

# Floundering in the Face of an Uncertain Future

- the plight of our in-stream frogs



## Frogs form an important component of our food chain

Fish, birds and reptiles are some of the animals that eat frogs and tadpoles. Most of us like to eat fish and see a variety of animals around us.

A frog's diet is made up largely of insects, therefore they help in controlling insect numbers.

Tadpoles are important to the health of waterways as they eat algae and detritus in the streambed. They themselves are food for a variety of animals.

## Some frogs have disappeared, some are declining

In very recent times (1970's and 1980's) some frog species such as the gastric-brooding frog, have disappeared altogether in South East Queensland. Other species are declining still.

Possible reasons include destruction/damage of habitat, air and water pollution, fungal disease, climate change. All or some of these can work towards weakening populations.

Care of known frog habitat will help maintain frogs populations.

## Our frogs are unique

Our stream-breeding frogs are a link to our distant past when Australia was a wetter place. The extinct Southern gastric-brooding frog was unique in that tadpoles completed their development in the mother's stomach. Some frogs help in the derivation of antibiotics, antifungals and heart drugs. There is much potential for research into other frog species which may further medical advancement.

## Frogs need a place to live and breed

Like all animals (ourselves included) frogs need a place to live that provides shelter, food and a suitable breeding environment. In-stream frogs particularly benefit from undisturbed vegetation adjacent to streams, stable banks, log debris in and around the stream and good water quality.

## Habitats that are healthy for frogs are healthy for our waterways and the adjacent land

The presence of some frog species means that the area they are living in is in good condition i.e. healthy forests, good water quality, stable creek banks, minimal erosion, runoff water cleaned by stream-bank vegetation and associated microorganisms before entering the waterway.

## What can we do?

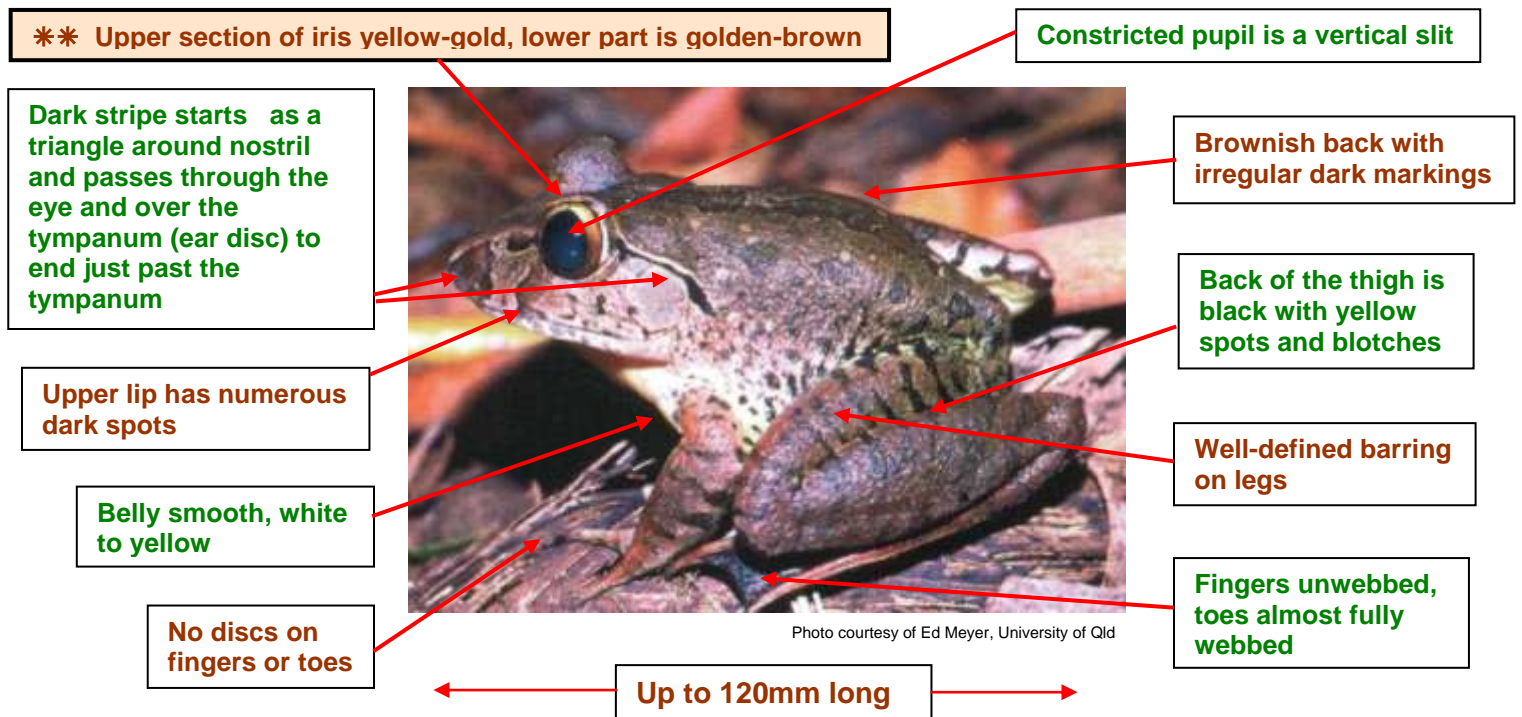
- \* Look after our riparian (stream-side) vegetation – don't clear it, allow it to expand, revegetate where needed.
- \* Look after our water quality – keep a check on sources of soil and stream-bank erosion and pollutants.
- \* Control our pets, especially at night – they can be hunters of frogs and other native animals.
- \* Keep stock away from creek banks – this reduces bank damage, erosion and water pollution.
- \* Control feral animals where possible – they can damage habitat and prey on frogs and other native animals.
- \* Report sightings of threatened, diseased or dead frogs (see reverse for identification tips) to:

**Mary River Catchment Coordinating Committee 5482 4766**

# At a glance.....

## threatened stream frogs of the Kenilworth-Belli area

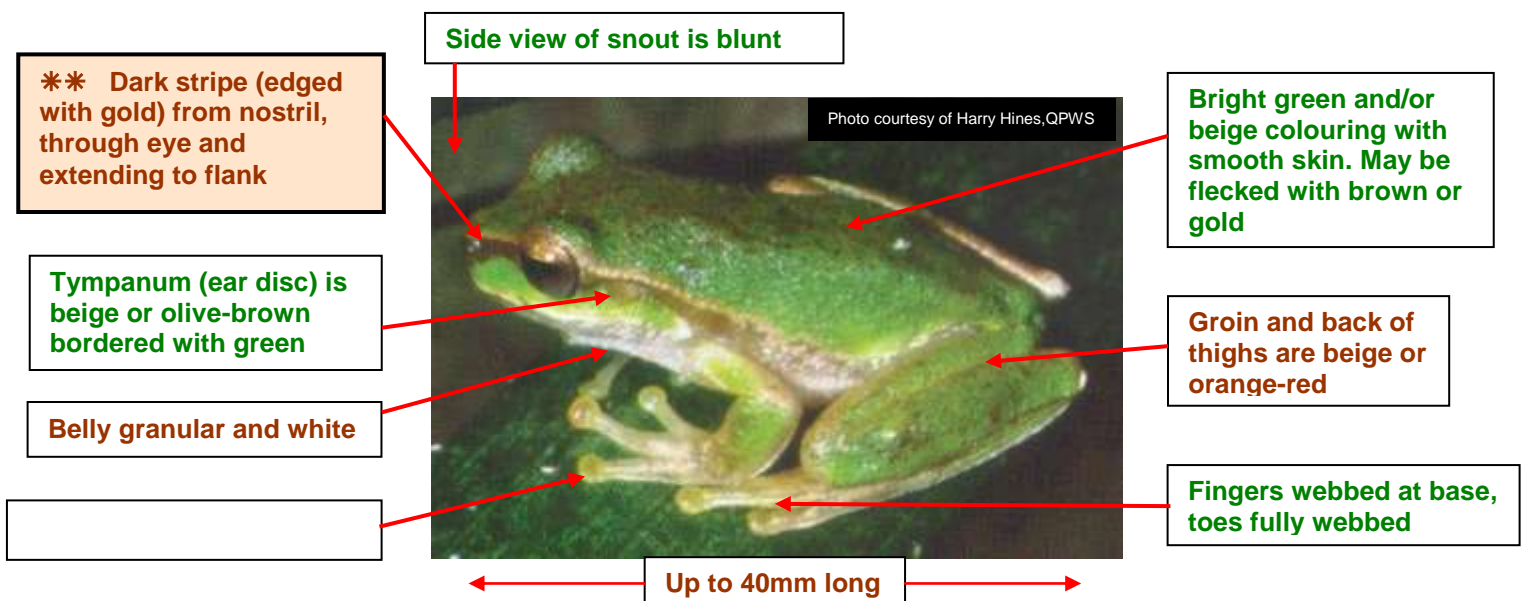
### Giant barred-frog *Mixophyes iteratus* (pronounced mix-o-fies iter-ar-tus) (Endangered)



Found mostly around streams and rivers and the adjacent wet vegetation. Often half buried in leaf litter.

Call: A deep guttural 'woh' and an occasional quiet, horse-like whinny. Breeds during Summer.

### Cascade treefrog *Litoria pearsoniana* (pronounced lit-or-ear pare-sone-iana) (Vulnerable)



Found close to streams in wet vegetation. Found on low vegetation.

Call: A crisp 'wreek-kik' or 'kik-kik' at night. Breeds during Spring and Summer.