

Investigation of the Herpetofauna of Sonora, Mexico

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Figure 1. Mexican Treefrog (*Smilisca baudinii*) from Sonora, Mexico. Photo by Erik F. Enderson.



Sonora, Mexico is among the most biologically diverse places in North America yet our knowledge of the region's herpetofauna is woefully inadequate. The only statewide investigation was published 60 years ago (Bogert and Oliver 1945) when most of the state was nearly inaccessible. Beginning in the 1970's and through early 1990's, herpetologists from the University of Arizona collected specimens throughout Sonora. Most of these collections however remain unknown to science. Recognizing the uniqueness of the area and its uncertain future due to increased logging, abusive grazing, clearing land to plant non-native buffleggrass, and the growing threat of illegal drug agriculture, herpetologists from the University of Arizona, Arizona-Sonora Desert Museum, and Drylands Institute have begun to collate existing records in conjunction with ongoing field work in an effort to thoroughly investigate its herpetofauna.

An important addition to this project was the purchase of aerial photos that will be used to create GIS maps of an important area within the state. These photos were purchased with funds granted to our project by the Tucson Herpetological Society's C. H. Lowe Research Fund. We sincerely thank the Tucson Herpetological Society for facilitating local research and thus furthering our knowledge of one of the world's most biologically unique and important areas.

Literature Cited

Bogert, C. M., and J. A. Oliver. 1945. A preliminary analysis of the herpetofauna of Sonora. *Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural History* 83:297-426.