

# FROGSHEET

QFS AGM 2025, Sean Morrow Presenting



## IN THIS ISSUE

**Pg 2 - President's Report**

**Pg 3 - Mount Burr Swamp's Comeback Is Creating New Hope for Frogs**

**Pg 4 - QFS AGM Summary 2025**

**Pg 5 - The Quiet Decline of Our Frogs & How We Can Help**

**Pg 5 - How Warming Climates Confuse Tree Frogs**



*Litoria caerulea; Photo by Paul Kaye*



**Thank you to our supporters!**

**Public Trust Fund: Total now stands at \$13,270.42**

Any donations over \$2.00 are tax deductible, and all are added to our research grant fund, which is awarded annually

# President's Report

Hello once again to all our QFS members. I hope everyone is doing well and that you've all received some of the much needed rain that has fallen across much of the state recently, without experiencing any of the damage from the severe storms that have been all too common this year. It has certainly been a busy period for the QFS, with preparations for our AGM on the 26th of October, two recent webinars, and ongoing planning for the upcoming frog camp at Bellthorpe Stays.

Once again this year our AGM was held at the lovely Karawatha Forest Discovery Centre, where we elected our committee for the coming year and heard from our guest speaker, Sean Morrow, who presented on designing frog friendly gardens. The committee remains largely the same for the upcoming year, with all members continuing in their current roles, and we are pleased to welcome a new committee member, Olivia Tyson. We're delighted to have Olivia join us and look forward to working with her more over the next 12 months. It's wonderful to have so many returning members as each of our valued committee members plays an important role in keeping things running smoothly.

We were fortunate to host two excellent webinars in recent months as well. On October 14<sup>th</sup>, Grant Webster delivered an in-depth presentation on the new frog classifications, offering a thorough explanation of the many updated names and taxonomic changes for Australian frog species. Our next webinar, held on November 5<sup>th</sup>, featured a discussion with Glen Ingram about his work with the Platypus Frog and the Southern Day Frog. It was a fascinating session, filled with personal insights and stories about these remarkable species, both now lost, from someone who had the rare privilege of working with them. Each webinar attracted between 40 and 50 attendees, including some viewers joining us from the United States. If you were unable to attend, recordings of both sessions are available for members on our website. A big thank you to Jono for organising these highly successful events.

We're also very pleased that the QFS is once again running the frog camp at Bellthorpe Stays after last year's success. Thank you to Jono for coordinating this event, which will again take place at the stunning Sunshine Coast hinterland property. Although this site is open to the public, attendees of the camp receive a generous discount, and several of our frog experts will be present to assist with identifying species throughout the weekend. The 400-acre property is home to a wide range of frog species. Unfortunately, I won't be able to join again this year due to prior commitments, but I hope everyone attending has a fantastic time and enjoys encountering many frogs and other wildlife.

Continued...

On behalf of the QFS, I would like to wish you all a very Merry Christmas. I hope you are able to celebrate with your family and loved ones and enjoy a wonderful festive season and New Year. Whatever your plans may be, have fun and stay safe. I look forward to seeing you again in 2026.

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

Kind Regards,  
Ashley Keune



## MOUNT BURR SWAMP'S COMEBACK IS CREATING NEW HOPE FOR FROGS

In a year where much of South Australia's South East has been struggling through dry conditions, Mount Burr Swamp has proved restored wetlands really can bounce back. Since the Nature Glenelg Trust took over the site in 2016, which had been once drained and cleared for farming, the swamp has slowly been given its life back.

This year, a welcome mix of rain and shallow groundwater has filled the newest section of the wetland, and the difference is already obvious. Aquatic plants are returning, the water is holding, and the landscape is starting to feel alive again.

While researchers have celebrated the return of migratory birds and freshwater turtles, this recovery is equally encouraging for frogs. As the pasture grasses die back and native wetland vegetation pushes through, it creates exactly the kind of cool, sheltered, insect-rich habitat frogs depend on. Early signs suggest the swamp is rebuilding the healthy food webs and breeding spaces frogs need to repopulate naturally.

Not every nearby wetland is doing as well. Many are still dry or slow to recharge. But Mount Burr Swamp stands out as a reminder of what can be achieved with patience, community support, and careful restoration. Volunteers continue planting, learning, and caring for the site, helping ensure frogs have a thriving home there long into the future.



# QFS AGM SUMMARY 2025

The QFS AGM for this year was held on the 26<sup>th</sup> of October 2025. As in previous years, the meeting took place both online via Zoom and in person at the Karawatha Forest Discovery Centre. We extend our thanks to Brisbane City Council for providing access to this excellent venue again. The meeting ran smoothly, offered plenty of valuable updates, and it was wonderful to see so many members participate.

Congratulations go to all committee members elected for the upcoming 12 months. I am pleased to continue serving as President for another year and look forward to working closely with the new committee, our members, and the wider community. Jenny Holdway has returned as Secretary, while Ryan Carelton will remain in the position of Vice President. Jono Hooper was once again voted in as Events and Initiatives Coordinator, and our Minutes Secretary, Desley Fricke, will continue in her role. Our Treasurer, Andrew Knowles, will again oversee the finances, and Kayla Beaton will continue as our Editor, producing our Frogsheets throughout the next year.

We are also delighted to welcome a new committee member, Olivia Tyson. Olivia has been actively involved with the society over the past year, attending numerous events, and she brings a wealth of knowledge about frogs. It's always encouraging to have fresh faces join the committee, as it helps keep our ideas evolving and our energy strong. Thank you to every committee member for dedicating your precious spare time to the Queensland frog Society for the next year.

After the formalities of the AGM, our guest speaker, Sean Morrow, delivered an engaging presentation. Sean, an expert in landscaping and the creation of natural wildlife habitats, especially frog ponds shared his insights and passion with the AGM attendees. His expertise is well recognised, and he offered practical advice on designing and building frog friendly ponds, including a range of design options. Members appreciated the session and asked many questions afterward.

Once Sean finished, those attending in person stayed on briefly to enjoy a light afternoon tea. It was lovely to spend some face to face time with members and the committee alike while enjoying some refreshments. Unfortunately, we had to pack up sooner than planned due to approaching severe storms. Thankfully, we managed to leave the venue just in time, as the storms arrived shortly after. A special thank you goes to Desley for setting up most of the tables and chairs, arranging the beautiful food display, and helping so much with packing up. Also, thank you to everyone who joined us at our 2025 AGM, whether via Zoom or in person as your support at this meeting is essential to the continuation of the society.

We look forward to seeing you at the AGM in 2026.



# THE QUIET DECLINE OF OUR FROGS & HOW WE CAN HELP

Australia is often celebrated for its remarkable frog diversity, from the tiny alpine species found in cold mountain streams to the colourful tree frogs calling through our suburbs. Yet the latest national data paints a far more sobering picture: many of our frogs are disappearing at an alarming rate.

For the first time, frog experts from across the country have contributed long-term monitoring data to the Threatened Species Index (TSX), a tool used to track population trends in threatened wildlife. This new dataset brings together information on 28 frog species, some of which have been monitored for decades. Together, the results show an average decline of 96% in threatened frog abundance since 1985.

Even when using more recent reference points, the trend holds steady; frog populations have still fallen by more than 60% since the year 2000. These declines are far more severe than those reported for mammals, birds, or plants included in the index so far.

The story of why frogs are declining is complex. The most catastrophic losses began in the 1980s, when the invasive chytrid fungus swept across Australia. This pathogen caused the extinction of seven Australian frog species, including the famous gastric-brooding frogs (*Rheobatrachus*). While a few species severely affected by chytrid have shown signs of recovery, many others continue to decline.

Interestingly, recent data suggests that some frog species not historically impacted by chytrid are now experiencing the steepest drops. This shift may reflect reduced disease pressure on some species but a rapid rise in other threats, including habitat loss, drought, invasive species, and extreme bushfires.

Despite the grim statistics, there is room for hope. The index shows that species receiving active, targeted conservation support fare significantly better than those left to decline without intervention. This emphasises the importance of continued research, habitat protection, and monitoring.

Citizen scientists now play a crucial role in filling data gaps. By submitting frog observations through programs such as FrogID or iNaturalist, Australians can directly contribute to the long-term protection of our country's precious amphibians.

## HOW WARMING CLIMATES CONFUSE TREE FROGS



In Ohio, USA, winters are arriving later and feeling far milder than they did only a few decades ago. But while temperatures shift, one thing hasn't changed at all: the length of the day. New research has found that this mismatch may be putting tree frogs in a tricky position.

Gray tree frogs (*Dryophytes versicolor*) rely on shortening daylight hours, not dropping temperatures, to tell them winter is on the way. As days grow shorter, they begin a remarkable transformation. The frogs load their livers with glycogen, which they convert into glycerol, an "antifreeze" that lets them survive being frozen solid. Normally, this strategy is lifesaving.

But with winters becoming warmer, the signal no longer matches the environment. A new study shows that when frogs sense shorter days, they still prepare for deep freeze even if the cold never comes. This early preparation drains energy, slows growth, and diverts nutrients into oversized livers instead of bones and muscles.

Researchers warn that while gray tree frogs are currently widespread, species with smaller ranges or limited food sources could suffer far more. Preparing for a winter that never arrives could reduce survival, disrupt breeding, and cause long-term population declines.

# Executive Committee

**Patron** – Dr Glen Ingram

**President** – Ashley Keune

*Email:* president [at] qldfrogs.asn.au

**Vice President** – Ryan Carleton

*Email:* vicepresidents [at] qldfrogs.asn.au

**Secretary** – Jenny Holdway

*Ph:* 0491 140 720

*Email:* secretary [at] qldfrogs.asn.au

**Treasurer** – Andrew Knowles

*Email:* treasurer [at] qldfrogs.asn.au

**Events and Initiatives Coordinator** –

Jono Hooper

*Email:* events\_initiatives [at] qldfrogs.asn.au

**Minutes Secretary** - Desley Fricke

**Newsletter Editor** - Kayla Beaton

*Email:* editor [at] qldfrogs.asn.au

**Frogshop Sales** - Jenny Holdway

*Ph:* 0491 140 720

*Email:* frogshop [at] qldfrogs.asn.au

**General Committee Member** - Olivia

Tyson

## A WARM WELCOME TO NEW QFS MEMBERS!

Nicole Reid, Robyn Elliott,

Jules O'Brien, Cecelia

Horwood, Sophie Stegect,

Daniel Mitchell, Julz Smith,

Ethan Mimnaugh, Lisa

Maloney, Michelle Toms,

Rhiannon Findwater, Julie

Moore, Vaughan King, Tania

Harley, Rachael Trembath,

John Vink, Cheryl Lindfield,

Gary Sands, Nick Cavendish,

Jessica Cale, Susan Goodall,

Jean Lukin, Jane Little.



## DATES FOR YOUR DIARY...

**5-7 December 2025**

Bellthorpe Frog Camp

**2pm-5.30pm 7 December 2025**

Permaculture Toowoomba Inc.

Presentation and frog hotel workshop.



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

DEADLINE FOR THE MID-SUMMER FROGSHEET CONTRIBUTIONS IS

**28 DECEMBER 2025**