



# Tawny Frogmouth

Podargus strigoides



## Ashton and Groot

Ashton was born on **August 3rd, 2012**, and Groot was born on **October 4, 2018**.

You can find us at **Walkabout Creek** where we are in our own bird enclosure. We like to hang on our perches or blend in with the surrounding woods. We tend to be more quiet and reclusive; we would rather be alone and people watch from afar!

## FROGMOUTHS AT A GLANCE



- Frogmouths have a **wide, triangular beak** that they keep wide open, waiting for prey to come near to eat.
- In the wild, tawny frogmouths will eat insects, small mammals, reptiles, frogs, and birds.
- At the zoo, we eat **mice** and **insects**

Wingspan:  
25-38 inches

Adult Size:  
13-20 inches long  
Up to 1.5 pounds



- The uniquely patterned feathers not only keep frogmouths warm, they also help with **camouflage**.
- Frogmouths engage in a behavior called **"stumping"** in which they stiffen their bodies and lay flat against a branch to imitate it.



Avg. life expectancy in the wild:  
up to 14 years

Avg. life expectancy in human care:  
20+ years



- The stiff feathers around their eyes are called **rictal bristles**, which help to **sense flying prey** and help **protect their eyes**.

## WHERE ARE FROGMOUTH HABITATS LOCATED?



Tawny Frogmouths are found throughout Australia and on the island of Tasmania. They occupy a variety of habitats including forests, scrubland, eucalyptus and acacia woodlands, and suburban parks.

# Frogmouth Behavior

## STUMPING

When first threatened, tawny frogmouths freeze with their heads craned upwards, feathers flattened, and eyes reduced to slits.

This may mean we are feeling uncomfortable or unsafe. It may be best to give me some space.



## PREENING

Like most other birds, frogmouths will often molt (or shed) their old feathers to allow new healthy ones to grow.

We will use our beaks to fix any loose feathers and straighten them so they can be nice and healthy.



## DAYDREAMER

Tawny frogmouths are nocturnal which means they are most active at night and sleepy during the day.

We are most likely resting or sleeping on a branch. It would be appreciated if you could keep your voices down so we can rest.



## CALLING

Tawny frogmouths will make calls when it gets dark. You can hear a low-pitched, repetitive sequence of 'oom-oom-oom' sounds.

We are trying to find others or make ourselves known to others in the area.

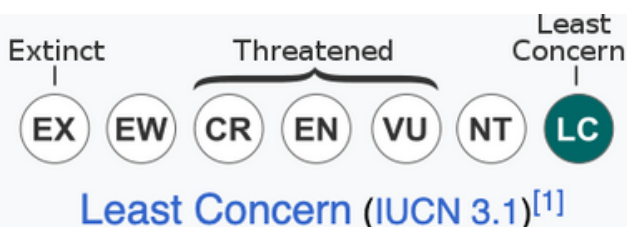


- Frogmouths are **ambush** predators. They will wait patiently for their prey to wander near their mouths to pounce on them.
- Tawny frogmouths will **mate for life**, and both parents will help incubate eggs and raise chicks together. At night, they will roost in the trees and work together during the day to protect their territory.
- They play a vital part in the ecosystem by **controlling populations of locusts, grasshoppers, mice, and christmas beetles.**

# Frogmouth Conservation

Since frogmouths predominately prey on insects, they are susceptible to **road mortality** due to the headlights and light beams of incoming cars. Insects are attracted to the light which brings frogmouths closer to the road where they might get hit. In addition, they can get sick from pesticides because of the prey they eat.

Tawny frogmouths are currently listed as **least concern**. However, future populations may be at risk due to increasing habitat loss and fragmentation.



## How can we help?

We can help decrease window collisions for birds by putting window decals or putting netting against the window. These allow the birds to see the window is not transparent and cannot go through.

We can deal with pests in different ways too. Instead of using harmful pesticides in gardens that might hurt other animals, we can spray vinegar to plants or plant companion plants like alliums, marigolds, and mint that naturally repel pests.