

# THE FROG AND TADPOLE STUDY GROUP (FATSG)

- a Special Interest Group of the  
Australian Herpetological Society Inc.

PO Box E405  
ST JAMES NSW 2000

## FROG CALL No 9

Telephone enquiries:

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David Millar & Martyn Robinson ( 02 ) 339 8226

Lothar Voigt (editorial) (02) 371 9129

### NEXT MEETING

Thursday 28th October

7.00 for 7.30 pm

Rooftop, Australian Museum

( cnr. College & William Streets, East Sydney )

William Street Entrance and follow the sign.

### SPEAKERS

Lothar Voigt

"Frogs the Kimberleys and Everything"

Dan Wotherspoon:

Training session: for School Visitors

Harald Ehmann:

Training session:

Endangered Frog Survey Procedures

( optional for those who want to stay on )

AS ALWAYS: Visitors welcome

Informal atmosphere

Refreshments provided

\$2 donation at the door ( *from you, that is* )

Everyone gets a say ( *you, your frogs name, etc etc* )

News announcements and discussions

Updates on projects

### FROGWEEK MONDAY 1.11.93 to SUNDAY 7.11.93

In that week we will do media focussed surveys of the endangered frogs  
from southern NSW ( near Eden ) to northern NSW ( near Murwillumbah ).

The key areas we will survey are located to facilitate media access,  
as well as optimising the visual impact of frogs, the search and the local scenery.

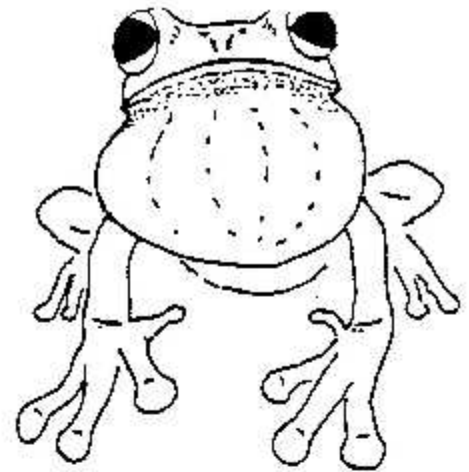
Nissan donated the use of a vehicle for two weeks of furious activity

There will be activities in schools ( see below ), street theatre and

the "Frog Jump Cup" ( an event to rival the Melbourne Cup )

Press kits will be made available.

At all interviews and media statements, calls will go out to the public,  
not only to report sightings but to send a 5 minute tape recording from  
their local swamp. This will give us the most comprehensive data base,  
ever, of breeding frogs in NSW!



### *Current major FATSG activities*

*Endangered Frog Survey:*

a study of the habitat characteristics, present distribution, and population sizes of 21 species of "at risk" frogs in NSW. Partly funded through the National Estate Grant Program. Proudly sponsored by Nissan Australia.

*Frogweek 1993:*

November 1 to 7 inclusive, many activities planned to focus public attention and interest in endangered frogs. We plan considerable public involvement. Proudly sponsored by Nissan Australia



### MORE FROG WEEK PUBLICITY

Noelene, Peter and Melinda Gaberish recently had the longest yet invasion of their home and garden by a television crew ( and all that goes with it ).

The ABC's "Gardening Australia " will show the segment entitled - "Getting frogs back in to your garden" on Friday, 5th of November - during FROGWEEK.

Noelene features with some of her young Red-Eyed Tree Frogs ( Litoria chloris ). Joshua and Neomi Ehmann show how to find and catch tadpoles and Harald provides some expert comment and frog week publicity ( on his shirt! ). The presenter Mary Moody does a magnificent piece on the plight of frogs and how gardeners can help. We get a wonderful plug for the endangered frog survey and the programme is watched by 1 million viewers! Thanks to everyone who helped - it will do lots for frogs!

Last December Merinda Voigt sent letters with her FROGFACTS NO2 ( "Keeping Frogs In Your Garden" ) and FROGFACTS NO 3 ( "Establishing Frog Habitats On Your Property" ) to Gardening Australia and to the Print Media. The "Organic Growing" magazine printed both without changes as promised, but they lopped off the FATS group headings and the credits. When Gardening Australia followed up they more than made up for that small loss of publicity. Copies of FF2 and FF3 will again be available at the next meeting

Peter Jacklyn of ABC radio's "Green and Practical" will also be interviewing Harald Ehmann on FROGWEEK. A perfect topic, since green frogs are obviously "green" and brown frogs are "practical". Peter Jacklyn came out to visit Karen Thumm's Red-Crowned Toadlet ( Pseudophryne australis ) site at Hornsby Heights with Shane and Karen. This was very successful as the little beasts were out in force ( for once ) and all the recording ( minus the expietives ) resulted in a 5 minute piece on "Green and Practical" the next Saturday ( Shane has a tape of this. ) Other TV and radio stations are also queuing up!

Remember "queuing when you need a good scrabble word and a good dinner word is "Microsympatric" ( see below ). Guaranteed to make all the spoons fall back into the soup

### FROG TAPES

Would all FATS members please learn the following lines by rote and quote them to anybody likely to respond.

- 1) Record the frogs in your area for 5 minutes ( to get even the infrequent callers )
- 2) Record your name the locality and date on the tape before the frog recording.
- 3) Write your name, address the locality and the date.
- 4) Post the tape and information to:  
FATS GROUP,  
PO Box E405,  
St James, NSW 2000

We will send back a replacement tape plus the identifications and also a newsletter with a follow up request if the locality is a good one.

(Please remind people that frogs are nocturnal! because some people don't know- truly!)

### FROGWEEK IN SCHOOLS - AND YOU

Would each FATS group member also do this for FROGWEEK.....

- 1) Make an offer( that she/he can't refuse) to your local school Principal, for you to come in and
  - a) Show interested teachers methods for making culture boxes to raise and maintain frogs and for building a frog pond in the school grounds
  - b) Show how to introduce frogs as a part of the Science and Technology Syllabus
  - c) Demonstrate available resources ( FROGFACTS, FROGTAPE from the Australian Museum , FROGWATCH and frog identification books
  - d) Show how to participate in the frog survey
- 2) If you make your offer in writing attach the press release ( which is enclosed for this very purpose! ) and send it off now. If you can, invite yourself before the beginning of FROGWEEK, so that you can pass on your information before the week is over
- 3) Do Dan's training session at the FATS group meeting on 26.10 and pick up your copy of FF2 and FF3 if you haven't got them.

if you feel you are too chicken to train the teachers your fallback is to offer to talk to the kindy or school classes yourself

\*Choose the level you are most comfortable with.

\*Relate your own experiences

\*Have some live frogs and tads to talk about BUT check with Lothar Voigt (02) 371 9129 whether the approval from NP&WS has come through.

\*Invite questions anytime

\*Give them a take home project to do"

### NOTE FOR COMMITTEE MEMBERS

The next committee meeting is at 5.00 pm prior to the FATS group meeting, same place:

- \*AHS President to address the Committee
- †Correspondence
- \*Meeting Venue in 1994 - options
- \*FROGWEEK final adjustments
- \*ENDFROGS final adjustments
- \*Other business

### ENDFROGS UPDATE

- \*The sorting, identification and data logging of some 2200 specimens held in the Australian Museum has been completed.
- \*The locality information has been collated and a key site list and master map have been produced.
- \*A methodology and member involvement plan / commitments have been established.
- \*Some preliminary fieldwork has been done.
- \*Harald's paperwork / administration to date includes:
  - licence applications .
  - exempt list inputs
  - press release for the international FROGLOG
  - a letter to the Snowy Mountains Authority on the possible impact of their cloud seeding plans on the Spotted Tree Frog
  - negotiation with CALM on the loan of a vehicle and office support.
  - providing input for Mike Tyler's Amphibian Action Plan.

Shane has made a tape of our endangered frogs, following permission to use existing frog recordings. He and Dan have been heavily involved in FROGWEEK to generate publicity and the large data inflow for the survey.

Shane has included the Preliminary Frogweek Schedule on the last page.

### ENDFROGS TRAINING SESSION

- \*Equipment use for temperature, pH, salinity, sound recording
- \*Data form completion
- \*Kit use and Restrictions
- \*Animal welfare

**Remember you must be covered by the AHS 3rdparty liability insurance to participate in FATS field work, I.E. you must be an AHS member.**

### LAST MEETINGS GUEST SPEAKER

Ross Knowles

"Conservation Genetics of Disjunct Rainforest Populations of Sphagnum Frogs"

Currently three species are recognised of KYRRANUS, (formerly part of Philoria)

Kyarranus kundagungan - the northern-most species up to Brisbane.

Kyarranus loveridgei - mid areas, e.g. Border Ranges

Kyarranus sphagnicolus - southern-most species, e.g. Washpool.

All three are montane rainforest frogs, living typically in swampy, muddy head-waters of creeks. There is a great variability in their colouration.

Their calls are variable and their distribution areas appear to overlap.

They all lay eggs in shallow chambers on land, which the male digs and calls from. His nuptial pad on the thumb has a sharp spike. The female has a broad spatula on her finger which she usually uses to beat up the foam nest. Each larva then develops in its own air bubble, provided that there will be some rainfall.

On occasion still nests are found, where the spawn is not encased in bubbles. How sufficient oxygen is then transported to the lower eggs is not yet clear. When tadpoles are placed in water they have been observed taking air bubbles from the surface.

Tadpoles have sufficient yolk to reach metamorphosis without feeding. A parent is often seen in or near the nest, apparently in attendance. The breeding season is late spring through summer. As they are classified rare and vulnerable Ross examined genetic diversity and the number of species the complex could be divided into. Based on electrophoresis each population has moderate genetic differences. (The populations are isolated by major rivers cutting through the montane rainforest. Until their morphology is looked at in more detail, the number of species remains uncertain.

### LAST MEETINGS VIDEO

Shane showed a video of the Brown Striped Marsh Frog (Limnodynastes peroni) spawning in a community tank. While he (the frog) was single-mindedly fornicating, she (the frog) was dog paddling at regular intervals to create the foam nest. The gentleman that he was gave no clue whether he found this disconcerting and he even let himself get buried in the foam. Oh bliss!

### BOOKS

**Martyn Robinson** has a new field guide almost out and hopefully available in the shops very soon: Frogs of Australia (South East). See the book and the author at the next meeting Under \$20!

**Mike Tyler** has 150 copies of a booklet "The General Care and Maintenance of Whites Tree Frog and White Lipped Tree Frogs" by Philippe de Vosjoli. He will part with one of them if you send him \$7 (including postage)

Prof. M. J. Tyler  
The University of Adelaide  
G.P.O. Box 498  
Adelaide 5001

PH (08) 228 5333

**Chris Williams** still has some "Amphibians and Reptiles of Singapore" by Kelvin Lim. for \$10. See him at the next AHS meeting (Friday 22.10.93 Australian Museum Hallstrom Theatre / 30 for 8.00pm

RANA has produced an excellent publication, "Raising Native Frogs" by Alistair Bax (the President of RANA) and published by the Queensland Conservation Council \$4.95 plus \$1.05 for postage and handling

QLD Conservation Council  
P.O. Box 12046  
Elizabeth Street  
Brisbane, 4002

### SOUTH AUSTRALIAN FATS

Congratulations to South Australian frog fans for starting up a FATS group under the S.A. Herp. Group. Thanks to Harald Ehmann for starting them off

The Convener, Gary Beardsell  
14 Cadiz Court  
Para Hills S.A. 5046

### FUTURE FROG CALLS

Please send eight 45cent stamps to  
Jacquie Reese  
14 Wallace Close  
Hornsby Heights, 2077

Luckily those of you who haven't sent your stamps have a friend in Harald who has overridden my harsh and merciless nature and given you an absolutely last chance. For those of you who have a clear conscience I will let you know when your stamps have run out by the conspicuous frog stamp on the first page of your FROGCALL.

### SEEN AND HEARD

#### SEEN

Two unshaved froggers, asking for alcohol at a chemist shop in Bega. Said they had some road-killed Litoria citropa and wanted to pickle their livers. Who's Livers?  
Swirling stream-side rockpools, but still without Litoria citropa spawn on the rock walls: both at Morton NP and at the NSW/Vic. border. Need to look again when the water gets warmer.  
More road kills, this time Banjo Frogs (Limnodynastes terraereginae) on the hairpin corners around Lithgow and Limnodynastes dumerilii coming down the hackle raising ponds towards Batemans Bay. Better news for another Banjo (Limnodynastes interioris) which had its drying spawn rescued just in time.  
Hundreds of fat dumpty Faragrinia tadgs amid their ducking elders but not one metamorph.  
something funny is going on at the south coast.  
Corroboree Frogs near Tumut without any sphagnum-moss nearby. The yellow and green variety.

In Wild magazine - no 48 an article in the green pages called "Frog march to Extinction"  
in Wild no 50-a letter to the editor from the Director of the Wet-Tropics Management Agency protesting about the gross distortion of facts within the article. The brief article charges that the WTMA "is overseeing one of the biggest extinction events in Australia's European history" relating to the disappearance of six frog species from upland rainforests in the Wet-Tropics. The WTMA has allocated in 2 years more than \$100,000 to frog research, including \$18,000 to Michael Mahony to study Day-Frogs.

Here is the first draft of the schedule for our frog week field marathon. You are quite welcome to join the key people listed at any of the locations that suit you. However it would be essential to participate in the training sessions we will run at the meeting on the 28th. Precise times and locations, including daily press conferences will be advised closer to the week.

DATE	AREA	SUGGESTED SITES	KEY PEOPLE
1 NOV	Canberra/ Southern highlands	Bungendore, Braidwood, Tumut	H.E., L.V., D.W., W.O.
2 NOV	Wollongong	Darkes Forest/ Gerringong	H.E., L.V., D.W., G.D.
3 NOV	Sydney Basin	Royal Nat. Park, Ourimbah	H.E., L.V., D.W., J.R., K.T., S.G.
4 NOV	Newcastle/Hunter	Wattagan S.F., Boadinghouse Dam	H.E., L.V., D.W., J.R., K.T., S.G., M.M.
5 NOV	Port Macquarie/ Taree	T.B.A.	H.E., L.V., D.W., S.K.J., M.M.
6 NOV	Coffs Harbour	Ebor, New England N. P.	H.E., L.V., D.W., G.S., P.J., A.A.
7 NOV	Further North/ Tweed Heads	T.B.A.	T.B.A.

People will also be needed to run the "Base" in Sydney. This will involve being near a phone. Shane is checking out a 1-800 Freecall number for us. He will also probably be looking after the Sydney base (except for a few days in the field) so please contact him if you would like to help here. His number is (02) 698 7641.

This list is a 1st draft at this stage, but the areas probably won't change radically.

Key People listed are: Harald Ehmann, Lothar Voight, Dan Wotherspoon, Will Osborne, Gary Daly, Jaquie Rescei, Karen Thumm, Shane Gow, Michael Mahony, Stephen Kum Jew, Garry Swann, Peter Jones, Angus Adair.

This is by no means an exclusive list, so don't be offended if you aren't on it. As we said earlier, you can join the group at anytime, depending on your availability or area of interest.