

## Southern Bell Frog Surveys

EBS Ecology was contracted to undertake surveys for the nationally vulnerable Southern Bell Frog (*Litoria raniformis*) within Bool Lagoon, Hacks Lagoon and Lake Ormerod in the state's South East. The surveys were undertaken to gain a better understanding of the response of the species to the large amount of rainfall experienced in the region. The three sites surveyed are known to contain Southern Bell Frog populations and anecdotal evidence suggested that the populations at these sites had increased rapidly in response to favourable conditions. Interestingly, this response was only reported from the three surveyed wetlands and not from other known populations.



A range of survey methods were implemented, including nocturnal surveys along set transects to enable density calculations to be undertaken, measuring frogs to determine the age classes represented and undertaking tadpole surveys to determine breeding activity.

The results of the surveys confirmed the anecdotal evidence that frog numbers and the density of frogs was high at all three locations. Interestingly, a number of dead frogs were also recorded during the survey and cannibalistic behaviour was observed. It appeared that the survey was undertaken as the populations were just starting to decline with the high number of frogs decimating food resources which forced larger frogs to prey upon smaller frogs. The Department of Environment and Natural Resources will use this data as part of a longer term monitoring and management program for the species.

