

FROG CALL

THE FROG AND TADPOLE STUDY GROUP OF NSW Inc

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NEWSLETTER No. 197 JUNE 2025



Photo: Green and Golden Bell Frog (Litoria aurea) at the Greenacre Open Day as part of the Wurridjal Festival. Denizen of tank B, by Fabian Byers

Join us at our next meeting

Date: Friday 6 June 2025

Time: 7pm (arrive from 630pm)

Location: Education Centre,
Bicentennial Pk Pathway,
Sydney Olympic Park,
Homebush Bay, NSW

How to get there...

By car: Turn left from Bennelong Pkwy on-
to Bicentennial Drive, then turn left onto
Step Up Place and park in the P10f / Badu
Mangroves carpark.

Public transport: 10 minute walk from
Concord West Railway Station. Walk down
Victoria Ave then Bicentennial Park Path-
way

Note: the path to the education centre isn't
well lit so please bring a torch

Everyone is welcome!

MEETING AGENDA - 7PM FRIDAY 6 JUNE 2025

6:30pm Arrival, tea and coffee, raffle tickets,
frog adoptions

7:00pm Welcome and announcements

7:20pm Main speakers:

- Eli Bieri: "Fires, flood and fungus: what is
happening to Australian frogs"
- Arthur White
 - * Sydney Royal Easter Show
 - * Greenacre Open Day

9:00pm Drinks and supper provided. Relax and chat
with frog friends and experts. Show us your
frog images. Tell us about your frogging trips
or experiences

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Photo: Michelle Toms and David Potter at the Illawarra Reptile Expo, by Harriet Potter

PRESIDENT'S PAD

With the cooler weather setting in our field trips have come to an end for the season, but that doesn't mean we are any less busy here at FATS.

FATS volunteers have attended many events over the past 2 months to spread the message of frog conservation, including the Hawkesbury Reptile Expo, Illawarra Reptile Expo, Greenacre Open Day, and the Sydney Royal Easter Show.

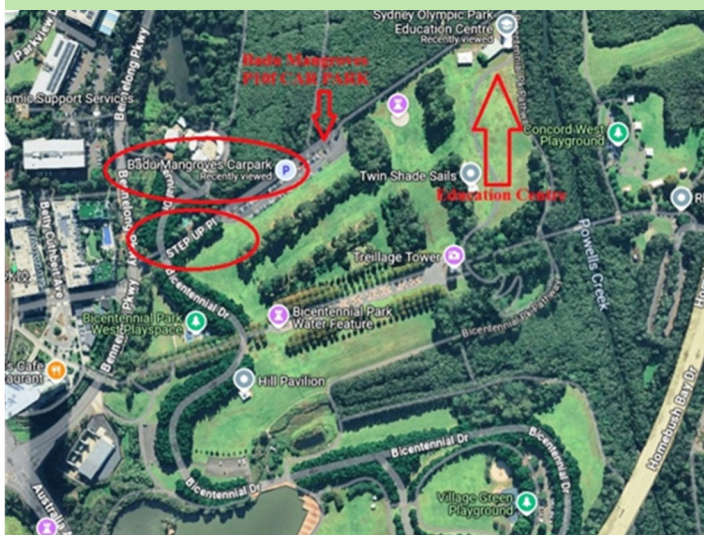
Our two days at the Sydney Royal Easter Show saw thousands of people visit our stall in the pet pavilion, admiring our frogs on display, asking questions about frog identification and care, and sharing their own encounters with frogs. Our fan favourite cane toad was also on display, playing an important part in educating the public on what to do if you see a cane toad in NSW.

It's that time of year when membership renewals are due. Please consider renewing your membership so you can continue to receive newsletters and access field trips. With your support we can continue spreading awareness of our wonderful amphibians.

I hope to see you at our next meeting.

Sincerely, Michelle Toms, President

FATS MEETS AT THE EDUCATION CENTRE BELOW



FATS SMITHS LAKE FIELD TRIP MARCH 2025

By Rhys Cairncross



We had a quiet trip in terms of species sightings, with 4 reptiles, 18 birds and 10 frog species seen, mostly due to cooler, windy and not particularly rainy weather, as well as being a bit late in the season for a lot of animals.

However, we did manage to find the rare Mahony's toadlet *Uperoleia mahonyi*, a threatened species, at a wallum swamp in Bombah Point. We also saw plenty of red-backed brood-frogs *Pseudophyrne coriacea* as usual.



Photos: Mahony's toadlet *Uperoleia mahonyi* (top and above). Red-backed brood-frogs *Pseudophyrne coriacea* (below), by Rhys Cairncross



LITORIA RUBELLA SPLITS INTO 3 SPECIES

Talk by Arthur White - April 2025



In 2025, the "rubella frog," formerly known as *Litoria rubella*, has been split into three distinct species: the Red Tree Frog *Litoria rubella*, the Ruddy Tree Frog *Litoria pyrina*, and the Western Desert Tree Frog *Litoria larisonans*. The Red Tree Frog is now found in central and western Queensland, the Northern Territory, northern Western Australia, New South Wales, and South Australia.



Red Tree Frog *Litoria rubella* remains in central and western Queensland, the Northern Territory, northern Western Australia, New South Wales, and South Australia.

Ruddy Tree Frog *Litoria pyrina* is newly recognized species. It is found in eastern Queensland and northern New South Wales.

Western Desert Tree Frog *Litoria larisonans*, new species, is found in the Pilbara and arid zones of Western Australia.

Litoria rubella species complex- more complex than you ever knew.



Arthur White

These discoveries were made through collaborative research, including the analysis of FrogID recordings, and the use of genetic, morphological, and mating call data. With these additions, Australia now has 257 native frog species and the FrogID species tally is 230!

Litoria rubella is one of the most widespread frog species in Australia. You can find it in every state except Tasmania and Victoria. *L. rubella* was first described by Gray in 1842, when the number of Australian frogs was poorly known. The various forms of "Litoria rubella" have spawned many local or common names for the frog, Red Tree Frog, Desert Tree Frog, Naked Treefrog, Desert Treefrog, Seagull Frog, Little Red Tree Frog and Brown Tree Frog. *Litoria rubella* has many colour forms and shape varieties across its range. Recent genetic work has shown that these varieties are closely-related species.



The *Litoria rubella* species complex includes the *L. dentata* group of species, *L. electrica* and now the *L. rubella* group of species. The robust bleating tree frog, *Litoria dentata*, was also known as Keferstein's tree frog. Described by Keferstein in 1868 from specimens collected in NE NSW. In 2021, geneticists showed that there were 3 species within *L. dentata*. *L. dentata* now only occurs in coastal NW NSW. *L. balatus* only occurs in south east Queensland. and *L. quiritatus* occurs from mid-coast NSW south to NE Victoria.

Litoria electrica

- In 2004, Jean-Marc Hero and Richard Retellick showed that a *L. rubella*-like species occurred in the Gulf region of Queensland. It was given the common name of the Buzzing Tree Frog.



In 2025, geneticists were able to show that the wide-ranging *Litoria rubella* consisted of 3 species. Once geneticists had defined the three species within *L. rubella*, a range of biologists set to work to define these species on the basis of their shape and biology (including tadpoles). Purser, W.A., Doughty, P., Rowley, J.L., Bohme, W., Donnellan, S.C., Anstis, M., Mitchell, N., Shea, G., Amey, A.S., Mitchell, B.A., and R. A. Catullo. 2025. Systematics of the Little Red Tree Frog, *Litoria rubella* (Anura: Pelodryadidae), with the description of two new species from eastern Australia and arid Western Australia. [Zootaxa 5594\(2\):269-315](https://doi.org/10.11646/zootaxa.5594.2.3) extracts DOI:[10.11646/zootaxa.5594.2.3](https://doi.org/10.11646/zootaxa.5594.2.3)

PLIGHT OF THE JAPANESE GIANT SALAMANDER *ANDRIAS JAPONICUS*

Talk by Arthur White - April 2025



In the mountain districts of central Honshu, the local people recount tales of Hanzaki. A strange river beast that arises from deep within the earth. In times gone by, Hanzaki was much larger and ferocious. But today, Hanzaki lives on as a smaller and benign spirit



Above: Male Hanzaki. Below: Female Hanzaki



In the mountains of Okayama prefecture, lies a tiny river valley where the Japanese giant salamander is venerated as a god. Every year for close to half a century now, the village of Yubara Onsen has held the Hanzaki festival to honour this most local of deities. In the regional dialect of Okayama, they are called "hanzaki" (半裂・はんざき), the relic of an old belief that the creatures could survive, planarian-like, after being sliced into two halves.

The Japanese giant salamander can grow to a length of 1.5 m and a weight of 27 kg. It is the third-largest amphibian in the world, only slightly smaller than its close relatives, the South China giant salamander and the Chinese giant salamander. The Japanese giant salamander occurs in freshwater habitats in the mountainous regions of central Honshu. Habitats range from relatively large rivers (20–50m) where the larger individuals are found, to small headwater streams (0.5–4m) where the smaller ones occur. The brown and black mottled skin of *A. Japonicus* provides camouflage against the bottoms of streams and rivers. Its body surface is covered with numerous small warts with distinctive warts concentrating on its head. It has very small eyes with no eyelids and poor eye sight. Its mouth extends across the width of its head, and can open to the width of its body.

Challenges: Habitat loss - water pollution, dams and canalization of streams and rivers. Climate change: in the last 30 years. Japan has experienced more intense typhonic storm damage; mountain streams become torrential flows and aquatic organisms are often killed. Hybridisation - very full full-blood Japanese Giant salamanders exist in the wild because of hybridization with the Chinese Giant salamander. Several conservation programs have started to try to save the Japanese giant salamander. The Kyoto aquarium is heading the largest salamander captive-breeding program.

The Nawa River basin is a special habitat for the JGS. It is unique in that it has relatively large numbers of JGS at a low altitude (of 100 meters or less) and also so close to the ocean. Elsewhere in Japan only small numbers of salamanders can be found at such low altitudes. The reason for the high concentration of JGS in the Nawa River basin is because of its location on the northern slopes of Mount Daisen, a sacred mountain situated on the Sea of Japan coast. The beech forests on the mountain's slopes are largely intact and act as important water filters for the surrounding area.

Sustainable Daisen NPO is a Non-profit organisation based in Daisen Town, Tottori Prefecture, Japan. Extensive Surveying and Data Collection of the Nawa River Habitat: Water quality testing and analysis is of the utmost importance. Extensive testing is carried out at various points within the river basin to identify pollutants and their potential sources.

Education Campaign: Outreach campaign with schools throughout the region. A professional team will visit elementary, junior high and high schools in Western and Central Tottori. Work with Tottori Prefecture to implement bypass slopes at high-impact weirs and dams to ensure unimpeded movement of Japanese giant salamanders within the river system. Implement and manage artificial nest boxes in similar high impact areas to replace nesting sites lost or altered due to construction and the concreting of the river banks. Establishing reserves and sanctuaries for the Japanese giant salamanders in areas of high ecological significance; in turn protecting the river, land, and forest surrounding it.



During the mating season, typically in late August and early September, sexually mature males start actively finding suitable nesting sites and often migrate upstream into smaller sections of the river or its tributaries. Because of the limited availability of suitable nesting sites, only large and competitive males are able to occupy nesting sites and become den masters. A den master diligently cleans his den, guards his den against intruders including other males who try to steal the den while allowing a sexually active female to enter the den. Mating begins as the female starts laying eggs and the den master starts releasing sperm, which often stimulate other subordinate males hiding around the den to enter the den and join the mating. As a result, a single female often mates with multiple males.

On the opposite bank of the Atomic Bomb Dome of Motoyasu River, which flows through the center of Hiroshima City, a giant salamander, a special natural treasure of the country, was found swimming.

<https://gethiroshima.com/news/giant-salamander-far-from-home/> It measured at 93.9cm in length, weighs 6.35kg and is estimated to be at least 50 years old. It is believed that it was discovered just in time as it was found out of water and the Ota River around Peace memorial Park is far too salty for comfort. Displaying cuts around the mouth and showing signs of internal bleeding thought to have been caused by taking in saltwater the specimen is undergoing treatment at Asa Zoo. Sources: [Chugoku Shinbun](#) | [RCC News](#)

The Hiroshima City Asa Zoological Park was the first zoo in Japan to successfully breed Japanese giant salamanders in captivity, and they have a strong history of caring for these endangered amphibians. While Asa Zoo successfully breeds and cares for Japanese giant salamanders, the National Zoo has also established a long-term breeding program with salamanders from Asa Zoo. These breeding programs are crucial for conserving the Japanese giant salamander, a species listed as Vulnerable by the IUCN Red List and the Japanese Ministry of the Environment. Zoos like Asa Zoo also conduct research to better understand the salamanders' needs, including their diet e.g., the National Zoo gives them frozen-thawed smelt and live earthworms, breeding habits, and potential threats.

The Japanese giant salamander faces threats from pollution, habitat loss (including silting rivers and concrete riverbanks), dams, and invasive species. In the wild, males can be aggressive and compete fiercely for breeding rights, sometimes leading to injuries and death. In the past, the salamanders were hunted for food and medicine, contributing to their decline. Some threats to the survival of the Japanese Giant Salamander are being addressed. Some, such as climate change, are more difficult to respond to, but efforts are being made. Perhaps once day, Hanzaki will again become a normal member of Japan's fauna.



Photo: Giant Salamander, far from home (8/4/2022) by Chigoku Shinbun

CELEBRATING WURRIDJAL FESTIVAL AT GREENACRE



Photo: Green and Golden Bell Frog, Frog-O-Graphic competition, by Josie Stokes

Hidden away in Sydney's industrial suburb of Greenacre lies a secret sanctuary for the Green and Golden Bell Frog *Litoria aurea*. Thanks to the efforts of Dr Arthur White and the volunteers at the Frog and Tadpole Study Group (FATS), this native species is making a comeback in the Cooks River Catchment.

This highly developed section of the catchment is an unlikely location for a frog habitat. As it turns out, the Cox's Creek Reserve and an old brick pit have created ideal conditions for this industrious frog. The Bell Frog sanctuary was open to the public during Wurridjal Festival.

See below for a great video on the development and management of the Greenacre site:

<https://www.facebook.com/reel/1204143107725510>

https://www.instagram.com/cooks_river_alliance/reel/DH65duEIF0E/



Photo: Green and Golden Bell Frog, Greenacre site. Greenacre Open Day (5/4/2025) by Fabian Byers

FATS NEEDS YOUR HELP AT OUR EVENTS

We are always looking for opportunities to talk to the community and promote the message of frog conservation, however we need volunteers. If you're available to assist at one of our upcoming events, please contact Kathy Potter our exhibitions coordinator: kathy@the-pottery.org. Upcoming events on page 7.

2025 SYDNEY ROYAL EASTER SHOW



Above: Peter and Matthew Vickery, Below: Arthur and Karen White, and Peter and Matthew Vickery, by Michelle Toms

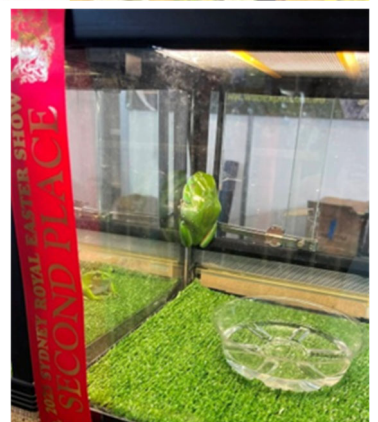


Below: Litoria chloris (left), and Arthur White talks cane toads (right), by Michelle Toms



PLACE WINNER!

Great couple of days at the Sydney Royal Easter Show 2025. Our green tree frog, *Litoria caerulea* (left) rescued from the Frog and Tadpole Study Group, took out second place. Anne-Marie and Andrew



HUGE THANK YOU to those who helped out with the Easter Show!

Arthur & Karen White, Peter & Matthew Vickery, Punia Jeffery, Michelle Toms, & David Potter.

ILLAWARRA REPTILE EXPO



Above: Harriet Potter, Below: David and Harriet Potter, by Michelle Toms



UPCOMING EVENTS

- **Mon 16 & Tue 17 June** Symposium for Australasian Turtles
- **Sat 9 August** Science week Australian Museum
- **Mon 11 to Fri 15 August** Science week at Australian Museum
- **Sunday 10 August** Penrith Reptile Expo and Family Fun Day
- **Sunday 10 August** Science in the Scrub
- **Sunday 17 August** Science in the Swamp
- **Sunday 14 September** Illawarra Reptile Expo

THANK YOU ALEX BAMFORTH FOR YOUR GENEROUS \$500 DONATION TO FATS



Photo: Alex Bamforth, retired employee of BHRC and Owner and Founder at Native Bush Solutions

Bush Habitat Restoration Co-operative Limited (BHRC) is a non-distributive co-operative founded in October 2001 by John Diamond (19 September 1947 – 31 December 2019) and Georgina San Roque (now retired.) They are committed to providing a range of high quality specialist services to clients through thoughtful and cost-effective ecological restoration/bush regeneration work that is focused on the needs of the site, particularly in protecting and restoring wildlife habitat.

BHRC work mainly in ecological restoration, within the area of Greater Sydney and the Illawarra region. Their members are passionate about the natural environment, hence many participate in volunteering work with programs run by government, non-government and not-for-profit organisations.

As part of their commitment to ecological restoration and sustainability they make yearly donations to support highly trusted organisations such as Birdlife Australia, Bush Heritage Australia, Frog and Tadpole Study Group NSW and Marine Conservation Australia.

<https://www.bushhabitatrestoration.org.au/>

Symposium for Australasian Turtles



Coffs Harbour NSW **2025**

ABOUT

A symposium for research on Australasian Turtles in Coffs Harbour on 16-17 June. This symposium is targeted towards scientists, Traditional Owners, community groups, citizen scientists, NGOs, and government

Hawkesbury Herpetological Society Incorporated's 16th Annual

PENRITH REPTILE EXPO & Family Fun Day

Save the Date

Sunday 10th of August 2025

ILLAWARRA REPTILE SOCIETY INC.

REPTILE EXPO

ATTRactions

- ← RETAIL & REPTILE MARKETPLACE
- ← REPTILE SHOW
- ← FOOD & DRINKS
- ← ATM ONSITE

GOLD SPONSORS

- Symbio wildlife park**
- chameleon**

14th SEPTEMBER Sunday 2025

10AM-3PM

ILLAWARRA SPORTS STADIUM

HOOKA CREEK RD, BERKELEY

POND CREATION SUPPORTS BREEDING FOR ENDANGERED LITTLEJOHN'S TREE FROG



Photo: Adult Littlejohn's tree frog found during surveys, by Klop-Toker, University of Newcastle.

In 2022, the University of Newcastle's Conservation Science Research Group (CSRG) received government funding to carry out conservation actions for the endangered Littlejohn's tree frog (*Litoria littlejohni*) aka the northern heath frog. For this project, CSRG partnered with the Department of Climate Change, Energy, Environment and Water; New South Wales (NSW) National Parks; and Forestry Corporation of NSW to create a series of ponds in the Watagan Mountains, Australia, aimed at boosting the size of this small inbreed population.



Photo: Student team sampling newly created ponds for *L. littlejohni* tadpoles. From Left, Clement Appadoo, Millicent Wade, Lily McGough, by Kaya Klop-Toker, Uni of Newcastle.

During her PhD, CSRG student, Nadine Nolan, learnt that the Watagans' population was experiencing genetic drift, which was splitting the population into two even smaller sub-populations with increased rates of inbreeding. In 2024, CSRG worked with the Forestry Corporation of NSW to create 35 more ponds to bridge the gap between the two sub-populations and reduce inbreeding.

In March 2025, the CSRG team found Littlejohn's tree frog tadpoles in eight of these newly created ponds – including in ponds that are >1.2 km from the nearest known historic breeding pond. This result demonstrates that Littlejohn's tree frogs are using these new ponds for breeding and to disperse across the landscape. Future genetic testing by the CSRG team will determine where frogs are moving from, and if there has been mixing between the two sub-populations.

Littlejohn's tree frogs were uplisted to endangered in 2022 after they were split from a closely related species, *Litoria watsoni*, now called Watson's tree frog or the southern heath frog. This split left Littlejohn's tree frog with only five known populations across three bio-geographic regions in state of NSW. The devastating Black Summer fires of 2019/20, which ripped across a third of Littlejohn tree frog's range, highlighted how vulnerable this species is to such stochastic events. Furthermore, studies by the CSRG showed that each population is small, isolated, and experiencing high levels of inbreeding. Creating additional pond habitats that can boost rates of reproduction for this species, is one of several integrated strategies the CSRG are using to try and secure this species in the wild.

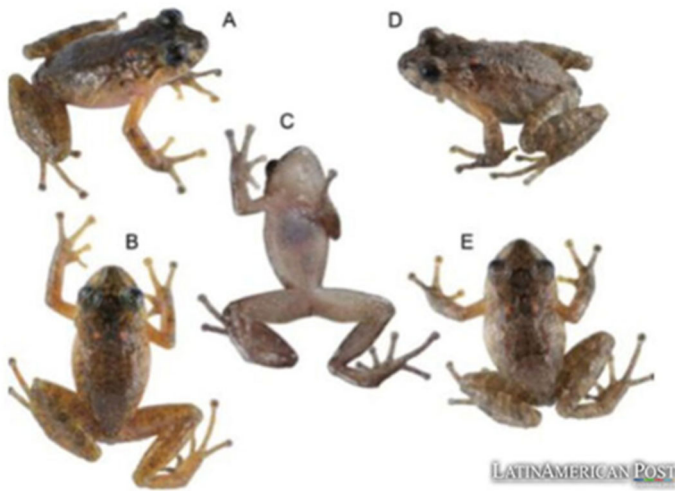
The CSRG are fortunate to have a multi-disciplinary team of scientists and students working on many different angles to improve northern heath frog conservation efforts. Some of the integrated research projects include: studying the species' population genetics; trying to understand and mitigate the impacts of mining; captive breeding and optimising husbandry; IVF and cryopreservation; understanding the relationships between chytrid and environmental variables; and studying the physiological health, stress, hormones, and microbiome of northern heath frogs to learn how these variables may be affected by captivity and chytrid treatment. By combining a range of field and lab-based projects, we hope to uncover conservation strategies that work for northern heath frogs but can be applied to other threatened amphibians.

To keep up to date with the latest findings and progress of this work, please follow the CSRG Facebook page Conservation Science @ UoN or on the website www.csrg.site.

** Forestry Corporation's completion of this part of the project was part of an enforceable undertaking with the Environmental Protection Agency after one of its contractors harvested 17 trees from Riparian Exclusion Zones in the Coopernook State Forest in December 2021.*

https://www.amphibians.org/news/pond-creation-supports-breeding-for-endangered-littlejohns-tree-frogs/?fbclid=IwY2xjawJ3liNleHRuA2FibQlXMQABHjak3UE6JnWtT_n9sWrd8tBRpjy6FBv00g9r-eOk0RFFXtJ2Qaw1aoHqpf_I_aem_rZXW9PM8sReLMY4sPdY0mQ

ONE HUNDRED YEARS OF SOLITUDE: REDISCOVERING ECUADOR'S LOST FROG



Photos: A. Dorso-lateral view; B. Dorsal view; C. Central view; SVL = 30.0 mm. Female MUTPL 1613; D. Dorso-lateral view; E. Dorsal View; SVL = 20.1 mm, by Jaime Culebras, Juan Sánchez.

Hidden in Ecuador's Andean forests for over a century, the Molleturo robber frog has been rediscovered, offering new hope for the conservation of rare species. This thrilling find highlights the importance of preserving Ecuador's unique montane habitats.

In the high-altitude forests of Ecuador's Andes, where the dense foliage of montane forests conceals countless secrets, a small creature with striking orange eyes has eluded the gaze of scientists for over a century. The Molleturo robber frog, *Pristimantis ruidus*, once thought to be extinct, has been rediscovered, breathing new life into the ongoing efforts to preserve Ecuador's biodiversity. This remarkable find underscores the vital importance of conserving the country's montane forests, which continue to harbor rare and enigmatic species.

The story of the Molleturo robber frog begins in 1922, when British-American naturalist George Henry Hamilton Tate embarked on an expedition to the Pacific slopes of the Ecuadorian Andes. Working on behalf of the American Museum of Natural History, Tate sought to explore the region's rich biodiversity and document its unique fauna. During this journey, nearly 8,000 feet above sea level, he encountered a previously unknown species of frog, which he named *Pristimantis ruidus*. Tate collected 16 specimens of the frog, marking the first—and for many years, the only—time it would be recorded in scientific literature.

Despite this initial discovery, the frog seemingly vanished from scientific observation, leading researchers to wonder if it had succumbed to the pressures that have driven many species to extinction. For decades, the Molleturo robber frog existed only in the pages of old journals and the minds of a few determined herpetologists who refused to believe that it had truly disappeared.

In 2022, a research team embarked on a journey to the Quitahuaycu Conservation Reserve, a remote area nestled in the southern reaches of Ecuador's Andes mountains. The reserve, which is one of the last remnants of West Andean Montane Forest in the region, had long been considered a potential refuge for undiscovered or presumed extinct species. Guided by the possibility that the Molleturo robber frog might still be out there, the team conducted an exhaustive search of the forest's understory, leaving no stone—or shrub—untuned.

Their persistence paid off. As night fell, the researchers spotted two frogs with the distinctive warty skin and orange eyes described by Tate a century earlier. These frogs, perched on fallen trees and low shrubs near a stream, were unmistakably *Pristimantis ruidus*. For the first time, the frog was photographed in its natural habitat, providing crucial documentation of its existence and appearance.

The frogs' coloration, an "olive clay" hue with "verona brown blotches" on their backs, and "olive sulfur yellow" snouts with "lime green" eyelids, matched Tate's descriptions. However, the rediscovery also revealed new details, particularly about the frog's behaviour. While previous accounts suggested that the frog was typically found under rocks, the new observations indicated that it might be more active on shrubs and vegetation during the night, retreating to the safety of rocks and logs during the day.

The Molleturo robber frog is a small, moderately sized amphibian whose rough, warty skin gives it a unique texture and appearance. Its name, *Pristimantis* guides, is derived from Latin. "Guides" means rough, a nod to the frog's distinctive skin. Molleturo, added following its rediscovery, refers to the parish in southern Ecuador where the frog was found.

The species' striking appearance is characterised by light chrome orange eyes, which contrast vividly with its earthy body tones. These features not only make the frog a fascinating subject for scientific study but also emphasize the importance of visual markers in species identification—a critical factor in the conservation of cryptic species like the Molleturo robber frog.

The rediscovery of the Molleturo robber frog is not just a triumph for herpetologists; it is a beacon of hope for conservationists working to protect Ecuador's fragile ecosystems. The frog's reappearance after a century of obscurity demonstrates that there are still pockets of pristine habitat within the Andes that can support rare and threatened species.

One of the key strategies for conservation in Ecuador is the establishment of more protected areas like the Quitahuaycu Conservation Reserve. For scientific research and ecotourism, both of which can contribute to the long-term sustainability of conservation efforts.

<https://latinamericanpost.com/science-technology/one-hundred-years-of-solitude-rediscovering-ecuadors-lost-frog/> 30/8/2024 extracts

ENDANGERED FROGLET CENTRAL TO KING VALLEY FARMERS' FIGHT AGAINST SOLAR FARM



Photo: A population of Sloane's froglets lives at the site of proposed solar farm, by Damian Michael

Farmers in the King Valley say a proposed solar farm will endanger a local habitat of the Sloane's froglet. The proposed Meadow Creek Solar Farm, 27 kilometres east of Wangaratta, would span 566 hectares and generate 330 megawatts of power. The group will aim to convince the Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water (DCCEEW) that the solar farm is likely to have, a "significant impact" on the Sloane's froglet. The project has been referred to the federal environment minister for assessment. **24/09/2024 extracts.**

Read more: <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2024-09-24/meadow-creek-solar-farm-charles-sturt-king-valley-farmer-fight/104366698>

QLD NEW SPECIES - LISTEN FOR CALLS

The FrogID app has been updated to reflect newly described frog species, thanks to research led by James Cook University, Newcastle University, the South Australian Museum and Australian Museum Research Associates.

Southern Whirring Tree Frog *Litoria revelata* This species now excludes disjunct populations in the Eungella Plateau and Atherton Tablelands of North Queensland. **Eungella Whirring Tree Frog *Litoria eungellensis*** Unique to the Eungella Plateau, mid-eastern Queensland, inhabiting a mere 20 km² in the cool mountain forests above 900 metres elevation. This frog hasn't been recorded on the FrogID database yet, so we're calling on all frog enthusiasts to keep the FrogID app handy and listen out for its call to record. **Atherton Tablelands Whirring Tree Frog *Litoria corbeni*** Found only on the Atherton Tablelands, northern Queensland. Originally named a species in 1985, this research has resurrected it as a distinct species.

With this addition, the FrogID species tally is now 228 and we've revalidated FrogID records to reflect this new classification. The Eungella Whirring Tree Frog and the Atherton Tablelands Whirring Tree Frogs raise conservation concerns. They occur in isolated, cool rainforest mountaintops, threatened by warming and drying conditions due to climate change, leaving them with nowhere else to go.

However, your submissions can make a difference. By recording frog calls with FrogID, we're better understanding the true diversity of frog species in Australia, where they occur and how they're faring, informing their conservation status and needs. **11/2/25 extracts.** **Read more:** [Frog ID Facebook page](#)

OLDEST ANCESTOR OF AUSTRALIAN TREE FROGS - LINKS TO SOUTH AMERICA

Newly discovered evidence of Australia's earliest species of tree frog challenges what we know about when Australian and South American frogs parted ways on the evolutionary tree.

Previously, scientists believed Australian and South American tree frogs separated from each other about 33 million years ago. But in a study published today in [Journal of Vertebrate Palaeontology](#), palaeontologists from UNSW Sydney say the new species, *Litoria tylerantiqua*, is now at about 55 million years old, the earliest known member of the pelodyadid family of Australian tree frogs.

The study is based on fossils unearthed from Murgon south-eastern Queensland. *Litoria tylerantiqua*, is named in honour of the late Michael Tyler, a renowned Australian herpetologist globally celebrated for his research on frogs and toads. "It is only fitting to name Australia's earliest tree frog in honour of a man who was a giant in Australian frog research and in particular the first to explore the fossil record for Australian frogs," says study lead author Dr Roy Farman, an adjunct associate lecturer with UNSW School of Biological, Earth & and Environmental Sciences. **15/05/2025 extracts.** **Read more:** <https://www.unsw.edu.au/newsroom/news/2025/05/australias-oldest-prehistoric-tree-frog>



Image: Artist's reconstruction *Litoria tylerantiqua* (right) *Platyplectrum casca* (left) from Murgon, QLD Samantha Yabsley, www.instagram.com/s.h.y_art

\$12M PLAN TO STOP CANE TOADS IN PILBARA

A \$12 million plan to upgrade cattle station water infrastructure is being pushed as a chance to halt Australia's cane toad invasion entering the Pilbara. A "waterless barrier" in a narrow 40-by-400-km strip of land between the Indian Ocean and Great Sandy Desert could prevent nine animals joining the threatened species list. **17/7/24 extracts.** **Read more:** <https://www.abc.net.au/news/science/2024-07-17/cane-toads-pilbara-invasive-species-waterless-barrier/103861310>

ANNOUNCEMENTS



2025 FROG-O-GRAPHIC COMPETITION

The FATS Frog-O-Graphic photo competition is now open!

There are 4 categories:

- Best Frog Image
- Best Pet Frog Image
- Most Interesting Image
- People's Choice.

Please submit your entries to photos@fats.org.au. In your submission please state:

- your name,
- frog species (by scientific name if known) and location - in the file name preferably,
- whether the image is a pet frog,
- your contact phone number, and
- confirmation that you are a financial member.

Entries close 31 August 2025. Winners are decided by a panel of judges. The People's Choice category is voted for by everyone present at the October public meeting.

Maximum of 6 entries per person. Maximum image attachment size 6 MB each. Entries must be original and your own work. Only current financial members are eligible to enter. Entries may appear in FrogCall, FATS Facebook group, website & other publications.

CAN YOU HELP?

Researchers at the Australian Museum are evaluating Cane Toad calls, to learn how they have been able to spread so successfully.

We're calling on citizen scientists - like you - to help us by recording the calls of Cane Toads on the FrogID app if you're in Australia, and on iNaturalist if you're elsewhere in the world.

Let's work together to collect as much data as possible to understand how Cane Toad calls vary across regions in Australia and beyond. Learn more about the study on the Australia Museum blog: <https://australian.museum/blog/amri-news/unravelling-the-secrets-of-cane-toad-calls/>

FATS MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS ARE DUE NOW

Student: \$20 Single: \$30 Family: \$40

As a member you receive FrogCall newsletters, access to field trips, meetings, frog surveys, other conservation and community events, and entry to the Frog-O-Graphic photo competition.

If you aren't a member but would like to join, it's easy to sign up! Please complete the membership form on the website <https://www.fats.org.au/membership-form>

If you are an existing member, please renew your membership before 30 June either via the website, bank transfer (details below), or at the next meeting.

Our account details have changed!

Please delete the old details and use the details below or we won't receive your payment

Account Name: Frog & Tadpole Study Group of NSW

BSB: 082 001 Account No: 313 033 719

Unfortunately our bank has stopped accepting cheques. If this is your preferred method of payment please reach out to us at fatsgroupnsw@fats.org.au

Thank you for your ongoing support!

FATS AGM NOTICE FRIDAY 1/8/2025

The FATS Annual General Meeting (AGM) will commence at 7pm on Friday 1 August 2025.

FATS meets at the Education Centre, Bicentennial Park Pathway, Sydney Olympic Park, Homebush Bay, NSW. Please check the FATS website and August 2025 FrogCall #198 newsletter for any changes to the AGM.

If you would like to ask any questions about joining the FATS committee, would like further information, or would like to submit any items please contact us at fatsgroupnsw@fats.org.au at least two weeks before the meeting.

We appreciate fresh ideas and new members on our committee. No experience required. The committee meets 6 times a year. Those far away can attend via video or audio link. No task commitments or time expected of committee members, other than what you are able to spare.

FIELD TRIPS NOTES

There are no upcoming field trips during Winter. We will get back out in the field when Spring comes around. There's always a need for helpers at the Greenacre Green and Golden Bell Frog conservation site so if you'd like to get outdoors and lend a hand reach out to Arthur White at arfawhite@gmail.com. You may even see a bell frog or two!

WHO ARE WE AND WHAT WE DO

The Frog and Tadpole Study Group of New South Wales is a non-for-profit society run by volunteers, dedicated to community awareness, advocacy and the conservation of frogs. We are actively involved in monitoring frog populations, conducting field trips, exhibiting at community events, and providing talks at local community groups. We have regular public meetings and offer student research grants, produce Frog-Call newsletters and FrogFacts information sheets.

MEMBERSHIPS: Encourage your friends to become a member or donate. Donations help with the costs of frog rescue and care, running the FrogWatch Helpline, student research grants, and advocacy. Memberships available from \$20 for students. Please visit our website if you'd like to get involved <https://www.fats.org.au/membership-form>

EVENTS: If you'd like to have a speaker attend an event, exhibition, or community group (eg garden club, probus group) please contact Kathy Potter our Exhibitions coordinator. If you are a member and would like to assist with talks and events please also reach out to Kathy.

MEETINGS: Our public meetings are held on the first Friday of every even month (February, April, June, August, October and December). If the meeting falls on a public holiday (eg Good Friday), the meeting date will move. Please check our website for notices. The meetings are informative, informal, topical, practical and free for everyone to attend. Visitors are welcome.

FACEBOOK: Our Facebook page has over 5,400 members worldwide. Posts vary from frog identification, care, husbandry, and health enquiries, to photos and posts about pets, gardens, wild frogs, frog ponds, research, new discoveries, jokes, cartoons, events, and habitats from all over the world. The page includes dozens of information files, keep scrolling to see them all. You are welcome to join us at: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/FATSNSW/>

FROGWATCH HELPLINE: We operate a frog rescue helpline for lost and injured frogs in the greater Sydney area. If you need advice regarding a frog please contact the Frogwatch Helpline on 0419 249 728. Please be patient as we are all volunteers, we will respond as soon as we can.

FROG ADOPTION: Rescue frogs are occasionally available for adoption. Please contact us if you wish to adopt a frog. A donation of \$50 is appreciated to cover care and feeding costs. We must sight your current NSW NPWS amphibian licence. A pet frog licence can be obtained from the NSW Department of Planning, Industry and Environment <https://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/licences-and-permits/wildlife-licences/native-animals-as-pets/frog-keeper-licences>.

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Thank you to the FATS committee, general members, FrogCall supporters, talented meeting speakers, Frog-O-Graphic competition entrants, event participants and organisers. Special thanks to those who contributed FrogCall articles, photos and media. New content for our newsletter is always welcome.

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