

# Northern Casque-headed Frog

*Pternohyla fodiens*

Family Hylidae



**Global Rank:** G4

**State Rank:** S1S2 (AZ)

**Distribution:** In the United States, the only habitat is in the San Simon Valley between Sells and Ajo, Arizona, north to near Hichiwan, Pima County, Arizona. In Mexico, the range extends south in western Mexico from Sonora to Michoacan. Extends from near sea level to about 4,900 ft. (1,490 m.) in elevation.

**Description:** Reaches up to about 2 1/2 in. (6.2 cm.) in snout-vent length. The upper surface of the head is very hard and the skin is firmly attached. There is a prominent ridge between the eyes and the nostrils and a fold of skin at the back of the head. Toe pads are small but distinct. A single large whitish tubercle is on each hind foot. Coloration is brown or pale yellow on upper surfaces, with large, dark brown spots edged with black. Lower surfaces are plain white. Adult males have a dark patch on each side of the throat. They have a large vocal sac which looks slightly bilobed when viewed from the front. The voice is a loud, low-pitched *walk, walk, walk* given 2 to 3 per second and all at one pitch.



*Current range of the casque-headed frog*

**Reproduction:** Breeds in June to September during periods of summer rains. After the first hard rains in July, choruses quickly form around temporary pools.

**Food:** Believed to be a variety of invertebrates.

**Habits:** The northern casque-headed frog is a terrestrial, burrowing, nocturnal frog of open terrain and tropical scrub forests. Occurs in mesquite grassland in extreme southern Arizona.

**Management Implications:** Mainly an amphibian of western Mexico, only habitat in the United States is in extreme southcentral Arizona.

**Important References:** Stebbins, R.C. 1985. A field guide to western reptiles and amphibians. The Peterson Field Guide Series. Houghton Mifflin Company, New York, NY.