

Submitted by **MARK L. ALLABACK** (e-mail: markallaback@sbcglobal.net), **DAVID M. LAABS**, Biosearch Associates, PO Box 1220, Santa Cruz, California 95061, USA, **DAVID S. KEEGAN** (e-mail: dkeegan@ddaplanning.com), and **JOSH D. HARWAYNE** (e-mail: jharwayne@ddaplanning.com), Denise Duffy and Associates, Inc., 947 Cass Street, Suite 5, Monterey, California 93940, USA.

RANA DRAYTONII (California Red-legged Frog). **PREY.** Although ranid frogs generally have indiscriminant diets, data regarding vertebrate food items taken by *Rana draytonii* are sparse. Vertebrates documented as prey include *Gasterosteus aculeatus* (Three-spined Stickleback), *Pseudacris regilla* (Pacific Chorus Frog), *Peromyscus californicus* (California Mouse) (Hayes and Tennant 1985. Southwest. Nat. 30:601–605), *Microtus californicus* (California Vole), and *Reithrodontomys megalotis* (Western Harvest Mouse) (Hayes et al. 2006. Herpetol. Rev. 37:449). Although expected, snakes have not been reported as dietary items.

On 13 Aug 2008, at 0030 h, while conducting surveys for *R. draytonii* at a pond in the Sierra Nevada foothills in northern California (Placer Co.), an adult frog (ca. 100 mm) was observed grabbing and quickly devouring a juvenile (ca. 20 cm SVL) *Thamnophis sirtalis* (Common Gartersnake). The *T. sirtalis* had been slowly moving across a flat, muddy bank covered with *Eleocharis* sp., and the *R. draytonii* was situated at the water/mud bank margin, quiescent, facing into ponded open water. Consistent with other feeding observations of ranid frogs (Anderson 1993. J. Exp. Biol. 179:1–12), the *R. draytonii*, upon lunging and grabbing the snake, used its forelimbs to manipulate the snake farther into its mouth. The capture and swallowing of the snake occurred within a period of five to seven seconds and the snake was entirely engulfed within that time. The temperature at the time of observation was 23°C, water temperature was 23.5°C, humidity was ca. 50%, and moon phase was waxing, approaching full.

Submitted by **ERIC W. STITT** (e-mail: estitt@ecorpc consulting.com), and **CRAIG P. SELTENRICH** (e-mail: cseltenrich@ecorpc consulting.com), ECORP Consulting, Inc., 2525 Warren Drive, Rocklin, California 95677, USA.

RANA PIFIENS (Northern Leopard Frog). **WINTER ACTIVITY.** On 10 Dec 2006 at ca. 1200 h, a *Rana pipiens* was observed on the north shore of Lake Winter located in Northern Wisconsin (45.8°N, 91.1°W). The lake was covered with approximately 2–3 inches of ice, except the occasional narrow opening near the shore. The south-facing shoreline was somewhat undercut from erosion and about 30.5 cm of soil was exposed. While walking out onto the ice from the shoreline a *R. pipiens* was observed jumping away from shore and out onto the ice and snow. The *R. pipiens* appeared to be rather torpid and its skin appeared rather dry and leathery.

The previous weather was cold, often with maximum temperatures well below the average maximum temperature for those days. On 9 Dec 2006 the temperature increased to a maximum of 1.7°C and then continued to climb to around 4–5°C during the day of the observation, which was mostly sunny. 5.6°C was the maximum temperature that day; two degrees below the 6.7°C record set in 2002 and well above the typical average maximum temperature

of -1.6°C (temperature data accessed on-line from www.undergroundweather.com).

Submitted by **ERIK R. OLSON**, 430 Lincoln Drive, Univ. Wisconsin, Madison, Wisconsin 53706-1381, USA; e-mail: erolson3@wisc.edu.

RANA SYLVATICA (Wood Frog). **EGG MASS SURVEYS.** Egg mass counts have become an increasingly popular method for estimating reproductive effort of Wood Frogs in seasonal breeding pools in the northeastern United States. Scientists, conservation organizations, and regulatory agencies use egg mass counts to determine population size and track population trends over time, to identify breeding pools in need of protective measures, and to develop indices based upon biological significance (Couch and Paton 2000. Wildl. Soc. Bull. 28[4]:895–901; Oscarson and Calhoun 2007. Wetlands 27[1]:80–95). Wood Frog ovipositioning typically occurs in communal rafts attached to submerged vegetation at or near the water surface (Couch and Paton, *op. cit.*; Egan and Paton 2004. Wetlands 24(1):1–13; Seale 1982. Copeia 1982[3]:627–635). In many northeastern states, citizen scientists are being trained to assess the ecological value of vernal pools through egg mass counts. Using snorkel equipment for one such survey in Maine, I found that the subsurface view of a large raft of Wood Frog egg masses revealed numerous masses on the pool bottom. Between 0.5 and 1 m below the communal aggregation of egg masses attached to *Ilex verticillata* at the water surface, some masses were clearly attached to submerged vegetation at the pool bottom while others were merely resting on a substrate of leaf litter. During 2009 springtime assessments (27 April–5 May), three pools (Penobscot County, Maine, USA; 44.884°N, 68.688°E; NAD 1983) were found to contain Wood Frog egg masses directly below and around the margins of rafts attached to vegetation near the water surface. There was no lack of attachment sites near the water surface in any of the three pools. Whether they were originally deposited in situ or were secondarily dislodged and came to rest on the pool bottom is unknown. In deep or tannic pools where visibility is poor, egg mass counts may have the potential to underestimate the true number of masses that occur within a pool.

Submitted by **DAWN MORGAN**, Department of Wildlife Ecology, 5755 Nutting Hall, Room 210, University of Maine, Orono, Maine 04469, USA; e-mail: Dawn_Morgan@umit.maine.edu.

RHINELLA ARENARUM (Common Toad). **MORTALITY.** Car traffic often results in high amphibian casualties when roads are encountered during breeding or other movements. *Rhinella arenarum* is the common toad in Argentina (Ceï 1980. Amphibians of Argetina. Monitore Zoologico Italiano [NS]. Monogr. 2, 609 pp.). In San Juan Province this species is distributed in all wetted areas including the watering systems of towns. On 23 Nov 2008, we counted the toads dead on the streets in Valle Fértil Department. This region belongs to the Chaco Seco Phytogeographical Province (Cabrera 1994. Enciclopedia Argentina de agricultura y ganadería. Editorial ACME S.A.C.I., 81 pp.). During this time 84 dead toads were encountered on the road in 900 m. All toads were 89 ± 18.8 mm, typical of adult reproductive *R. arenarum*. This is