FROGSHEET

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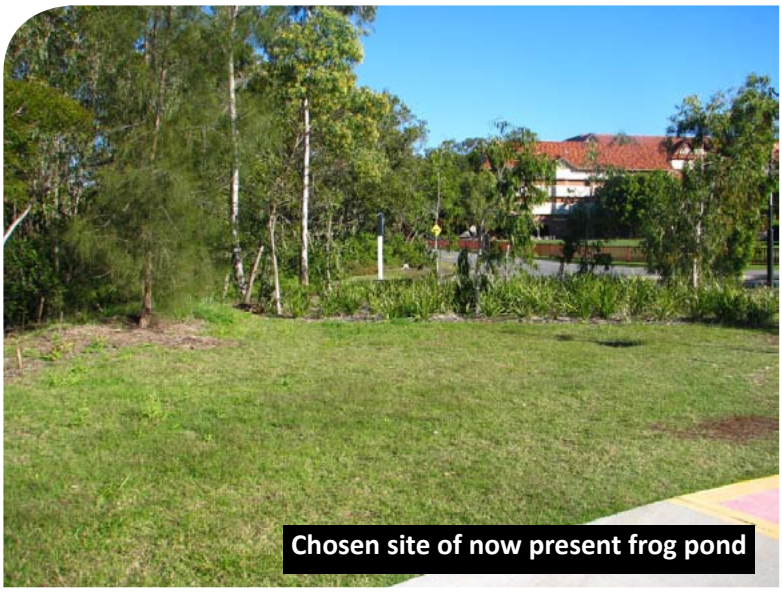
HEATH PARK POND PROJECT: A COLLABORATIVE EFFORT

Volunteers planting out the pond

It was almost a year ago that the QLD Frog Society was contacted by the Norman Creek Catchment Co-ordinating Committee (N4C), requesting some advice on the possible installation of a frog pond in Heath Park at East Brisbane. Norman Creek runs around the periphery of the park; their members manage weeding and revegetation projects in the area, and they had noted the presence of some frog activity.

This site was already known to QFS as it had previously supported a successful breeding population of Green Treefrogs (*Litoria caerulea*) in ephemeral water that collected around and beneath a dense group of Cottonwood trees. However, in 2010, major alterations resulted in the replacement of this remnant vegetation with a new car park.

In June 2017 approval was obtained from the BCC Land Manager to construct a pond on Council land that could hopefully provide a substitute breeding site for any remaining frogs. An initial meeting was held on site between QFS, N4C and the BCC Creek Catchment Officer to choose a location and to discuss construction and subsequent maintenance. The site had to be as close as physically possible to the original one, as frogs won't change their traditional behaviour no matter how inviting the new habitat may seem to be.



Chosen site of now present frog pond

The position was chosen, and BCC offered to fund and carry out the excavation, provide tools, rocks and plants, and put in a tap as a permanent source of water. QFS and N4C agreed to equally share funding for the bentonite clay liner (chosen after much research) the river sand to cover it, and to provide people for a working bee to install both the liner and an initial delivery of plants. Plans faltered briefly when a Dial-before-you-Dig enquiry identified a Telstra cable running directly beneath the intended site, but this was proven not to be →

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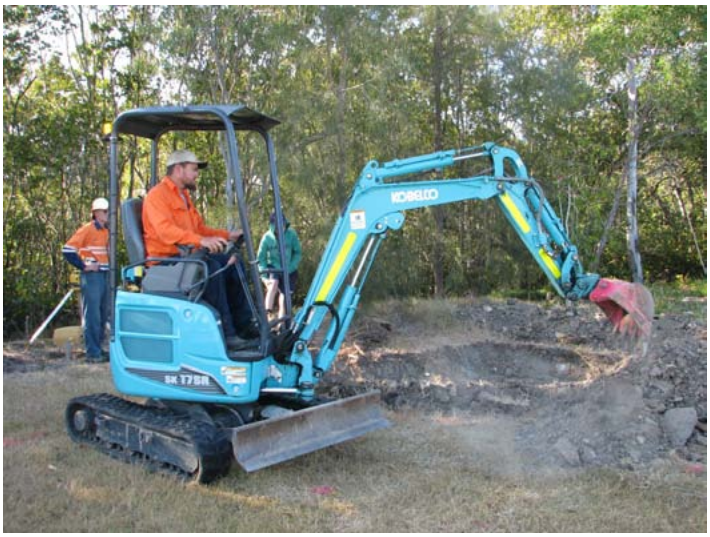
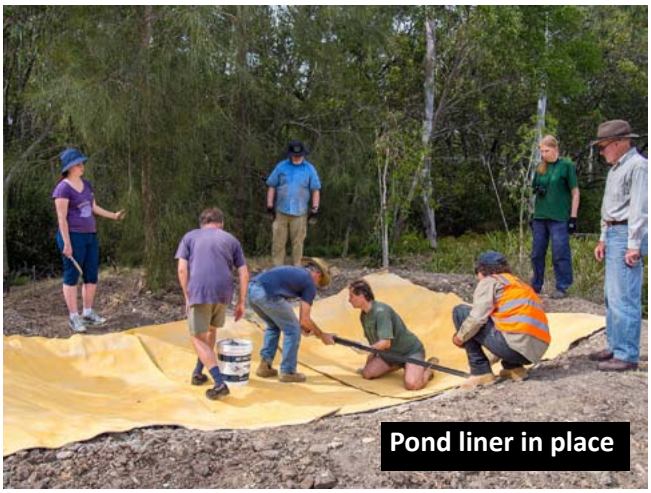


the case when an Underground Service Locator performed a detailed survey, and on 11th September 2017 the digger arrived and the hole was completed.

The following week there was good attendance at the working bee, and members of the passing public stopped off to lend a hand as well. The heavy liner was rolled out, joints sealed with bentonite paste, and the edges dug into the bund wall. Rocks were used to stabilise the edges and to construct a spillway towards the nearby creek, as there could be issues with future simultaneous rain events and high tides. A layer of river sand then covered the liner, reeds and sedges were planted into it, the tap was turned on – and the water stayed in place!

Over the following weeks timber was gathered and arranged to provide habitat, landscaping and further stabilisation of the banks. A variety of plants were added both into the water and around the →



Pond liner in place

UPCOMING EVENTS

13-15 July - QLD Garden Expo. Nambour Showground. QFS sales and display.

15-16 September - Native Plants Qld. Spring Flower Show. Toowong Botanical Gardens. QFS display.

October - QFS Annual General Meeting. Stay tuned for date and location!

Keep updated via our E-News Emails and Facebook

ANSWERING EMAILS

We are seeking a proactive member with decent frog knowledge to regularly attend to our Questions email Inbox. Please contact us if you are interested.

FROG HABITAT WORKING BEES

Bowman Park, Bardon
8-11am - Contact Phil for more info or visit the Facebook group at https://www.facebook.com/bowmanparkfroghabitatgroup/

RIC NATTRASS RESEARCH GRANT

The QFS Trust Fund was created with the purpose to help save QLD frogs through education and research by means of this Research Grant, and now stands at **$5,563.42** (- $561.08 since Autumn edition)

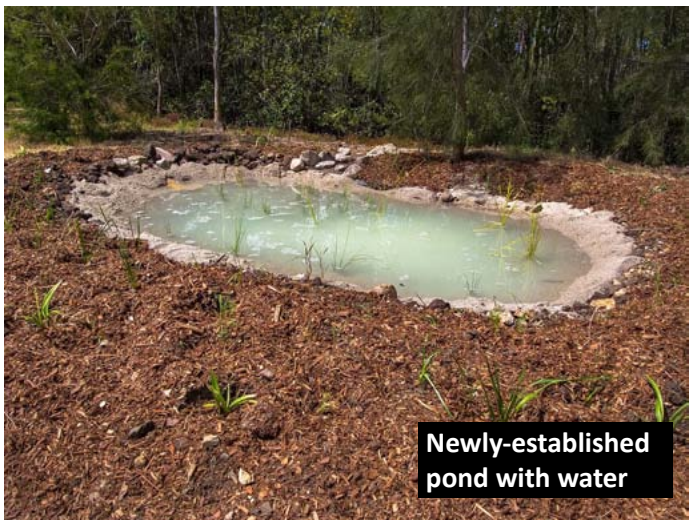
STAY IN THE LOOP

If you have a newer preferred email address, please contact us and let us know.

HELPING HAND

We are always in need of an extra pair of hands to assist at community event display stalls. Many hands make light work, even if you can spare 30 minutes to help unpack and packup our display gear from and to a vehicle. Most of our displays are within the Brisbane area.

Please contact our Secretary if you can help us out.



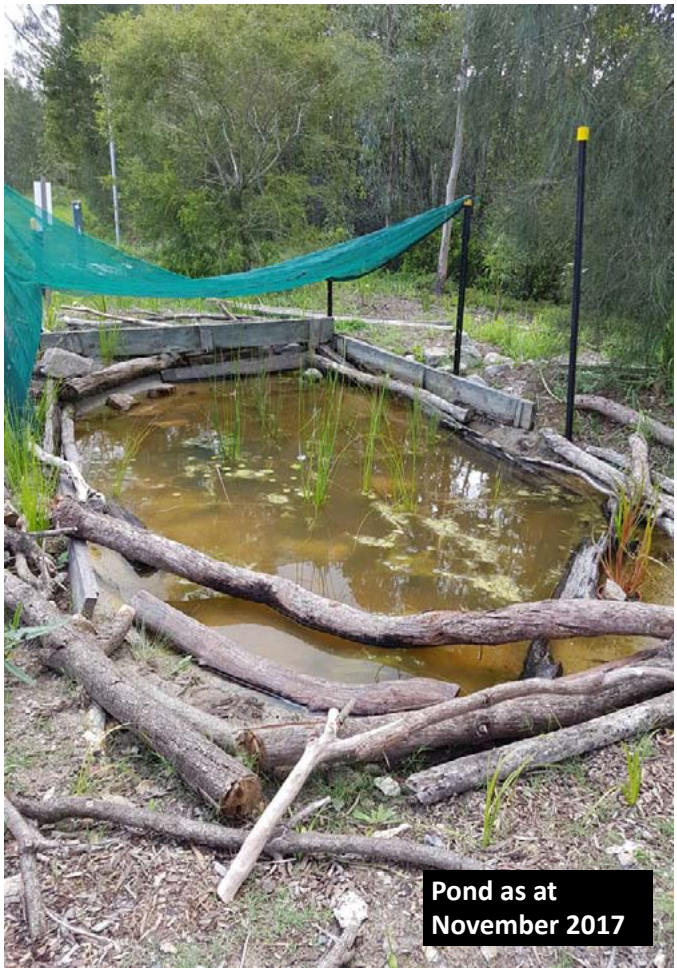
Newly-established pond with water

edges so that we could assess which did well, and some old sections of terracotta pipe were used to provide underwater shelter from wading birds. Dragonfly larvae and water beetles were soon sighted.
As there is a high level of local pedestrian traffic, a sign mounted beside the pond informs people of the aim of the project and asks them to treat it with care.

Update, issues and some solutions….

Water temperature: The first obvious problem was that the water became severely overheated in the full sun reaching at least 35 deg. Algae then flourished, choking the plants. Using star pickets and shade cloth a roof was placed over more than half of the pond resulting in a noticeable improvement, and we intend to leave it in place for at least another summer whilst some shade trees grow up.

Water quality: Cloudiness, sediment and death of pondlife especially after rain, caused us to test some factors with a Horiba monitor and also submit samples to a laboratory for confirmation and further contaminant analysis. Results showed the pH was very high →



Pond as at November 2017

QFS Membership - Don't Delay, Renew Today!

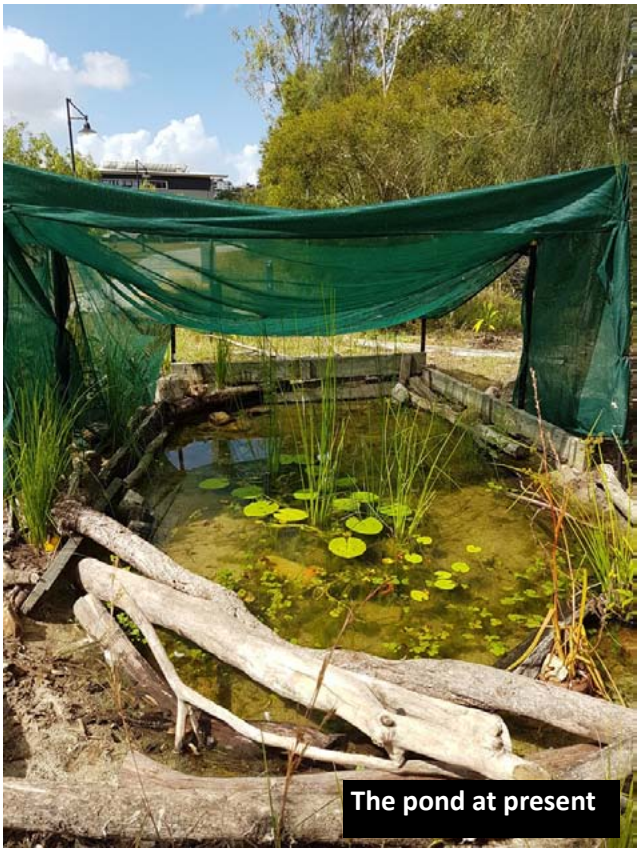
As we approach the new financial year, many of our supporters memberships are up for renewal. Aside from donations, and the limited number of sales we make, your membership is the only significant source from which we can continue to operate as a Society and educate the community about our frogs.

You will soon receive a renewal notice via either the mail or email. Renewals can be done easily via our website - click here. Please don't hesitate in securing your membership for another year and supporting QLD's frogs through frog pond construction, research grants, workshops and displays at community events.

Thankyou!

Donation in Memory of Alan Bailey 1986-2018

The QFS would like to gratefully acknowledge a $100 donation to the Public Trust Fund in memory of a young man who passed away in January. Alan Bailey had many challenges in his short life but all his friends remember him by his friendship, joy and fun and always had a smile no matter what. Alan loved frogs and was going to have a frog pond built for him prior to his death. We thank Annie for her donation, in Alan's memory.



The pond at present

(it was lowered slightly by sinking net bags of soaked garden peat), salinity was slightly high (not suprising with the tidal creek next door) but all trace metals, herbicides etc were within normal ranges.

Water depth: As feared, the pond is really too shallow now that it's settled in, but regulations restricted the depth to which we could initially dig and there was a slight underestimation of the amount of liner needed. It would be a cooler healthier pond if at least one end was considerably deeper, but changing this isn't an option.

Toads: Heath Park is a toad hotspot, and all through summer multiple skeins of toadspawn and adult toads were removed. Control required daily rigorous monitoring, we were able to prevent all but a small amount hatching and to manually remove those toadpoles.

Mosquitoes: Larvae appeared early on, and built up very quickly. There was some doubt as to whether fish would survive the temperature and quality of the water, so we experimented with a small number of native "feeder fish" from the aquarium once the shade roof was on, feeling that at least it gave them a chance of life ! Success was reasonable, the larvae disappeared, and though some fish died particularly after rain, others have survived long term.

Maintenance: The pond requires quite frequent topping up, so having the tap is a huge advantage. Weed grasses and roots need regular removal to limit their growing into the pond, and algae removal is also a recurrent task. Further planting is continuing around the edge and may help with toad deterrence by next summer, when we are hoping the frogs will see it as a seriously desirable residence!

Julia and Stefan

ASHGROVE REPORT

I don't have a report from the area as I have only just got back on feet but I hear the working bees at Bowman Park have been busy. I have received a few emails regarding indentifying emerging tadpoles and fortunately these have been answered by our experts.

A couple of months ago I was contacted by a lady, Annie, who wished to donate to our Public Trust Fund in memory of a young man who had passed away in January. Alan Bailey had many challenges in his short life but all his friends remember him by his friendship, joy and fun and always had a smile no matter what.

He was about to go into independent housing when pancreatic cancer cut his life short. As he was a frog lover extraordinaire his friends were going to build a frog pond for him at his new accommodation but unfortunately this didn't happen. In his funeral notice his family and friends were asked to wear "froggy green" as well as popular culture T Shirts. Annie feels this gesture will go to good use and QFS is very grateful for the donation.

Jenny Holdway

RESEARCH GRANT AWARDED

As previously reported, Alannah Filer is the recipient of the 2018 Ric Nattrass Research Grant. The purpose of this grant is to assist research into Queensland's frogs.

Alannah is currently completing her PhD at the University of Queensland on the distribution of Queensland's acid frogs - the Wallum Sedgefrog, Wallum Rocketfrog, Cooloola Sedgefrog, and Wallum Froglet. Alannah's research focuses on the analysis of acid frog species and the competitive relationship with their associated sibling (closely related and morphologically similar) species. Alannah is concentrating on the relationship between the Wallum Sedgefrog and its sibling the Eastern Sedgefrog.) →

The acid frogs, also known as wallum frogs, live in the remnant wallum/heath pockets in the sandy lowlands of South East Queensland and Northern New South Wales. The species are however frequently threatened by loss or degradation of their habitat to urban development along the coast. Habitat alteration can allow the introduction of the acid frogs' sibling species ('common' species which utilize a variety of environments) by decreasing the acidity of the water, allowing competing species to breed. These sibling species have been observed to outcompete the acid frogs in disturbed wallum ecosystems.

Alannah is using bioacoustic audio recorders to monitor the amphibian populations at various ponds with differing levels of disturbance. This is to determine the extent and method of acoustic competition between the acid frogs and their sibling species. So far, two breeding seasons of acoustic data have been recorded and data collection is ongoing.

In 2009, the Queensland Frog Society established the Queensland Frog Society Trust Fund to provide funding for amphibian research projects such as Alannah's. To finance these grants, the Queensland Frog Society is encouraging you to be involved by giving a tax-deductible donation to the QFS Public Trust Fund, where your donation will be invested into the future of Queensland's frog fauna. Jennifer Singfield

Alannah with the bioacoustic recorders used for her research

FINDING FROG IN FEBRUARY AND OTHER TIMES

November 2017 marked the start of planning for the second annual Find a Frog in February Citizen Science program as the final, necessary bucket of funding came to fruition. The area covered by this program includes all of the Mary River catchment with the addition of the Burrum River and coastal catchments south to Peregian. The Burrum River has been included as the endangered Giant barred frog (Mixophyes iteratus) has been recorded in this system and provides an important insight into the previous extent of this species (closest records are in Tinana Creek). The Noosa River system, including Kin Kin Creek, are information depauperate and interesting in their own right. Again, the Giant barred frog is significant except this time for its presumed absence when it is surrounded by records in neighbouring catchments.

These are just some of the gaps in knowledge that FFF seeks to fill through the collection of frog records from many locations and habitat types. Surprisingly there is a lack of fauna information from many places as sightings go unrecorded most of the time. The catchment community has many eyes and a great willingness to be involved and contribute to our collective knowledge and management. All the records go into the Queensland Government WildNet database where it is kept in perpetuity and available to researchers, planners, land managers and members of the public. →


Young Ella finding frogs

After cutting our teeth on this new program in 2017, we were more prepared this February to reach as many people as possible and give whatever support was needed to help people with their frogging involvement. Here's a brief summary of what went on during 2017 and 2018: Besides being super prepared this year the weather angels showed themselves with introductory rain right on que on the 1st February and again, great, widespread deluges were experienced during the last week. We couldn't have asked for better conditions for frog action to encourage folk to take photos and recordings of frog calls. Consequently, there were twice as many Frog Finders involved and more than four times the number of records this year! Some significant finds were the Cascade treefrog (Litoria pearsoniana – vulnerable) at Wootha, Wallum froglet (Crinia tinnula - vulnerable) at Talegalla Weir area, Tusked frogs (Adelotus brevis - vulnerable) from three of the four shires, explosive congregations of multi-species activity after heavy rains, development of Year 7 module on frogs by Jean Pink from James Nash State High School, confirmation of 2002 of the 2035 records due to excellent information provided (photos, call recordings, descriptions, habitats)!

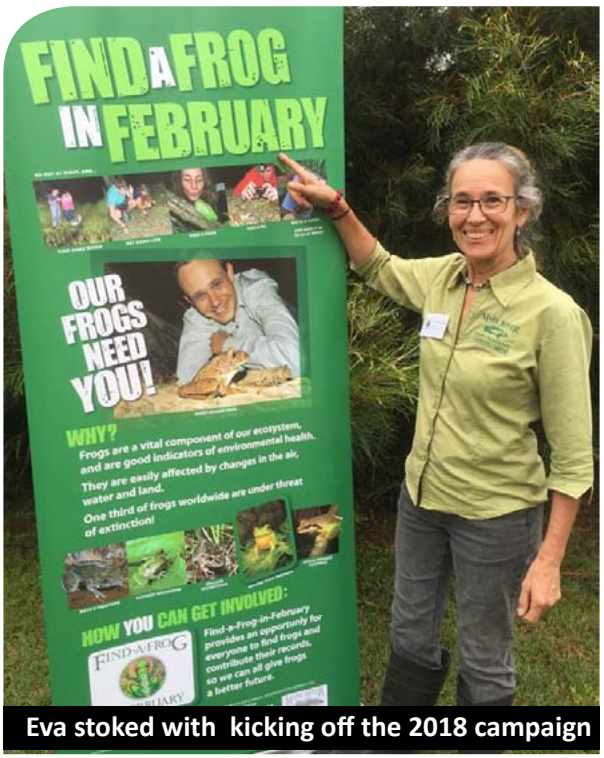
	2017	2018
Number of workshops and school presentations	0	7
Number of Frog Finders submitting records	79	137
Number of surveys carried out	88	223
Number of different locations surveyed	68	146
Total number of frog records submitted and positively identified	438	2,035
Number of species observed	22	23
Number of threatened species observed	3	4

The MRCCC has been carrying out frog surveys in the Mary River catchment since 2003 collecting around 15,000 records. The addition of over 2,000 records in just one month is a mammoth increase in knowledge! The bar is now set high for us and we will be working to increase participation next year through more awareness, more workshops and modernising the submission of records (paper forms seem to be a thing of the past but, yes, we will keep them for the old fashioned amongst us as well as an electronic method!).

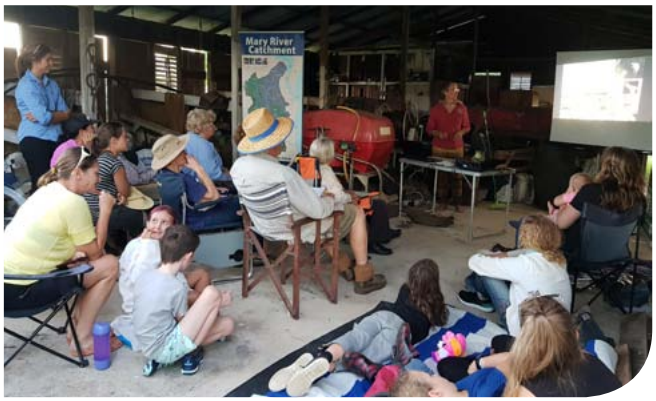
The MRCCC expresses its gratitude to the four councils who funded the FFF program and to the generous provision of space for workshops at Noosa Landcare's Rural Futures Centre, Waterford Park at Kin Kin, the Goomboorian Hall and the Lower Wonga shed at Crossley's property. Fabulous venues even when we were sometimes bulging at the seams!

Major congratulations must go to the Fabulous Frog Finders who put in a huge effort to go out and look around and then to submit their frog experiences. We hope you had fun and will join with us to gather frog records again in February 2019, and any time in-between!

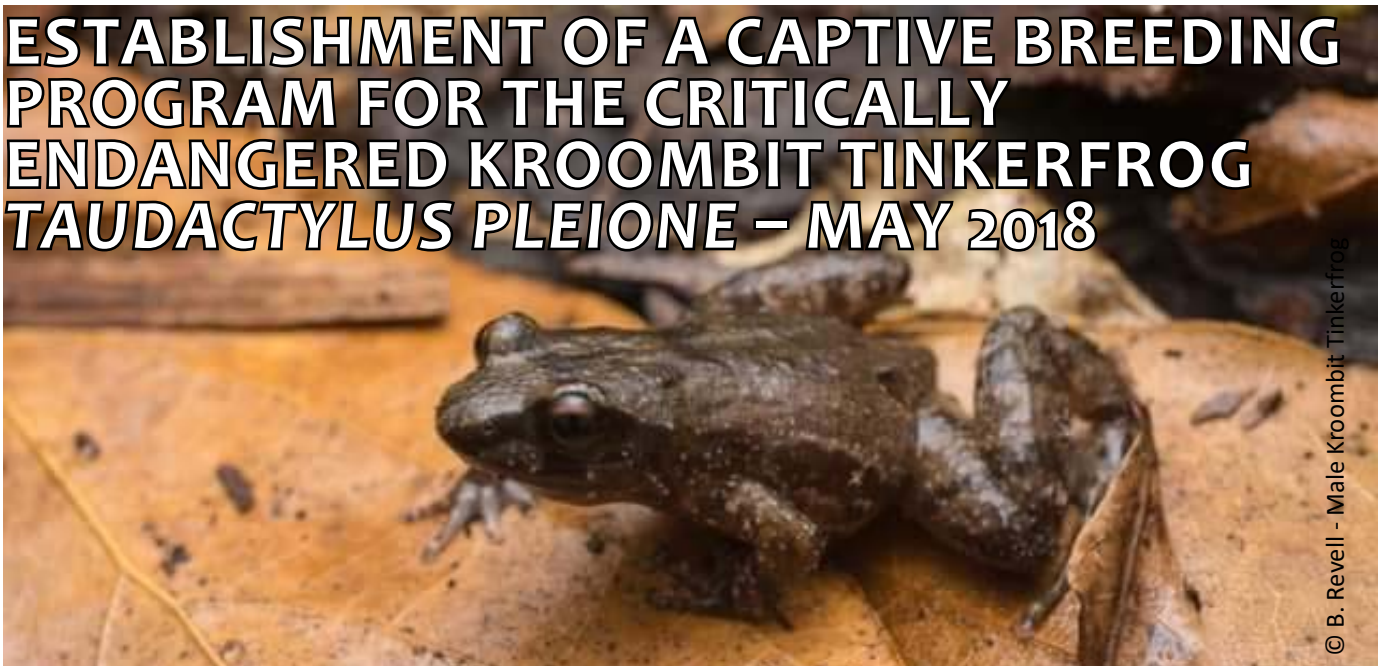
Eva Ford



Eva stoked with kicking off the 2018 campaign



ESTABLISHMENT OF A CAPTIVE BREEDING PROGRAM FOR THE CRITICALLY ENDANGERED KROOMBIT TINKERFROG *TAUDACTYLUS PLEIONE* – MAY 2018



© B. Revell - Male Kroombit Tinkerfrog

The Department of Environment and Science's Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service (QPWS) and Currumbin Wildlife Sanctuary (CWS) have commenced a collaborative project to undertake captive breeding of the critically endangered Kroombit tinkerfrog *Taudactylus pleione*. This comes on the back of a successful captive breeding trial using the closely related Eungella tinkerfrog *T. liemi*, by Professor Jean-Marc Hero (formerly of Griffith University), Dr Ed Meyer (consultant ecologist) and Currumbin Wildlife Sanctuary.

In early February 2018, Ed Meyer and Harry Hines, Senior Conservation Officer QPWS, undertook a field trip to Kroombit Tops National Park to collect a small number of tinkerfrogs for captive breeding. We focused our efforts on finding an adult female but were unable to locate one (due in part to the very wet, cold and windy conditions prevailing at this time). We did however locate and collect an indeterminate, possibly sub-adult female and an adult male on this trip. A subsequent collecting trip in March 2018, with Saskia Lafebre and Kimberly Revelly from Currumbin Wildlife Sanctuary (CWS), Harry Hines of QPWS and Ben Revelly (a QPWS volunteer), resulted in the collection of a second indeterminate individual and a partially gravid adult female. Animals collected from the wild were carefully transported back to a dedicated husbandry facility at Currumbin within 48 hours of capture. They have all settled in to their new home and are eating well. We are hopeful that the adult female will develop a full complement of eggs over the coming months with a view to breeding in spring.

Amphibian chytridiomycosis, a fungal disease responsible for declines and disappearances of frogs across the globe, is a major threat to the tinkerfrog species both in the wild and in captivity. The preceding work with the captive population of Eungella tinkerfrogs at CWS, developed safe treatment protocols to rid adult and subadult tinkefrogs of amphibian chytrid fungus. In keeping with these protocols, treatment of Kroombit tinkerfrogs for chytrid commenced in the field, 12 hours after capture.

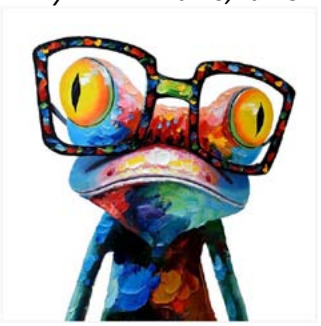
Pre-treatment chytrid infection status was assessed by carefully swabbing the flanks and ventral surfaces of the frogs and subsequent DNA analyses. After swabbing, each frog was treated with a 10 minute bath in an antifungal solution. This same treatment was repeated every 24 hours for 10 days after capture. Analysis of skin swabs of the frogs immediately post-treatment and in subsequent weeks, has shown that all four animals collected from the wild are now chytrid free.

Depending on the sex of the sub-adults collected in February/March, additional animals may be collected from the wild this spring. The Kroombit tinkerfrog husbandry team will regularly assess the progress of captive frogs and evaluate the need for additional animals as required. In the longer term, we hope to →

Something for you...

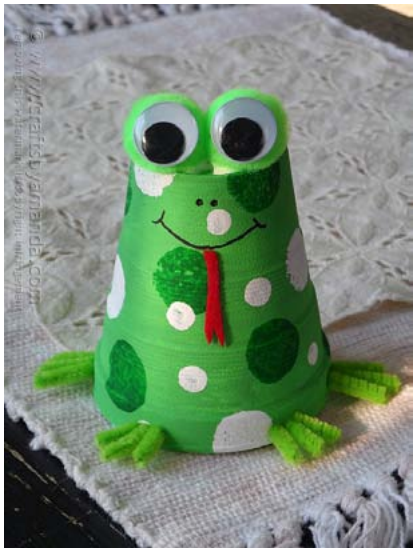
Junior Frogologists

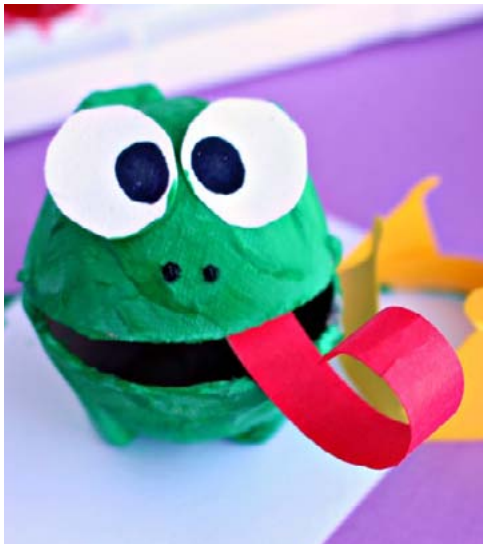
By Tim Williams, Junior Editor

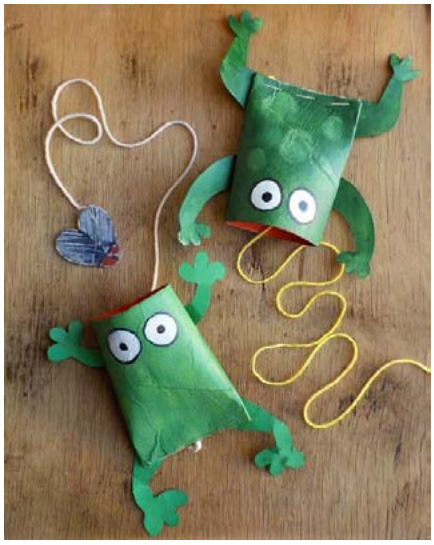


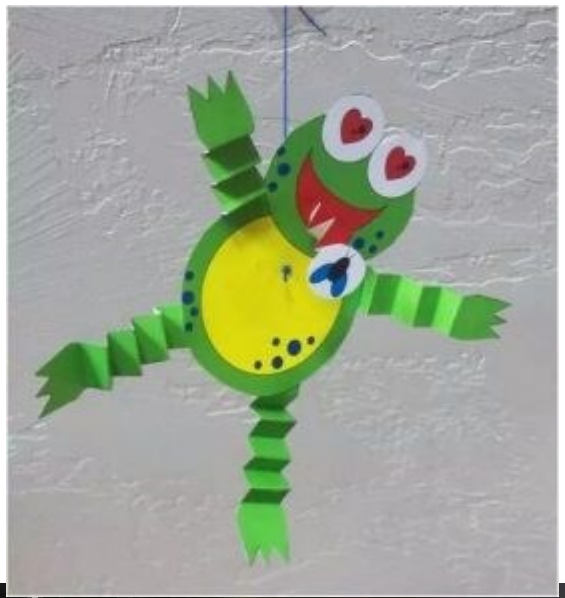
Let's Get Crafty

Love frogs, cool with craft, why not whip up one of these groovy masterpieces! Sure fire fun for you and your frog fan club!







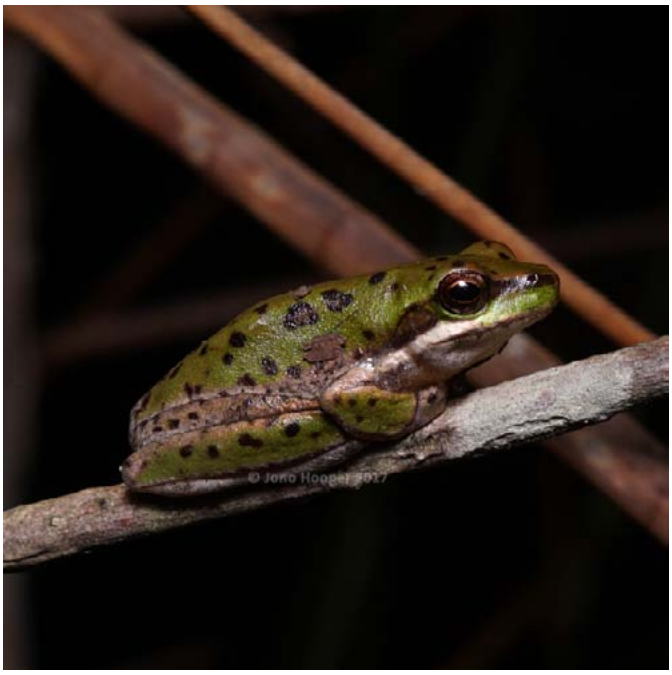


release captive bred animals back to the wild. Fitzroy Basin Association (FBA) helped finance this important project and have supported survey and monitoring of threatened frogs at Kroombit Tops over many years. Their ongoing support of this project and other conservation work at Kroombit Tops (in particular feral animal control) is critical to the continued survival of the Kroombit tinkerfrog. Other important contributors to this project include present and former staff of CWS, including Michael Vella, Saskia Lafebre, Natalie Hill and Matt Hingley. Department of Environment and Science staff (past and present) and numerous volunteers have also contributed over many years to our understanding of the distribution and abundance of the Kroombit tinkerfrog, its status, and the need for captive breeding. Thanks are also owed to the local QPWS staff for use of the barracks (warm, dry and mostly leech free!) and their ongoing efforts in controlling feral animals at Kroombit.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

I have been busy these last several months managing threatened acid frogs at a local airport expansion project, whilst also attending to emails, answering Facebook questions during the wet weather and keeping members updated via our Enews emails. J. Hooper

WHO AM I?



I am the Eastern Sedgefrog (*Litoria fallax*) - did you guess right from the last newsletter? My black spots are not particularly common for my species. Caloundra.

NEXT EDITION

Thankyou to those of you who contributed to this newsletter.
Deadline for Spring *Frogsheet* contributions is
13 August 2018

If undelivered, please return to
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PP424022/00619