

Media Release

The Hon Lily D'Ambrosio MP

Minister for Energy

Minister for the Environment and Climate Action

Minister for Solar Homes



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PROTECTING CRITICALLY ENDANGERED FROG FROM PREDATORS

The Andrews Labor Government is protecting the critically endangered Spotted Tree Frog from non-native fish predators in its north-eastern Victorian home.

The Labor Government is supporting the removal of invasive fish from a strategic section of stream within the Big River catchment, following the installation of concrete barriers to protect Spotted Tree Frog tadpoles.

As part of the Icon Species funding, the Government has provided \$36,000 to fund the project which supports ongoing Spotted Tree Frog conservation management.

Recreational fishing groups are working with the Spotted Tree Frog Recovery Team to prevent non-native fish from wiping out populations of the frog.

Listed as critically endangered in Victorian and Australia-wide, half of the known Spotted Tree Frog populations have been lost through non-native fish such as trout, carp and redfin that eating tadpoles and the lethal fungal disease chytridiomycosis.

The fish barrier reduces the ability of these fish to access the streams where the Spotted Tree Frog still occurs. Now the Spotted Tree Frog will have increased protection through the removal of predatory non-native fish from the sheltered section of stream.

Ash and sediment washed into stream channels from the 2019/20 Black Summer bushfires further impacted air and water quality, buried the cobble banks where Spotted Tree Frogs shelter in Victorian and NSW, and filled gaps and crevices between rocks where the frogs lay their eggs.

A Spotted Tree Frog can lay up to 900 eggs in rock crevices beneath the water or on the bottom of a stream. Tadpoles emerge in the stream channel and in stream backwaters, while frogs shelter on cobble banks along the stream.

Zoos Victoria has also established a Spotted Tree Frog captive breeding program, with the goal to produce frogs for reintroduction back to the wild.

Funding from the Government has allowed 13 organisations to work together to successfully repair a mountain stream barrier to now reduce the threat of non-native fish complemented by funding to the Taungurung Land and Waters Council through the Biodiversity Caring for Country funding and Cadbury.

The Government has invested more than \$560 million into protecting Victoria's biodiversity since 2014.

Quote attributable to Minister for the Environment and Climate Action Lily D' Ambrosio

"Through our record investment in Victoria's biodiversity we're protecting all our native wildlife – big and small – including this iconic native frog."

Quote attributable to Member for Northern Victoria Jaclyn Symes

"We're creating a haven to help the Spotted Tree Frog's tadpoles escape introduced predators, supporting the population to survive – and hopefully one day thrive – in the wild."

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