

Endangered frog gets new lease of life

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(Phys.org) —In a bold conservation move, one of Australia's rarest frogs has been given a new lease on life following the first successful frog translocation in Queensland's history.

Twenty-two years ago the Armoured Mistfrog (*Litoria lorica*) vanished from the rainforests of Far North Queensland, and was not seen again until rediscovered in 2008 on the Carbine Tablelands of the Wet Tropics

World Heritage Area.

Great news but, unfortunately, five years of intensive surveys turned up just one small population in one rainforest stream.

Drs Conrad Hoskin and Robert Puschendorf of James Cook University conducted the surveys.

"No [species](#) is safe as a single population when disease or other threats could suddenly wipe out that population, and hence the entire species" Dr Hoskin said.

With translocation the only option for the critically endangered [frog](#), Drs Hoskin and Puschendorf got together a team including representatives from the Department Of Environment and Heritage Protection, the Department of National Parks, Recreation, Sport and Racing, and the Western Yalanji Aboriginal Corporation.

"The potential gains from the translocation are very significant," Dr Hoskin said. "Moving these frogs might seem like a drastic action, and there are risks involved, but the threat to the species if left as a single population is too great.

"It is vital that we protect species from extinction and keep natural ecosystems in the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area intact.

"Having rediscovered this species we don't want to lose it a second time," he said.

On September 3 and 4 this year 40 Armoured Mistfrogs - 20 males and 20 females - were carefully translocated to a new site about four 4 km upstream from the single known [population](#).

Seventeen of the translocated females carried eggs, which will hopefully be laid at the new site over coming months.

"The [translocation](#) was a great success with many of the released frogs visible the second night, sitting by a waterfall. I will visit the site again in about a month to see how they are settling in." Dr Hoskin said.

Survival and breeding success will be monitored for both source and translocated populations over the next five years to ensure that the Armoured Mistfrog is on track and thriving.

"The Wet Tropics has many unique species and a tremendous diversity of life, and we need to keep it that way," Dr Hoskin said.

Provided by James Cook University

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