

Reptiles and Frogs of the Mount Alexander Region

The Mount Alexander Region of central Victoria has a diversity of reptile and frog habitat. As many as 8 frogs and 30 reptile species can be found across the Box Ironbark forests, the lush hills coming in from south, semi-arid grasslands and woodlands from the north, plus urban, grassland, wetland and waterway habitats scattered throughout. Some species are very rarely recorded, and may be locally extinct. Others are at the edge of their distribution. Some, like the Blue-tongue Lizard and Common Froglet, are relatively common.

This guide was developed in order to raise awareness within the community of the amazing diversity of reptile and frog species we have locally, and encourage people to be involved in conservation efforts. Most species cannot be easily identified using a photo alone, so if you would like to learn more about our local reptiles and frogs and how to identify them, please refer to the reference list below.

Remember that all reptiles and frogs are legally protected in Victoria. Rather than physically handling them, we encourage you to watch them, listen to the different frog calls, take a photo or make a recording to share with others. Good places to find reptiles or frogs are often under rocks and logs. Leave them undisturbed if you can; be careful of spiders, scorpions, and snakes; and place all shelter back exactly how you found it. We particularly encourage you keep a safe distance away from snakes.

Resources

For a comprehensive list of field guides and other resources, visit the link on Connecting Country's Reptile and Frog Page: <http://connectingcountry.org.au/monitoring/reptiles-frogs-of-the-mount-alexander-region/>

First Aid for Snake Bites:
<http://stjohn.org.au/first-aid-facts>

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of the MOUNT ALEXANDER REGION



Dragon Lizards



Jacky Lizard (Tree Dragon),
Amphibolurus muricatus (PR)



Eastern Bearded Dragon*,
Pogona barbata (MV)

Goannas



Sand Goanna,
Varanus gouldii (PR)



Tree Goanna (Lace Monitor)*,
Varanus varius (PR)

* Threatened species

Snakes



Lowland Copperhead,
Austrelaps superbus (MV)



Eastern Tiger Snake,
Notechis scutatus (PR)



Little Whip Snake,
Parasuta flagellum (PR)



Red-bellied Black Snake,
Pseudechis porphyriacus (PR)



Eastern Brown Snake,
Pseudonaja textilis (PR)



Juvenile Eastern Brown Snake,
Pseudonaja textilis (PR)

Blind Snakes



Woodland Blind Snake*,
Ramphotyphlops proximus (PR)



Gray's Blind Snake,
Ramphotyphlops nigrescens (PR)

Skinks



Eastern Three-lined Skink,
Acritoscincus duperreyi (PR)



Eastern Striped Skink,
Ctenotus orientalis (PR)



Large Striped Skink,
Ctenotus robustus (MV)



Cunningham's Skink,
Egernia cunninghami (PR)

Skinks



Black Rock Skink,
Egernia saxatilis (MV)



Garden Skink,
Lampropholis guichenoti (PR)



Bougainville's Skink,
Lerista bougainvillii (PR)



White's Skink,
Liopholis whitii (PR)



Boulenger's Skink,
Morethia boulengeri (PR)



Stumpy-tailed Lizard
(Shingleback),
Tiliqua rugosa (MV)

Skinks



Common Blue-tongued Lizard,
Tiliqua scincoides (PR)



Blotched Blue-tongued Lizard,
Tiliqua nigrolutea (PR)

Legless Lizards



Striped Legless Lizard*,
Delma impar (MV)



Olive Legless Lizard,
Delma inornata (PR)



Common Scaly-foot,
Pygopus lepidopodus (PR)

Tortoises



Common Long-necked Tortoise,
Chelodina longicollis (MV)

Geckos



Marbled Gecko,
Christinus marmoratus (PR)



Wood Gecko,
Diplodactylus vittatus (PR)



Thick-tailed Gecko,
Underwoodisaurus milii (MV)



Logs on the ground create habitat for reptiles.
Photo by Bonnie Humphreys

Frogs



Southern Brown Tree Frog,
Litoria ewingii (MV)



Peron's Tree Frog
(Maniacal Cackle Frog),
Litoria peronii (MV)



Growling Grass Frog*,
Litoria raniformis (MV)



Pobblebonk (Eastern Banjo Frog),
Limnodynastes dumerilii (MV)



Spotted Marsh Frog,
Limnodynastes tasmaniensis (PR)

Frogs



Common Spadefoot Toad,
Neobatrachus sudelli (PR)



Plains Froglet,
Crinia parinsignifera (PR)



Common Froglet,
Crinia signifera (PR)



Victorian Smooth Froglet,
Geocrinia victoriana (PR)



Bibron's Toadlet*,
Pseudophryne bibronii (PR)

Habitat and Refuge for Reptiles

Everywhere in the region is potential habitat for reptiles – from an urban backyard or park, through to some of our extensive bushlands and grasslands. There is an opportunity to create and improve reptile habitat in all of these areas. However, not all reptiles have the same needs - a grassland skink may have very different needs to a tortoise, and a gecko different needs again.

One of the most important things you can do to help reptiles is to retain 'sticks and stones' on your property. Logs, sticks, rocks, and leaf litter on the ground may look out of place to us, but to many reptiles it makes for a perfect home. This kind of habitat on the ground encourages invertebrate populations which are essential food sources. Larger hollow logs also provide larger reptiles with shelter from the elements and predators, while the leaf litter layer gives smaller reptiles like skinks and legless lizards something to hide under.

Here are some actions you can take to support and encourage reptile species:

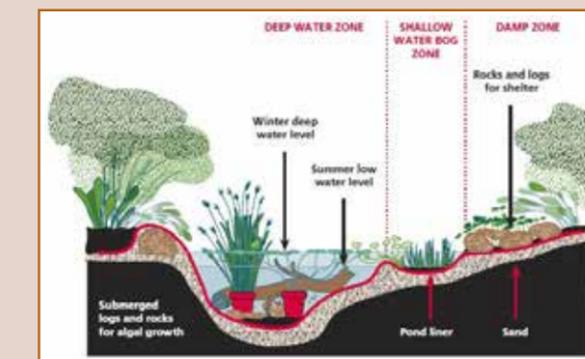
- ✓ Protect intact native woodlands and grasslands.
- ✓ Help degraded land regenerate by planting native species, excluding grazing and controlling weeds.
- ✓ Control feral predators such as foxes. Where possible, keep pets such as cats and dogs away from reptiles and their habitat.
- ✓ Improve habitat in your local area by attending your Landcare group's working bees and other events.
- ✓ If you don't have much natural ground-level shelter on your property, you can create some artificial habitat using old fence posts, buried pipes, corrugated iron, or ceramic roof tiles.

Frog Friendly Habitat

As with reptiles, many frog species have different requirements when it comes to the 'perfect habitat'. Frogs rely on water for breeding and for respiration through their skin. Many species also need plants or debris in or near the water to attach their eggs to while they develop. These also provide shelter and help attract prey for frogs to eat. Even in an urban garden in the middle of town, a good frog pond can attract as many as five different frog species.

Below are some things you can do to help give our frog species safe homes:

- ✓ Create a "frog bog" in your backyard (see Sustainable Gardening Australia's diagram below, and visit <http://www.sgaonline.org.au/frog-ponds/> for some good tips).
- ✓ Retrofit an old farm dam by adding plants and shelter.
- ✓ Work with your local Landcare group to improve the quality of our waterways.
- ✓ Refrain from using herbicides and pesticides when rainfall is predicted, and minimize or avoid their use near wetlands and waterways.



* Threatened species