



New species of the *Rhinella crucifer* group (Anura, Bufonidae) from the Brazilian Cerrado

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Abstract

A new species of *Rhinella* of Central Brazil from the *Rhinella crucifer* group is described. *Rhinella inopina* sp. nov. is restricted to the disjunct Seasonal Tropical Dry Forests enclaves in the western Cerrado biome. The new species is characterized mainly by head wider than long, shape of parotoid gland, and oblique arrangement of the parotoid gland. Data on natural history and distribution are also presented.

Key words: *Rhinella crucifer* group, Seasonally Dry Forest, Cerrado, Central Brazil

Introduction

The cosmopolitan Bufonidae family (true toads) presented currently 528 species. The second most diverse genus of Bufonidae, *Rhinella* Fitzinger 1826, comprises 77 species, distributed in the Neotropics and some species were introduced in several world locations (Frost 2011). Although the taxonomy and phylogeny of the family Bufonidae, had several changes in the past few years (e.g. Frost *et al.* 2006; Chaparro *et al.* 2007), composition of major phenetic groups of *Rhinella* have remained largely unchanged (Pramuk 2006; Maciel *et al.* 2007; Narvaes & Rodrigues 2009).

Duellman and Schulte (1992) and Baldissera *et al.* (2004) defined morphologically the *Rhinella crucifer* species group based on osteological and external morphological characters. *Rhinella crucifer* was considered a species complex with an extensive geographical distribution (Haddad & Sazima 1992), since the end of century XIX, when many formerly recognized species were synonymized with *R. crucifer*. Baldissera *et al.* (2004) revised the *Rhinella crucifer* species group and redefined the group consisting of five species: *Rhinella crucifer* (Wied-Neuwied 1821), *Rhinella ornata* (Spix 1824), *Rhinella henseli* (A. Lutz 1934), *Rhinella abei* (Baldissera, Caramaschi & Haddad 2004) and *Rhinella pombali* (Baldissera, Caramaschi & Haddad 2004). The *Rhinella crucifer* species group is distributed throughout the Atlantic Rain Forest from State of Ceará to the State of Rio Grande do Sul and extending west to the states of Minas Gerais and São Paulo, Brazil, as well as to northeastern Argentina (Baldissera *et al.* 2004; Frost 2011).

Herein we describe a new species of *Rhinella* assigned to the *Rhinella crucifer* species group based on evidence of external morphological characters such as head wider than long, shape of parotoid gland, and oblique arrangement of the parotoid gland. The new species has the inland most distribution in the group. We also provide remarks on natural history, distribution, and conservation of the species.