



Frog ID App – let's hop to it!

Did you know Australia has 240 known species of frog and almost all are only found in Australia? Whilst some frogs, like our local Striped Marsh Frog, are flourishing, others have declined significantly since the 1980s. Sadly four have become extinct.

But the new FrogID is about to change all that by providing education on how to identify native frogs calls. You can get involved in this national science project, simply by using a smart phone and recording frogs croaking. The app places the data from the recording onto a map once it has been verified by experts. The information is transferred to the Atlas of Living Australia and can be used to identify where frogs are thriving and where they aren't. The Australian Museum can use the information to match frog calls to weather and habitat, which enables scientists to gain a better understanding of how different frog species are responding to our changing climate and other environmental impacts.

Springfield Lakes Nature Care Vice President, Dr David Manning has been trialling the app on our spotlighting tours of White Rock Spring Mountain Conservation Estate but you can start with your very own backyard. Perhaps you could even take a walk around Springfield's many lakes or rain gardens to see what you can hear. The FrogID app is free and easy to use. Simply download the app, then go out into the field at night or during the day to see what you can hear. The best time to record a frog call is after a rain event or during rain when frogs are actively croaking.

Dr Jodi Rowley Curator, Amphibian and Reptile Conservation Biology Australian Museum said, "The best time to record frogs calling is October—February, especially after the first warm, rainy period but there are species that only call in the cooler months, so any time is a good time for FrogID."

There are a few tips you should know before you go:

- Hold the phone away from you so you don't record your breathing and try to be as close as possible to where the frog call is coming from.
- Take care—the banks around our sediment ponds can be muddy and slippery.
- Remain still and wait for the frog to really start croaking. Try to get at least 20 seconds but no more than 60 seconds of recording. If you don't get enough, be patient and try again. It doesn't matter if you have more than once frog wanting to get in on the act, the App can decipher up to several different species in any one recording.
- Don't forget once you return home to wash off any mud or dirt from your shoes before you go to the next location so that diseases and small microbes don't get transferred to another location.
- Submit the frog record via the app. You don't need to have wifi and you can submit directly from the area where you took the recording as long as you have mobile reception.
- Know your crickets, apparently crickets can sound a lot like frogs, so make sure you listen to a cricket chirp before you jump into your first frog recording.

The Australian Museum is also using the data obtained through FrogID to help track the Cane Toad. All this

information could be crucial in saving Australia's frogs. You might be one to discover a new species of frog or find a frog thought to have been listed as extinct. It's all possible and you don't need to be a scientist or have any special gear, although a torch or headlamp could come in handy if you're going off at night and we do suggest that you take a friend with you to keep you company.

The Springfield Lakes Nature Care will be hosting some Spotlight Night tours in May and hope to establish a keen group of froggers to create an account to enable the group to contribute together.

The app even has a detailed map showing where frogs have been recorded and if you're the competitive type, you can try to get on the leader board by recording and submitting frog calls. So download the App and let's put Greater Springfield on the Frog ID map www.frogid.net.au/.

If anyone would like to join our group, membership is free and meetings are held once a month at the Community Meeting Rooms in Greater Springfield.

If you would like to attend or if you would like more information, please contact us by sending an email to info@SpringfieldLakesnatureCare.org.au.

