

# Frog census a great leap forward for local amphibians, but stranger danger lurks

By **STEPHEN CAUCHI**  
SCIENCE REPORTER

THERE'S good news and bad news for Melbourne frogs.

The good news is that some rare species of frogs are re-establishing themselves in the suburbs. The bad news is that two colonies of an interstate species could pose a threat to their local cousins.

Environment Minister John Thwaites yesterday released the results of an extensive survey of Melbourne's suburban frog population, which was conducted by 900 volunteers.

We know that if rivers and creeks are healthy we're going to find more frogs," Mr Thwaites said. "That's why we have a frog census. We're discovering frogs that we didn't

know were in places around Melbourne, and that's a good sign. But we've got more to do."

After not being sighted in Melbourne for many years, a colony of rare southern toadlet frogs was sighted in Mitcham, Mr Thwaites said. And two new colonies of the endangered growling grass frog were discovered at Caroline Springs and Rockbank in the west.

The census also found an interstate species — the eastern dwarf tree frog, also known as the banana box frog. They were found at Kew and Northcote.

The manager of the Amphibian Research Centre at Werribee, Gerry Marantelli, said the banana box frog could kill off local frogs through disease or competition.

"If people find these frogs, which

are small and usually lime bright green with black and white lips, they should contact the Amphibian Research Centre, which will collect them," he said.

The census identified 11 frog species across Melbourne.

See the full Frog Census online at [theage.com.au](http://theage.com.au)  
LINKS [www.melbournewater.com.au/frogs](http://www.melbournewater.com.au/frogs)



The southern toadlet has been sighted