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Springfield Lakes Nature Care Update

by Judith Vink and Luise Manning

What creaks and croaks in your back yard?

Frogs are one of the most threatened groups of animals on earth, primarily because of habitat loss, disease and climate change. In a bid to better understand Australia's national frog health and distribution, the Australian Museum has created Frog ID Week from 9-18 November 2018. It will create an annual 'audioshot' of Australia's frogs, allowing scientists to better understand Australia's frog population.

Frogs are best identified by call and Frog ID app is just the tool to get expert identification without having to have the background knowledge. Everyday people are now helping the Australian Museum build up a database of who croaks where and how often.



Springfield Lakes Nature Care Group (SLNC) has been using the app to record the calls of frogs that occur in the Springfield Lakes area. The app has helped in identifying the Copper-backed Broodfrog (*Pseudophyrne ravenii*) in White-rock Spring Mountain and more recently the Great Barred Frog (*Mixophyes fasciolatus*) in Brookwater (pictured).

The Great Barred Frog (*Mixophyes fasciolatus*) is 11.5cm in size and stands upright like a cane toad but has no paratoid gland. It has distinctive black bars on its hind legs and is found in riparian streams in wet and sometimes dry forests. Tadpoles grow up to 90mm and can take approximately nine months to metamorphose, relying on deep pools for their development.

There are a lot of frogs with similar features, so by recording their call with the Frog ID app, you can help the Australian Museum plot frog distribution. Use it next to your backyard pond, creek, pot plant or even down pipe. It doesn't matter if they are common species or if it calls often. The app is encouraged to be used repeatedly over several nights. The data becomes more reliable the more it is recorded. Scientists will verify the calls captured and you will become a frog expert, contribute to frog species conservation and potentially discover something new.

So why not learn what frogs are living in your backyard or local creek and come to Springfield Lakes Nature Care's free Workshop on Friday 16 November from 6pm to 8pm at Brookwater Sales Office 3 Birchwood Crescent, Brookwater. Judith Vink will be sharing her presentation *Discover Who Croaks in Greater Springfield* about some of our local frogs, where to find them and what sounds they make. Nibblies, cold drinks, tea/coffee and biscuits will be provided. Unfortunately this workshop is not suitable for children. Participants will drive to Opossum Creek Parklands on Scoparia Drive and take a one hour stroll along a section of the Louise Clews Walkway along Opossum Creek to listen for frogs and practice using the app.

Please bring your smart phone so you can trial the free FrogID App, and we can teach you the best way to record and submit your frog calls. Please wear closed in shoes, long sleeved clothes/pants (mosquito protection) and a torch. The app is free and you can download it before you attend the workshop by going to www.frogid.net.au. Places are limited, so please book early to avoid disappointment; go to www.eventbrite.com.au/e/frog-id-workshop-walk-tickets-51240855779

SLNC is pleased to announce that our monthly cane toad catching nights have begun to reap success. In October, residents reported that for the first time in five years they have heard the native Eastern Sedge Frogs, leading us to believe that numbers have increased whilst the numbers of cane toads caught has been reduced from 109 adult and 500 toadlets in October 2017 to only 85 adult toads and only two male frogs were heard calling to mate. The cane toad catching nights are held on the first Friday of the month at 7pm. Our next event is 7 December at Spring Lake Park meet at BBQ tables next to the pontoon. You can follow us on www.facebook.com/SpringfieldLakesNatureCare or contact info@springfieldlakesnaturecare.org.au if you wish to become a member.