

Red-crowned Toadlet

Pseudophryne australis



What does it look like?

Despite its name, this is not a toad but a colourful little frog! The frog is black or dark brown on its back with a reddish tinge or scattered red flecks. It is easy to identify by the bright orange-red triangle or 'T' shape on its head and a stripe on its lower back of the same colour. On the base of each arm there is a white patch. On its belly is a striking, marbled, black and white pattern. The skin on the back is smooth with low warts and the toes have no webbing. It usually measures less than 30 mm in length. The short, grating and 'squelchy' call can be heard all year round.

Where does it live?

This frog is found near sandstone areas within the Sydney Basin. They are often associated with temporary creeks and flooded areas, under rocks and logs and occur in open forests and inhabit periodically wet drainage lines below sandstone ridges that often have shale lenses or cappings.

What does it eat?

The Red-crowned Toadlet feeds on insects and worms. It is an opportunistic feeder and will eat most things within a limited size range.

Breeding and Lifecycle

Males call after rain throughout the year from burrows or under rocks and leaf litter. The Red-crowned Toadlet breeds in damp leaf litter and over 20 large eggs are laid at a time. Hatching occurs when the tadpoles are well developed and the site has had heavy rainfall. Until then, the male frog usually stays close to the developing eggs, but this is probably to defend the breeding site rather than the eggs.

Conservation threats

The population size of the Red-crowned Toadlet is known to be decreasing, due to direct human impact via urbanisation and tourism. In addition, inappropriate catchment management, including degraded water quality and inappropriate fire regimes and habitat modification (eg vegetation clearing, invasive weeds) are also contributing to their decline. We have established sediment basins suitable as Red-crowned Toadlet habitat here in the Tourist Park. This is designed to encourage breeding and increase population numbers in the area.

