



FROGSHEET

Official Newsletter of the Queensland Frog Society Inc.

Winter 2015

W: www.qldfrogs.asn.au | E: questions@qldfrogs.asn.au | Camps E: frogcamps@qldfrogs.asn.au |



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Presidential Business...

Despite the cool change in seasons and quieter frog activity, I always find there to be plenty going on in terms of frog news, displays and events! As May draws to an end and Winter officially arrives, we have already represented QLD's frogs and the Society at Caloundra, Chermside and a Wildlife Festival on Bribie Island. In early June we attended the World Environment Day (WED) festivities at the University of the Sunshine Coast for our second year with much interest shown and questions answered. Then before we know it, we'll be at the QLD Garden Expo in Nambour which is our most successful attendance of the year with large crowds and lots of interest in our display! It is at this event we endeavour to release a brand new resource specifically on cane toads...

Speaking of toads, the media has been in a frenzy lately, and for good reason. Dr Rick Shine and his team from various southern Australia universities have released a scientific paper that provides empirical evidence in support for the humane euthanasia of cane toads using the fridge/freezer method. This method had been shunned for several years as unsupported doubts arose over the amount of pain the method inflicted on the animals during freezing. For more details, read inside!

To finish on a less serious note, I have made use of the somewhat unpleasant cooler temperatures by frogging for several winter breeders. Whilst still a little warm, I found several calling Chirping Froglets (*Crinia deserticola*) for my first time (right). The small size of these frogs is fully appreciated when finally found right under your eyes.



Another species in full chorus was the pretty Cooloola Sedgefrog (*Litoria cooloolensis*) (left), an acid frog endemic to only several undisturbed areas on the south-east



coast and islands. And finally, a frog not afraid of chilly nights,

the Whistling Treefrog (*Litoria verreauxi*) (bottom right).



Featuring in this Edition

Weed work and reveg at Bowman Park - P. 4

Wired for Sound - P. 5

Toads croak at fridge/freezer method -

P. 7

Best time at Blackbutt Workshop - P. 7



Welcome and thanks to our New Members

Janice Gillespie, Christine Watson, Audrile Bahlmann, Susan Reilly, Jill Fechner, Jamayka Webbe, Clare Fitzpatrick, Benjamin Revell, Katherine Nelson, Robert Toghill, Brenda & Paul Irwin.

Cheers, Jono Hooper



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Brisbane City Council



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Thanks to QWaLC for our
free insurance

QFS Public Trust Fund - Ric Natrass Research Grant

The QFS Trust Fund was
created with the purpose to
help save QLD frogs through
education and research, and
now stands at **\$4,709.77**
(+ \$85.25 since Autumn Edition)



Coming Up

QLD Garden Expo

10-12th July, 2015

QFS Display and sale items

S.G.A.P. Spring Flower Show, Toowong

15th - 16th August, 2015

QFS Display and sale items

QFS Annual General Meeting (AGM)

10th October, 2015

Venue to be advised

QFS Management Meetings

7:30pm, 3rd 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, Ph: 3355 4134

Carseldine Bush Crew

Cabbage Tree Creek, Carseldine

Contact James Hansen for more info at

jamna@powerup.com.au or editor@qldfrogs.asn.au



Learn how to build a frog pond - Items on sale - Great advice
This is the most popular event we attend! Come check it out.

Ashgrove Report

Now the cooler weather is upon us there isn't much in the way of frog activities even after the couple of good rain days we had.

Phil Bird held a successful working bee at Bowman Park on the 17th but unfortunately I wasn't able to attend. He reported "I think we were all pleased with our efforts. We worked well together and must have put in a couple of trays of plants. We have about 40 Richmond Birdwing Butterfly vines planted now of which some are getting into the canopy. Next working bee will be in August".

Had a lovely time in Blackbutt when Jono and I went to present a Frog ID workshop. Our hosts, Wendy and Ray Benfer made us feel very welcome and about 29 attend the afternoon which was great. They arrived from Nanango, Kingaroy, Benarkin, Yarraman and Blackbutt and we had a good range of frog stories and queries. The afternoon ended with a violent storm which reduced the number of people who were to venture out frogging after dinner, but for those of us who did we found seven species of frogs [inc. ~30 Scarlet-sided Pobblebunks, above] in the park we visited and around the Benfer's house.



Friends of Yarraman have requested a workshop in their area and this might go ahead later this year.

Jenny Holdway ■

Brookfield Report

Bowman Park – frogs are not the only species

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.

Updated Diary Dates

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

Frogs are cool - Spread the word!

If you're a coordinator, why not set up a QFS display 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. Or you may like to help arrange a frog ID workshop which are a fantastic way to introduce your community to frogs.

The Bowman Park Frog Habitat Group manages the drain line sites within Bowman Park, Bardon. The Group has a frog focus which also involves bush rehabilitation such as weeding and planting. This provides habitats suitable for frogs to use as refuges and for breeding. Plants provide homes and a food source.

In 2003, we had planted out a site that is situated at one end of the park from Cecil Road and runs parallel along the upper part of Bowman Parade, Bardon. We wanted to increase canopy cover in this area to act as weed control and allow us to plant understory plants as a refuge for frogs and other species. We had planted understory plants in this area a few years ago and unfortunately they were removed by a pesky



brush turkey (Image 1). We even tried to bush turkey proof part of the area with coconut mesh (Image 2).



The site had also become overgrown by Maderia vine (*Anred-
era cordifolia*) with the last of the vines were removed from trees in Dec 2012 (Images 3 and 4). We still are removing sprouting nodules from under the trees.

When the concrete drain line was removed in 2000, a series of community plantings took place. One of the groups involved was the Bardon Kindergarten and they



planted 10 Richmond Birdwing vines (*Pararistolochia praevenosa*) along a fence at the Kindergarten. These vines are now starting to climb into the canopy. These vines are host plants for the larvae of the endangered Richmond Birdwing (*Ornithoptera richmondia*). Since then an additional 20 vines were planted at a number of sites on the drain lines



(5 and 6). However a number of these vines were removed by the persistent bush turkey.



While the endangered RBW is an important butterfly species there are a number of butterflies that would be helped by planting host plants for their larvae. It is a philosophy that one can follow where one species can raise community awareness, with a flow on effect that will help all species. This has been the early experiences of the community interest in frogs during the “save the orphan tadpoles of the 2000’s” and the “save the Green Treefrog”



NEW FROGS OF BRISBANE POSTER FOR SALE

Our newly revamped and expanded Frogs of Brisbane Poster is available!

This great resource is partly funded by the Brisbane City Council to whom we are most grateful.

NEW Poster

Existing member who renews: Free poster (plus postage at \$10)

New member: Free poster (plus postage at \$10)

Additional poster to members: \$5 (plus postage at \$10) = total \$15

Non-member: \$5 (plus postage at \$10) = total \$15

OLD Poster

Members/non-members: gold coin donation (plus postage at \$10)

Please contact our Secretary, Jenny, using the details on Page 2 to place your order, or come and say g'day at our QFS display at upcoming events and receive your poster minus shipping!



by the Boscott's at St Lucia. Now the recent in interest in loss of the European bees and the upsurge in keeping urban bees in hives on roofs.

On Sunday, 17th May 2015, a small band of volunteers (Phil and Anthony- image 7- 8) planted over 100 other



butterfly host plants as understory planting at the site, with an



additional number of RBW vines (images 9-10). This planting was supported by Habitat Brisbane (Simon Fox) and the Richmond Birdwing Recovery group (Glyn Saunders). In addition it is hoped to increase community awareness in number of butterfly species that use the park. We



are hoping to place interpretative signs with names of butterflies and their host plant.

Anyone who has ever walked past and through ground covers will see the clouds of insects that take to the air, to see other critters moving through and under the shelter of the lush growth. These insect provide both food and refuge for the local frogs.

The Bowman Park Habitat Group meets on the first Sunday of the month on every even month of the year. The next working bee is on Sunday the 2nd August. For further details contact Phil Bird by email frogphil@gmail.com or visit us on Facebook.

Phil Bird ■

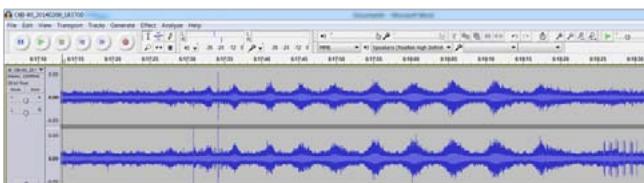
Wired for Sound

You can't hunt plants using sound detection but some animals make noises and this can be particularly useful when finding and identifying species. Bird watchers know well the value of birdsong in this arena and even whale monitors are getting to understand the language of these large, social cetaceans. Recent work at the Griffith University is investigating the sounds of underwater fauna in gauging the health of an aquatic ecosystem (yes - invertebrates make noises too!). Around these parts, if you are a 'frogger' you will be pleased that most of the frog species have individual and discernible calls which the males make to call in a mate, or ward off a territory intruder.



Typically we at the MRCCC conduct our frog surveys on foot and at night when it is warm and when frogs are active. We can cover a couple of hundred metres during a survey which takes a couple of hours. Thanks to the Sunshine Coast Council we were recently able to purchase two Songmeter acoustic monitors to help us with our surveying. We chose to target Obi Obi Creek and Kin Kin Creek to see if we could detect the elusive and endangered Giant barred frog in those systems. Alas, out of six sites and more than 12 weeks of night recordings we were only able to hear them at one site on Obi Obi Creek.

The recordings from an acoustic monitor must be analysed either by listening to all or some of the recordings (arduous to say the least), by looking at the sonograph to see if there is anything that is worth lis-



tening to or by running the recordings through sound recognition software and double checking the results by listening to the point of vocalisation in the recording. This last option is not available as yet and so we have relied on the patience of Joel Crampton, an undergraduate student and a budding herpetologist. But the possibility of replacing humans is being realised through our partnership with the Faculty of Science and Engineering, Electrical Engineering, Computer Science at the Queensland University of Technology. To help them in this endeavour we have been able to send them local calls of Giant barred frogs from Obi during this past summer season. While this work is time consuming we are hopeful to be able to test drive the software this coming frog season.

Eva Ford ■

Public Trust Fund Update

Thankyou to those of you who have donated to the Public Trust Fund Ric Natrass Scholarship. Without these funds, we would no longer be able to offer students like David Benfer, Lynette Plenderleith and Jonathon Hooper (to name a few) the opportunity to research our wonderful native amphibians and to protect them.

We continue to seek donations toward this fund. Remember donations over \$2.00 are tax deductible. You can use the order form to send donations to the Secretary, or alternatively via the brochure available on our website.

Many Thanks,

Jenny

The Fragile Web, Blackbutt

Wendy and Ray Benfer have set up a wonderful Environmental Awareness Centre on the corner of Coulson Street and the main road, the location of our Frog ID workshop in March. In the main front room Wendy has a lovely collection of photographs on the wall depicting local birds, plants etc, has local information and maps, books, environmentally-friendly household and Free Trade products.



MEMO FOR MEMBERSHIPS

As we enter 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 have received a renewal notice via either the mail or email. Please don't hesitate in securing your membership for another year and supporting QLD's frogs.

Thankyou!

F.E.A.T and Incredible Edibles share these premises and a reading room and kitchen are also available. The garden is being planted out with native plants that will also bring in the local wildlife such as butterflies, and Ray becomes quite excited when he sees a caterpillar eating a plant knowing that this habitat is working.

Wendy and Ray extend a warm welcome for you to drop in if you are driving through Blackbutt.

Opening hours are 1 – 4 pm Monday, Wednesday and Friday but if you are going through at other times, please phone them on 4170 0555 or email ahead of time at raywendy@bigpond.com and if they are free will happily come and meet you there. Wendy is now our co-ordinator for the South Burnett area, too. ■

Best time at Blackbutt Workshop

After initially postponing our first Blackbutt Frog ID workshop, Jenny and I were keenly anticipating the rescheduled event. I met Jenny from a distance on the road, and patiently followed behind her (antique!) Mazda up the slow climb to Blackbutt on Saturday morning. After arriving at the Benfer's property and being warmly welcomed and fed by Ray and Wendy, we travelled to The Fragile Web to set up for the much anticipated workshop. The Benfers had organised much of the gear for us and soon enough I was speaking to an audience of almost 30 keen attendees from Blackbutt to the Bunya Mountains and towns inbetween.



No sooner had the workshop finished that a fierce storm approached and whipped up winds almost blowing several of us away, clinging to the marquee. Then down came the rain, transforming the area from dusty ground into widespread pools with wind-blown shallow waves across the surface. We bunkered down

inside to enjoy various nibblies for dinner until the rain turned into light showers. This was the heaviest downpour the town received in several months!

We ventured outside in search of frogs, though were unsure as to how much activity there would be following the sudden temperature drop. Our concerns did not turn true though, as we found about half a dozen Great Barred Frogs and a couple of dozen Scarlet-sided Pobblebunks, among a few other species.

Following the fantastic frogging, Jenny and I bunkered down in the guest house. We reflected on the evening and shared in some laughs. She can be such a child. Good times. The Benfer's had provided very comfortable accommodation and I had a good night sleep, until just before dawn when just in my shorts I was drawn outside by the call of a Gungan (*Uperoleia*) frog. He was calling off the property though, to my great disappointment.

Following breakfast and some good conversation, we thanked the Benfers for their warm hospitality, though not before we were loaded with complimentary gifts. Thankyou Ray and Wendy, and to all who attended the workshop. We must do this again some time! ■

Scientists use brain electrodes to find freezing toads the best way to get them to croak

Daniel Smith | *ABC News* | 26th May, 2015

Tossing cane toads into the freezer causes them no pain and is the most humane way to get rid of the amphibian pests — but just make sure they don't thaw out too soon.

That is the message from Australian scientists who used pain-sensing electrodes wired into toads' brains to find out whether freezing them — a method long-condemned as inhumane by animal ethics groups — was the best way to go.

Researchers implanted small electrodes in the brains of cane toads and then put them into a refrigerator for a few hours, before transferring them to a household freezer.

Professor Rick Shine from the University of Sydney said the toads quietly slipped into unconsciousness as

they were transformed into toadsicles, and the toad's brains did not register any evidence of pain during the entire process.

"What we saw was that the toad's brains just switched off," he said. "By the time they went into the freezer there was almost nothing happening and it slowly went down."

"The difficulty is of course, you can't ask a cane toad if something hurts."

"People have used all kinds of indirect measures ... this was really the 24-carat gold way to measure what's happening inside a toad's brain when you're doing something to it."

But Professor Shine warned the toads had to be kept in the freezer for days, otherwise they could defrost and come back to life. "Make sure it's in the fridge for a few hours so that it's not going to feel pain when it goes into the freezer," he said.

"Once it's in the freezer, leave it in there for a couple of days ... depending on what else is in the freezer and so forth, it may not be all that far below zero, and especially if you have quite a few toads together in a bag, it takes a while for it to freeze to the point where it actually kills them."

"So if you don't want an unpleasant surprise when you pull out your bag of frozen toads, leave them in there a bit longer."

Original study:

Shine. R, Amiel. J, Munn. A.J, Stewart. M, Vyssotski. A.L, and Lesku. J.A (2015) Is "cooling then freezing" a humane way to kill amphibians and reptiles? **Biology Open** (2015) 00, 1-4 doi:10.1242/bio.012179

Climate change risk to 'one in six species'

Helen Briggs | BBC | 30th April, 2015

One in six species on the planet could face extinction if nothing is done to tackle climate change, analysis suggests.

If carbon emissions continue on their current path - and temperatures rise by 4 degrees - 16% of animals and plants will be lost, according to a review of evidence.

The study, published in *Science*, shows risks are highest in South America, Australia and New Zealand. Previous estimates range from 0 to 54%. Dr Mark Urban of the University of Connecticut, US, analysed data from 131 scientific studies on the risk of extinction from climate change.

Many species will be able to shift their ranges and keep up with climate change whereas others will not. Dr Mark Urban, University of Connecticut. He found that the rate of biodiversity loss is likely to speed up with each degree Celsius rise in temperature.

If future temperatures rise by 2 degrees compared with pre-industrial times, global extinction risk will rise from 2.8% today to 5.2%. But under the scenario where global warming continues on its current path, 16% of species (one in six) face extinction.

"If the world does not come together and control greenhouse gas emissions and we allow the Earth to warm considerably we will face a potential loss of one in six species," said Dr Urban.

"Many species will be able to shift their ranges and keep up with climate change whereas others will not either because their habitat has disappeared or because they can't reach their habitat anymore."

Unique habitats

Higher extinction risks are predicted for Australia, New Zealand and South America, where there are many species adapted to live in habitats not found elsewhere.

Commenting on the research, Prof John J Wiens of the University of Arizona, said the global extinction risk from climate change might be even higher than 16%, as the majority of studies analysed were from Europe and North America, where extinction risks are lower.

"In South America, the extinction risk was estimated to be 23%," he said. "Unfortunately, this higher number might better reflect the number of species that might go extinct due to climate change globally, if we consider how the world's species are distributed."

Dr Mike Barrett, Director of Science and Policy at WWF-UK, said the findings echoed its Living Planet Report, which found that populations of vertebrate species have halved since 1970. "This report looks forward and finds that many species are threatened with extinction if we fail to tackle climate change."



Something for you...

Junior Frogologists

By Tim Williams, Junior Editor

Cool frog facts

Smallest frog

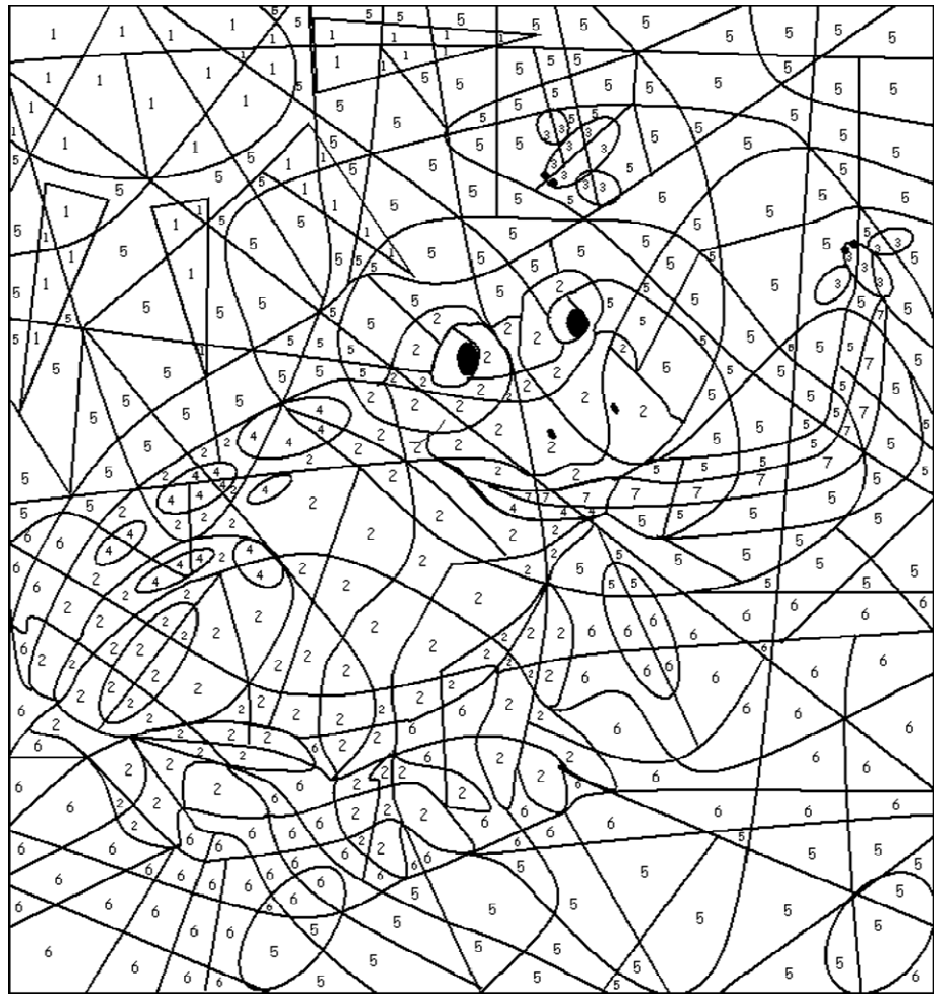


The smallest frogs are the *Paedophryne dekoti* and *Paedophryne verrucosa* from Papua New Guinea, sizing in at only 9 mm in length. Next up is the critically endangered Cuban frog *Eleutherodactylus Iberia*, measuring only 10mm when fully grown. They are threatened by pesticides, and by large-scale mining operations that destroy their habitat. (Photo of *E. iberia* by M. Lammertink)

Largest frog



The world's largest frog is the Goliath Frog *Conraua goliath*, which lives in western Africa. They can grow to be over 30 cm long, and weigh over 3 kg. This species is endangered, due to conversion of rainforests into farmland, and their being used as a local food source. (Photo: www.reptileclassifieds.co.uk)



1 = Yellow 2 = Green 3 = Grey 4 = Dark green
 5 = Blue 6 = Brown 7 = Pink Source: <http://www.coloring.ws>

* Spaces that are not numbered should be left as white.

The Last Croak...

What's green and dangerous? A frog with a hand grenade.

What do you say to a hitch-hiking frog? Hop in!

Cool frogs: <http://www.vector-eps.com/>



Frotophraphy

Member Frog Photos

Send your neat frog photos to editor@qldfrogs.asn.au or via Facebook by the next newsletter deadline.



Cooloola Sedgefrog (*Litoria cooloolensis*)
Credit: B. Revell

Great Barred Frog (*Mixophyes fasciolatus*) at Kondalilla National Park
Credit: B. Elliott



Chirping Froglet (*Crinia deserticola*) at Burrum Coast National Park
Credit: J. Hooper

Thanks to those who contributed to this newsletter!
Don't hesitate in contributing to the next edition.
**Deadline for Spring *Frogsheet* contributions is
20th August 2015**

If undelivered, please return to
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