland areas

Up to 32 mm