



Growling Grass Frog

Litoria raniformis

SURVEY NOTES

Where do we look?

Growling Grass Frogs are found throughout Victoria in woodland, shrubland or open disturbed areas. They are generally found in association with and call from, permanent ponds, dams, lagoons or lakes. They tend to prefer well vegetated water bodies and generally call while afloat amongst rushes or sedges. Growling Grass Frogs may also be found in ephemeral ponds, especially if they are free of exotic fish such as *Gambusia* and are close to permanent water bodies.

When to look? What do we look for?

The best way to find Growling Grass Frogs is to listen for them. They have an extremely characteristic call that is hard to confuse with any other Victorian species. If you hear something that sounds like a lawn mower starting up coming from the water, it's probably a Growling Grass Frog. Growling Grass frogs inhabit areas that we generally associate with frogs - this may have something to do with one of the components of their diet...other frogs! - and will be heard calling at dusk and just after dark on hot summer nights.



Growling Grass Frog (Lydia Fucsko/frogs.org.au)

Growling Grass Frogs are basking frogs. Often you will find them out sunbathing and calling on very hot summer days. Not a time most people associate with frogs calling!

The best time of the year to look for this species is during December and January, although they may call in November and February.

What now?

We recommend you visit locations that you think may contain suitable habitat for the Growling Grass Frog during the calling season. **Please talk to your local Waterwatch Facilitator for help finding appropriate sites.** If you don't hear any calling individuals at a site, you can try imitating their call (a tape or CD is fine as well). A bit of potential competition may get them calling!

Make sure you fill out a site survey form whether you hear them or not. If you hear a Growling Grass Frog, try and get a recording of its call.

If you find a population of Growling Grass Frogs, **please do not try and pick them up.** You might be lucky enough to see one of these amazing creatures - especially if you have found them while they are basking - but it's best not to disturb them, as we may inadvertently transfer disease or harmful chemicals to the individual or the whole population.

Anything else?

Growling Grass Frogs are a threatened species. One potentially threatening process is the introduction of amphibian **chytrid fungus**, which can cause a lethal disease in many frog species, including the Growling Grass Frog. The fungus can live in soil and can be readily transported between sites on the shoes of unsuspecting frog surveyors. The fungus has been found in Victoria and is being taken very seriously by the Australian Government. A threat abatement plan was released in 2006 to help deal with the issue. While it is very important for us to know where surviving populations of Growling Grass Frogs can be found, we also don't want to be transferring this disease. It will greatly reduce the risk of transferring the fungus if you spray your shoes with anti bacterial/fungus spray between site visits (before you get back in the car if you're driving). Methylated spirits or Detol will do the job quite effectively!