



FACTSHEET

Moaning Frog

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Common Name: Moaning Frog

Scientific Name: *Heleioporous eyrei*

Noongar Name: Warrkaly
(general term for “frog”)

Conservation Status: Listed as Least Concern under IUCN (2016). All Rottnest Island’s fauna is protected under the *Rottnest Island Authority Act 1987*.

Habitat: Wetlands, freshwater seeps and brackish swamps

Length: 3-6.5 cm

Description:

The Moaning Frog is well-built with short limbs with brown, white and grey mottled upper surfaces and sides. Its flanks behind its front legs are often a distinctive yellow and undersides are white except for its brown throat. The males have slightly larger arms but otherwise it is difficult to tell males and females apart.

Diet:

Invertebrates (insects)

In the wild:

Good water quality is vital for the survival of Rottnest’s frog populations which are genetically distinct from mainland populations. The brackish wetlands on Rottnest (swamps and seeps) provide very important breeding sites and habitat for frogs.

During the breeding season (April to June), Moaning Frogs are found in the Island’s swampy areas and wetlands with sandy soil. During the hottest part of the year, these frogs bury themselves in moist sand and aestivate (become dormant) until the temperatures cool.

Males excavate burrows prior to winter in these wetland environments. After a female enters the burrow, they may lay as many as 300 eggs in a chamber at the bottom of the burrow. When the burrow is inundated with water, the tadpoles are able to exit the burrow. It takes up to 3 months for metamorphosis (transformation from tadpole to frog) to occur.

Threats:

Habitat loss caused by:

- Increased salt levels in the swamp water due to human activity and sea water intrusion (inflow or seepage).
- Altered hydrological regimes (changes to the normal water cycle concerning the seeps and swamps such as too much nutrient-rich groundwater and sediment-heavy road run-off entering the water).
- Chemical or waste contamination.

Disease:

- Amphibian Chytrid Fungus.

DID YOU KNOW?

Frogs are sensitive to changes in pH and are good indicators of ecosystem health.

Even the pH of human skin is too acidic for frogs and if you touch them you can burn their delicate skin.

HOW CAN I HELP?

Use water wisely on Rottnest.

Take all rubbish with you.

Observe and conserve.

Keep to designated walking tracks.