FROGS OF THE MURRAY–DARLING BASIN

Australia has 217 identified species of native frogs and 53 of these occur in the Murray–Darling Basin. These species live in a variety of habitats including on the ground, in trees, wetlands, alpine bogs and burrows. This poster features 18 frogs from a range of habitats in the Basin.

Frogs are often good indicators of environmental pollution. Adult frogs drink and breathe through a semi-permeable skin, and tadpoles breathe through gills. This means water and airborne pollutants can easily enter the blood of both adult frogs and tadpoles. These pollutants may then have toxic effects, ultimately leading to population decline.

Sudell’s frog, common spadefoot toad (Neobatrachus sudelli)
Sharp, blade-like projections on the underside of the feet aid burrowing. Size: 4 cm.

Water–holding frog (Cyclorana platycephala)
Survives dry periods in the ground encapsulated in a cocoon. Desert Aborigines used it as an emergency water supply. Size: 6 cm.

Wide-mouthed frog, New Holland frog (Cyclorana novaehollandiae)
A large distinctive burrowing species found in the northern Basin. Size: 10 cm.

Green tree frog (Litoria caerulea)
One of Australia’s most widely distributed and best loved frogs. It is found throughout the QLD and NSW parts of the Basin. A popular and long living ‘pet’. Size: 10 cm.

Southern corroboree frog (Pseudophryne corroboree)
Arguably Australia’s most visually appealing frog. It is critically endangered and restricted to the Snowy Mountains of New South Wales. Size: 3 cm.

Eastern sign-bearing froglet, plains froglet (Crinia parinsignifera)
One of a group of very similar small frogs. Usually found in flooded woodland and grassland, extending from the east coast of QLD through NSW to the River Murray in South Australia. Size: 2 cm.
REPTILES
OF THE MURRAY–DARLING BASIN

Reptiles are a group of air breathing, cold-blooded vertebrates which are characterised by having skin covered in scales and/or external bony scales and plates called scutes.

The Murray–Darling Basin supports 149 identified reptiles, including 46 snakes, 100 lizards and three species of freshwater turtle. Reptiles play an essential role in maintaining ecosystem balance throughout the Basin.

Common dwarf skink (Mnestes graps)
One of Australia’s most widespread and abundant lizards, it occurs in most regions of the Murray–Darling Basin. A secretive species found in grassland and grassey woodland.

Murray River short-necked turtle (Emydura macquarii)
Also known as the Murray turtle and the Macquarie turtle, this species is one of three native freshwater turtles in the Basin. It is found only in the lowland rivers of the Basin.

Common blue-tongued lizard (Tiliqua scincoides)
Found in a wide variety of habitats in the Basin including coastal woodlands, montane forests and semiarid grasslands. They are easily recognised by their bright blue tongue and are amongst the largest skinks in the world.

Gippsland water dragon (Physignathus lesueurii howittii)
Found in eucalypt forests, woodlands, grasslands of the south-eastern area of the Basin. Usually seen on rocks, logs or overhanging branches.

Nobbi dragon (Amphibolurus nobbi)
Found in dry eucalypt forest, rocky ridges, coastal heathland, mallee and dry scrubland. Favours the central areas of the Basin from south-west Queensland through to the border areas of South Australia.

Sand goanna (Varanus gouldii)
Most widespread and abundant goanna, found over most of the Basin. Forages widely over most dry open habitats.

Images:
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