



Rice and Biodiversity

Rice farms are homes for many types of plants and animals. The rice farmers protect the biodiversity of the region and maintain the ecosystems for the benefit of nature and also to their farms.

The type of native wildlife that rice farms attract include:

Birds

The area comprises of about 100 species of birds, such as honey eaters, flycatchers, thornbills, pigeons and parrots. In fact, the Riverina rice region has become part of the East Asian-Australian Flyway Zone, an international corridor for migratory journeys of many bird species, including water birds that would not otherwise be seen in this part of the world.

Mammals

Mammals include larger species such as kangaroos, bats and possums.

Reptiles

Reptiles include goannas, geckoes, dragons, skinks and snakes. The rice bays and irrigation channels are an ideal home for insects and animals including tortoises and frogs. The University of Canberra has shown that around 40 billion native frogs are found on rice farms throughout the rice growing region and the endangered Southern Bell Frog relies on the rice industry for its survival.





The rice industry is the first agricultural industry in Australia to develop a Biodiversity Strategy and Plan.

The Biodiversity Strategy and Plan was developed by CSIRO Sustainable Ecosystems and the Rice Growers' Association of Australia to provide practical guidelines for rice farmers so that they can maintain and improve biodiversity. This ensures that plants and animals can live productively with the rice growing environment.

Farmers are implementing measures on and around their farms that will ensure native plants and creatures can live in harmony with the rice-growing environment. Some of the activities include planting and maintaining areas of native vegetation and ensuring Black Box and Red Gum woodland depressions are flooded occasionally to rejuvenate wetland species.

