

Be a buddy to the tawny frogmouth

Try to:

- listen for the bird's call on a still and silent night to discover if you have one in your area.
- keep mature trees in your backyard, streets and parks, and plant new gum trees if you have room.
- keep cats and dogs indoors at night to prevent attacks.
- be alert when driving at night as they may fly down to seize moths illuminated by car headlights.

Avoid:

- using pesticides or snail baits where frogmouths feed.

Don't be surprised if:

- you think you can hear, but never see the frogmouth that lives near you
- a tawny frogmouth silently glides by to eat insects fluttering around outside lights
- you see one at night sitting on or close to the ground, or even on the road
- you struggle to see one in the day, even when pointed out to you.

Find out more about your own backyard buddies

VISIT: www.backyardbuddies.net.au
www.facebook.com/backyardbuddies

CALL: 1300 361 967



Be a backyard buddy

Help keep the
tawny frogmouth safe
in your local area



This bird is so perfectly camouflaged during the day that it may be living near you, without you ever noticing. The only clue might be their low, humming 'oom-oom-oom' call, heard mainly at night.

Tawny frogmouths are large birds whose plumage is finely streaked and mottled in grey and brown. To avoid detection during the day they sit upright, completely motionless on branches in trees, heads tilted up and eyes closed to slits. In this posture the birds look just like broken branches.

If a frogmouth is disturbed, it may adopt a threatening pose, fluffing out its feathers, showing its wide orange eyes and opening its beak in a wide froglike gape to reveal its yellow throat, hoping to appear intimidating.

At night a frogmouth eats insects like moths, which it may catch in flight around streetlights and garden lights. They also sit on a branch and scan the area for movement, ready to drop to the ground to catch worms, slugs, snails and occasionally, mice and frogs.

You can help look after frogmouths in your area

Our backyards and neighbourhoods can be good homes for frogmouths if we do a few simple things to help them stay safe. That's why the Foundation for National Parks & Wildlife, local councils and other groups have started Backyard Buddies.

What is a backyard buddy?

Backyard buddies are the native animals that share our built-up areas, our beaches and waterways, our backyards and our parks. The tawny frogmouth is a backyard buddy.

Backyard buddies are also the local people who value the living things around them, like the tawny frogmouth, and are willing to protect and encourage them by doing a few simple things around their own homes.

So you can be a backyard buddy.

Be a backyard buddy

It's easy. All you have to do is care... and take a few simple steps.

Step one is to find out what tawny frogmouths do and do not like.

Tawny frogmouths love:

- Roost trees** – the birds colouring blends well with the bark of many gum trees.
- Safe nesting sites** – they build a loose platform of twigs lined with green leaves in branches 5 to 15 metres above the ground.
- Eating garden pests** – moths, slugs, snails and mice are favourites.

But they don't like:

- Being disturbed** – cats and dogs may frighten or attack a frogmouth when it comes to ground to feed at night.
- Garden pesticides** – which may poison the birds if they eat contaminated insects and slugs.
- Trees being removed** – which reduces their available habitat.

Please turn over for some of the simple, practical things you can do to help encourage tawny frogmouths in your backyard or neighbourhood.

Tawny frogmouth profile

They are between 40–50cm from head to tail.

With their nocturnal habit and owl-like appearance, they are often thought of as owls. However their feet are weak, and lack the curved talons which owls use to catch prey.

They live singly or in pairs and occasionally in family groups.

They may remain in the same area for many years.

The soft edges of their feathers enable silent flight.



A. Brown