



# FROGSHEET

Official Newsletter of the Queensland Frog Society Inc.

Winter 2014

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## President's Report

Well winter has arrived or has it? I'm writing this report in what is being reported as the warmest start to winter in a long time. This hasn't really fooled too many of the frogs though as it has also been drier than average and we are looking at a return to El Nino conditions (basically drought here in Queensland and many other parts of Australia). Many areas across Queensland have already had very little rain in the summer and autumn just gone so the prospect of drought isn't good news for breeding in many species of frog. The summer gone presented few breeding opportunities for many of our frogs but hopefully those in your local area managed to squeeze in some raucous nights frenetically breeding!

Jesse, our Vice President and I have been out conducting stream frog surveys with some of our colleagues during late April into early May. Even though the early part of the night remained warm we detected very few active frog species. The occasional sedge frog (*Litoria fallax*) was all that could muster the energy to call, usually from high up in some streamside vegetation.

As always, don't forget we do have a number of frogs in Queensland that breed and remain active over the winter months, so if you're missing your fill of froggin then don't despair, simply do a little research on the winter breeding frogs of your area and don a warm coat!

Over winter the committee receives a lot less frog related enquiries but will remain busy preparing the Brisbane City Council funded redesign of our Frogs of Brisbane poster, as well as conducting educational displays and presentations. This poster will have up dated taxonomic information, new images and greater detail on the identification of the introduced cane toad. It should be available by the summer – so keep an eye out in the summer edition of the *Frogsheet* to find out how you can get one.

Enjoy the warmer weather while it lasts! Also enjoy the new format *Frogsheet* – since going electronic Jono (*Frogsheet* editor) has been doing a wonderful job packing the newsletter full of all sorts of interesting frog information.

*Cheers, Dan*



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Continued →

## Diary Dates

### QLD Garden Expo

11, 12 & 13<sup>th</sup> July

Come and visit us and our display in the 'Living Backyard' at QLD's largest garden expo, Nambour. Items & free stuff available.

### Annual General Meeting

4<sup>th</sup> October

10.30am – CWCN Centre, 47-57

Hepworth Street, Chapel Hill. Come listen to our guest speakers.

### SGAP Spring Flower Show

11 & 12<sup>th</sup> October

Botanical Gardens, Toowong. QFS Display and Sales

### Proposed Frog ID Workshop

November, Mooloolah

### QFS Management Meetings

7:30pm, 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday of every month

All welcome! Phone/email Jenny. H for location.

### Frog Habitat Site 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](mailto:ddolby@hotmail.com), Ph: 3355 4134

#### Carseldine Bush Crew

Cabbage Tree Creek, Carseldine

Contact James Hansen for more info at

[jamna@powerup.com.au](mailto: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](mailto:editor@qldfrogs.asn.au).

### SUNSHINE COAST

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## From Jono

Hi Fellow Froggers,

**W**hilst we didn't receive the downpour as predicted for May, our first and only real rain in late March provided excellent opportunities to get out and get wet (depending on how desperate for frogging you were). And you've guessed of course I for one was in that 'desperate' category :P It was well worth it though as I found my first Green-thighed frogs (*Litoria brevipalmata*), calling at Pomona beside a swollen watercourse, in up to my knees of water! I also added another four frog species to my sighted records which was an over-due achievement in my opinion.



These next few months are looking quite exciting, despite what is now meant to be Winter. We have our first ever presence at the University of the

Sunshine Coast's World Environment Day, organised by our Sunny Coast Coordinator Brittany Elliott, followed by our always successful display at the QLD Garden Expo in July! Looking forward to meeting you at either events.

Cheers, *Jono Hooper*

## Ashgrove Report

**A**s I have just returned from overseas where I was dealing with family matters, I am not aware of any unusual frog activity for this time of the year and from what I can see of my garden, there hasn't been a lot of rain during that time. I will be spending the winter months putting my garden back after 2 or 3 scrub turkeys called it home over summer and I do hope my frogs haven't move camp because of them.

In April we had a very successful working bee at the David Avenue habitat section in Bowman Park Bardon. We have been working hard to eradicate a nasty weed, *Dyschoriste depressa*, which has taken hold though out the area. We left a huge pile of it for the council to pick up and hopefully destroy and we will have to continue to pluck out any seedlings that appear. This weed is also in the surrounding grassed area and the mowers help to spread it as just a tiny portion will regrow.

I do hope the members and friends who venture to Nambour for the Expo will call into the "Living Backyard" section and say "hello".

Cheers, Jenny



QFS supported by the Brisbane City Council



Thanks to Ascot Print & Design Pty Ltd for printing our *Frogsheet* header and footer for free

### Welcome and thanks to our New Members

Kymberly Robinson, Ann, Peggy and Joyce Bennett, Lindi Oliver, Susan and Michael Cully.

### QFS Public Trust Fund - Ric Nattrass Research Grant

The QFS Trust Fund was created with the purpose to help save Queensland frogs through education and research, and now stands at **\$4,534.62**.

### 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.

### Want to help spread the word?

If you're a coordinator, why not set up a QFS display in 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.

### Updated Diary Dates

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

# Who's Who of the QFS

**W**e conclude the QFS Committee Member Profiles in this newsletter edition.

## Janece Eckhardt, Treasurer

### 1. What duties do you perform as Treasurer?

My role as Treasurer is to manage the monies of the QFS. This mainly involves processing invoices, recording expenses and receipts as well as monitoring bank statements. I also watch the performance of our investment portfolio.

Financial statements are presented at each management meeting. Each year a report is prepared for auditing by the accountant. The audited accounts are presented at the AGM.

As a member of the management team, I assist with the running of the Society. The Treasurer needs to ensure the QFS operates within its Constitution and complies with the requirements of the Office of Fair Trading.



Helping out at displays and workshops is always interesting and fun. I also respond to phone calls from people with queries about frogs

### 2. How long have you been involved in the QFS?

Since joining the QFS in 2003 I've very much enjoyed attending many of weekend camps & local displays.

### 3. What do you spend your time doing outside of your role in the QFS?

Since retiring, I haven't been busier. I spent many years with the local SES, in both administrative & operational roles. Had some very interesting & challenging experiences working as relief store manager in

remote communities. At home I love developing a natural environment for birds, frogs and lizards. Of course there's growing organic vegetables.

### 4. What lead you to become involved as Treasurer of the QFS?

Frogs need all our support. So in 2009 I thought what better way to support the Society using my

## Buy a Card and Support Your Queensland Frog Society

We offer gift cards for all occasions! For a donation of over \$5 to the Queensland Frog Society you can choose from four frog photos to have on your own printed card which we will send to you. There is a space for your own personal message to the person you are gifting it to. Below is an example of one of the photos, with the words on the reverse reading:



*'This card represents a donation to the Queensland Frog Society (QFS) that has been made on your behalf. QFS is a non-profit community organisation that promotes the conservation and appreciation of all of Queensland's fantastic frogs. The money donated to QFS will be put to one of our many conservation activities including our research scholarship grants.'*

Words on front of card reads: *'Someone has made a contribution to frog conservation on your behalf!'*

The frog photos to choose from are:

Southern red-eyed treefrog; Holy cross frog;

Fleay's Barred-frog and Orange-thighed frog. You can donate by either a direct deposit to our account or by sending a cheque/money order to our postal address (on page 1).

Account details are: Westpac Bank - Annerley Branch; BSB: 034 046; Account No. 13 43 4. Please send an email to [secretary@qldfrogs.asn.au](mailto:secretary@qldfrogs.asn.au) to inform the Secretary of the deposit.



drive, time & earlier work experiences.

## Madagascar Could Be on the Brink of Invasion by Asian Toad

Jane J. Lee | National Geographic | 28<sup>th</sup> May 2014

**The Asian toad looks poised to mount an invasion of Madagascar, potentially setting off an ecological disaster in a country known for its unique animal species.**

About 92 percent of Madagascar's mammals and 95 percent of its reptiles are found nowhere else on Earth, according to the World Wildlife Fund. For animals that haven't evolved to deal with a predator like the

Asian toad, disease and lack of defense are big concerns, researchers warn in a letter published today in *Nature*.

The biggest direct threat to Madagascar's native wildlife is the Asian toad's toxin, said Jonathan Kolby, a conservationist at James Cook University in Queensland, Australia, in an email interview. Native animals that try to eat this toad could find themselves ingesting their last meal. (Some species in Australia have faced a similar problem. Eating the invasive—and toxic—cane toad has ravaged populations of unique mammals.)

Another worry, says Kolby, is the Asian toad's indiscriminate appetite. It eats insects and small vertebrates like snakes, rodents, and other amphibians—populations that, on Madagascar, have never had to protect themselves from this predator.

The Asian toad could also spread the chytrid fungus and ranavirus, says Kolby. The illnesses caused by the fungus and the virus—which include thickening, sloughing, or hemorrhaging of the skin; lethargy; and cardiac arrest—have cut down many of the world's amphibian populations, driving some species extinct. (See "30 Amphibian Species Wiped Out in Panama Forest.")

### A Stranger In Town

On March 26, a mining company working in

Madagascar alerted researchers to an "unfamiliar amphibian" spotted in Toamasina (map), the country's largest seaport.

Kolby was conducting field surveys for amphibian diseases (partly funded by the National Geo-

graphic Society) when he heard about the sighting. As soon as he and his colleagues saw pictures of the animal, they knew it was an Asian toad.

That evening, Kolby went to Toamasina and caught six adults in a nearby swamp, confirming the toad's presence. Now Kolby, his colleagues,



Asian Toad (*Duttaphrynus melanostictus*)

Credit: D. Chen, National Geographic Creative

### Membership Renewals

Members will receive a renewal form soon via email or post for the 2014-15 year. New members always welcome!

Payment accepted through direct deposit or cheque/money order to QFS Post Box address.

Direct deposit details:

Name: Queensland Frog Society Inc.  
Bank: Westpac – Annerley Branch.  
BSB: 034 046. Account No: 13 43 41

Many thanks for your support – it is greatly appreciated and allows the society to fight for our amphibians.



and local conservation groups are trying to discover the extent of the Asian toad's advance.

### An Invader That Gets Around

It's likely the Asian toad entered Madagascar via shipping crates from Asia, Kolby said. Unverified reports suggest the toad has been present in Toamasina since 2011.

Native to nations including Bangladesh, Cambodia, China, and India, as well as parts of Indonesia, the Asian toad has made inroads into Papua New Guinea and Timor-Leste, among other countries.

The Asian toad is highly adaptable to different environments and can be a prolific breeder, says Kolby. Once it establishes itself in a new habitat, it can easily displace indigenous wildlife. Asian toads have also sickened people that have tried to eat them, and toad carcasses have contaminated wells and other water sources.

### Eradication

Kolby and colleagues say an eradication program needs to be established quickly. That could include eliminating adult toads, removing eggs and larvae from breeding sites, draining ponds where more eggs could be laid, and installing low fences that would prevent the toad from reaching water, where it reproduces.

Kolby says it's not unusual to catch a species in the early stages of an invasion. The spread of American bullfrogs to several European locations is one example. What is unusual is acting quickly enough to have a realistic chance of eradicating the invader. (See "Rat Invaders: Islands Fighting Back Against Killer Rodents.")

Kolby is now working with conservation groups in Madagascar to raise awareness of the potential problem—and to gather enough funding and expertise to remove the Asian toad before it entrenches itself in a truly unique part of the world.

Source: <http://news.nationalgeographic.com/news/2014/05/140528-asian-toad-invasive-species-madagascar-conservation-science/>

## Dancing frog species discovered in Indian jungle mountains

Associated Press Yahoo!7 | 9<sup>th</sup> May 2014

**Scientists have discovered 14 new species of so-called dancing frogs in the jungle mountains of southern India.**

Indian biologists say they found the tiny acrobatic amphibians, which earned their name with the unusual kicks they use to attract mates, declining dramatically in number during the 12 years in which they chronicled the species through morphological descriptions and molecular DNA markers. They breed after the yearly monsoon in fast-rushing streams, but their habitat appears to be becoming increasingly dry.



One of the 14 new species of so-called dancing frogs  
Credit: Satyabhama Das Biju/AP

"It's like a Hollywood movie, both joyful and sad. On the one hand, we have brought these beautiful frogs into public knowledge. But about 80% are outside protected areas, and in some places, it was as if nature itself was crying," said the project's lead scientist, University of Delhi profes-



sor Sathyabhama Das Biju.

Biju said that, as researchers tracked frog populations, forest soils lost moisture and perennial streams ran inexplicably dry. He acknowledged his team's observations about forest conditions were only anecdotal; the scientists did not have time or resources to collect data demonstrating the declining habitat trends they believed they were witnessing.

The study listing the new species published Thursday in the Ceylon Journal of Science brings the number of known Indian dancing frog species to 24. They're found exclusively in the Western Ghats, a lush mountain range that stretches 1,600 kilometers (990 miles) from the western state of Maharashtra down to the country's southern tip.

Only the males dance it's actually a unique breeding behavior called foot-flagging. They stretch, extend and whip their legs out to the side to draw the attention of females who might have trouble hearing mating croaks over the sound of water flowing through perennial hill streams.

The bigger the frog, the more they dance. They also use those leg extensions to smack away other males an important feature considering the sex ratio for the amphibians is usually around 100 males to one female.

"They need to perform and prove, 'Hey, I'm the best man for you,'" said Biju, a botanist-turned-herpetologist now celebrated as India's "Frog-man" for discovering dozens of new species in his four-decade career.

Source: <https://au.news.yahoo.com/a/23371152/dancing-frog-species-discovered-in-indian-jungle-mountains/> to read more of the article



**We'll be at the**

**Queensland Garden EXPO**

**Will You?**

Drop by & ask us about frogs & toads, attend frog presentations + we'll have shirts, books, stickers, CDs, toy frogs and more on sale! "Discounts for Members"

Queensland Frog Society Inc. qldfrogs.asn.au

11 + 12 + 13 July

Nambour, Sunshine Coast

## Corroboree frog making comeback in Kosciuszko National Park

ABC NEWS / 1<sup>st</sup> May 2014

**A threatened Australian frog species placed in a quarantined enclosure in the Kosciuszko National Park a year ago is making a comeback.**

The New South Wales Office of Environment and Heritage says it has released a further 150 Southern Corroboree Frog eggs into a second enclosure in the park this week.



Southern Corroboree Frog in wet boggy environment in Kosciuszko National Park. (ABC News)

Senior threatened species officer, David Hunter, says an introduced pathogen will wipe out the frogs if nothing is done to protect them.

But he says the project appears to be working.

"So a year on from the first enclosure that we built and put frogs and eggs into, we're seeing very positive signs that the frogs are really happy with their new environment," Mr Hunter said.

"In fact, so happy that the eggs are now one-year-old little frogs that are growing really strongly and the adults that we put into the enclosure successfully bred and produced viable eggs themselves."

Mr Hunter says the Corroboree is Australia's best known frog species.

"In the 1960s, a researcher concluded that Corroboree Frogs formed the greatest vertebrate biomass in that system," he said.

"So, if you got all the Corroboree Frogs and put them into a ball, that ball would have been bigger

than a ball of wombats, or wallabies or possums or anything else.

“They really were in such huge abundance that they would have been playing an important part of the ecosystem function of those systems.”

Source: <http://www.abc.net.au/news/2014-05-01/frogs-thrive/5423182>

## Fascinating frog facts add to festival fun

David Cameron | University of the Sunshine Coast  
| 28<sup>th</sup> May 2014

**Do you know your Graceful Treefrog from your Eastern Sedgefrog, or your Striped Marsh Frog from your Pobblebonk?**

The Queensland Frog Society stall at this year’s Sunshine Coast World Environment Day Festival on Sunday 8 June will be a great place to find out just which frog sings which part of that backyard symphony on rainy nights.

University of the Sunshine Coast Environmental Science student Brittany Elliott, 18, of Buderim, who is also the Frog Society’s regional coordinator, said stall volunteers would happily share fun and important facts about frogs during the festival at USC’s Sippy Downs campus.



QLD Frog Society Inc. Sunshine Coast Coordinator, Brittany Elliott *Credit: USC*

“The Queensland Frog Society wants to raise awareness of the simple things we can do to help our local frogs,” she said.

“Frog numbers are declining. They are our environmental indicators and if they disappear from an area, we can assume that their environment is no longer healthy.

“People can come and see us at the stall for some ideas on creating a frog pond for their gardens or, if they wonder which frogs they can hear calling, we’d love to identify them.”

Brittany, in the first year of her degree at USC, has been passionate about environmental science – and frogs – since high school. When most of her friends were heading to Schoolies Week, she joined an academic research team to investigate diminishing frog populations in New South Wales.

She was recently a recipient of a \$15,000 Queensland Government Supporting Women Scholarship and a \$12,000 USC Vice-Chancellor’s Merit Scholarship.

Brittany said she hoped to use her USC studies to launch a research career which would allow her to continue to help endangered frog species.

The World Environment Day Festival is on Sunday 8 June from 10am to 4pm at USC’s Sippy Downs campus. It has been organised by the Sunshine Coast Environment Council with support from USC, Sunshine Coast Council, Noosa Council and the Queensland Government.

The festival will include food, music, entertainment, presentations, workshops and displays, ranging from wildlife to sustainable fashion, craft and games.

## Why Frogging?

And now a challenge – I would like you to consider frogging.

Frogging?

Yes, Frogging. Frogging is a wonderful word that does not mean to behave like a frog, leaping and splashing about. No, it means to search for frogs, to look at frogs, to learn about frogs and ultimately to help gain information that will help preserve the little suckers.

You want me to look for frogs? Frogs - those slimy, disgusting creatures?

I’m afraid that you have the wrong attitude and, by the way, a terrible definition.

Frogs are beautiful, colourful, charming, noisy, melodic, rhythmic, acrobatic destroyers of insect pests. They exist in a myriad of patterns and col-



ours and their croakings, bleatings, buzzings and wailings help herald Spring and Summer and, if we're lucky, rain and if they're lucky, a mate. They are beautiful. They are amphibians - beautifully adapted to life in and out of water. And some of them have the most fascinating life stories....

You said beautiful twice.

That is because I meant it.

So Frogging is an activity where we go looking for frogs?

Yes that's right.

But surely frogs are invisible.

No, they can be hard to find in the day time but as the sun goes down and darkness descends it the frogs come out! And then they call. And each specie calls differently. Sitting under the stars and listening to a cacophony of frog calls is a wonderful thing; a simple, affordable celebration of life and nature. And soon, when you learn the calls of the dozen or so common species found here on our Sunshine Coast each 'crick' or 'tok' or 'waaaa' you hear conjures up its name and magically its image. Imagining a frog's appearance is one thing though - you deserve to see it. So a hand free torch strapped onto your head follows



the 'waaaa' to find a Graceful Treefrog – a small four centimetre creature, rich green on its back and bright yellow on its belly and regularly bulging throat. Look closer and note its bright orange eyes and its purple or maroon thighs. You don't need to touch it – just look. Take it in. Now take a step back and admire the scene - the water, the damp rich vegetation and the frogs calling vociferously. This beats the hell out of watching the

smug imbeciles on Big Brother. Now, let us find another...

Okay but where will we look?



We can start in your backyard or at a local park or wander alongside a dam or a creek. There are many, many local places where we can start to build our collection of sightings. All you need is a love of nature, an appreciation of the outdoors, curiosity and a willingness to learn. An added bonus is that any information that you can gain about the distribution and abundance [or lack of abundance] of frogs is useful to frog conservation.

Okay. Where do I find out more? I'll give it a go.

Join the Queensland Frog Society – it is as cheap as chips – and there you will get access to good information and, just as importantly, get to meet many people who want to contribute to the conservation of Australian animals and their habitats like you do. Drop by their website - [www.qldfrogs.asn.au](http://www.qldfrogs.asn.au).

*Contributed by Member, Ken Cross*



# Frotophraphy

## Members Frog Photos

Have some neat frog photos you'd like to share here? Email them to [editor@qldfrogs.asn.au](mailto:editor@qldfrogs.asn.au) by the next newsletter deadline (see below).



'Mind the frogs!' - a roadsign in Spain  
Credit: QFS Member



Northern Laughing Treefrog (*Litoria rothii*)  
Credit: M. Jackson



Southern Orange-eyed Treefrog (*Litoria chloris*)  
Credit: L. Thompson

Thanks to those who contributed to this newsletter!  
Remember, we're always after member-contributed content.

**Deadline for Spring Frogsheet contributions is  
21<sup>st</sup> August, 2014**

If undelivered, please return to  
**QLD Frog Society Inc**  
**PO Box 7017**  
**East Brisbane, QLD 4169**

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