

FROGSHEET



QFS Display at Off-Grid Expo



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QUEENSLAND FROG SOCIETY ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Date and Time: 22nd October 2023 at 2pm

Venue: Karawatha Forest Discovery Centre

Zoom link also available on request

Guest Speakers: QFS, 2023 Ric Nattrass research recipients Jordy Groffen, a PhD student at James Cook University, and Roy Farman a PhD student at the University of New South Wales.

If you are interested in attending please reply to the E-News that has been sent out

President's Report

Hello once again to all of our QFS members. I hope everybody is well and that you have been lucky enough to get some rain in the last few weeks in some of those storms. It certainly is dry around much of the state. I know this year has been the driest on my property that I have seen. The rainfall in my area of the Mary Valley this year is currently less than half the lowest total for at least the last 20 years. With a bit of luck we can get some decent rainfall in the coming months to bring out some more frogs.

On September 2nd and 3rd we set up our display at the Off Grid Expo which was a great weekend at Goomeri for all that attended. Our display looked fantastic and we made lots of book sales at this event which was great to see that people are so interested in learning about frogs. This event was well attended on the Saturday but was a little quieter on the Sunday. It was lovely to be able to meet so many people that were wanting to learn about frogs and frog friendly gardens.

People were wanting to tell us about the frogs that they have in their gardens and we had lots of inquiries to help identify frogs that people have on their properties. A big thank you to our volunteers Jono and Desley who worked with me over the weekend and to Di Woodstock and Dee White for organising this wonderful event for the community. We look forward to being involved again at this event again next year!

Approaching very quickly is the Queensland Frog Society AGM which will be held on Sunday the 22nd of October at the Karawatha Forest Discovery Centre and a Zoom link will also be available for people who can't attend the meeting in person. The meeting will start at 2:00 pm. A light afternoon tea will also be provided at the venue. All members are welcome to attend this meeting and we would love to see you there. If you wanted to become more involved in the QFS, you may like to take on a role in the committee. If you are interested, don't forget to get your nominations in! These forms were sent out in an E-news so don't forget to fill out these forms and get them back to us.

If you want to hear more about what the QFS has been involved with throughout the last 12 months, just want to support the QFS by being present or want to learn about the research of our two 2023 Ric Natrass research recipients please join us at the AGM. We are lucky enough for both of our Ric Natrass research recipients to be able to join us at the upcoming AGM as our guest speakers. Jordy Groffen is a PhD student at James Cook University, and Roy Farman is a PhD student at the University of New South Wales. Both Jordy and Roy will update us on the progress of their research throughout the year and will answer questions that you may have.

If you are planning on attending please click on the button in the E-news that was sent out so we know if you are wanting a Zoom link sent out or if you are attending in person. If you would like a say at the meeting but can't attend via Zoom or the venue on the day, please get a proxy form filled out so you can still have your say. We look forward to seeing as many of you there as possible. Take care of yourselves, look out for each other and our environment.

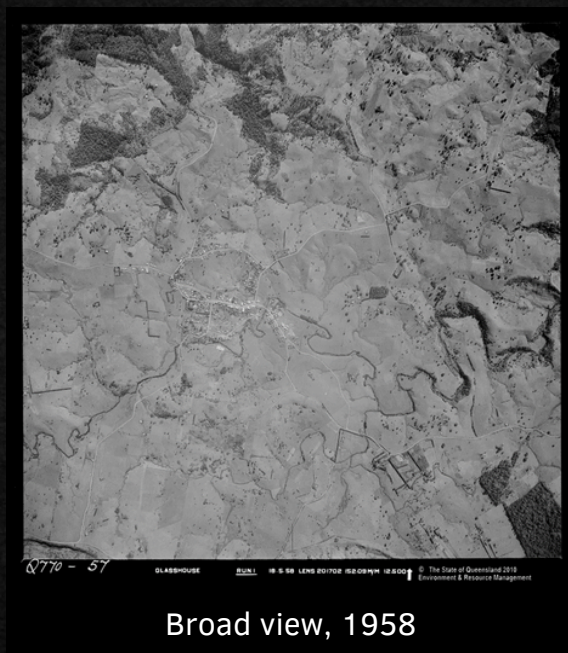
Regards

Ashley Keune



Long-Term Frog Monitoring in the Mary

There is no excitement quite like finding something that was lost! Two frog outings along Obi Obi Creek in Maleny in February were cause to exclaim out loud and get some snaps of a waterway star; the Giant barred frog (*Mixophyes iteratus*). This stream dependant frog has recently been downgraded from Endangered to Vulnerable under state and federal legislation, in response to updated distribution and population knowledge. The major threats for this species have been losses due to the amphibian Chytrid fungus, and habitat loss.



Broad view, 1958

Aerial photography from 1958 shows widespread vegetation loss from the riparian zone of Obi Obi Creek all the way from the headwaters to Gardiner's Falls. Any riparian-loving beast would be comprehensively displaced and that seemed to be the situation for many decades. No reports of the Giant barred frogs were noted until one fine evening in 2012 when the MRCCC and Barung Landcare conducted a frog survey at the Maleny Precinct site before works began there. There we found three individuals and the excitement grew as another was observed later on Walkers Creek and downstream towards Lake Baroon. However, numerous surveys along the other sections of Obi Obi Creek from the Book Farm to Kenilworth, over two decades could not reveal other populations. 10 years ago a survey along the Maleny Boardwalk revealed nothing.

However, over the past 25 years there has been a strong revegetation effort along the waterways of the plateau. In town the Boardwalk planting started in 1993 by Barung Landcare, and Maleny State School planted a corner in the early 2000's. The extensive Maleny Precinct revegetation began in 2014.



Maleny Precinct and school reach 1993 and 2022

Long-Term Frog Monitoring in the Mary

Article continued...

The MRCCC's annual Find a Frog in February event encourages people to survey waterways at night and in 2020 the first sightings of Giant barred frogs started to come in from locals. This year a large group of workshop attendees walked the Boardwalk and we held an outing for the students and teachers of Maleny State School on their grounds. At the Boardwalk we encountered 12 individuals and seven at the school, with one male calling across the creek at the Precinct. To everyone's delight males, females and juveniles were all seen. This is a majestic species; especially awe-inspiring when spotted by torch-light under the dark canopy of the night. Key to food webs and energy transfer between terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems, its presence is vital.

The sightings confirm that, given time, revegetated sites do bring exceptional ecological benefit through supporting processes and providing complex habitat. We calculate that, around Maleny, 20 years of growth was needed to bring this species back to living and breeding at the site. The trees are now providing a suitable microclimate (moist and cool), ground cover (leaf-litter and refuge 'furniture') and stable banks, in-stream complexity and deep pools for breeding.

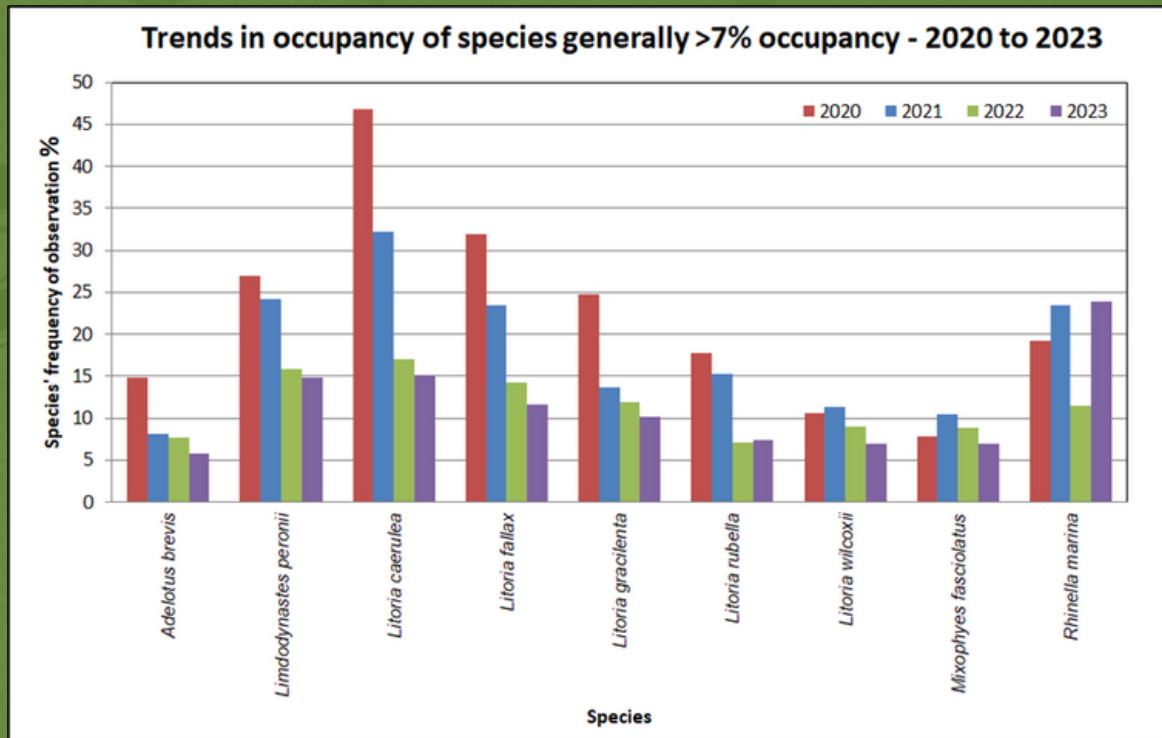
It is heartening to know that environmental projects taken on by all landholders, groups and agencies are making a positive difference. It takes knowledge, resources, dedication and patience.

Find a Frog in February is grateful for the continued support provided by the four local councils of the program area; Sunshine Coast Council, Noosa Council, Gympie Regional Council and Fraser Coast Regional Council.



Mixophyes iteratus, Photo by Eva Ford

What's Happening to Some of Our Common Frogs?



The data provided by Find a Frog in February (FFF) participants over the past four years is showing a concerning trend for many of our more commonly observed species. It is not a time to be complacent around our 'Least concern' species, especially at a time of dramatic change that is becoming evident all around us.

The annual FFF citizen science program coordinated by the Mary River Catchment Coordinating Committee (MRCCC) is held each February to make the most of what is normally a period of high frog activity. The data shown in the graph comes from people across the whole program area; the Sunshine Coast to the Burrum River (see map).

All species included in the graph are 'Least concern' except *Adelotus brevis* that is Vulnerable but commonly reported from much of the program area. And, of course, the Cane toad that seems to be the only species that is persisting as 'normal'. However, several people local to Traveston and Cooran area (Ashley and myself included) found many moribund and dead Cane toads last summer on our properties. Across the landscape I see many Cane toads in poor condition; quite the opposite of the very healthy specimens on K'gari!

The data shows that, the number of sites where these species are present (not abundance) as a proportion of the total number of sites that are surveyed, has been declining for these species over the past four years.

What's Happening to Some of Our Common Frogs?

Article continued...

While we can't make conclusions as to the cause/s we can surmise that we may be seeing impacts of prolonged dry periods that narrow up the window of opportunity for breeding and other changes to niche conditions specific to each of these species. And of course Chytrid fungus outbreaks causing local declines and disappearances is a very likely contributor. IUCN states that 41% of the world's amphibians are threatened! It was around 30% not that long ago. On my property at Traveston I have recorded 15 species but have only been observing 9 over the past several years. Ashley nearby has recorded 24 species at his place but only observing 15 of them lately.

5, 4, 3, 2, 1 ... Coming, present or not! It's reason to monitor like mad!

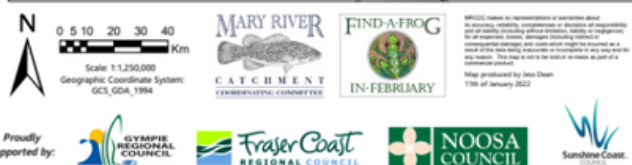
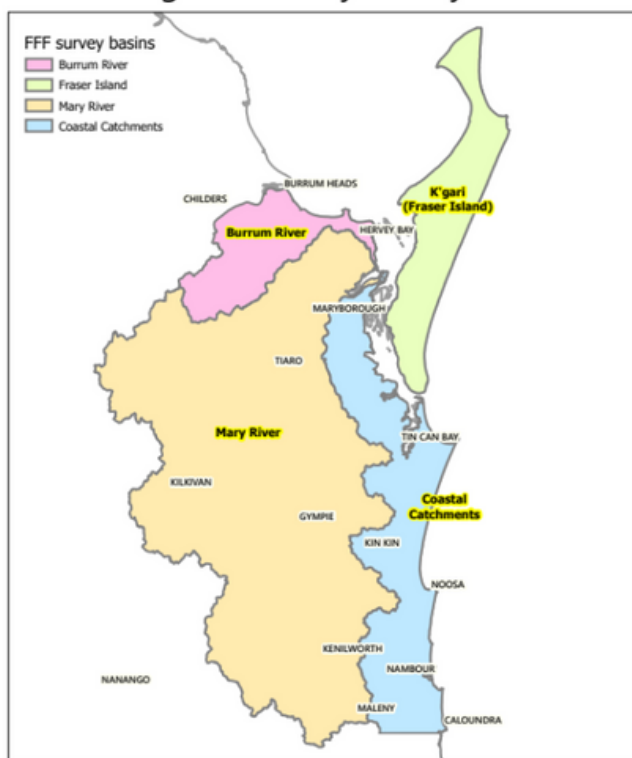
What to do? Here's a couple of suggestions:

- Monitor, and keep monitoring, one or more chosen sites where frogs frequent. And report your findings to your local database of authority so it can be useful.
- Maintain complexity in habitat areas. This can be as simple as a pile of mulch in your back yard or as large as a whole property.
- Provide water bodies where possible; small, large, temporary, permanent, flowing, still, vegetated and bare edged are all important for different species.
- Disinfect your shoes and equipment if moving between water bodies.

The MRCCC would like to acknowledge the generous support of the Sunshine Coast, Noosa Shire, Gympie Regional and Fraser Coast Regional Councils that support the FFF program each year.

Eva Ford (MRCCC FFF Coordinator)

Find a Frog in February Survey Area 2022





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A WARM WELCOME TO NEW QFS MEMBERS!

Isaac DuPlessiss, Pam Lambert, Liam Pratt, Rhys Parry, Megan Allen, Elissa Robins, Ane Bjornerem, Deborah Stewart, Wendy Eiby, Katie Quan.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY...

22 October 2023 [2pm]
QFS AGM
At Karawatha Forest
Discovery Centre

20-24 November 2023
Australian Citizen Science
Association Conference
[More Information](#)



PLEASE EMAIL EDITOR@QLDFROGS.ASN.AU
WITH ARTICLES FOR INCLUSION IN FROGSHEET!

DEADLINE FOR SPRING FROGSHEET
CONTRIBUTIONS IS **13 NOVEMBER 2023**

