

**ARIZONA GAME AND FISH DEPARTMENT
HERITAGE DATA MANAGEMENT SYSTEM**

Animal Abstract

Element Code: AAABC02080

Data Sensitivity: No

CLASSIFICATION, NOMENCLATURE, DESCRIPTION, RANGE

NAME: *Hyla wrightorum* Taylor

COMMON NAME: Arizona treefrog, Mountain treefrog, Sonora treefrog, Wrights' treefrog, Sonora Hyla, Madrean treefrog

SYNONYMS: *Hyla eximia wrightorum* Taylor

FAMILY: Anura: Hylidae

AUTHOR, PLACE OF PUBLICATION: Taylor, Univ. Kansas Sci. Bull. 25: 436. 1939.

TYPE LOCALITY: Eleven miles south of Springerville, Apache County, Arizona, U.S.A.

TYPE SPECIMEN: HT: UMMZ-83074. I.J. Cantrall, 11 Aug 1935. Paratype: FMNH-10822 (Field# UMMZ 79141(3)).

TAXONOMIC UNIQUENESS: *Hyla wrightorum* is 1 of 5 hylidae species that occurs in Arizona (Harper et al. 2002). Until recently, *Hyla wrightorum* was regarded as a synonym of *Hyla eximia*, but Duellman recognized *H. wrightorum* as a distinct species. This treatment was adopted by Crother et al. (2003). The taxonomic status of Mexican populations north of the Mexico City region is uncertain (Crother et al 2003 in NatureServe, 2005).

DESCRIPTION: A small frog with adults ranging in size from 0.75 – 2.25 in (2-5.7 cm). The dorsum is green to brownish with a dark eye stripe that extends beyond the shoulder, sometimes to the groin. Toward the rear, the stripe may break up into spots. There is a thin white line that separates the stripe from the back color. Spotting on the head and upper back is usually scarce or absent. Some individuals have a spot on each upper eyelid and dark lengthwise bars or spots on the lower back and some completely lack such markings. Males have a tan or greenish throat, while the females throat is typically white. Toe pads are distinct but small, and the webbing is reduced. Tadpoles are brown dorsally with minute silvery-gold flecks, while dark ventrally and tinged pale gold (Somma 2005 USGS). Tadpole lengths range from 4.9 - 5.2 cm (1.9-2.04 in), with the tail alone being ½ to 2/3 their bodies (Mehta 2005). (Stebbins 1985; Bebler & King 1992; AmphibiaWeb, accessed 2005).

AIDS TO IDENTIFICATION: Skin smooth and green with a dark stripe through the eye and along the side.

ILLUSTRATIONS:

Color drawing (Stebbins 1985: plate 16)

Color photo (Behler and King 1979: plate 150)

Color Photo (R. Babb in <http://www.reptilesfaz.com/>)

Mating call and Color photo (McHugh in <http://www.enature.com/fieldguide/>)

Color photo (In <http://images.google.com/images?/>)

TOTAL RANGE: Mountains of central Arizona and Southeastward into west-central New Mexico, south into Mexico. In Mexico, south in Sierra Madre Occidental to southern Chihuahua (Duellman 2001) and perhaps to north of Mexico City region, but the precise distribution in Mexico is unclear due to taxonomic uncertainties (Frost 2002; Crother et al. 2003 in NatureServe 2005).

RANGE WITHIN ARIZONA: Forested central plateau north of Mogollon Rim and isolated populations in the Huachuca Mountains and adjacent Canelo Hills in southeastern Arizona (Brennan 2003).

SPECIES BIOLOGY AND POPULATION TRENDS

BIOLOGY: *H. wrightorum* is nocturnal. During the colder winter and hotter summer months they hibernate (aestivates) (NatureServe 2005). The skin is toxic and can severely irritate the eyes of humans after handling (Somma 2005, USGS). Voice is a harsh, low, slightly metallic note repeated several times per second.

REPRODUCTION: Breeds June through August, during and after rains. The breeding period can be from two to eight days (Mehta 2005). It breeds in shallow pools, ponds, and slow moving streams. Breeding choruses typically last for only 2-3 days, after which most frogs leave the breeding habitats (Brennan 2003). Egg masses are attached to vegetation just below the water (Behler and King 1979, in NatureServe 2005). Tadpoles metamorphose in about 6-11 weeks, when they reach about 38 mm.

FOOD HABITS: Arthropods. Very little is known of the food habits of *Hyla wrightorum*, although beetles, spiders, earthworms, flies, bark beetles, and grass particles have been seen in the stomach contents of Arizona species. Larvae probably eat algae, organic debris, and plant tissue.

HABITAT: In Arizona, they can be found on the ground or in shrubs and trees near ponds, pools and streams, usually in coniferous forests.

ELEVATION: 3,000 - 9,500 feet (915 - 2898 m). A large proportion of occurrences in Arizona occur above 6,000 feet.

PLANT COMMUNITY: Riparian communities in coniferous forests. Frequents meadows in oak-pine or pine-fir forests.

POPULATION TRENDS: Unknown. Appears to be stable on the Mogollon Rim, but may have declined in the Huachuca Mountains. According to NatureServe (2005), the population is likely relatively stable in extent of occurrence, unknown degree of decline in population size, area of occurrence, and number/condition of occurrences.

SPECIES PROTECTION AND CONSERVATION

ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT STATUS: C – Huachucas/Canelo Hills DPS (USDI, FWS 2007)
[C - H/C Hills DPS USDI, FWS 2008-2011]
STATE STATUS: 1A (AGFD SWAP 2012)
OTHER STATUS: Forest Service Sensitive (USDA, FS Region 3 2013).

MANAGEMENT FACTORS: According to NatureServe (2005), there are no known threats to this species, although some sources cite that introduced species could have an effect. In addition, Sredl and Collins (*in* Degenhart 1996) report that the presence of *Ambystoma tigrinum* larvae strongly affected the survival of tadpoles. When salamanders were absent, survival was nearly 5 times greater than when salamanders were present.

PROTECTIVE MEASURES TAKEN: Arizona fishing license required to take any amphibians.

SUGGESTED PROJECTS: Distribution, habitat, population and life history studies needed.

LAND MANAGEMENT/OWNERSHIP: BIA – Camp Verde and Fort Apache Reservations; DOD - Fort Huachuca Military Reservation; USFS - Apache-Sitgreaves, Coconino, Coronado, Kaibab, and Tonto National Forests; AGFD Region I Office; State Land Department; Private.

SOURCES OF FURTHER INFORMATION

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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

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