



Colorado River Toad

Incilius alvarius



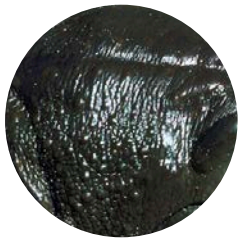
Jabba

My birthday is **unknown**, but I came to the zoo in **October, 2021**.

I am one of the Racine Zoo's educational ambassador animals! I live behind the scenes, so you will only see me during educational programs. My skin is sensitive and toxic so I am a non-touch animal!

I am also known as the **Sonoran desert toad**

RIVER TOADS AT A GLANCE



- My skin is **smooth** and **wet**. Just like other amphibians, I use my skin to help me breathe oxygen.

Adult:
4-7 inches in length
10-11 ounces

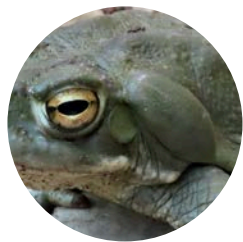


- I have a **wide mouth with no teeth**. I swallow my food whole.
- In the wild, I like to eat **insects, small mammals, small lizards, and other amphibians**.
- At the zoo, my favorite food is insects.
- I blink when I swallow my food. **My eyes** help me push food down my throat.



Avg. life expectancy in native habitats: 4-10 years

Avg. life expectancy in human care: up to 20 years



- I have special **parotid glands** behind my **eyes** and **on my back**.
- I secrete a **bufotoxin** to prevent predators from eating me. It is **poisonous** and causes serious harm when ingested.

WHERE ARE NATIVE RIVER TOAD HABITATS LOCATED?



The Colorado river toad can be found in arid grasslands, wooden scrubland, and inland water sources. They are semi-aquatic, so they stay around large streams or temporary rain drains, canals, and irrigation ditches. Their range spans throughout the Sonoran Desert from Southern California and Arizona to Northern Mexico.

Colorado River Toad Behavior

PUFFING UP

When I feel threatened, I will inflate my body to look bigger. I do this to scare predators and make myself unappealing to eat.

I feel uncomfortable in the situation that I am. I may need some alone time.



BURROWING

In the wild, I burrow when it's hot and dry to stay cool and moist. I like to stay in my burrow through the hottest points of the day.

I might want to get comfortable and find a place to rest.



VOCALIZATIONS

To communicate with others, I will make a low-pitched screech. I can use this to find other toads, or scare off other predators.

If I am making these noises, I may be feeling stressed out and need some time alone.



SLEEPING

I am naturally nocturnal, so I tend to be active during the evening hours and sleepy during the day.

I may be sedentary when you see me. I will need some time to wake up and get comfortable before being seen.

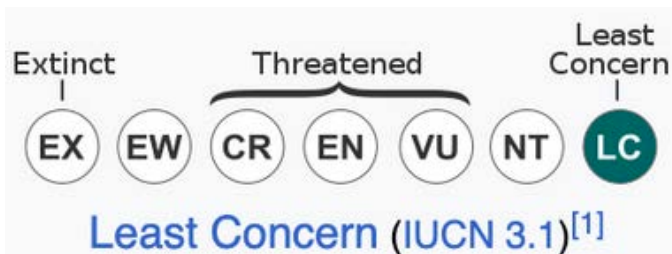


- Amphibians, like the Colorado river toad, go through brumation when temperatures get colder. Toads will burrow themselves deep into the ground and stay there until the springtime comes and it gets warmer. Brumation is similar to hibernation, or a state of inactivity, unique to reptiles and amphibians.
- River toads wait for spring rains in the desert to mate. They will gather in temporary breeding pools and streams.
- Females lay strands of eggs containing up to 8,000 eggs

River Toad Conservation

There are no significant threats to this species worldwide; however, tadpoles are threatened by pond contamination. Adults are threatened by habitat destruction, and are listed as Endangered in California and Threatened in New Mexico.

Colorado river toad's are currently listed as Least Concern, but vary depending on what U.S. state they are in. They are endangered in California, and threatened in Arizona. Habitat destruction and climate change is reducing the waterways they like to live in.



How can we help?

Amphibians have sensitive skin which can be affected by the presence of pesticides and herbicides. They can be irritated and be threatened if their ponds are contaminated. Reduce the use of pesticides and weed killers on lawns or use natural landscaping practices.

Handling amphibians with your bare hands can injure both you and the animal. The oils and salts found naturally on your skin are harmful to the frog. Please admire them from a distance.