

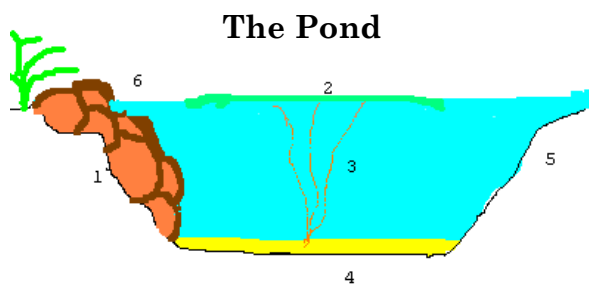
# Frogs in your backyard

Frogs are disappearing from our backyards for many reasons, mainly from lack of water in which to breed, the overuse of pesticides and the cultivation of gardens. In order to bring those night sounds back we need to improve the habitat, by returning it to a more frog friendly state.

Ways in which you can do this are

- Stop using pesticides and allow the natural pest controllers to do their job. Frogs and birds will eat insects, blue tongue lizards will dispose of those snails and do you know that the small insectivorous bats will eat their weight in mosquitoes.
- Plant a number of native shrubs and grasses and leave the litter from them lie on the garden. These will provide hiding places for your frogs as well as a food.
- Build a simple frog pond.

Creating a pond - Your frog pond needs to be in an area that is in 50% shade for most of the day. Build it away from the house, and particularly away from your neighbours' house, as male calling frogs can be quite noisy. The area should be well mulched and protected from the larger birds by offering plenty of groundcover.



- |                               |                          |
|-------------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1 Ledge for plants and rocks. | 4 Washed sand or gravel. |
| 2 Native water plants.        | 5 Plastic pond liner.    |
| 3 Water depth to 30cm.        | 6 Rocks, logs            |

The pond can be fiberglass, plastic, an old bath or sink, in fact any container as long as it is not metal as this could leach into the water. It needs to have a deep part at least 40cm deep preferably around 50cm. This keeps parts of the pond cooler in the summer months. For preference use Builders Plastic (3x2 metres) bought from a hardware store to create an inexpensive freeform pool.

First double over the plastic and lay it on the ground to get the general idea of size and shape, and then dig a hole that is at least 50cm deep at one end with a shelf that is say 10cm deep, that leaves an overlap of around 15cm. You do not need to be exact, as an excess will be hidden under the mulch. The other end should gradually slope to the edge, this gives breeding areas and ease of access for the ground frogs. The sides will remain steep, flatten the bottom of your pond and remove anything sharp, line the base of the pond with sand, soil that has been sieved or even newspapers to avoid the lining being punctured.

Next put in your doubled plastic, let the excess hang over the edges, fill with tapwater and let the weight of the water mould the plastic into the shape of the pond. The water will be suitable for frogs in 5days once the chlorine in the water has dissipated.

Normally there is no need to trim the plastic, just start "landscaping" your pool by burying the plastic under the mulched edges, rocks, rotting logs driftwood etc. Native grasses can be planted through holes pierced in the plastic or amongst the rocks. The whole area around your pond should then be mulched which should also deter toads. The same effect can be created when using other materials to create your frog haven, the possibilities are endless, whether you use the liner or a ready-made pond.

Habitat - Frogs need plenty of mulched areas, shade, no pesticides, areas of humidity, (rotting logs, compost heap) and natural cover. Pets especially cats should be discouraged from visiting the area.

Water Plants - There are a variety of native plants that can be utilised for your pond - Kangaroo Grass, Sedge, Lomandra and Melastoma Affine. Avoid noxious weeds like salvinia and water lettuce that are often found in our waterways and seek native or compatible plants from your local nursery. Experiment with garden plants in soil in a pot in the water.

Mosquitoes - A good conditioned pond will not attract mosquitoes, but if you are worried introduce our native Pacific Blue Eyes, 6-8 would be enough, and they breed very well. They are available from good pet shops. Do not collect fish from creeks as they will probably eat your tadpoles and do not introduce Goldfish.

Feeding Tadpoles - When your pool is new and the plants and waterweed are not yet established, you can feed your frogs and tadpoles twice a week on boiled lettuce, which can be frozen in ice-cube containers for easy storage. Later with all the leaf matter that falls into your pond from the overhead vegetation, tadpoles should have sufficient food to sustain them.

Good luck with your pond. Experiment, try different shapes and plants, maybe put in some low-level lighting and a small irrigation system to keep the area damp. Remember we are trying to attract frogs to our garden. Do not bring in tadpoles from another location as this has proved to be detrimental to the local frog populations.

## WPSQ Membership

Name: .....

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Address: .....

.....

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Phone: (h) ..... (w) .....

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Preferred Branch: **Bayside Branch**

Your special interests / skills: .....

.....

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\$30 Single       \$12.50 Youth (up to 18 years)

\$20 Concession       \$45 Family / Non-profit Group

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**Wildlife Preservation Society of Queensland (WPSQ)**

Level 1, 30 Gladstone Rd, Highgate Hill QLD 4101

*You can also subscribe online at [www.wildlife.org.au](http://www.wildlife.org.au)*

### What is the Wildlife Preservation Society of Queensland?

The Wildlife Preservation Society of Queensland (Wildlife Queensland or WPSQ) is a community environmental group with a wonderfully diverse membership drawn together by a common interest in wildlife. It was started in 1962 by naturalist David Fleay, poet Judith Wright, artist Kathleen MacArthur and publisher Brian Clouston who decided to act on their concerns about Australia's precious and vanishing natural environment. The society aims to protect all Australian wildlife, through education, consultation and legislation.

Our society is made up of a head office located in Brisbane while branches are spread throughout Queensland. Our head office largely focuses on matters on a regional or state level while branches are mainly focused on activities in their local area. They combine their efforts on issues of importance to all. Projects aim to involve other likeminded groups and individuals throughout the state.

### What can a community group do?

Plenty. As individuals, we have unique talents and experiences. As a community group we can learn from each other, pool our talents and be more effective and influential. Working together we can ensure wildlife interests are represented in planning. Just being a member lends your weight to our efforts. Members of our society are drawn from all around Australia as well as from overseas.

### Bayside Branch

Bayside Branch hosts monthly meetings with expert guest presenters, conducts workshops, arranges family outings such as spotlighting, bushwalks and bird watching. Each year we participate in fauna surveys and run projects many involving the community. Publishing our monthly newsletter and diary plus the bi-monthly koala news keep members informed on issues and coming events as well as providing information on specific wildlife.

**VOLUNTEERS:** *As we are a community-based non-profit organisation your help would be welcome in a number of areas. Please contact us to find out more.*

Email: [bayside@wildlife.org.au](mailto:bayside@wildlife.org.au)  
<http://branches.wildlife.org.au/bayside>



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Preservation Society of **Qld**  
Bayside