




AUTUMN 2021

FROGSHEET

<http://www.qldfrogs.asn.au/> |  questions [at] qldfrogs.asn.au |  /qldfrogsociety |  @qldfrogs

Kroombit Threatened Frogs Project update: Page 2

Image: The critically endangered Kroombit Tinker Frog (*L. kroombitensis*), photographed during the December Frogsearch. Credit: Daniel McCawley



How many frogs did you find in February?

Send in your photos and recordings to the MRCCC! Further details on page 4.



IN THIS ISSUE

Pg 2 – Kroombit Threatened Frogs Project Update: December 2020 Frogsearch report

Pg 3 – A Bushfire Recovery Project in Wallum Country

Pg 4 – 'Find a Frog in February' Turns Five

Pg 5 – The Bowman Park Habitat Group

Pg 6 – From the Secretary's Desk

Frogs of the Wallum Wetlands: Page 3

Image: Eastern sedgefrog (*L. fallax*) photographed at a recent wetlands survey. Credit: Eva Ford



Public Trust Fund: Total now stands at \$5,448.03

Thank you
to our
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President's Report

HELLO, ALL OF OUR QFS members. I hope that you have all had a good start to 2021.

We have welcomed Alice to the team this year in the role of Editor, and we are wishing her all the best in her new position. I'd like to extend my personal thanks to Jono for all his hard work, dedication and the outstanding job he did in this role over the past several years.

This edition is the first of our 'new look' Frogsheet – I hope that you like the changes that we have made so far. As part of trialling a few changes during the next 12 months the Frogsheet will become more frequent, but it will also be smaller in size. We appreciate any feedback on any of the changes that you see over the coming year.

With this year being one of the state's better wet seasons in recent memory, many of us will have witnessed more frogs active and breeding throughout the summer months. This has been great to see, but as a result of the wetter weather toads are also breeding up again. Don't forget that, as part of a toad reduction program, members can request toad baits for use on their own property. Currently, these are supplied free of charge thanks to the support of Professor Rob Capon from The University of Queensland. If you are thinking of getting some, now is the time!

I have actually just received my first toad baits to use on my property, where I know a few toads are breeding. Using them will help me understand the processes involved in making a trap and setting the baits, as well as any paperwork that is involved. I'm looking forward to seeing the results in the coming weeks. Alone, these baits are not a solution for the complete removal of cane toads, but they can be used as one part of the approach to reducing and removing the toads from an environment.

In the last few weeks, I have received emails from many people asking about frog identification and for frog-related advice, which is really great. I am glad that we have so many members of the community looking out for our frogs. In my short time as President, helping these community members to help frogs has been the most rewarding part of my job so far.

Take care of yourselves, and look out for each other and the environment.

Warm regards,

Ashley Keune



Kroombit Threatened Frogs Project Update

December 2020 Kroombit Frogsearch report

WITH KROOMBIT TOPS MISSING out on the early wet season rain recorded in other parts of the state, conditions during the December 2020 Kroombit Frogsearch were only marginally better/wetter than the previous December Kroombit Frogsearch. In 2019, QFS volunteers assisting with frog surveys had to contend with catastrophic fire conditions (see Frogsheet Autumn 2020). Undeterred by the dry conditions, a team of 7 QFS volunteers travelled to Kroombit Tops in early December 2020 to survey sites within Kroombit Tops National Park for the Kroombit tinker frog (*Taudactylus pleione*; critically endangered), the Kroombit treefrog (*Litoria kroombitensis*;

critically endangered) and the tusked frog (*Adelotus brevis*; vulnerable).

Much like in December 2019, surface water was scarce at many sites, and opportunities for breeding were thus largely limited to a small number of spring-fed seepages and streams with more permanent water. With frog activity depressed due to the dry conditions, the Kroombit tinker frog and Kroombit treefrog were only encountered in low numbers at a handful of sites. Numbers of other resident frog species (including the tusked frog) were also low.

With conditions dry and frogs scarce, QFS volunteers focused their attention on deploying automated acoustic recorders. Thanks to their outstanding efforts, around 50 recorders were successfully deployed. They will capture frog calls every evening/night through to the next Kroombit Frogsearch, scheduled for late March/early April 2021.

The calls captured by these automated recorders will be used to assess the current abundance and distribution of the Kroombit tinker frog, Kroombit treefrog and tusked frog across Kroombit Tops National Park.

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December Kroombit Frogsearch crew outside the barracks at Kroombit Tops National Park. Credit: Daniel McCawley



QFS Kroombit Frogsearch volunteer Ollie Scully deploying one of the acoustic recording devices set up at Kroombit Tops National Park to capture calls of the critically endangered Kroombit tinker frog. Credit: Daniel McCawley

Sound recordings from these devices will be downloaded during the next Kroombit Frogsearch, and QFS will then be

looking for volunteers to assist with the analysis of these recordings.

The biannual Kroombit Frogsearch is part of QFS's Kroombit Threatened Frogs Project – a project funded by a Community Sustainability Action (CSA) grant awarded to QFS by the Queensland State Government in late 2019. In addition to surveys and monitoring of threatened frogs at Kroombit Tops, CSA grant money is being used to fund construction of a pig-proof fence to exclude feral pigs from areas of Kroombit tinker frog breeding habitat. QFS is planning to undertake an excursion to Kroombit Tops to erect this fence in late winter of 2021.

If you would like to join us on this trip or assist with future monitoring surveys at Kroombit Tops, contact QFS Event and Initiatives Coordinator, Jono Hooper, at events_initiatives@qldfrogs.asn.au.

Ed Meyer

QFS Kroombit Threatened Frogs Project Coordinator

A Bushfire Recovery Project in Wallum Country

WE KNOW LAST SUMMER'S savage bushfires had devastating consequences for many of the country's much-loved native fauna species. Now, we are on a mission to find out how the bushfires impacted some of our local amphibious friends.

Among some of the worst fire-affected areas in 2019 were large swathes of wallum wetlands, from Woodgate to Peregrine. These wallum swamps are characterised by flora-rich shrubland and sandy, acidic soils (reaching as low as pH 3.3!), and are home to some of our most vulnerable frog species: the Wallum sedgefrog (*Litoria olongburensis*), Cooloola sedgefrog (*Litoria cooloolensis*), Wallum rocketfrog (*Litoria freycineti*) and Wallum froglet (*Crinia tinnula*). These species are only found in wallum country (located in South East Queensland, extending into Northern New South Wales), and their habitats have already been negatively affected by coastal development. The recent droughts and fires only add further stress to these threatened ecosystems.

In response to the 2019/20 summer bushfires, the Federal Government's Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment provided funding for research into the impact



Some of the MRCCC team among swathes of *Xanthorrhoea* in the Wallum wetlands. Credit: Eva Ford

of the fires on frog and fish of the wallum wetlands. The Mary River Catchment Coordinating Committee (MRCCC) has since partnered with Griffith University, the Burnett Mary Regional Group, the Australia New Guinea Fishes Association and local traditional owners to conduct this research. By conducting surveys in burnt and unburnt areas and comparing the results, we will be able to make recommendations for the future management of the wallum wetlands.

"... the sites were other-worldly to me... I was astounded by the beauty of the wetlands"

Last month, I was privileged to join the MRCCC's 'frog lady', Eva, and knowledgeable volunteer, Mary, for four nights of surveying the wetlands around Peregrine and Noosa North Shore. After navigating Noosa's motorways, beaches, housing estates, and abundant roundabouts, I was pleasantly surprised to find that much of Noosa remains relatively untouched (when you veer off the beaten track a little).

I'm more familiar with rainforest and bushland walks, so I found that the sites we surveyed were somewhat other-worldly to me: no vegetation above shoulder height other than the occasional banksia and the flower heads of the prolific *Xanthorrhoeas*. I was astounded by the beauty of this wetland – or should I say wonderland?

Our nocturnal surveys (frogs are most active after dark) required us to bash through several metres of thick scrub to access the melaleuca swamps and wallum heathlands we were studying.

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Listening for frog calls during a night survey. Credit: Eva Ford

We donned our head torches, gumboots, long sleeves and plenty of bug spray, but it was tough going. We tromped through unstable terrain littered with hidden sink holes, and consequently suffered more than a number of falls. Thankfully in a swamp there's always a soft landing!

While inside the swamps, we waded through sometimes-gumboot-deep water to survey a 50-metre transect at each site. We recorded aspects of the weather (including temperature, humidity, cloud cover and moon phase), took water samples for testing and recorded the plant and animal species we could see. Fortunately, this included plenty of frogs! We also pricked our ears up and listened hard for the calls of male frogs (as the females don't call).

"We were thrilled to hear the call of the Wallum rocketfrog on our final night"

Eva's keen ear was tested with a number of species that aren't usually heard around the creeks, streams and dams she normally surveys. Among these, we heard the vulnerable *Litoria onlongburensis* and *Crinia tinnula*. We were also thrilled that, during a shower of rain on our final night and

amongst a chorus of other species, we heard the call of the Wallum rocketfrog (*Litoria freycineti*).

Interestingly, the frogs we managed to identify by sight were almost always a completely different species to the frogs we identified by sound. I found it fascinating to see up-close the bright blue on the back of the thigh that distinguishes *Litoria onlongburensis* from its eastern cousin, *Litoria fallax*.

Spotting the frogs was sometimes a challenge, but some frogs made our task much easier by coming to greet us. At one point, a friendly striped rocketfrog (*Litoria nasuta*) climbed right up Eva's pants! This wasn't the first time I've seen frogs getting up close and personal with Eva. It seems that she spends so much time around these friendly amphibians they have started to see her as kin.

Overall, we had a very successful week, collecting important data for the scientific record and even identifying some species of frog where they hadn't been recorded before. Our data and observations will be used to inform the future management of wallum wetlands, and will contribute to the protection of the incredible flora and fauna that survive in these unique ecosystems.



Wallum sedgefrog (*L. onlongburensis*)
Credit: Sarah Grimish

Alana Ebert

Mary River Catchment Coordinating Committee (MRCCC)

'Find a Frog in February' Turns Five

THIS FEBRUARY MARKED THE fifth year of 'Find A Frog in February' (FFF)! Last year was the best year yet for the annual citizen science program of the Mary River



Catchment Coordinating Committee (MRCCC): Over 7,000 records were submitted thanks to the fabulous froggers of the Mary, Noosa and Burrum River catchments, and coastal communities from Burrum

Heads to Peregian. Thirty different species were encountered, up from the previous two years' counts of 22 and 23 species, respectively. Here's hoping that we've had another cracking year!

If you took photos or recorded calls of frogs you found in February, then simply send the photos or recordings to the MRCCC for identification.

Join the [MRCCC](#) and [Find a Frog in February](#) groups on Facebook for 'Frog of the Day' videos, quizzes and discussions with other fervent froggers all year round!

This program is generously supported by councils of the study area: Gympie Regional Council, Sunshine Coast Council, Noosa Council and Fraser Coast Regional Council. We (and the frogs) are immensely grateful.



For more information, head to <http://mrccc.org.au/frog-in-february/>.

**Mary River Catchment
Coordinating Committee (MRCCC)**



The Bowman Park Frog Habitat Group

WE HAVE BEEN WORKING at Bowman Park, Bardon since 1995, when we became a Brisbane City Council Habitat group. Since then, the Bowman Park Frog Habitat Group have been holding regular working bees, which currently include our regular meeting on the first Wednesday of each month, ad hoc weekend plantings and bi-yearly sessions with Bardon kindergarten.

We are currently working by the creek line that runs alongside Bowman Parade. The main weeds we are dealing with here are the ground covers, such as dyschoriste (aka butterfly heaven; *Dyschortiste depressa* – one of the serious weeds in Brisbane) and creeping inch plant (*Callisia repens* – a succulent and garden escapee). We are also controlling two of the exotic vines, Madeira vine (*Anredera cordifolia*) and cats claw creeper (*Dolichandra unguis-cati*). Both of these vines are canopy killers.

“We saw striped marsh frogs spawning... watched over by a freshwater snake”

On the 3rd February this year we met with our regular volunteers and habitat group support staff to prepare part of our site for planting. During this working bee we saw a few of the locals in the frog pond: striped marsh frogs were spawning and were watched over by a freshwater snake (aka common keelback; *Tropidonophis mairii*). The keelback feeds mainly on amphibians and small lizards, and is one of the few snakes that can actually eat cane toads (up to a certain size) without being harmed.

The site also has a number of hard-working brush turkeys, which we find help with character building as we try to work with them to manage new plantings!

If you would like to get involved with any of our working bees at Bowman Park, please contact me at frogphil@gmail.com.

Phil Bird



Brush turkey and nest at Bowman Park, Bardon. Credit: Phil Bird



Frog pond at Bowman Park, Bardon. Credit: Phil Bird



Frogspawn at Bowman Park, Bardon. Credit: Phil Bird



Freshwater snake at Bowman Park, Bardon. Credit: Phil Bird

From the Secretary's Desk

THIS SUMMER HAS BEEN like the ones we used to have 7 or 8 years ago, when I would be busy answering people's emails and phone queries on how to identify or help their frogs. Some were even just letting the Society know how pleased they were to see frogs in their garden!

The difference now is that, thanks to the wonders of technology, I am able to view photos from the community quicker than ever. One such photo I received a couple of weeks ago is shown here. Along with the photo, I received a call from a very distressed member of the public, who had just rescued a frog from her swimming pool. The frog was covered in small black ants, and it seemed clear that the frog had jumped into the pool to try and get rid of the ants. Unfortunately, some of the ants just *would not* let go.

I suggested resting the frog in a moist container for the day to see if the ants would dry up enough to be brushed off. The caller got in touch later on to say that by the evening, the ants were able to be plucked off with tweezers without doing any damage to the frog's skin.

I have never come across anything like this before, and I am glad that there was a happy ending!

Jenny Holdway



*Bleating treefrog (L. dentata) with some of the ants still attached.
Credit: Concerned member of the public*



DATES FOR YOUR DIARY ...

9-11 July 2021

**Queensland Garden Expo,
Nambour showgrounds**



A warm welcome to new QFS members!

Sophie Curtis, Lara McCall, Hudson Family, Mary Clarke, Robyn Foley, Barbara Fullham, Amanda Martin, Christine Hammond, Geoffrey Renyard, Layla Hamilton, Rohan Kent, Anders Zimny, Sheryn Brodie, Mark Sanders, Alice Carruthers, Debbie Grieve, Meta Sieferle, Dorit Daniel, Carolyn O'Neill, Pratt Family

Executive Committee

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**DEADLINE FOR MID-AUTUMN
FROGSHEET CONTRIBUTIONS IS
5TH APRIL 2021**