

Tawny Frogmouth

**Scientific Name:**

Pogardus strigoides

Range:

Australia, Tasmania, and other coastal islands

Habitat:

Heavy forests, open woodlands, parks, roadsides, golf courses, and gardens

Average Size:

Length: 16-22 inches

Weight: 7-22 ounces

Lifespan:

Up to 25 years in captivity

Diet:

Wild: Insects and small vertebrates that can be swallowed whole

Zoo: Mice

Reproduction:

Incubation: 30 days

Clutch size: 2-3 eggs

Appearance:

Frogmouths are best known for their camouflaging color. Being light grayish-brown with dark streaks makes it easy to blend in with the bark of many trees. The eyes, which are closed or half-lidded during the daylight hours are bright gold.

Predators:

Cats, dogs and foxes

Population Status:

Stable

**About the Animal**

Often mistaken for owls, the nocturnal frogmouth is named for its large, flat, triangular bill, which is used to catch insects. They will perch on a stump or branch and watch for tasty prey items to pass by. When prey is spotted, the frogmouth flies down and eats it. These birds are also able to catch insects like moths while flying through the air. Unlike owls, frogmouths must capture their food with their mouth – they lack the strong talons and sharply curved beak of an owl.

During the day, frogmouths sleep perched on a branch assuming a stick-like posture with their bills raised upward and eyes closed, and stay very still. The colors and patterns of the feathers help make the frogmouth almost impossible to see.

Although not endangered or threatened, these birds are rarely seen. Often the only glimpse a human will catch of the frogmouth is the bird flying after moths attracted to the headlights of cars. Unfortunately, many frogmouths are killed or injured in collisions with moving vehicles every year.

Mating and Reproduction

Tawny Frogmouth pairs are monogamous, meaning they stay together until one of the pair dies. Much like birds of prey, they will use the same nest every year after making repairs. Once the loose, platform-like nest is repaired and lined with leaves, the female lays her clutch of 2-3 eggs. Both parents incubate the eggs and care for hatchlings.

Amazing Information

In order to keep the nest tidy and relatively free of germs, insects and parasites, frogmouths instinctively waddle to the edge of the platform and defecate over the edge.



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