

FROGWATCH 2024



ACT and Region FrogWatch
Flynn Community Hub, 3/21 Bingle Street, Flynn
Phone: (02) 6278 3309
Email: frogwatch@ginninderralandcare.org.au
Web: www.ginninderralandcare.org.au

Mid-winter froggy greetings and happy reading! If you would like a frog pond installed in your garden for free, then make sure you check out the last page!

Launch party: Frogs in your pocket

The latest FrogWatch publication *Frogs in your pocket* has just hopped off the press.

This pocket guide will help you identify 11 common ACT frogs when you are out and about, and when monitoring FrogWatch sites for the annual FrogCensus.



"How gorgeous and informative is *Frogs in your pocket*? Congratulations for producing this excellent and appealing guide." (Rosemary Blemings).

The pocket guide will be officially launched by Rebecca Vassarotti, ACT Minister for the Environment and Shane Rattenbury, ACT Minister for Water, Energy and Emissions Reduction.

Thursday 15th August, 3:00pm @ the Banksia Street Wetland, O'Connor. Parking along the street but please not on the green strip/verge.

Meet us for coffee & almost unlimited freddos, and get your own copy of *Frogs in your pocket*.

Contact frogwatch@ginninderralandcare.org.au for more information.



Winter frog walk & talks

Sip on hot chocolate and count the stars while listening to frog serenades and learn ribbet-ing facts about our amphibian friends.

August is a great time to start wrapping your ears around the calls of our two winter-breeding local frogs: the *common eastern froglet* and the *whistling tree frog*.

Frog walk and talks run from 18:00 to 19:30ish. Wear sturdy shoes and lots of warm clothes, bring your own cup and a torch if you can.

When and where?

Tuesday, 20.08., Fassifern Pond, Dunlop

Park along Hugh McKay Crescent or at the end of Ginninderra Drive and take a short stroll to the pond. There is no parking at the pond.

<https://events.humanitix.com/frog-walk-and-talk-belconnen>

Wednesday, 28.08. Shepherds Lookout Parking

<https://events.humanitix.com/frog-walk-and-talk-lookout-dam>

Park at <https://shorturl.at/MXOve>

August is platypus months

To keep busy while waiting for the October FrogCensus why not participate in the big Platypus count?

Platypus Month has been organised by the Upper Murrumbidgee Waterwatch for over 10 years. The data collected by volunteer citizen scientists has helped to learn more about these elusive creatures in and around our city as well as their population trends, distribution and habitat preferences.



Dawn and Dusk Platypus Group Surveys

This year, surveys can be booked on Humanitix. Use the link below to register for as many surveys as you'd like at the four locations in the Canberra region and two near Cooma.

Surveys occur at both dawn and dusk so there is something for early birds and night owls alike.

<https://events.humanitix.com/upper-murrumbidgee-waterwatch-platypus-month-2024>

Guided Platypus Walk

In addition to the surveys four guided platypus walks are on offer this year: 3rd and 25th of August on the Queanbeyan River and 11th and 17th on the Lower Molonglo River at Namarag near Coppins Crossing. Use this link to book your spot:

<https://events.humanitix.com/upper-murrumbidgee-waterwatch-platypus-month-2024-platypus-walks>

Platypus and Rakali Sightings portal

If you are unable to participate in Platypus month this year, you can record your sightings year round on the Waterwatch [Platy and Ratty Portal](#). Waterwatch encourages everyone to submit platypus (and Rakali) sightings at any time of the year.

Upcoming 2024 FrogCensus

Eavesdropping on frogs at night is heaps of fun and a great way to learn more about our local amphibians.

Trained volunteers adopt a survey site and undertake three site visits under the cloak of night during October to record frog calls.

No previous knowledge required, just come to one of our training sessions, rug up, bring your favourite torch and wear sturdy shoes. Booking essential!

Training runs from 18:00 to 20:00 and includes some theory, plenty of fun frog facts, and ID practice at a nearby frog habitat. Hot drinks and nibbles provided.

When?

Tuesday 24.09.2024 @ the Australian National Botanic Gardens

<https://events.humanitix.com/2024-frogcensus-training-anbg>

Wednesday 25th September 2024 @ Jerrabomberra Wetlands Offices, Dairy Road

<https://events.humanitix.com/frogwatch-census-training-jerrabomberra-wetland>

Green and Golden frog update

You might have noticed strange looking additions to the Kambah, Mawson, David Street, and Banksia Street wetlands. Ewen Lawler from the University of Canberra, supported by Landcare and FrogWatch volunteers, has done an amazing job setting up what seems to



be small frog beauty farms. Not only will they give resident frogs a choice of using a sauna, they can also opt for a swim or float in a salty spa, and all in the name of science. This pilot project is testing how effective these treatments are in helping our local frogs to fight off the deadly chytrid fungus over winter. If you want to know how it works, please check out the article listed below.

Photo taken at Banksia Street wetland by Kevin Cox

Lots of cool frog stuff in the press

When frogs get the blues

ABC news covered this amazing story: [Scientists make chance discovery of rare blue skin mutation in Kimberley magnificent tree frog](#)

Just shows what can happen when you are in the right spot at the right time...



Frog Saunas

[This frog sauna story from the Conversations has really caught people's interest and it is an awesome and informative read.](#)



Installing frog saunas to help endangered species cope with the devastating chytrid fungus is exactly what scientists from the University of Canberra, are currently testing at a number of pilot study sites across town (see previous page for update). The collected data will be paramount to pave the way for a successful reintroduction of the Green and Golden Bell frogs in coming years. This species is highly susceptible to the Chytrid fungus and has vanished from the ACT many years ago.

If you are interested to learn more about these frog saunas or how to build one – we got your covered!

Frog sauna talk and workshop

Anthony Waddle's passion for creative solutions to big issues definitely shines through his invention of the frog sauna.

We consider ourselves super lucky that Lyn Smith from SeeChange Gungahlin successfully enticed Anthony to come to Canberra in September and give a presentation followed by a workshop.

This is an amazing opportunity to learn first-hand about the theory behind the amphibian hot-tub invention, how it actually works and how easy (and cheap) it is to install one in your backyard for the winter months.

When? Saturday 14.09.2024, 10:00 - 12:00

Where? Wildbark visitor centre, Rosenberg St, Throsby. Come early to enjoy a treat at the café.

How? Booking essential and includes a small fee to cover venue hire. Go to <https://humanitix.com/au> and search for 'frog sauna'.

More frog habitat fun

FrogWatch will be running several frog-friendly habitat sessions this spring, supported through the ACT Government Environment Grant scheme.

In Canberra's increasingly urbanised landscape it is important that we open our hearts and our backyards to local flora and fauna.

Together we can build a network of microhabitats that will re-establish lost and strengthen existing connectivity corridors between larger habitats. This will assist dispersal, seasonal migration for breeding, foraging or overwintering and therefore strengthen our local biodiversity.

Making your backyard frog-friendly is easy. From a froggy corner to a frog pond for breeding, there are many options to choose from depending on your garden, the natural landscape and your budget.

Frog-friendly garden versus frog pond Want to be frog-friendly without maintaining a pond?

No worries, we are offering frog-friendly garden sessions to talk about just that over a nice cuppa and some treats.

Keen to add a pond into your garden?

Our hands-on workshops will be just for you.

During each session, we will – as a team – install a frog pond in an urban backyard. This shall be lots of fun and will give every attendee the confidence to set up their own little frog paradise.

Become a frog pond workshop HOST

FrogWatch needs 4-6 urban backyards across town, ready for a little makeover in the name of frogs. Please get in touch if you would like to host a frog pond workshop at your place (FrogWatch will provide all material and catering), get the help of fellow nature lovers and be rewarded with a beautiful frog pond at your doorstep. Looking forward to hearing from you!

Fantastic nature adventure coming up

Black Mountain Summit Ramble Saturday

31 August 2024, 9:30 to approx. 12:00

Join Australian National Botanic Gardens Guides and Michael Doherty, a local plant ecologist and member of Friends of Black Mountain to explore fascinating **winter flowering plants** in the gardens and on Black mountain. Very old trees (with 'elephants' feet'), and plant adaptations to fire will also be investigated.

The Summit Walk has steep sections, so it is suitable for fit walkers (including children over the age of 12).

Meet at the clock near the café bridge, Australian National Botanic Gardens

Bring Friends, water & and snacks

Wear sturdy shoes, a hat, sun cream and appropriate **winter clothes** if it is cold.

Bookings essential Places are limited

<https://www.trybooking.com/CUCSZ>

The power of citizen science



The results of a great ACT citizen science project about Canberra's city-dweller turtles, have just been published and you can read it for free!

This study is based on surveys by volunteers - *your work made this possible!* Thank you so very much!

A collaboration between the Turtle whisperer Bruno Ferronato and FrogWatch compared Eastern Long-necked Turtle populations at ponds in the Inner North (low habitat connectivity) and in West Belconnen (high habitat connectivity).

The study (read here <https://rdcu.be/dPoGN>) found that population sizes in the West Belconnen ponds increased sharply as the size of ponds increased - but in the Inner North ponds this was much less pronounced. This may be due to the fact that while turtles can thrive in urbanised areas, they experience much higher risks and barriers related to moving between ponds that are poorly connected. As a result turtles cannot move to larger ponds with more abundant food and habitat and have to compete over limited resources at their resident pond – a possible threat to their long-term survival.

Fun fact: Despite being half the size, Jaramlee Pond is estimated to have twice as many turtles as the Lyneham wetlands!

Unbelievable but true: During the surveys a turtle that had been captured and marked 14 years prior and 15 kms upstream was re-captured in Belconnen – and had barely grown a few millimetres!

Canberra Nature Mapr



NatureMapr

Are you using the CNM to identify local flora and fauna, including frogs? Next time you use it you can show your appreciation for the amazing community support they have provided by using the DONATE button (top right on the Nature Mapr page), alternatively email the team (About→contact) to find a way that suits you.

This is it for today! Please keep in touch. Hope to catch up with you during one of our upcoming events. Looking forward to it



The ACT and Region Frogwatch Program is coordinated by the Ginninderra Catchment Group with the financial assistance of the ACT Government. Parts of the program are also supported by the **ACT Herpetological Association (ACTHA)** and **Icon Water**.