

## **An evaluation of the subspecies *Acris crepitans blanchardi* (Anura, Hylidae)**

MALCOLM L. McCALLUM<sup>1</sup> & STANLEY E. TRAUTH<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Biological Sciences Program, Texas A&M University-Texarkana, Texarkana, TX 75501, USA*  
(Malcolm.McCallum@tamut.edu)

<sup>2</sup> *Department of Biological Sciences, Arkansas State University, State University, AR 72467, USA*  
(strauth@astate.edu)

### **Abstract**

We investigated the validity and distribution of the subspecies *Acris crepitans blanchardi*. Currently *Acris crepitans* contains three subspecies: the northern cricket frog (*A. c. crepitans*), Blanchards cricket frog (*A. c. blanchardi*) and the coastal cricket frog (*A. c. paludicola*). We examined the diagnostic characters of 1441 specimens from the center of the range (Arkansas, Missouri, and Mississippi), 161 specimens from the extreme northwest portion of this species range (South Dakota and Nebraska), and 85 from the extreme southeast portion of the species range (Florida and Georgia). Discriminate analysis was applied to the tabulated data and no significant differences between portions of the range could be discerned. No concrete evidence was found to support designation of specimens from South Dakota and Nebraska or from Smallens Cave (origin of the type specimen) as *A. c. blanchardi*. This information places the subspecies *A. c. blanchardi* in a status of doubtful validity suggesting that no delineation between *A. c. blanchardi* and *A. c. crepitans* should be made at this time.

**Key words:** *Acris crepitans blanchardi*, *A. crepitans*, Blanchards Cricket Frog, subspecies

### **Introduction**

The term subspecies came into use during the 19<sup>th</sup> century replacing the term variety. Mayr (1969) defined a subspecies as “An aggregate of phenotypically similar populations of a species, inhabiting a geographic subdivision of the range of a species, and differing taxonomically from other populations of the species.”

Early authors were often indiscriminant with their use of this category (Mayr, 1969) resulting in classification problems for modern day biologists.