

Your Backyard

In this lesson, we'll be taking a look at
Your Backyard.

Estimated Completion Time: 20 minutes.

Your Backyard

We've mentioned a couple of times that, as Einstein remarked, imagination is greater than knowledge. And that relates to photographs. In this lesson, we intend to prove this.

All of the photos in this lesson were taken in backyards, with either a compact digital camera, or a low end DSLR. Only standard lenses were used on the DSLR - no macro lenses, although some of the shots were taken using a variety of compact digital cameras in a macro mode.

Many of these photos have been post processed to improve color and saturation, sharpness, and noise reduction.



This gecko was crawling up a glass door.

Your Backyard

To hone your skills, take your camera into the backyard, front yard, around the pool, around the house. Take some time, and really look around. Sometimes, a little patience is required.



You'll find spiders everywhere. Get in close, and set the aperture high - get that background out of focus.

Your Backyard

As it can be hard to get close to many wild animals, a camera with some decent zoom capability - more than 10-12 times zoom (400mm or so) can be a real advantage. Also, when using that zoom lens, use a tripod as well to get sharp results.



A 300mm lens was used to get this image - these wallabies are very shy, and difficult to get close to.

Your Backyard

Getting animals to come to your yard is an art in itself - but not really that hard. Of course, what you do depends on where you live - but do some research to see what sort of food, seeds, feeders, or plants you should try.



A blue faced honeyeater out the front.

Your Backyard

Don't just go out during the day. Try late evening, early morning, even well after dark. Many insects and spiders in particular are active at these times.



Try going out at night - it can be a treasure trove for insects.

Your Backyard



Again, nice and close to get this grasshopper.

Your Backyard



This carpet python was caught trying to eat a pet bird.

Your Backyard



A caterpillar destroying some leaves. We've moved in nice and close to fill the frame.

Your Backyard



This duck family 'freezes' when approached to protect the young ones - making it easier to get close.

Your Backyard



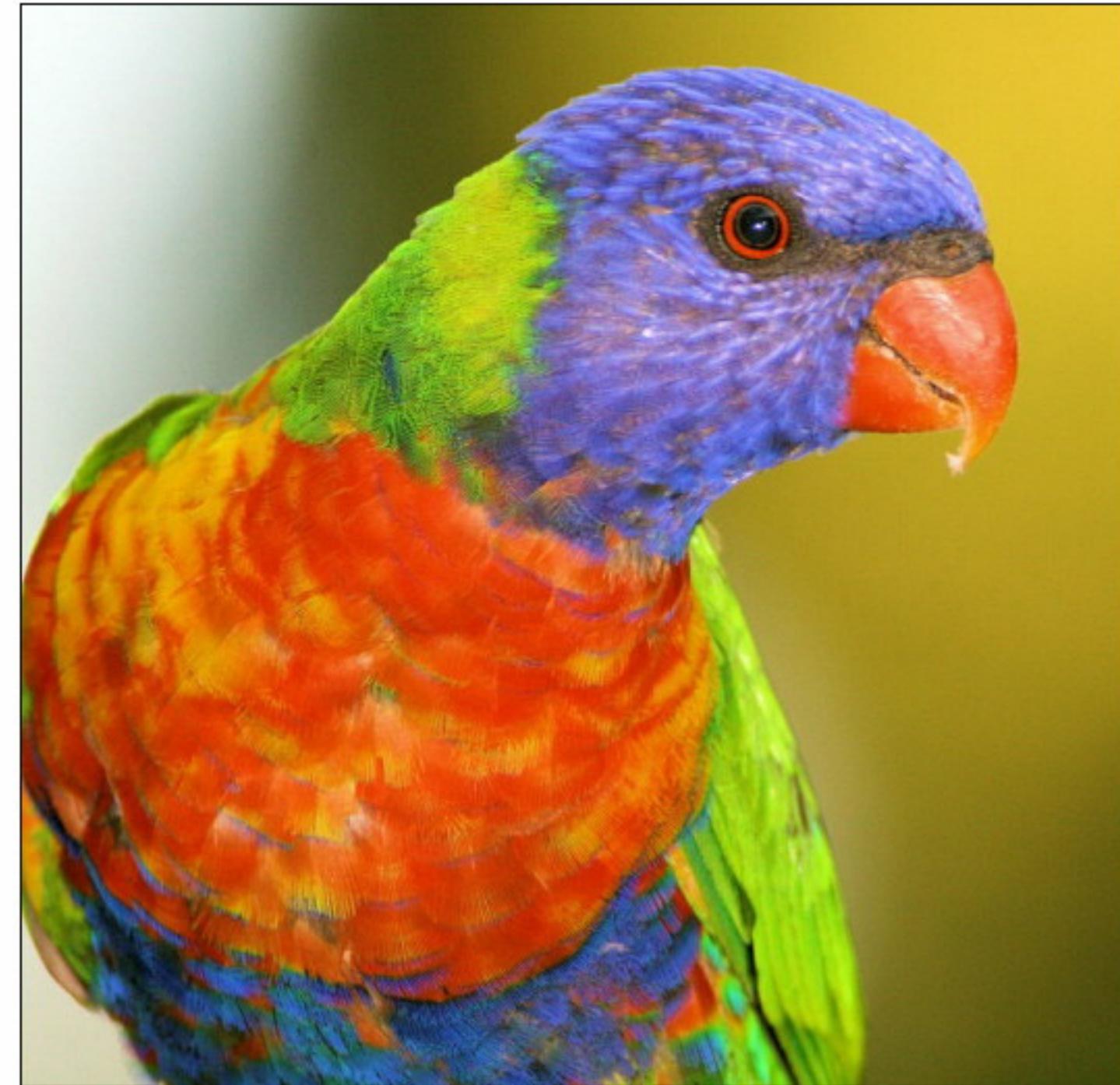
A cicada - common, and noisy, in Australian summers.

Your Backyard



Another noisy and common animal - the cockatoo.

Your Backyard



The rainbow lorikeet makes appearances in a lot of yards - and are easy to attract with some seeds.

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We had to zoom to get this grey heron, sitting in a backyard tree.

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A young currawong in the front yard.

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These are eastern water dragon eggs - the lizard digs a hole, lays the eggs, and buries them.

Your Backyard



Here is the eastern water dragon that laid the eggs. We had to photograph this one from above (a balcony), as it couldn't be easily approached from ground level.

Your Backyard



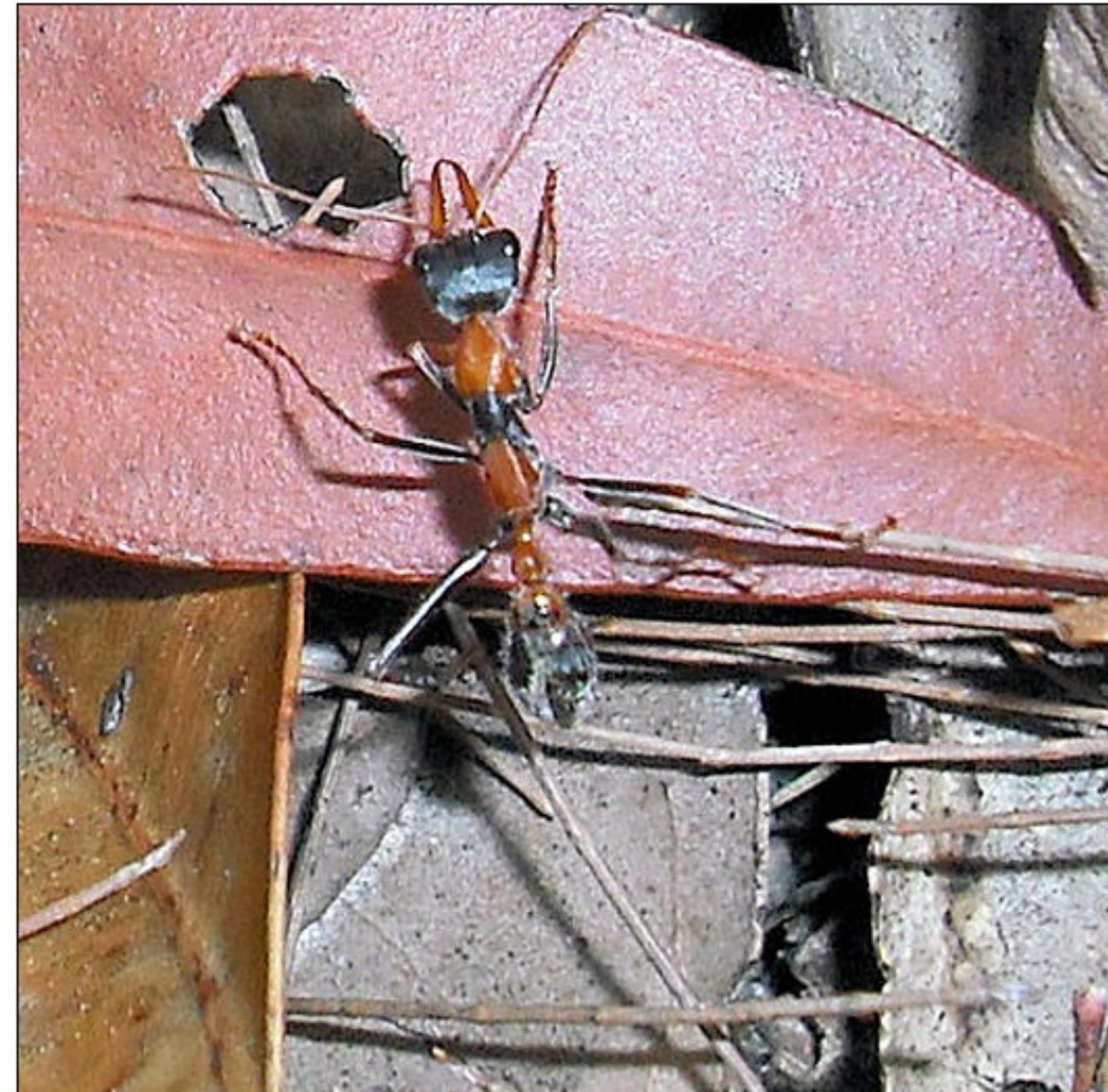
This dainty green tree frog was found in the pool, and released in the backyard.

Your Backyard



To attract animals like frogs to your yard, you have to have an environment that frogs will thrive in.

Your Backyard



These 'jack-jumpers', found in the front yard, are actually quite dangerous ants.

Your Backyard



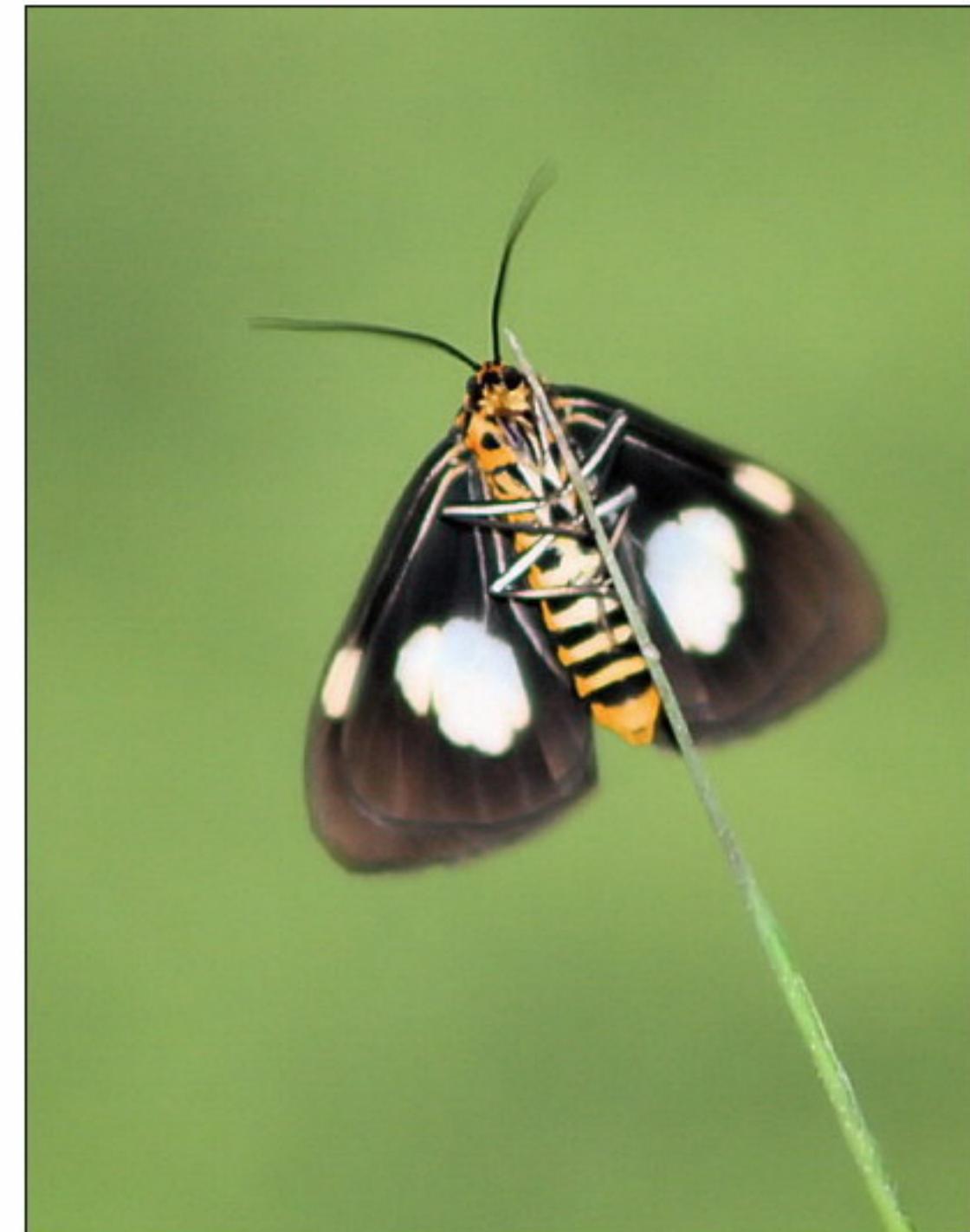
This duck was attracted by bread to the yard.

Your Backyard



This is one we really looked around hard to find - this is a nest from a particular species of ant.

Your Backyard



A moth, just outside the front gate. A really low aperture blurs the background beautifully.

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This beetle was small, and easy to miss - that's why looking around is so important.

Your Backyard



Not the sort of thing you do want to find in your yard - but we did. Termites.

Your Backyard



A really low aperture helps to even make the web invisible. The evening light also helped.

Your Backyard



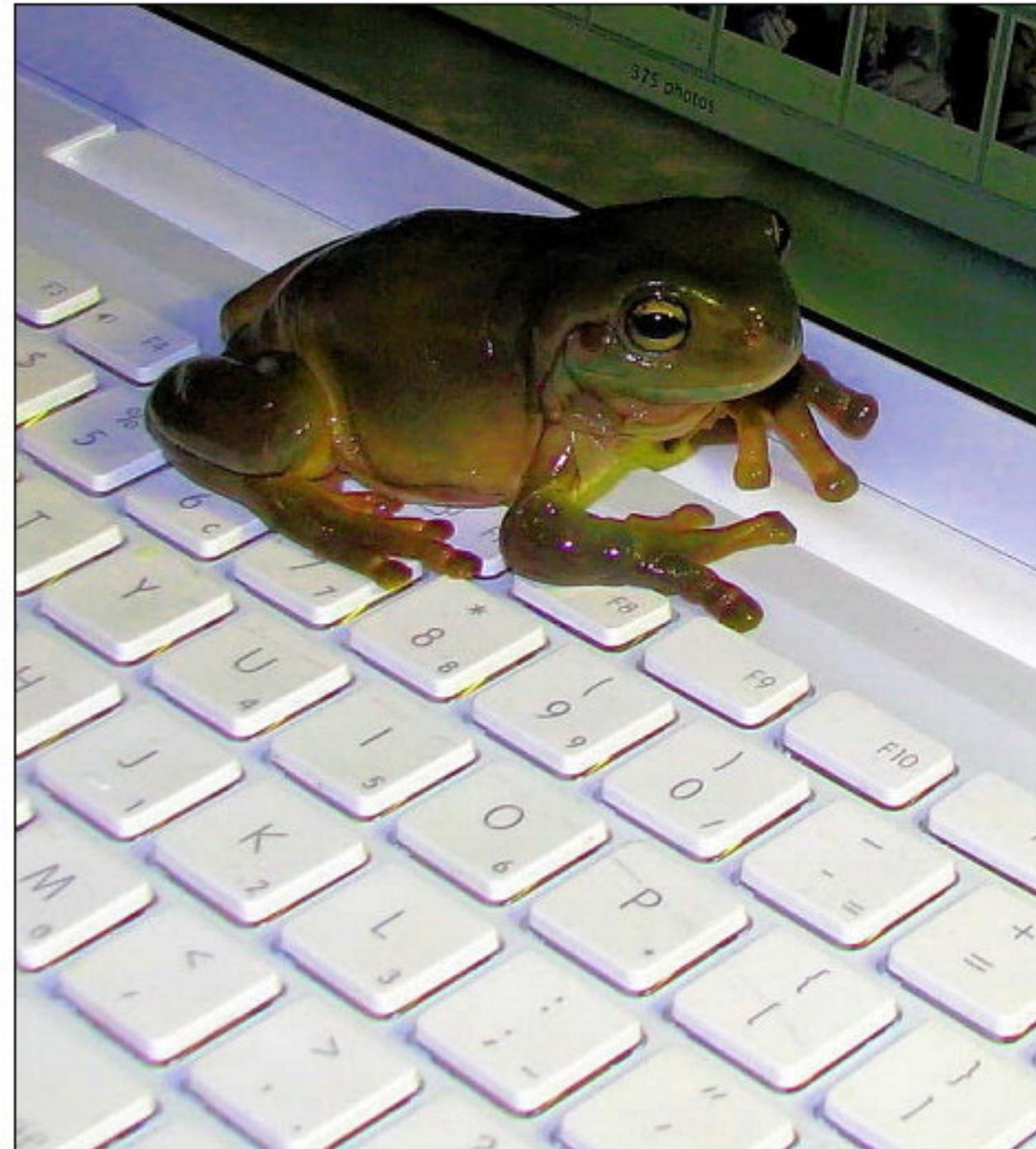
These rosellas are very timid - so a 300mm lens was used to get this shot.

Your Backyard



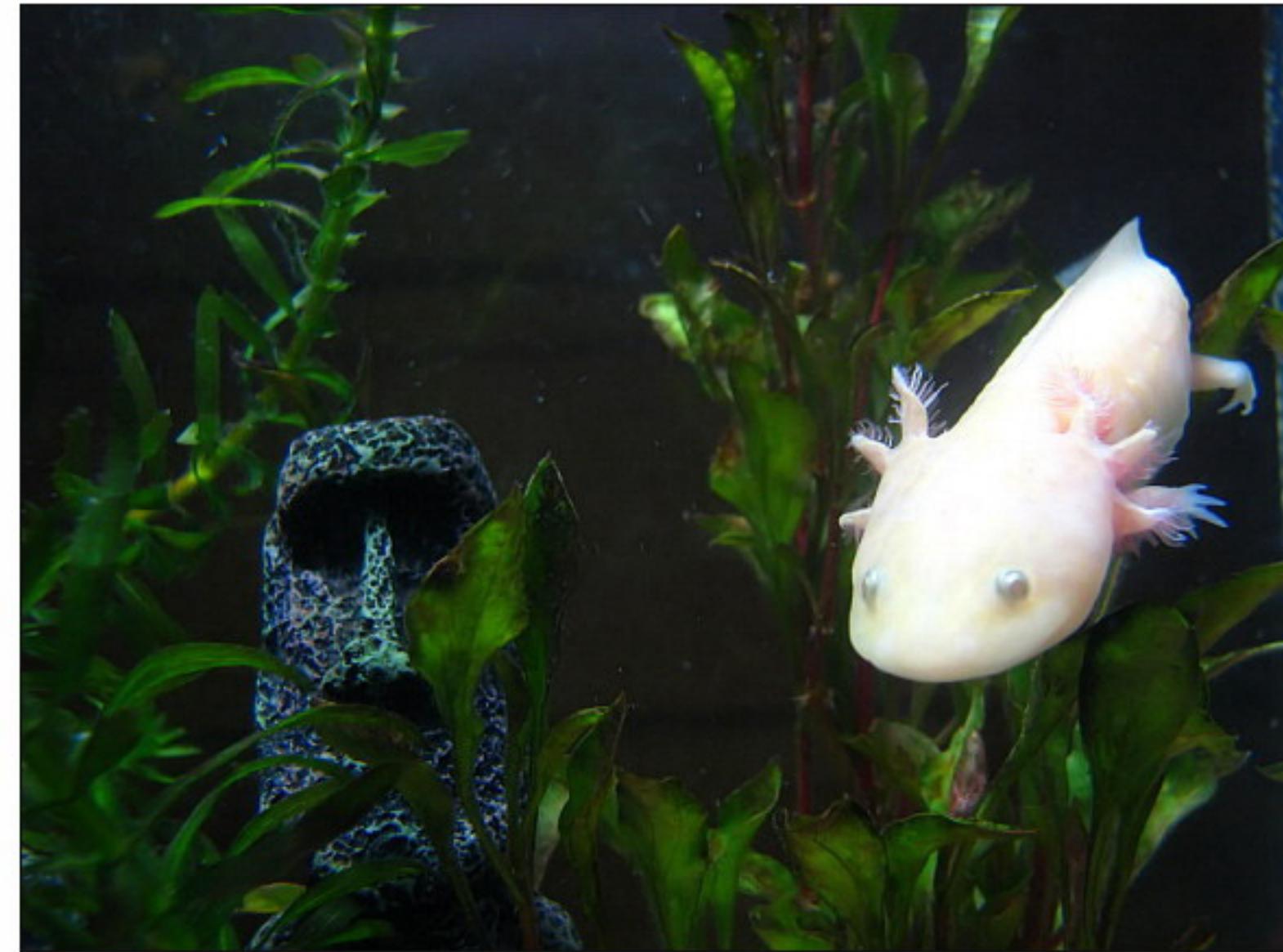
A common gecko on the wall.

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This is actually a pet frog...

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Another pet - the mexican walking fish, or axylotyl.

Taking a photo into a tank can be tricky, as a flash will reflect off the glass. This does leave much light, so you have to either up the ISO, or lower the shutter speed. Shoot from an angle, to prevent reflections. If you get the angle right, you can use a flash - sometimes.

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Another pet - the freshwater crayfish.

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This legless lizard was found swimming in the pool.

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This lace monitor is a regular visitor to the yard.

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Technically a cheat here - this ant was snapped on the beach.

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Bees are found in almost every yard in the world.

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Dragonflies are also found around the world - and the colors on this one really turned out well.

Your Backyard



Beetles - also found in just about every garden in the world.

Your Backyard



We thought adding a human hand to this one would add some interest.

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This was taken on a 2 megapixel camera - but with a focal length of 18mm.

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Bees formed this swarm just outside the kitchen window.

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You've now completed this lesson.

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