

Frogs of the Macedon Ranges

Transcript

My name is William Terry and I'm the environmental programs and engagement officer at Macedon Ranges Shire Council. I also have a passion for all things fauna. These podcasts are a way to engage with residents on environmental topics. This is the first what we hope will be a short series if you enjoy this podcast with welcome your feedback. Any suggestions on topics. Did you know that there is as many as 15 different frog species the called the Macedon Ranges home. There are also three of these that are threatened with extinction. In this podcast we're going to learn about five different frog species.

Could you hear the Eastern Banjo Frog in that recording? They have this really distinct call. That sounds like a plucking of an instrument, plucking of a banjo, which is exactly where this species gets it's name. This is a large frog about 8.5 cm long. It has somewhat warty skin. Which can sometimes make it mistakenly identified as a cane toad. It's also a burrowing frog and they're often found in the garden off and when someone is digging or doing some gardening lifting some soil.

The Eastern Banjo Frog eats a variety of insects, worms and spiders so can be really helpful addition for your garden. If you would like to see in Eastern Banjo Frog up close, a great time to find them is at night, straight after rain. You'll find them hopping around on the ground. Their eye shine can sometimes be picked up in the torchlight.

Next, let's hear the Common Eastern Froglet.

This next Little frog you just heard just then is the Common Eastern froglet. It is a very small little frog and it's commonly around farm dams and slow-moving water. And they can be sort of described as something a bit like a cricket or like a ratchet going back and forward. This frog has the ability to breed all year round when sort of conditions are favourable. This little frog eats a range of insects including mosquitoes, caterpillars and flies.

Next, we will hear the Spotted Marsh Frog.

You might have heard in that recording amongst other frog that clicking sound like click, click. This sound is the call of the Spotted Marsh Frog. And the Spotted Marsh Frog is grey or brown coloured frog and has this amazing looking green camo patches that cover it's back and legs. They often also have a light coloured striped that runs the back of the head all the way down it's back. This is a reasonably widespread species and their eggs are easily seen as they suspend them in the floating foam amongst the reeds in farm dams.

Up next is the Southern Brown Tree Frog.

This frog that you just heard is the Southern Brown Tree Frog. He really likes to call immediately following rain and despite what the name suggests, they actually come in a variety of different colours, including different shades of brown, cream and in our area we even get some green coloured Brown Tree Frogs. And like other tree frogs, the southern Brown tree frog has sticky toes, and he's able to climb smooth surfaces and to get away from predators on the ground. Females lay up to 600 eggs, usually in late winter, but this species can breed all year, similar to the Common Eastern Froglet.

Next up, we're going to hear from the Growling Grass Frog.

The frog we just listened to there was the Growling Grass Frog. Another species that was once widespread in the region, but it has declined significantly. So much so, that it is a nationally threatened

species. It's a large green frog and particularly likes to live in dams or slow moving water. The Growling Grass Frog is a sit and wait predator. It feeds on a variety of insects and even small lizards, fish, tadpoles and even other frogs.

Unfortunately, Growling Grass Frogs are threatened by a number of impacts. Things like habitat loss and loss of wetlands, pollution to the waterways, cats, foxes, herbicides, introduced fish such as the trout and redbfin, which will predate on frogs and the chytrid fungus.

Have a listen to the following chorus of frogs and see if you can hear each of the five frogs that we've talked about today.

Thank you very much for listening to this podcast if you've enjoyed what you heard today. Let us know via an email at environment@mrsc.vic.gov.au