



Melbourne Water ecologist Rhys Coleman in Fitzroy Gardens.

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Frogs far from croaking

FROGS are frolicking in the Fitzroy Gardens' lake, the latest Melbourne frog census has revealed.

The lake was one of 174 waterways searched for frogs last year during the second annual census funded by Melbourne Water and managed by the Amphibian Research Centre.

The census discovered the presence of the southern brown tree frog in the Fitzroy Gardens' lake, within a croak of the MCG and State Parliament.

The species was already discovered to have made its home

in the Carlton Gardens' lake, along with the spotted marsh frog, and also in Merri Creek, at Quarries Park in Clifton Hill, during the 2002 census.

Melbourne Water ecologist Rhys Coleman said the Fitzroy Gardens find was a result of an expanded search for the second census — up by more than 100 sites throughout metropolitan Melbourne.

"By doing this, we're getting an idea of the current distribution of frogs throughout Melbourne. It's nice to know we still have frogs in the inner city," he said.

Mr Coleman said more than 70

volunteers were given tapes late last year with which to record frog croaks.

Amphibian Research Centre scientists then listened to the tapes to identify different species, he said.

Mr Coleman said a diversity of frog species in a waterway was a good indicator of a healthy environment.

To see more results or to register for the next frog census, go to www.frogs.melbournewater.com.au or call Melbourne Water on 13 1722.

— Fiona O'Doherty