

Green and Golden Bell Frog

Scientific Name:

Litoria aurea

Conservation Status in NSW:

Endangered

National Conservation Status:

Vulnerable

Photo: DECC



SPECIAL NOTE: Much of the water in this frog's remaining habitat has been affected by chemicals.

Description:

The Green and Golden Bell Frog is a relatively large frog growing to 100mm in length. Males are generally smaller than females and have a yellowish darkening of the throat area. All Green and Golden Bell Frogs are variable in colour. Generally they are a vivid pea green splotched with metallic "brass" brown or gold, though some are predominantly green or golden brown. The belly is usually creamy white. Legs are variegated green and gold and the groin area brilliant electric blue.

The tadpoles of Green and Golden Bell Frogs are also relatively large reaching 80mm in length. They are strong swimmers. A golden dorso-lateral stripe and a green tinge to the back is observed in large tadpoles just prior to limb growth.

Habitat:

The Green and Golden Bell Frog inhabits swamps, marches, dams, stream sides, and sometimes man-made depressions such as "The Brickpit" at Homebush Bay, Sydney. They have a preference for waterways containing bullrushes (*Typha spp.*) or spikerushes (*Eleocharis spp.*) and areas which are unshaded. They shelter in vegetation and rocks. The frogs can be active in daylight hours, particularly in summer when breeding takes place.

Tadpoles take approximately six weeks to develop. Tadpoles feed on vegetable matter however frogs are voracious insect eaters and will also eat other frogs and even juveniles of their own species.

Green and Golden Bell Frogs and tadpoles are an important food source for water birds, snakes, tortoises, and fish.

Threats:

The Green and Golden Bell Frog used to be found along the New South Wales coast and inland to mountainous areas. They are now restricted to isolated coastal populations due to loss of habitat.

Much of the water in remaining habitat has been affected by chemicals such as herbicides, pesticides, and detergents. Roadkill plus feral predators such as cats, foxes, and the Plague Minnow (*Gambusia holbrooki*) have further reduced frog numbers. A fungal pathogen is also a major threat.

Community Action:

Warringah residents can assist the Green and Golden Bell Frog by supporting Council's feral animal control programs, keeping domestic cats in at night, and ensuring chemicals such as herbicides do not enter waterways. Only pick up Green and Golden Bell Frogs with wet hands as dry human skin can damage the frog's skin and lead to fungal disease attack.

(NPWS)