

Twelve species of native frogs have been recorded in the South East of South Australia. While their specific habitat requirements vary, most require quality native vegetation and all need good quality water to breed. In the South East of South Australia, it is estimated that only 6% of the original wetland areas remain and of this, only 10% are in good condition. This makes our remaining wetland areas a very important asset for the frogs of the region.

YOU CAN HELP

The following steps can help improve the habitat that frogs need to live and breed.

Water Quality

Pollution of waterways has been identified as a threat to frogs. In particular, the general use of farming chemicals is considered to threaten some frog species. Frogs are also sensitive to changes in pH and salinity. Some chemicals are residual. If you have to spray, use frog friendly chemicals and do not spray close to wetlands or waterways.

Fence wetlands and managing stock grazing

Uncontrolled stock access can permanently damage wetland areas. Stock cause pugging, vegetation loss and add high levels of nutrient. Fence your wetlands to exclude stock. If grazing is necessary it should be done when the wetland is completely dry.

Restore Wetland Hydrology

As a result of changing land use and drainage for agriculture, many wetlands no longer get the water they require to fill seasonally, or to remain full long enough for frogs to complete their life cycle. Species requiring wet or moist conditions, and with specific habitat requirements will be most impacted. Where possible, keep wetlands connected to their catchment and reinstate their natural water regime.

Encourage riparian vegetation

Many frogs lay their eggs in floating foam nests amongst emergent vegetation not far from the banks of wetlands, in long chains that are wrapped and wound around water plants, or in loose jelly clumps attached to vegetation. By protecting water plants such as reeds and sedges you are providing important breeding habitat for frogs.

Revegetate some of your property

During dry periods, frogs need areas of native vegetation as a refuge until such time as surface water returns. It is of vital importance that we revegetate islands or connective habitat to facilitate safe movements. This can be done in the form of shelterbelts for livestock or fencing off and planting out corners in your paddocks.

Create a corridor or native shelterbelt

Some frogs live in terrestrial habitats such as woodlands and grasslands but they need to move to water to breed. This can often involve moving across roads and open areas making them vulnerable to predation and being squashed by cars. By reconnecting native vegetation with wetland areas, we can help these species to move safely across the landscape.

Leave fallen timber, rock and leaf litter

Decaying timber and leaf litter provides resources for many native animals. Frogs hide and hunt in the leaf litter and use fallen timber and rocks to shelter under.

Predators

Introduced fish like mosquito fish and Redfin are considered a threat to native frogs because they prey on frog eggs and tadpoles. This is a problem for frogs that favor permanent water.

Get involved in conservation initiatives

For more information or to report a frog sighting call Natural Resources South East 08 8735 1177 Visit www.naturalresources.sa.gov.au/southeast Or register at <https://root.ala.org.au/bdrs-core/senrm/home>

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Photographs donated by: Steve Bourne SB, Steve Clarke SC, Bryan Haywood BH, Aaron Payne AP, Ken Walker KW, Steve Walker SW

Cover Photographs: Steve Walker. From top: Litoria raniformis, Litoria ewingii, Limnodynastes tasmaniensis, Neobatrachus pictus, Crinia signifera.

Content: Natural Resources South East

FROGS South East, South Australia

FROGS

South East, South Australia



Southern Bell Frog (Litoria raniformis)

One of the largest frogs in Australia. Also known as the "Growling Grass Frog". Loud barking call and colourful skin patterns. The fingers are not webbed, but the toes are almost fully webbed. Tadpoles are pinkish-grey in colour and the tail has a yellowish tinge. Lays a raft of eggs that later sinks.

Size: Males 55-65 mm; Females 60-104 mm.

Habitat: Large permanent waterbodies with abundant growth of vegetation near the bank.

Mating call: A long, medium pitched, modulated growl, followed by a series of short grunts.



Eastern Banjo Frog (Limnodynastes dumerilli)

Also known as the "Pobblebonk". Burrows underground during dry times. Common and widespread. Coloured grey, olive-green, dark brown to black. A pale stripe runs from under the arm to under the eye. Tadpoles are dark brown with dull gold clusters. Lays eggs in floating foam nests

Size: Males 52-70 mm; Females 52-83 mm.

Habitat: Burrows in loamy soils and emerges to feed and breed after rains.

Mating call: Musical 'bonk'. Often call together.



Striped Marsh Frog (Limnodynastes peronii)

A voracious hunter, this frog will eat almost anything smaller than itself, including other frogs. Light brown to grey frog with brown stripes, often with a pale stripe running down the middle of the back. The iris of the eye is golden at the top and dark brown at the bottom. Lays eggs in floating foam nests.

Size: Males 48-69 mm; Females 46-73 mm.

Habitat: Commonly found in wetlands and swamps. Shelters among reeds and other debris.

Mating call: A single loud 'pok' or 'tock', similar in inflection to a hen's 'cluck'.



Spotted Marsh Frog (Limnodynastes tasmaniensis)

Olive, green or brown spots on a pale background, often with a pinkish, yellow or white stripe running down the middle of the back. Lays eggs in floating foam nests

Size: Males 31-42 mm; Females 32-47 mm.

Habitat: Widespread in marshy country, creek edges and wetlands. Usually the first frog to colonise new dams. In dry periods, shelters in cracks and under rocks.

Mating call: A short, single 'tuk'.



Common Froglet (Crinia signifera)

Very common ground dwelling frog. The colourings and texture of this frog are highly variable. The skin may be plain, striped or spotted, smooth, warty or rigid. Lays eggs in clumps attached to vegetation.

Size: Males 18-25 mm; Females 19-28 mm.

Habitat: Highly adaptable and can be found beneath rocks, vegetation and debris at the edge of creeks, ponds, wetlands and areas of seepage.

Mating call: Rapidly repeated 'crick...crick...crick'. Can be heard all year round.



Brown Tree Frog (Litoria ewingii)

Medium sized frog with a broad head and rounded snout. An agile climber and jumper! Generally pale brown however in the South East they are often green in colour. A dark brown stripe runs from the snout through the eye, fading down the front leg. Lays eggs in clumps attached to vegetation.

Size: Males 22-40 mm; Females 32-46 mm.

Habitat: On the ground, in vegetation, or under rocks near permanent streams or pools.

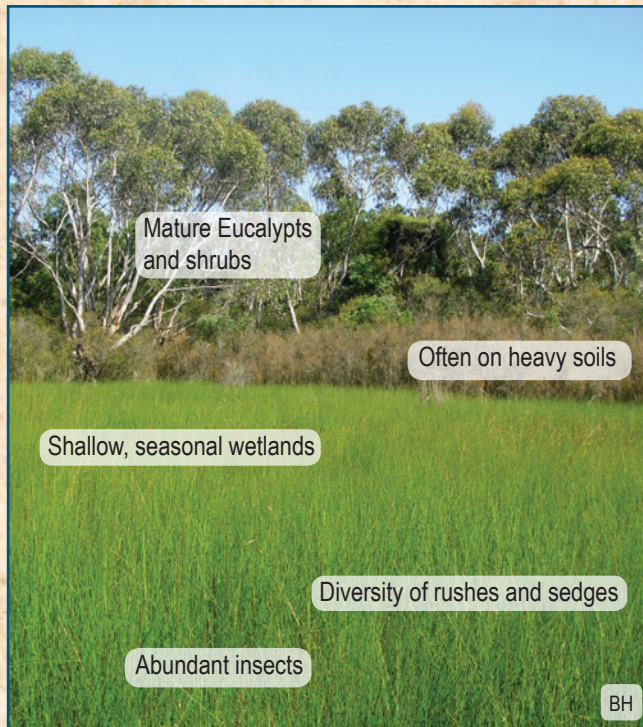
Mating call: A loud, distinctive, high pitched 'weep-eeep-eeep' of 10 to 20 notes.

RED GUM SWAMPS

EUCALYPT FORESTS

OPEN WOODLAND AND GRASSLAND

MODIFIED HABITATS



Smooth Frog (Geocrinia laevis)

A secretive terrestrial frog. Grey or brown frog with red flecks. Pale pink patches are present underneath the legs and in the groin. The belly tends to be mottled or densely covered with grey, tan or dark brown flecks. Lays eggs in clumps on the ground.

Size: Males 23-27 mm; Females 22-35 mm.

Habitat: Found amongst leaf litter in dry Eucalyptus and pine forests subject to temporary flooding.

Mating call: Call consists of a variable number of pulses, the first often being longer than the rest. 'cra-a-a-a-a-a-ck.... cra-a-a-ck...cra-a-ck'.



Painted Frog (Neobatrachus pictus)

Also known as the 'Mallee Spade Foot'. Large, stocky built burrowing frogs with short limbs. Emerges only after heavy rains to breed. Colour patterns range from grey through to yellow with dark green or brown blotches. The eye is prominent and has a vertical pupil. Neobatrachus species Lay eggs in long chains.

Size: Males 46-58 mm; Females 48-55 mm.

Habitat: Mostly open grassland and woodland, mallee and open and disturbed areas.

Mating call: A long, rapidly pulsed, musical trill lasting 2-3 seconds.



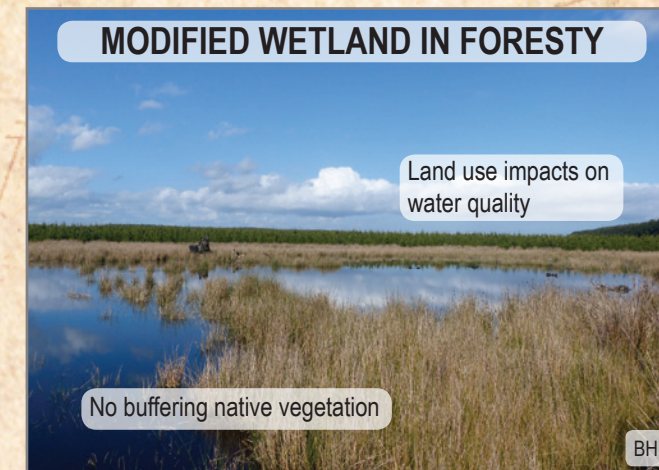
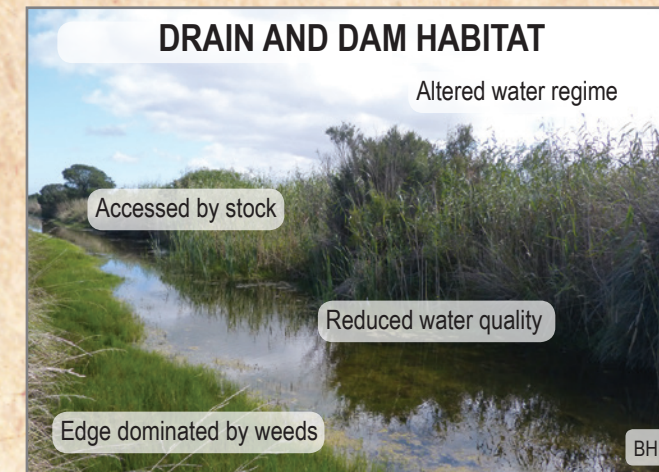
Sudell's Frog (Neobatrachus sudelli)

Also known as the 'Common Spade Foot'. Remains buried for much of the time, becoming active after rain. A burrowing frog that is very similar to the Painted frog. Neobatrachus species Lay eggs in long chains.

Size: Males 38-44 mm; Females 46-49 mm.

Habitat: Open grassy woodland or shrubland.

Mating call: A short 'musical trill' very similar to the Painted Frog.



Development of the land for agriculture, industry, forestry and housing has altered much of the original frog habitat.

However, modified wetlands and drains, dams and stormwater basins can offer good habitat for some frog species so it is important to look after these areas too.

If things are done to maintain good water quality, retain rocks and fallen timber and revegetate with native species, these areas can become significant frog habitat.

Create a frog pond in your backyard or school, or make your dam frog friendly by planting local wetland plants, and enjoy seeing amphibian visitors!



Peron's Tree Frog (Litoria peronii)

A large frog with the ability to quickly change colour from a pale pinkish-grey to a dark chocolate brown. The back of the thighs are heavily marked with black on yellow. Distinctive pupil in the form of a cross. Lays eggs in clumps attached to vegetation.

Size: Males 44-53 mm; Females 46-65 mm.

Habitat: Red Gum swamps, but will forage in open grassland.

Mating call: A long series of 29-50 explosive notes, like a 'maniacal cackle', 'cra-ah-ah-ah-ahhk' which increases in volume.



Southern Toadlet (Pseudophryne semimarmorata)

A ground dwelling species which tends to walk rather than hop. Dark olive-green to chocolate brown frog with numerous warts. Brilliant yellow, red or orange areas are present under the limbs and body. The belly is marbled black and white or black and blue. Lays eggs in clumps on the ground.

Size: Males 25-28 mm; Females 25-33 mm.

Habitat: Found in Eucalyptus forests subject to flooding. It shelters under logs and leaf litter in small tunnels.

Mating call: A harsh, short and slowly repeated grating 'cre-e-ek'.



Bibron's Toadlet (Pseudophryne bibronii)

A small brown to almost black frog which has a scattering of darker flecks and reddish spots. The belly is marbled black and white. A ground dwelling species which tends to walk rather than hop. Lays eggs in clumps on the ground.

Size: Males 22-30 mm; Females 25-32 mm.

Habitat: Found in damp forest areas, heathlands and grasslands which have some cover such as logs and stones.

Mating call: A short, grating, upwardly inflected 'ark'.