

Hypsiboas punctatus (Spotted Tree Frog)

Family: Hylidae (Tree Frogs)

Order: Anura (Frogs and Toads)

Class: Amphibia (Amphibians)



Fig. 1. Spotted tree frog, *Hypsiboas punctatus*.

[<http://www.inaturalist.org/observations/2770252>, downloaded 23 October 2016]

TRAITS. The spotted tree frog, or polka-dot tree frog, has smooth skin on the upper side of the body, coloured pale green with darkish red spots during the day, and there is a yellowish stripe running down the side of the frog. The underside is white. During the night the skin on the upper side is a reddish colour with yellowish spots (Fig. 1), and the rest of the frog is pale green. The eyes are black, surrounded by a white ring (Rainforest Conservation Fund, 2016). Only the bases of the fingers are webbed, and the toes are webbed halfway up. The males can be 31-40mm in length while the females are 35-41mm. This species was previously known as *Hyla punctata* (IUCN, 2016).

DISTRIBUTION. They are found in various regions of South America ranging from Paraguay, Brazil, Bolivia, to Argentina, as well as on the island of Trinidad (but not Tobago) (Fig. 2). They range from low-lying areas up to 1400m above sea level (IUCN, 2016).

HABITAT AND ECOLOGY. They can live in a range of habitats, such as in flooded pastures and open countryside, in swamps, ponds, along rivers and in areas where the water is very slow

moving; however they can also be found in some forests (IUCN, 2016). Their diet consists mostly on insects and can include any other tiny animals that they manage to catch (Rainforest Conservation Fund, 2016).

REPRODUCTION. Males use advertisement calls at sites to make themselves known to females. Females then make their way to these calling sites to lay eggs. Females which were observed in the wild laid around 200-300 eggs in clusters of around 15. These egg stuck together and floated at the surface of the water and then stuck to floating vegetation (Faivovich et al., 2014).

BEHAVIOUR. The frogs communicate with each other by using different types of calls. Males use advertisement calls to attract females to them, or they use territorial calls to warn other males about invading their calling sites. Males are very territorial. Males fight with each other over mates and over calling sites as well, because the females lay their eggs at these calling sites and the males must protect them. Figure 3 shows this behavior (Faivovich et al., 2014).

APPLIED BIOLOGY. This species has a widespread distribution throughout most of South America as well as on the island of Trinidad and it is fairly common. It can survive in a great range of habitats and its population is not considerably affected by any major threats. As a result *Hypsiboas punctatus* is listed as of Least Concern, which simply put means that the species is not endangered in any way or at risk of becoming endangered (IUCN, 2016).

REFERENCES

- Faivovich, J., Brunetti, A.E., and Taboada, C. (2014). The reproductive biology of *Hypsiboas punctatus* (Anura: Hylidae): male territoriality and the possible role of different signals during female choice. *SALAMANDRA* **50**(4):215-224.
- IUCN. (2016) *Hypsiboas punctatus*. The IUCN Red List of Threatened Species. <http://www.iucnredlist.org/details/full/55620/0>.
- Rainforest Conservation Fund. (2016). *Hyla punctata*. Rainforest Conservation <http://www.rainforestconservation.org/species-data-sheets/frogs/hyla-punctata/>.

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Fig. 2. Geographic distribution of *Hypsiboas punctatus*.

[<http://maps.iucnredlist.org/map.html?id=55620>, downloaded 23 October 2016]

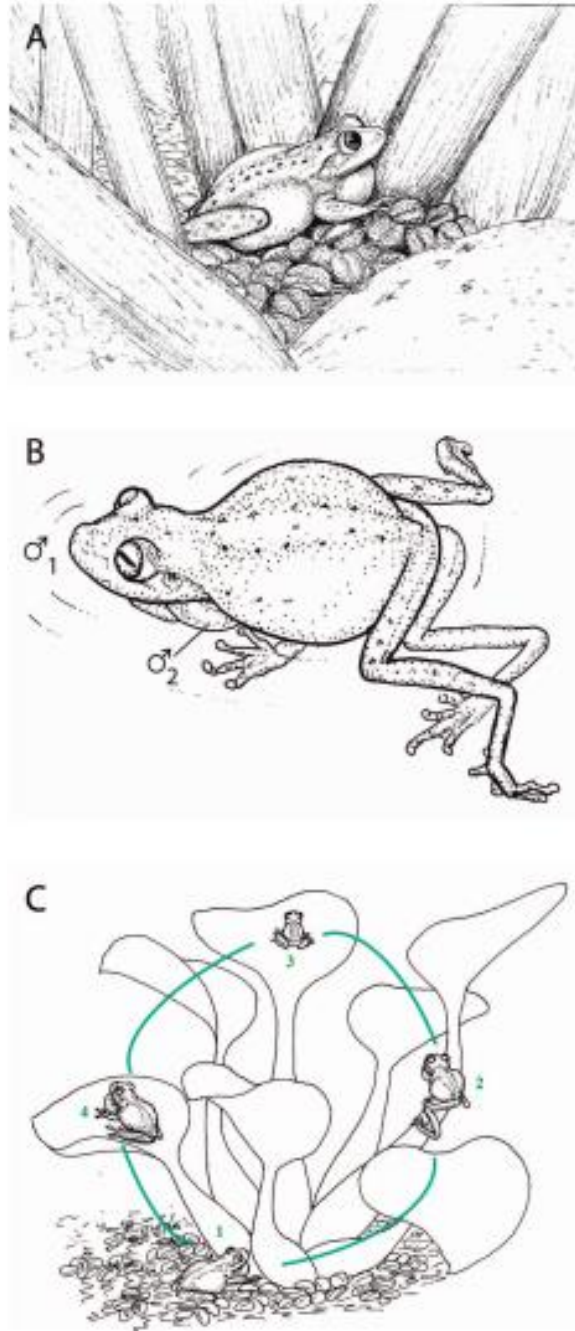


Fig. 3. Reproductive behaviour of *H. punctatus*. A) Calling by the male. B) Two males fighting. C) A male giving off advertisement calls at position #1 and territorial calls at #3 and #4.

[http://zoologia.puce.edu.ec/vertebrados/Recursos/publicaciones/Cientifica/Brunetti_et_al-0690.pdf, downloaded 23 October 2016]