



NATIONAL PARKS ASSOCIATION OF THE ACT INC.

Threatened Frogs Find a Heavy Metal Haven

A conference on this weekend will hear how surviving climate change will be tough for many of the local plants and animals but research is throwing up some real surprises. The threatened Green and Golden Bell frog may have survived in the Upper Molonglo because it is riddled with poisonous heavy metals from the Captains Flat mine. Research by Professor Will Osborne suggests the heavy metal contamination may reduce the incidence of the chytrid fungus which is killing frogs elsewhere.

The conference, **“Corridors for Survival in a Changing World”** will be opened by the Chief Minister on Friday at 1.00 pm. In Tuesday’s Budget, Mr Stanhope announced funding to develop an ecosystem connectivity map to enable improved connectivity and conservation. “We can help vulnerable and threatened species to survive,” Kevin McCue, convenor of the symposium for the National Parks Association of the ACT said, “but only if we learn the difference between what will help and what will make things worse.”

“We think that building natural corridors will allow threatened species to move between isolated pockets where they have managed to hang on,” Ms Goonrey, President of the NPAACT said, “but this won’t work for all species. We need to be careful that what we do is based on sound scientific research. This symposium is designed to share the results of that research with the general public.”

Topics covered over the two days range from the regeneration of the bush after the 2003 fires to the endangered pygmy possum. “Protecting endangered species is much more complex than we thought,” Ms Goonrey said. “We have some of the best researchers in the country working here in the ACT. This is a unique opportunity for the general public to discuss with them what we can do locally to protect our plants and animals from the effects of climate change.”

More information is at <http://www.npaact.org.au/event.php?id=427>

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