

# The Frogs are Calling You

Help us find out how frogs respond to wetland watering

## Become a Frog Citizen Scientist

Anyone can become a frog citizen scientist – it's easy, fun, and a valuable contribution to scientific research. You can work with us to better understand what conditions frogs like. Help us collect recordings of frog calls from a wetland near you.

## You'll be part of a large monitoring program

Scientists from a statewide government program called [WetMAP](#) (Wetland Monitoring and Assessment Program for environmental water) are currently listening and looking for frogs and tadpoles along the edges of wetlands. Scientists are also using automated recorders called AudioMoths to capture frog calls.

WetMAP is starting a new frog citizen science project, in collaboration with the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP), Frogs Victoria, the University of Melbourne, the Australian Museum, Goulburn Broken Catchment Management Authority (CMA) and North Central CMA.

## Why we need you

Citizen scientists greatly benefit research, management and community engagement. By collecting more frog records we have a larger sample size, which strengthens our scientific analyses. Citizen science gives everyone the chance to take part in scientific research and gives us an opportunity to share news about our research on managing water for the environment. We can all build our connections and share our knowledge of frog ecology and how frogs are affected by water in the landscape.

## Wetlands have changed

Water is essential for sustaining urban and rural communities, agriculture and industry, and the environment. Our rivers and wetlands have been impacted by the construction of dams, weirs, irrigation channels and pipes to move water around as well as remove it from the system for use. Many rivers and wetlands have lost their natural flows. Now there are changes in how much water flows, when it flows, how long it flows and how often. These changes mean waterways, including wetlands, don't function as they once naturally did, and we need to actively manage some water flows to support healthy environments.

## Water for the environment

Water is stored in dams and then released through structures that regulate flow (known as "regulators"). Water releases designed to support plants and animals in rivers and wetlands is called "environmental water" or "water for the environment". Many agencies work together to deliver water for the environment in Victoria including DELWP, the Victorian Environmental Water Holder (VEWH), CMAs, water authorities and land managers.

The delivery of water for the environment is targeted to areas with significant ecological values. It is important to use environmental water entitlements as effectively as possible because water is a scarce resource.

## Why monitor the response of frogs to wetland watering?

Frogs are an important part of the natural world, but many types of frogs are in trouble and becoming threatened. Frogs are very sensitive, and act as early indicators of environment change and stress. In addition to the many changes we've made to water in wetlands, frogs are also affected by salinity, high nutrient levels, pest species such as Carp, grazing by livestock and pollutants in waterways. They are also affected by disease such as chytridiomycosis (known as "chytrid") and climate change.

Knowing more about how to manage water for the environment to benefit frogs can help us protect these amazing creatures. We need to monitor how frogs are influenced by various aspects of environmental water, such as when the water is delivered (the timing of inundation), how long the water persists before drying up (the duration of inundation), and the influence the watering has on habitat and water quality.

## What's involved in being a frog citizen scientist?

We are seeking citizen scientists who would like to visit wetlands across northern Victoria and take recordings of calling frogs. We're using the FrogID app which is available on iOS (iPhone) and Android phones. The Australian Museum's FrogID app is an easy-to-use tool, that can be downloaded easily for free. All you need to do is visit a wetland, make a recording, and press submit! The FrogID app will tell you what frogs were calling. We've created our own FrogID group – "The Frogs Are Calling You", which includes the description "WetMAP frog citizen science - Northern Victoria".

To have your recordings included in the study, please sign up to be a WetMAP frog citizen scientist at [www.frogscalling.org](http://www.frogscalling.org).

All the frog calls you can record will be useful and help us improve our understanding of how frogs respond to water for the environment. We will send you updates on the project, including how your data are being used and the main scientific findings.

## How do I get involved?

There are lots of ways to connect with the WetMAP Frog Citizen Science project.

- Sign up at the [www.frogscalling.org](http://www.frogscalling.org)
- Find us on [facebook.com/frogscalling](https://facebook.com/frogscalling)
- Contact Lynette Plenderleith at [Lynette@frogsvic.org](mailto:Lynette@frogsvic.org)
- Follow us on [twitter.com/FrogsCalling](https://twitter.com/FrogsCalling)



## What places can you "monitor"?

Any wetland, with or without frogs! Wetlands can be large or small, on private or public land, in still and flowing waterbodies. Some wetlands receive water for the environment while others do not. The watering patterns across wetlands are also very variable; some may hold water for long periods of time while others may not. We are also keen to record what happens in long drying phases. We encourage you to visit any wetlands you like, even farm dams. Information about frogs on your own dam will make an important contribution to this study. You can find more ideas for places to visit on the website.

## When can I start?

Any time you like! Frogs are most likely to be active in late spring-early summer when most species are busy calling and breeding. Project signup is available on the website now and you can begin collecting data whenever and wherever you like. We are organising regional events to share information about the project and data collection and help you use the FrogID app. We will send you details when you sign up. We are also keen to find out what you think of being involved in the project, so we have created a quick and easy questionnaire that we hope you can fill in when you sign up.

Frog photos: Geoff Heard