



# Create a Frog-friendly habitat in your Backyard

Frogs play an important role in maintaining healthy ecosystems. By building a frog habitat in your backyard, you can help protect them while enjoying their calls and pest-control benefits. Follow these steps to create a safe and welcoming habitat for them.



## 1. Location matters

- Select a shaded area with dappled sunlight to prevent water from overheating.

## 2. Build a frog pond

- Size and Depth: Aim for a pond at least 50cm deep with shallow edges for easy access.
- Shape: Irregular, natural shapes mimic natural ponds and attract frogs.
- Lining: Use a good quality pond liner or a pre-made pond shell.
- Water Quality: Fill with rainwater or dechlorinated tap water. Avoid chemicals! Regularly top up the pond with rainwater.

## 3. Add frog-friendly features

- Native Plants: Plant rushes, Tussock sedges, and grasses, around the pond for shade and shelter.
- Rocks and Logs: Provide hiding spots with rocks and logs placed in and around the water.
- Floating Plants: Include water lilies or Azolla for shade and oxygenation.

## 4. Frog safety

- Avoid pesticides and chemicals. Frogs are sensitive to toxins!
- Keep cats and dogs away.

## 5. Attract frogs naturally

- Don't introduce frogs; let them come naturally. Introducing frogs from elsewhere can spread diseases.
- Provide food sources by planting a garden to attract insects like moths and flies.

## 6. Monitor and Enjoy

- Observe respectfully: Watch frogs from a distance to avoid stressing them.
- Keep observing: Note which species visit your backyard.



Figure 1: Eastern Banjo Frog (*Limnodynastes dumerilii*)

iNaturalist is a citizen science platform that helps users record and share observations of biodiversity. It allows you to contribute to valuable scientific data while learning more about local species. Simply take a photo of flora, or wildlife in your backyard, upload it to the app, and the community will help identify it. Using iNaturalist is an excellent way to track your backyard visitors and support conservation efforts.



# Frogs of the Macedon Ranges

Frogs are essential for the health of our local ecosystems. Frogs consume large numbers of invertebrates and are an important food source for many wetland birds and reptiles.

## **Growling Grass Frog (*Litoria raniformis*)**

Status: Endangered Size: 100mm

Call: Grrruh-uh-uh-urk. Grrruh-uh-uh-urk. Grrruuurk

A large frog that varies in colour from bright lime green to dark moss green. This species is in serious population decline in Victoria. Despite being from the tree frog family, it dwells on the ground and often preys upon smaller frogs. Its large body size, bright green colour and warty back make it easy to identify.



## **Peron's Tree Frog (*Litoria peroni*)**

Status: Not-threatened Size: 65mm

Call: Chattering, descending cackle.

Grah-a-a-a-ah-ah-ah-ah-aah-aah-aah-aaaah-aaaah

The Peron's Tree Frog has the ability to change its colour from grey and browns to an almost white. Its armpits, groin and thighs are coloured a yellow and black marbled pattern. This species is easily identified by its cross shaped pupils. This frog is very quick and a fast climber.

## **Southern Brown Tree Frog (*Litoria ewingi*)**

Status: Not-threatened Size: 45mm

Call: Low-pitched, gravelly repeated whistling.

Cree-cree-cree-cree-cree-cree-cree

One of the more common frog species, the Southern Brown Tree Frog is an excellent climber and jumper. This small frog is usually either a dark or light shade of brown and sometimes green. There's a black line on its face from the nostril, through the eye to the shoulder. Tree frogs such as the Southern Brown Tree Frog have large sticky toe pads for climbing. They are often seen after rain.



## **Spotted Marsh Frog (*Limnodynastes tasmaniensis*)**

Status: Not-threatened Size: 45mm

Call: Single note click like two stones being hit together.

This frog shelters during the day under loose timber and rocks. It can be found in grassland, bushland and around houses. It's distinctly recognised with its irregular spots and blotches and with its golden eye colour. The Spotted Marsh Frog often has a pale stripe down its back.





**Eastern Banjo Frog** (*Limnodynastes dumerilii*)

Status: Not-threatened      Size: 70mm

Call: Distinctive single-note 'bonk'.

The Eastern Banjo Frog has an oval-shaped gland on the top of its hind legs and white or mottled belly. The colour of this frog varies from light greys to greens, browns or black. Its unique call sounds like a slack string of a banjo. This species buries itself and can often be found while digging in the garden.



**Common Eastern Froglet** (*Crinia signifera*)

Status: Not-threatened      Size: 65mm

Call: Ratchet-like 'crick-crick-crick'

This frogs is the common species in the shire. It often occurs around farm dams and other stagnant ponds. The appearance varies greatly but often consists of a grey or brown back, with darker coloured lines or blotches. They have a very pointy looking head.

**Brown Toadlet** (*Pseudophryne bibronii*)

Status: Endangered      Size: 30mm

Call: Grating 'ark' a bit like two marbled rubbing together

Unlike the other species listed, the Brown Toadlet lacks the ability to jump. Instead, its short arms allow it to climb around in the ground litter of open forests, woodlands and grasslands. They have a dark brown warty back. On the belly of this species is a unique marbling of black and white. Extensive habitat loss and degradation of waterways are said to be contributing to the serious decline of the Brown Toadlet in Victoria.



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