

# Frogs of the Darebin Creek

Frogs are sensitive to environmental changes, which is why they are used as an environmental indicator species. A frog's call is one of the best ways to identify its species, as each has a unique sound. The following descriptions will help you identify some of the frogs that live along the Darebin Creek and may also live in your garden. Most frogs are active at night and males can be heard calling to attract a mate especially during autumn and spring. A Frog Census is held by Melbourne Water, where community members monitor frog numbers and species along the Darebin Creek and throughout the Melbourne area.

## **Common Froglet** *Crinia signifera*

A small frog up to 3 cm in size. Upper surface pattern of either uniform light grey or brown contrasting with black sides; or grey or brown with irregular darker patches and sometimes a light vertebral stripe; or a broad dark vertebral band bordered on either side by a light brown or grey band from eye to groin. This frog is mainly found near ponds or other water bodies.

**Breeding:** All year round

**Call:** can be easily mistaken for crickets

*"crick, crick, crick, crick, crick, crick"*

## **Whistling Tree Frog** *Litoria verreauxi*

This small frog is between 2.5-4cm and has large dark or black patches on the sides and in the groin on a diffuse yellow background. Despite its name this is usually a ground dwelling frog. Males call from the ground often several metres from the water source for breeding.

**Breeding:** August to March

**Call:** is a rapidly repeated whistling sound

*"tweee, tweee, tweee, twee, twee"*

## **Southern Brown (Ewing's) Tree Frog** *Litoria ewingi*

Growing to 4.5cm this widespread species is found in great numbers in flooded grassland or marshes. It is an agile climber and jumper. Like most small tree frogs, this species is a voracious insectivore capable of leaping to catch a fly in mid-flight! Adults have pale fawn, cream, orange, or light brown sides.

**Breeding:** All year round

**Call:** a series of rapid harsh, whirring pulsing notes

*"creeeeeee, creeee, creeee, cree, cree, cree"*



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

A medium sized frog to 6 cm. Rich grey or brown above. Irregular darker mottling and numerous small bright green spots over upper surface. Groin and hind sides of thighs mottled black and bright yellow. May be found long distances from water in a variety of habitats, usually in trees and shrubs. Can be found foraging for food on the ground. The eye has a distinctive cross shaped pupil.

**Breeding:** September to December

**Call:** a loud, penetrating long rattle. Has been variously described as a "loud chuckling trill"

*"craaaaaaaaaaaaaarrrrrkkkk"*

## **Growling Grass Frog** *Litoria raniformis*

The Growling Grass Frog is a large frog up to 8cm. Olive to bright emerald green with irregular gold, brown, black and bronze blotches on a warty back. A widespread but only locally common frog, populations of which may be in decline. This frog preys on other frogs and is active by day. Adults are usually found close to or in water or very wet areas in woodlands, shrublands, and open and disturbed areas. Eggs and tadpoles can be found in permanent lakes, swamps, dams, and lagoons with still water. Males usually call while floating in open water. The Growling Grass Frog is an endangered species, which we are lucky to have living along the Darebin Creek in Bundoora, Thomastown and Mill Park.

**Breeding:** August to April

**Call:** a growl of about one seconds duration

*"crawark, crawark, crok-crok"*



## Eastern Banjo Frog/ Pobblebonk Frog

*Limnodynastes dumerili*

A stout round shaped frog ranging between 6-8 cm in size. Grey or brown with blackish marblings, with or without a continuous or broken narrow vertebral stripe. Sides often beautifully marked with a bronze and purple sheen with black mottling. A pale yellow stripe from below the eye to above the base of the forelimb is conspicuous. This frog is good at burrowing to hide during the day and conserve its moisture.

**Breeding:** August to April

**Call:** a single short call. Two or more frogs in unison sound like "pobble-bonk".



"bonk, bonk, bonk, bonk"

## Striped Marsh Frog

*Limnodynastes peroni*

A large wetland-dwelling frog and voracious hunter, this frog eats almost any animal smaller than itself, including small frogs. It is most commonly associated with wetlands and permanent water and shelters among reeds and other debris. A medium frog to 6.5cm with a granular green back, banded with yellow and brown stripes. The under surface is mostly white. Eggs are laid in static water usually in a foam nest concealed in aquatic vegetation. This frog is found in many locations along the Darebin Creek including.

**Breeding:** August to March

**Call:** is a single short soft explosive note, with a seconds spacing

"tock, tock, tock, tock"

### Frog Resources

Amphibian Research Centre:

[arc@frogs.org.au](mailto:arc@frogs.org.au)

Melbourne Water Frog Census Website:

<http://frogs.melbournewater.com.au/>

Museum Victoria Website:

<http://www.museum.vic.gov.au/bioinformatics/frog/>

Victorian Frog Group Website:

<http://www.frogs.org.au>

### Spotted Marsh Frog

*Limnodynastes tasmaniensis*

Spotted Marsh Frogs grow up to 4.5cm and have large olive-green blotches on their back and sometimes have a yellow, red or orange mid-dorsal stripe. This frog likes floodplains, open forests, woodlands, shrublands and grasslands where semi-permanent water supplies are found. This frog has been recorded at many locations along the Darebin Creek in both urban and rural locations.

**Breeding:** August to May

**Call:** The Southern call race has a single sharp click similar to the sound when snapping your fingers.



*"click, click, click, click, click"*

### Eastern Dwarf Tree Frog

*Litoria fallax*



A small frog that grows up to 3.5cm. A dark bronze line runs from the nostril to eye. The groin and hidden part of the thigh are bright orange, with a bright orange vocal sac. This frog has been introduced to the Darebin Creek travelling from the east coast of Australia via banana boxes and tropical plants. These frogs are native to Australia and as such are protected species.

**Breeding:** November to February

**Call:** is a two-part call: a long *"wreeeek"* followed by a sharp *'kík kík, kík kík"*

Photos:  
Growling Grass Frog by D. Ford  
All other photos by T. Grinter

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