

Limnodynastes peronii

Brooke Mainprize, 1999 © 2001 James Cook University

Authority: Dumeril and Bibron, 1841

Common Name: Striped-Marsh Frog

Description (Cogger 1992; Robinson 1993; Hoser 1989; Tyler 1992; Griffiths 1997): Dorsal surface light brown or grey-brown with a series of irregular dark brown stripes and spots. There is usually a broad pale yellow, cream and sometimes orange band from the centre of the head to the vent, and a dark band on each side from the eye to the groin. A white or yellow glandular fold borders this band below. The darker dorsal markings often have lighter centres, while a pale vertebral stripe is often present. Limbs are scattered with dark spots and irregular cross bands. The belly is white, often with a few brown flecks. The iris is golden above and dark brown below. The skin is smooth all over. The snout is pointed and prominent. There is no tibial gland. Inner metatarsal tubercule not shovel-shaped. First finger slightly shorter than the second. The toes are almost free of web and without fringes. There are prominent vomerine teeth behind the choanae. A single metatarsal tubercule. Tympanum indistinct. 65 mm in size.

Similar species (Cogger 1992; Robinson 1993): *Limnodynastes peronii* can be distinguished from *L. tasmaniensis* and *L. fletcheri* because it has stripes instead of spots. It can be distinguished from *L. salmini* by its lack of pink/orange stripes and the two-coloured iris. Some specimens superficially resemble *L. salmini* by being much darker brown, with only faint markings, while others have the pale stripes on the body of light red or russet.

Range (Cogger 1992). *L. peronii* can be found along the Tasmanian coast and ranges of Victoria, N.S.W. and eastern Queensland.

Ecology and behaviour (Cogger 1992; Robinson 1993; Hoser 1989): *L. peronii* is a highly successful urban species which is very common in built-up areas and thrives even in small, decorative garden ponds. It is usually found associated slow moving streams, marshes, swamps, dams and ponds and other permanent water throughout its ranges, and are especially common under debris on river flats. *L. peronii* predated primarily on ground dwelling insects such as slaters and beetles as well as moths and small flies.

Breeding biology (Cogger 1992; Robinson 1993; Tyler 1992; Tyler 1994; Hoser 1989): *L. peronii* breeds in the warmer months of the year, laying eggs in a floating mass in swamps, dams, marshes and ponds. When the tadpoles hatch they drop into the water. The call is a single loud "tok" or "whuck", like a hammer striking an anvil, repeated at intervals of a few seconds. Males call while almost totally submerged in water, often from beneath the floating egg-mass. The male can be heard throughout the year. The breeding females have one or more inner fingers flanged, for use in paddling the egg-mass into a frothy, floating raft. The tadpoles are large and black, and attain 6.5 cm in length before metamorphosing. The length of life as tadpoles has been reported to be 11 months. *L. peronii* lays between 705-1009 eggs, each with a diameter of 1.5 mm. The tadpoles are lentic, with a minimum life of 11-12 days.

Origin of Name (Waite 1929): A literal translation of *Limnodynastes* is 'Lord of the Marshes'

Literature cited:

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