



Amazing Animals Fact sheets

Nightjars

profiles



Tawny Frogmouth

The daytime camouflage of the Tawny Frogmouth is extraordinary. Male and female pair permanently and during the day roost near one another on bare but sheltered branches, stumps, and even shaded ground. At the hint of threat or disturbance they freeze, compacting their plumage and closing eye slits and looking just like a broken branch. Only if pushed do they flash or react with a frightening snapping of their yellow, mouthed bills.

Habitat

Tawny Frogmouths inhabit open forests and woodlands of eucalypts and acacias throughout Australia. There three races – one southeastern Australia north to region of Cairns-Cooktown and west to inland regions of the Great Dividing Range and southeastern Australia; two Western Australia north to Great Sandy Desert, northeast to channel Country, Qld, and southeast to Murray mallee, Vic; and last northern Australia, south to the Great Sandy Desert, Barkly Tableland and southern plains of Gulf of Carpentaria, Qld.

Diet

All frogmouths are night-active, mainly in the several hours just after dusk and before dawn. Large nocturnal insects, spiders and myriapods are prime prey and these the birds snatch from the ground or low branches in gliding dives from a vantage perch. Food is captured with their beak.

Breeding

Nesting duties are shared evenly by the sexes; building, incubating, brooding and feeding one another on the nest, as well as young. Each may spend up to 12 hours incubating one to three eggs. Breeding is advertised by both partners drumming nightly from the nest site.

Tawny

Tawny, aka Miss Tawny came to live with us here at Australia Zoo after being a patient of the Australian Zoo Wildlife Hospital.

Little Tawny had a wing injury and was not able to be released back into the wild. Tawny now spends her days blending into her surroundings and enjoying the company of our resident mischievous laughing kookaburras.

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Australia Zoo Tawny Frogmouth