



Fearsome Frogs and Ominous Owls



When the rain starts to fall in the North West, then Lebone II College of the Royal Bafokeng suddenly has tiny red-back toad hoppers in the amphitheatre and hopping along the corridors.

Many people are afraid of owls as they fly silently at night but this is only because they are nocturnal feeders looking for rodents that might want to raid our food. This also helps owls avoid other diurnal birds of prey that might attack them in the light of day. Our Grade 5 class visited the Birds of Prey Rehab Centre outside Dullstroom and met an Eagle Owl and a southern White-faced owl which are used to being around people.

They are the size of a R5 coin so everyone needs to tread carefully. The arrival of the hoppers is because the dams on the campus are used as a breeding ground by amphibians. To help students overcome their fear of growing warts or other myths, we celebrate Leap Frog Day as part of our WESSA Eco-Schools calendar.



Frogs and toads are both amphibians and they are similar in many

ways. Frogs tend to have moist slimy skin and lay their eggs in a bunch. Toads have dry bumpy skin and like to lay their eggs in a row.

Students dress up in green, act like frogs, examine live creatures gently with a magnifying glass, speak, read and write about frogs and toads and create fun artworks.

We learnt that owls can swivel their heads 270° degrees in either direction. If we tried that we would damage the delicate blood vessels in our necks and heads, cut off blood supply to our brains and faint. The Grade 5's were so impressed that they decided to support the Owl Rescue Centre in Hartbeespoort by collecting plastic bottles for them. The centre recycles the plastic to form magnificent owl houses for rehousing owls that might have been involved in a vehicle collision or flown into a powerline. We are working towards one day being owl stewards at our school as large sections of pristine savanna bushveld have been conserved on our campus.