

Doing the Right Thing for Frogs

Frogs are an essential part of our natural environment. They help to control the populations of the creatures that they feed upon. Adult frogs eat only food that moves.

When land development occurs, frog habitat is usually lost. Swamps, ponds, gullies and other small watercourses are levelled, drained or filled and native vegetation is cleared. Lawns are established, chemicals (fertilizers, insecticides, fungicides and herbicides) are used. Dogs and cats arrive.

What is the best way to help our frogs?
Provide them with a frog-friendly garden.

- 1. Build a garden pond.** Permanent water is an essential element for attracting frogs to the garden.
- 2. Decrease the area under lawn.** Extensive lawns are a haven for cane toads.
- 3. Build rockeries** using boulders and rocks. These are great for frogs. Rockeries can be planted with small native plants.
- 4. Provide shelter and refuge** for a variety of frogs by creating mounded areas of sand and gravel. Use river stones, logs, mulch and leaf litter, and create moist shady places with leafy native plants.
- 5. Plant multi-layered habitats** of ground covers, shrubs and small trees.



Green-thighed Frog

- 6. Do not use any chemicals** in the garden. Pesticides kill frogs, birds, lizards and the predatory insects that protect our plants.

Attracting Frogs to your Garden

Frogs need food, shelter and water

FOOD

Many frogs eat insects, spiders and other small invertebrates. Large frogs may also eat small lizards, mice or small birds. While they are young, tadpoles usually eat algae and other aquatic plant matter.



SHELTER

Frogs require shelter in the daytime during breeding periods. This can be in hollows, cracks and crevices in rocks and logs, under leaf litter, or beneath shady leaves.

During non-breeding times and in dry weather some frogs will burrow into leaf litter, soil or sand; others live in cracks, crevices and hollows in trees, logs and rocks.

There should be lots of trees and groundcovers and above all, there must be moist areas in the garden.

WATER FOR BREEDING

Most frog species have particular water requirements. Some tadpoles need shallow water, others deep water. Some prefer still water and others some running water.

Eggs may need to be attached to emergent or submerged plants. The eggs of some species float on the water in a kind of foam or froth.

There has to be sufficient water present long enough for tadpoles to complete their development.



Native Plants for Frog Friendly Gardens



Dainty Tree Frog

Native Plants Queensland

(Society for Growing Australian Plants Qld. Region Inc.)

Visitors are welcome to attend our Regional Gatherings hosted by the various Branches of our Society. Branches in Queensland are:

Brisbane Daytime, Brisbane Southside, Brisbane Western Suburbs, Caboolture Daytime, Cairns, Gladstone, Innisfail, Ipswich, Kingaroy & Districts, Logan River, Mackay, Pine Rivers, Rockhampton, Samford, Sunshine Coast & Hinterland, Tablelands, Townsville and Warwick.

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Frog-Friendly Plants

A garden with a wide range of native plants at different height levels, from trees to shrubs to ground covers, tufting plants and climbers, will ensure that frogs will be well supplied with insect food and the shelter and shade they require.

Trees

Small eucalypts, melaleucas (paperbarks & tea trees), acacias (wattles), allocasuarina (she-oaks), syzygiums (lilly-pillies) and other small rainforest species will give the upper level required.

Shrubs

These range in size from almost small trees to almost groundcovers and encompass a colourful selection of plants – melaleuca (bottlebrushes & honey myrtles), banksia, grevillea, leptospermum (tea-trees), senna (cassias), providing a range of lower levels in the garden.

Groundcovers

These are particularly important in providing cover and protection for a frog habitat. They also discourage weed growth and help retain soil moisture – brachyscome, chrysocephalum and xerochrysum (native daisies), viola (native violets), hibbertia (guinea flowers), goodenia, lobelia are all suitable groundcovers.

Grasses, Sedges, Rushes and Other Tufts

Grasses and other tufting plants are used by many frog species during the mating season, when they stake out their preferred site on the blade of a plant from which to begin calling. Poa (tussock grass), baumea (twig rush), carex (sedge), juncus (rushes) lomandra (mat rush), dianella (flax lily) are all very suitable.

Ferns

These add a lush rainforest accent to the garden. They require a moist, sheltered situation. Cyathea (tree ferns), adiantum (maidenhair), blechnum (water ferns), doodia (rasp ferns) are all suitable.

Climbers and Creepers

These too can add to the frog habitat as they climb up trees and weave their way through shrubbery, but they can be invasive, so use with caution.

Native Plants for around Frog Ponds

Alpinia arundelliana – Native Ginger
Alpinia caerulea – Native Ginger
Artanema fimbriatum – Koala Bells
Bacopa monnieri
Banksia robur – Swamp Banksia
Blechnum indicum – Binunq or Water Fern
Carex appressa – Tall sedge
Carex brunnea – Rainforest Sedge
Carex fascicularis – Tassel Sedge
Carex polyantha – a Sedge
Crinum pedunculatum – River Lily
Cyperus exaltatus – Giant Sedge
Dianella brevipedunculata
Dianella caerulea – Blue Flax Lily
Dianella longifolia – Smooth Flax Lily
Gahnia sieberiana – Red-fruited Saw Sedge
Geitonoplesium cymosum - Scrambling Lily
Gymnostachys anceps – Settlers' Flax
Histiopteris incisa – Bat's Wing fern
Juncus usitatus – Common Rush
Lobelia alata – Angled Lobelia
Lomandra hystrix – Creek Mat Rush
Lomandra longifolia – Long-leafed Mat Rush
Ludwigia octovalvis – Native Primrose
Lygodium microphyllum – Climbing Maiden Hair
Mazus pumilio – Swamp Mazus
Melastoma affine – Blue Tonque
Persicaria striqosa – Prickly Smartweed
Persicaria attenuata – Smartweed
Persicaria orientalis – Prince's Feather
Philydrum lanuginosum – Frogmouth
Phragmites australis – Common Reed
Poa labillardieri – Tussock Grass
Rhynchospora corymbosa
Themeda triandra – Kangaroo Grass
Villarsia exaltata – Erect Marsh Flower
Viola hederacea – Native Violet



Native Aquatic Plants for growing in Frog Ponds

Aponogeton elongatus
Azolla species – Native Fern
Baumea articulata – Jointed Twigrush
Brasenia schreberi – Watershield
Cotula coronopifolia – Water Buttons
Cyperus exaltatus – Giant Sedge
Cyperus polystachyos – Bunchy Sedge
Eleocharis sphacelata – Tall Spike Rush
Eriocaulon australe
Lepironia articulata
Marsilea mutica – Nardoo
Myriophyllum verrucosum – Red Water Milfoil
Nymphaea gigantea – Giant Waterlily
Nymphaea violacea – Native Waterlily
Nymphoides crenata – Wavy Marshwort
Nymphoides indica – Water Snowflake
Ottelia alismoides - Ottelia
Ottelia ovalifolia – Swamp Lily
Potamogeton perfoliatus – Clasped Pondweed
Ricciocarpus natans – Liverwort
Spirodela punctata – Thin Duckweed
Triglochin procerum – Water Ribbons
Typha domingensis – Bulrush, Cumbungi
Typha orientalis – Broad Bulrush, Cumbungi



Nymphaea gigantea