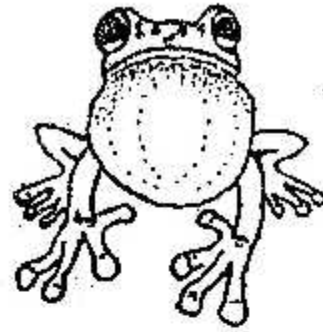


FROG CALL No 6

Newsletter of the
FROG & TADPOLE STUDY GROUP:
a special interest group of the
AUSTRALIAN HERPETOLOGICAL SOCIETY INC.



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NEXT MEETING

Wednesday 7th April 1993 time: 7.30 for 8pm
Level 3 Staff room, Building E
Sydney Technical College,
(cnr. of Harris Street and Thomas Street , Ultimo)

THE NEXT MEETING

We will have news from members on their recent activities, (including the Red-crowned Toadlet, Ornate Burrowing Frog and the Spotted Tree frog) field work invitations and a video of the recent talk by Dr Graeme Watson to the FATS group of the Victorian Herpetological Society.

Of course there will be the usual informal atmosphere with refreshments provided. Bring a friend (froggy or otherwise)!

SPOTTED TREE FROG REDISCOVERED IN NSW

Members who attended the last meeting in January would have heard about the rediscovery of the Spotted Tree Frog by Harald Ehmann and family while holidaying in the Khanchoban area during the Christmas break. The rediscovery is being reported in the imminent issue of Herpetofauna.

In late February Harald took the 1993 Herpetological Techniques Course students (17) to the area. The survey work carried out substantially extended the data base on this population. A total of about 80-100 frogs and 800-1000 tadpoles were seen. Measurements of frogs, stream and air temperatures were made and habitat characteristics recorded. There are some surprises in the results - the highlights will be outlined at the next meeting.

The Herp. Techniques students made some valuable observations on Pseudophryne dendyi during an attempt to locate additional populations of Pseudophryne corroboree.

ORNATE BURROWING FROG FOUND AT CAMDEN

John Emedi has located an outlier population of Limnodynastes ornatus during his habitual attention to his study sites in western Sydney. The nearest known population is near Penrith: so this Camden site is important as it is the southern-most essentially coastal occurrence of the species.

ENDANGERED FROGS FIELDWORK GRANTS

The acceptance paper work for these grants, totalling \$31000, has been submitted and we now await the initial funds to come through. Could the members of the planning committee please attend a further meeting in the usual place at 6pm on the night of the next FATS Group meeting on the 7th of April? There will also be further project discussions for all FATS G members during the main Meeting.

FROGWEEK 1993

We have not yet succeeded in attracting major funding to launch this important event to publicise the plight of frogs. More ideas and input are needed to get this issue into the spotlight. Thanks to Shane Gow and Dan Wotherspoon for their significant work on FROGWEEK1993. Dan or Shane would like to hear from you if you have any useful contacts in the media or if you have experience with press releases or even staging major events without any money!

SPAWN!

Talking about Dan - he has just returned from the NSW North Coast where he had a great time in the pouring rain. After a dry spell everything began calling, amplexing and breeding. Especially the frogs!

FROGFACTS

FF2 ("Keeping Frogs In Your Garden") got a plug in some of the gardening magazines. The hapless AHS secretary now gets between 2 & 4 letters everyday, with requests for FF1 & FF2. FF3 ("Establishing Frog Habitats On Your Property") will again be available at the next meeting.

THE LAST MEETING

This was held on 27 January 1993. We had great discussions on just about anything, including the Endangered Frog Survey, Frogweek and NP&WS. Harald showed his first slides of the Spotted tree frog. We also frogmarched three of our members into useful service: Peter Jones as refreshments person, Jacquie Recsei as membership mailout Secretary and Lothar Voigt as Newsletter Editor.

GUEST SPEAKER DAVID SKELLY

Our Guest speaker was David Skelly who gave a presentation on tadpole predator responses in the USA.

He examined how frogs are distributed across the gradient from permanent to ephemeral ponds - the more permanent the pond the more likely it is to contain fish and other tadpole predators.

To investigate why Chorus Frogs in Michigan occur in temporary ponds and Spring Peepers predominantly in permanent ones, he conducted a huge field experiment. Take six ponds, 72 fly-screened pens, each as big as a small room, then drag the pens half into the ponds, add predators into some of them, collect frog spawn clumps ("Most species breed explosively only two or three nights a year") and add the pre hatched larvae, and later collect and count the surviving metamorphs in the pens- that's all there is to it!

David found that the young Spring Peepers from the temporary end were larger but fewer, and the Chorus Frogs from the permanent end were larger but fewer than at the other extreme of the gradient. He also concluded that the effect of removing predators was greater in the permanent ponds; and that there was no competition between the two species at the tadpole stage (but possibly in the terrestrial phase).

David assumes there may be a trade off between predation risk and growth: Chorus Frog Tadpoles are more active and possibly for this reason able to grow faster. However their activity also attracts the attention of predators (compared with anaesthetised tadpoles). This may be why the inactive and slow-growing Spring Peepers can live in fish-containing permanent ponds.

David is now testing the limit of this idea with Australian species. Litoria dentata has an active tadpole which lives in temporary places, Litoria peronii has slower ones which live in both and Crinia signifera of course occurs everywhere! (it cheats though , having a large egg and a small metaphoric size, so the tadpoles need very little food).

NEWSLETTER CONTRIBUTIONS including all incriminating gossip and observations about life from a frogs perspective should be sent to:

Lothar Voigt,
682 old South Head Road,
Rose Bay, 2029.

Telephone: (02) 371 9129.

PLASTIC CONTAINERS with clip-top lids. If you are interested please contact Lothar Voigt on (02) 371 9129

40cm size @ \$14

45cm size @ \$19

FROGWEEK T-SHIRTS

Bring \$20 to the next meeting and you too can have an "exclusive hand-printed T-shirt" (sounds good but looks better!) to advertise the most important week in 1993.