

Fowlers Gap Biodiversity Checklist

Frogs

e do not normally associate dry arid regions with water-loving frogs. However, the amphibians (frogs and toads, newts and salamanders, worm-like Gymnophnians) have been around for 270 million years and have adapted to all but the coolest climates. Australia only has frogs and toads and these and the rest of the Amphibia seem to have finally met their match with post-industrial Man challenging them with water and air pollution, global warming and global travel and trade breaching continental disease barriers. Thus appreciate Fowlers Gap's frogs while you can. The first one you are likely to meet will seem to defy all the above problems for the frogs and toads since it will be peering up at you from a flush toilet bowl! You will have met *Litoria ruou*

amidst the fan-like roots of a Mulga or other acacia awaiting a drenching rain. In the warmer months, a heavy rainfall will see not only the desert bloom but also it will seem like it has been raining frogs. So if you get stuck on the Station in a downpour then grab the torch and muddy your boots

- £ *Neobatrachus sudelli*, **Common Spadefoot Toad**
 Grey, brown, yellow or reddish-brown back with large dark brown or olive patches or marbling. Size 40 mm snout-vent length. Call is a long high-pitched trill. Burrowing frog that emerges on flooded claypans or roadside pools after summer rain.
- £ *Cyclorana platycephala*, **Water-holding Frog**
 Dull olive-grey or olive-green back or grey with light-green patches. Size 60 mm snout-vent length. Call is a drawn out, snoring 'maw-w-w-w-...maw-w-w-w'. Can stay underground cocooned in a burrow for several years. Breeds on flooded claypans, in pools or creeks after heavy spring or summer rains.
- £ *Cyclorana verrucosa*
 Grey-brown to olive-brown back with irregular dark patches and pale stripe. Size 45 mm snout-vent length. Call is a long moaning growl. Breeds in flooded depressions and billabongs after spring or summer rains.
- £ *Litoria caerulea* **Green Tree Frog**
 Dark green above with scattered white spots on sides and occasionally on the back. Ventrums are white and tympanum distinct. Size 100 mm snout-vent length. Call is a repeated deep 'crawk-crawk'. Found in a large variety of habitats including human dwellings, downpipes, tanks and troughs, and windmills.
- £ *Litoria rubella*, **Desert Tree Frog**
 Grey-brown or fawn back with broad darker stripe and dark flecks; black eye stripe. Size 35 mm snout-vent length. Call is a long rattle. Found near creeks and breeds on inundated areas. Lives in trees (and houses) away from water and forages on humid nights.

Guides:

- Barker, J. and Grigg, G. 1977. *A Field Guide to Australian Frogs*. Rigby, Adelaide.
 Cogger, H.G. 2000. *Reptiles and Amphibians of Australia*. 6th Edition. New Holland Publishers, Sydney.
 Tyler, M.J. 1994. *Australian Frogs. A natural history*. Reed Books, Chatswood.

This guide is part of a UNSW research project in collaboration with the Cooperative Research Centre for Sustainable Tourism and NSW National Parks and Wildlife

Service. The aim of this project is to develop and implement products to support a vibrant wildlife tourism industry in the rangelands of the Outback. Some more information can be found at our web site

<http://www.bios.unsw.edu.au/rootourism/>.

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