




FROGSHEET

Official Newsletter of the Queensland Frog Society Inc.

Summer 2016-17

Web: www.qldfrogs.asn.au | Questions Email: questions [at] qldfrogs.asn.au |  /qldfrogsociety

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Welcome and thanks to our New Members

David Aleckson, Stephanie Fielder, Debra Stark, Lee-Anne Longton, Michael Rowe, Tim Hackwood, Jessica Grundy, Denis Thompson, Suzanne Machin, Keep Queensland Beautiful, Goondicum Pastoral Company, Bruce Lawrie, Annette Maclean, Ollie Scully and Koral Meechan.

Have a laugh



President's Report

Our 2016 AGM was incredibly informative this year as we were treated to two guest presentations. The first was by Prof. Rob Capon of the University of Queensland speaking on the successful cane toad tadpole traps he has developed, and the second by Dr. Ed Meyer on the behaviour of Green-thighed Frogs of Karawatha Forest. It was very exciting to hear about Prof. Capon's latest research into cane toad toxins and how these had been utilised very successfully attract and trap conspecific tadpoles. Dr. Meyer's investigations into the secret life of Green-thighed Frogs was also very interesting as he shared on their breeding and foraging behaviour. These presentations were streamed live on the day and are now available to our Members on our website and on the Members-only Facebook group. The entire outgoing Committee was also re-elected and I look forward to achieving more in the year to come!

Since the AGM I have again kept busy with several events. Sunshine Coast Council invited me to attend and present at the 'Neighbours Day' for residents near Mary Caincross Reserve at Maleny. I gave two presentations on the frogs of the area and provided guidance on how to make backyards frog friendly. Tours were also given through the Reserve where people got to meet several Great Barred Frogs.

A few weekends later, Jenny and I gave a frog workshop at Yarraman Creek which was well attended. You can read more about this on Page 4. My wife and I also recently attended a frogging night at Cooroy. This was not a QFS event but still a good opportunity to get out in the local area and meet fellow froggers.

I have also been out and about in my local area of Buderim, compiling a list of frog species present in the area. My focus has been on determining the extent of the threatened Cascade Treefrog (*Litoria pearsoniana*) population (right image). This species is pleasantly abundant in several gullies and streams, all of which are located in local Council reserves. Other species in the area include the



Southern Orange-eyed Treefrog and the vulnerable Tusked Frog.

I hope you enjoy this *Frogsheet* edition. It includes information on an exciting project one of our Areas Coordinators has initiated, plus details on two new frog species just discovered (one each in QLD and NSW)! I wish you all a Blessed Christmas and safe New Year! Cheers,

Jon Hooper



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QFS supported by the
Brisbane City Council



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Thanks to QWaLC for our
free insurance

QFS Public Trust Fund - Ric Nattrass Research Grant

The QFS Trust Fund was created with the purpose to help save QLD frogs through education and research, and now stands at **\$5,584.66** (+ \$172.61 since Spring Edition)





Upcoming Events

Ipswich Plant Expo

11 - 12 March 2017. Frog Display and sales.

QFS Management Meetings

Every three months at 12pm Sunday, Caboolture BP south-bound rest stop. Our next meeting is in December. All welcome! Phone/email Jenny to register your attendance.

'Unofficial' Frog Camps

'Unofficial' Frog Camps will return in 2017! Members who tag along are responsible for organising their own camp permits, gear and their own safety. The QFS is not liable for personal injury. Once details of each upcoming camp are announced, you need to let Rod know if you're coming. Stay tuned for further details in 2017!

Frog Habitat Working Bees

Bowman Park, Bardon

8-11am - Contact Phil for more info

Grinstead Park, Alderley (off Short Street)

Contact Debbie Dolby for more info
ddolby@hotmail.com, Ph: 3355 4134

Carseldine Bush Crew

Cabbage Tree Creek, Carseldine
Contact James Hansen for more info at
jamna@powerup.com.au.

Working bees in frog habitat

If you are undertaking bush-care in frog habitat and would like your working bee dates included above, please email Jono at editor@qldfrogs.asn.au

Ashgrove Report

So good to get some good rain in this area as the creeks were looking quite sad before the breeding season. My main concern has been for the Tusked Frogs as Enoggera and Ithaca creeks are a good habitat for them.

The Tusked Frogs I have in my garden have returned which is good as I have wondered if they stayed around after the brush turkey has rearranged it.

The Bowman Park working bees continue to try and irradiate Cat's Claw and other evasive weeds, replanting the areas as we go so after this rain we should see the new plants settled in.

I have been visiting Garden groups to give talks on how to encourage frogs into their gardens and Jono and I have just been to Yarraman to do an ID Workshop to the Friends of Yarraman Creek Group.

Jenny Holdway ■

Bundaberg Report

Good day all,
Happy National Frog Week for the first full week of November (6th to 12th)!

The last few months have been a bit quiet on the frog front for me, as I have started studying a university degree this year and it has been hectic juggling jobs, family and study. I was unable to find time this year to hold the Frog Identification workshop that was so successful last year due to my exams being right around the same period. It was interesting to be able to educate some of my university lecturers on aspects of frog anatomy during laboratory practicals though. Hopefully, I can organise the workshop for next year.

The Facebook group for National Frog Week is progressing along well with 365 members now. I encourage you to join if you haven't, and share it amongst your friends. Not only is it for promoting National Frog Week, but

Changed your email address?

Please notify the Secretary of your current email address to avoid the risk of missing out on *Frogsheet* newsletters via email.

Updated Diary Dates

Please visit the QFS website and our Facebook page for updated and new events that arise between *Frogsheet* newsletters.

Frogs are cool - Spread the word!

If you're a coordinator, why not set up a QFS display at a community event and raise awareness of our awesome frogs? No expert knowledge is necessary, just a passion for frogs. Contact Jenny to arrange display and brochure pick-up. Or you may like to help arrange a frog ID workshop which are a fantastic way to introduce your community to frogs.

throughout the year any Australian frog news that I can find is posted there. Feel free to post any frog news that you have there too. The URL is <https://www.facebook.com/groups/801229443280759/>

Cheers,
David Flack ■

Logan City Report: New Online Map to Report Frog Sightings

There will soon be an online interactive frog map of Queensland where froggers can plot the location of frog species. Hopefully there may be a link to the map on the QFS website by the time you read this frogsheet.

Every member should make use of this mapping facility. It will be a valuable opportunity to pool all the results of our frog surveys. It will also become a useful research tool for analyzing and identifying frog habitat.

I first raised the idea of developing this type of map at the last AGM and I promised to make some enquires to find out who could help us with this project. Then I contacted SEQ Catchments who have a Federal Government grant to produce environmental mapping for various organisations. They agreed to create an online frog map for us.

I must thank the mapping staff at SEQ Catchments, including Melissa Walker and Shannon Mooney for the many hours of hard work they are putting into this project. There are technical issues with the software that they still need to sorted out. After that, Jono and the Committee members will review the map to decide what changes need to be made.

One of the reasons I initiated this project is because I have seen a lot of wildlife habitat cleared for development because the habitats are often not shown on official maps. Birding and koala organisations each have their own mapping systems, far more comprehensive than what the government uses. We need to do the same for frogs. If a planned development fails to recognize the habitat of an endangered frog, we may be able to use our own mapping as grounds to lodge an objection.

Michael Kels
Area Coordinator for Logan City
■

Yarraman Workshop Wrap-up

For the past couple of years Susan and Scott Reilly (Secretary and President of FOTYC) have been suggesting that the Society visit their place and put on an ID Workshop for their volunteers and frog enthusiasts. After the success of the workshop in Blackbutt last year, Jono and I travel to Yarraman on the last day of National Frog Week 2016 to do so.

A lovely group of 14 people gathered under the house to listen to Jono and watch his presentation on frogs in general and then specific species of that area. The big green frog nearby started to call and we were all hoping he was calling in the black clouds which were gathering for some welcome rain but not to be. Pleasingly there were lots of interesting questions and stories and I think all aspects were covered well. The group consisted of people from Crows Nest, Nanango, Blackbutt, Wolvi and Yarraman.



A very tasty BBQ was prepared and eaten before we got our boots and shoes on for a spotlight. Even though it was a dry night it wasn't long before the first frog was spotted and as we walked around the site of Friends of Yarraman Creek revegetation areas many more frogs were out and about foraging. We saw five frog species: stony-creek frogs (mainly females, juveniles & one male), striped marsh frogs, eastern sedgefrogs, great barred frogs, a scarlet-sided popple-bonk and of course toads.

Friends of Yarraman Creek is a small group of about five volunteers who meet on Wednesdays and have replanted along both sides of Yarraman Creek with plant species native to their area which are thriving and creating a wonderful environment for all fauna. The creek is home to a platypus and its burrow is easily spotted. The group is celebrating the Healthy Waterways 2016 – Waterways Stewardship Award win and it is well deserved. Do visit their Facebook page www.facebook.com/yarramancreek4614 to see what more they have done.

Jenny Holdway ■

NEW FROGS OF BRISBANE POSTER FOR SALE

Our newly revamped and expanded Frogs of Brisbane Poster is available!

This great resource is partly funded by the Brisbane City Council to whom we are most grateful.

NEW Poster

Existing member who renews: Free poster (plus postage at \$10)

New member: Free poster (plus postage at \$10)

Additional poster to members: \$5 (plus postage at \$10) = total \$15

Non-member: \$5 (plus postage at \$10) = total \$15

OLD Poster

Members/non-members: gold coin donation (plus postage at \$10)

Please contact our Secretary, Jenny, using the details on Page 2 to place your order, or come and say g'day at our QFS display at upcoming events and receive your poster minus shipping!



A new, brightly-coloured treefrog revealed in northern Australia

Keith McDonald, Dr Jodi Rowley, Stephen Richards, Dr Greta Frankham | *Australian Museum* | 27 September 2016

A green frog with orange hands and feet and purple thighs leaps into the spotlight.

A new species of bright green treefrog from northern Cape York Peninsula has just been introduced to the world.

The newly named Cape York Graceful Treefrog (*Litoria bella*) has escaped attention until now by masquerading as its southern relative, the Graceful Treefrog (*Litoria gracilenta*). By looking at differences in its appearance, as well as its advertisement call and DNA, we now conclude that the Cape York Graceful Treefrog is a distinct species, bringing the number of known frog species in Australia to 239.

The Graceful Treefrog (*Litoria gracilenta*) is a small, green treefrog commonly heard after spring and summer rain along the east coast of Australia. Until now, the species was thought to occur all the way from north-eastern New South Wales to northern Cape York Peninsula in Queensland. How-

ever, subtle differences in appearance between Cape York frogs and their southern counterparts made us suspicious that more than one species was involved, and so we began the investigation.

By examining and comparing the frogs' colour and body measurements, DNA sequences and advertisement calls, we reveal that the frogs on northern Cape York Peninsula are a distinct species, and name the species the Cape York Graceful Treefrog (*Litoria bella*). We were also surprised to discover that the new species is more closely related to similar frogs in

New Guinea than to its southern relative.

The Cape York Graceful Treefrog is known from between Moa Island in the Torres Strait in the north, to about 20 km south of Coen on the Cape York Peninsula in the south. The southern-most location of the new species is separated by 220 km from the most northern record of the Graceful Treefrog in the Endeavour Valley



Cape York Graceful Treefrog

Credit: J. Rowley

near Cooktown.

The scientific name of this new species, *bella*, means 'beautiful' and this striking new frog certainly lives

NEW FROGS OF BUNDABERG AND FRASER COAST POSTER AVAILABLE

This great resource was funded by the Bundaberg Regional Council, Fraser Coast Regional Council, and the QLD Frog Society.

Existing **Bundaberg or Fraser Coast** member who renews:

Free poster (plus postage at \$10)

New **Bundaberg or Fraser Coast** member:

Free poster (plus postage at \$10)

Additional poster to **Bundaberg or Fraser Coast** members:

\$5 (plus postage at \$10) = total \$15

Non-member within **Bundaberg or Fraser Coast** region:

\$10 (plus postage at \$10) = total \$20

Please contact our Secretary, Jenny, using the details on Page 2 to place your order, or come and say g'day at QFS display in the Bundaberg or Fraser Coast region to receive your poster without postal costs!



up to the name, with its bright green head and back, orange belly, bright orange hands and feet, iridescent bluish purple inner thighs.

The discovery of this little green gem of the frog world is further evidence that we have a long way to go to fully document and understand the amazing biodiversity of northern Australia.

Source: <http://australianmuseum.net.au/blogpost/amri-news/a-new-brightly-coloured-treefrog-revealed-in-northern-australia> ■

Unlikely urban frog discovery surprises scientists

The University of Newcastle | 4 November 2016

A University of Newcastle (UON) biologist has made the incredible discovery of a new frog species nearby Newcastle Airport, Australia.

Discoveries of new vertebrate

species are rare, typically occurring in isolated and poorly explored areas – making this discovery within a populated and well-developed city so unlikely.

It was the frog's unique ventral pigment or 'marbled underbelly' that led Dr Simon Clulow to know instantly that he was holding something unfamiliar to the world of science.

Dr Simon Clulow "The distinctive marble pattern on the frog's belly, along with other features makes it quite different to any other frog species in this part of the world and led us to believe straight away that we had found a new species - it was an incredible mo-

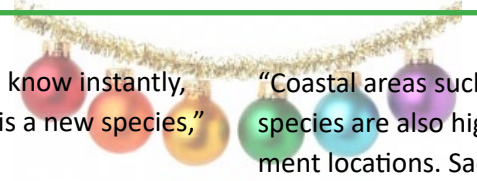
ment," said Dr Clulow.

"Nowadays many new discoveries are based primarily on genetics, that is the frogs look similar to other known species but when we analyse them in the lab we find they differ genetically. It's almost unheard of to



New Australian frog species, Mahony's Toadlet (*Uperoleia mahonyi*), found in Newcastle.

Credit: A. Parsons



pick up a vertebrate in the field and know instantly, based on appearance alone, that it is a new species,” said Dr Clulow.

Scarcely bigger than a human fingertip and living well concealed under a layer of vegetation or sand, it’s little wonder they have avoided discovery.

Dr Clulow said the frogs were ‘cryptic’, that is they visually mimic their natural surroundings to avoid detection - a natural defence mechanism particularly common in small lizards, snakes and frogs.

“They are highly secretive. Individuals remain well camouflaged and hidden under grass, leaves and sand and are often found only by following the male advertisement or ‘mating’ call,” said Dr Clulow.

A striking orange ‘flash colour’ is visible in its groin when the frog extends its legs - another important defence mechanism.

“If a predator comes across the frog, the frog will flash a brilliant burst of orange as it attempts to leap to safety. This is thought to momentarily startle the predator, helping the frog to survive another day!” said Dr Clulow.

Dubbed Mahony’s Toadlet (*Uperoleia mahonyi*), the name honours Dr Clulow’s supervisor and mentor, Professor Michael Mahony, a renowned frog expert and conservationist.

“Professor Mahony has dedicated his life to the research and conservation of frogs, this is a wonderful opportunity to acknowledge his very meaningful work,” said Dr Clulow.

Not to be confused with a toad, Mahony’s Toadlet is a native Australian frog species which takes its common name from the glands on its back which superficially resemble the toads of Europe and the Americas.

The advertisement or ‘mating’ call is a single audible ‘squelch’ sound lasting less than one second.

The species was discovered at Oyster Cove in Port Stephens and has a highly restricted distribution, occurring in select coastal sand swamps in the Myall Lakes, Port Stephens and Central Coast.

“The frog is a habitat specialist, living exclusively on a particular type of leached white sand substrate, which could make it more at risk from threats such as habitat loss and sand mining.”

“Coastal areas such as those inhabited by this new species are also highly attractive residential development locations. Sadly, this threat, combined with the limited distribution of the frog could result in it being immediately listed as a threatened species,” said Dr Clulow.

This discovery was detailed by Dr Simon Clulow from the University of Newcastle along with coauthors Dr Marion Anstis (University of Newcastle), Prof Scott Keogh (Australian National University) and Dr Renee Catullo (University of Western Sydney) in the journal *Zootaxa*, published today.

Article from: <https://www.newcastle.edu.au/news-room/featured-news/unlikely-urban-frog-discovery-surprises-scientists> ■

Frogs breed with their siblings and cousins after bushfires

Bridie Smith | *The Sydney Morning Herald* |
15 November 2016

Three months after the Black Saturday bushfires incinerated the bushland around Kinglake, Jane Melville returned to check on her precious frogs.

For the previous two years she had been studying the wild populations of two of the area’s more common species: the southern brown tree frog and plains brown tree frog. Returning to the area north east of Melbourne that had been scorched by the firestorm was an anxious moment.

“I didn’t quite know what to expect,” the Museum Victoria herpetologist admitted. “We could have gone out there and found absolutely no frogs.”

Instead the frog calls that greeted Dr Melville and her colleagues lifted their spirits: there was a chorus in the recovering bush.

However the team’s hopes that frogs were resilient to fire have been shattered by the results of their most recent study, published on Tuesday.

While the calls that greeted the researchers each winter breeding season after the 2009 bushfires were robust in number, genetic testing has revealed they are alarmingly limited in diversity.

Or to put it another way, the surviving frogs have such limited choices of mates that they are breeding with their siblings and cousins.

"I was surprised at how dramatic inbreeding was. There was a huge spike after Black Saturday," Dr Melville said. "If it keeps going like that, then the populations would be at risk of extinction. It's that dramatic."

Inbreeding shrinks a population's gene pool, compromising its ability to fend off threats such as new and emerging diseases or an ability to adapt to a changing climate.

Up to 40 per cent of amphibian species are facing extinction, with the highly-contagious chytrid fungus one of the most serious threats.



The genetic diversity of the southern brown tree frog fell after the Black Saturday fires. *Credit: D. Paul*

Modelling conducted as part of the study suggested an 80 per cent chance that a Victorian tree frog population would become extinct if 10 intense fires occurred this century.

Traditionally frog surveys count calls. The size of a population is estimated based on the number of calls recorded during the breeding season. However the results of Dr Melville's study suggests this is not an accurate reflection of the health of a population.

"It seemed in a lot of cases that frogs are resilient to fires but this may not be the case," she said.

Dr Melville said if increased inbreeding as a result of bushfire had been recorded in an abundant species, then it was probably also the case for threatened species, such as the growling grass frog, which calls the area home. It was also likely to be seen amongst reptiles and small mammals which are not as mobile

as larger animals that can escape fire and seek breeding mates further afield.

The work, by researchers from institutions including Monash and Melbourne universities, is published in The Journal of Applied Ecology on Tuesday.

Source: <http://www.smh.com.au/technology/sci-tech/frogs-breed-with-their-siblings-and-cousins-after-bushfires-20161115-gsph81.html>

'Unofficial' Frog Camps Return 2017

Long time Member and former President, Rod, is inviting people along to go frogging on camping trips next year. Members who tag along are responsible for organising their own camp permits, gear and their own safety. The QFS is not liable for personal injury.

Once details of each upcoming camp are announced, you need to let Rod know if you're coming.

Stay tuned for further details in 2017!



Have a laugh

What do toads drink?
Croak-a-cola!

What kind of music do sophisticated frogs listen to?
Hopera.

What does a bankrupt frog say?
"Baroke, baroke, baroke."



Something for you...

Junior Frogologists

By Tim Williams, Junior Editor

Try these cool froggy crafts to put a HOP in your Christmas!

Frog-licious Treats



Ingredients

12 Oreo cookies
24 Pretzels
White chocolate melts
Green food colouring
Black icing writing pen
Strawberry roll-up or sour strap
Green sugar sprinkles

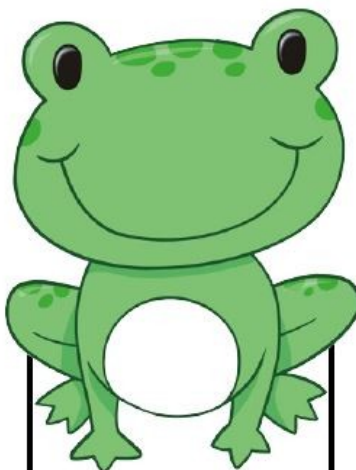
Instructions

Line baking tray with waxed paper. Melt 7oz white chocolate in microwave and carefully add green colour. Dip pretzels in green chocolate, removing with fork and place together on tray. Dip oreo the same and set on pretzels. Cut strap to tongue shape and set in oreo for mouth. Sprinkle green sprinkles at rear of cookie and set white chocolate melts for eyes, with black pupils drawn on with black icing pen. Allow to set.

See <http://www.bakingandboys.com/2014/03/oreos-pretzel-frogs.html> for more.

Frog-tastic Reads

Make a cool bookmark for your summer getaway! See http://www.activityvillage.co.uk/sites/default/files/downloads/frog_joke_bookmarks.pdf for more.



Q:
What does a
frog say when
it sees
something
great?



Today
awesome!

A:

www.ActivityVillage.co.uk

Origami Tree Decs



Make and hang these super cute origami tree frogs from your Christmas tree this year. Now that will get people talking! See <http://www.parents.com/fun/activities/rainy-day/how-to-make-a-jumping-origami-frog/> for video instructions.

Merry
Christmas



Frotophraphy

Members Frog Photography

Send your neat frog photos to editor@qldfrogs.asn.au
or via Facebook by the next newsletter deadline.



A female (above) and male (below) Tusked Frog courting at Buderim Rainforest. Unfortunately for him, she left him, possibly in favour of the male calling opposite of them.
Credit: J. Hooper



Three Green Treefrogs inside a toilet at Widgee, west of Gympie. They are about to set off through the window for their nights' foraging expedition, and are always back by the following morning.
Credit: Frances

Thankyou to those who contributed to this newsletter!
We love receiving Member & Coordinator-contributed content.
**Deadline for Autumn *Frogsheet* contributions is
9 February 2017**

If undelivered, please return to
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