

Distribution of the Yellow-lemon Tree Frog, *Hyla savignyi* (Audouin, 1827), in southern Arabia: updates and extensions of previous records

By Cornelya F. C. Klütsch, Wolf-Rüdiger Grosse, Bernhard Misof,
Abdul Karim Nasher, and Clas M. Naumann

Abstract. The distribution of the Yellow-lemon Tree Frog *Hyla savignyi* in southwestern Arabia is presented. This isolated distribution area is limited to the western escarpment along the Red Sea. All sites were located between 1,400 and 2,800 m above sea level. The northernmost occurrence was found near Taif in Saudi Arabia (21°16'N, 40°25'E), the southernmost near Mawah (14°13'N, 44°23'E) in Yemen.

Kurzfassung. Das Verbreitungsgebiet des Kleinasiatischen Laubfrosches *Hyla savignyi* in Südwestarabien wird dargestellt. Es handelt sich um ein isoliertes Vorkommen, das auf die Bergkette entlang des Roten Meeres beschränkt ist. Sämtliche Fundorte liegen zwischen 1400 und 2800 m NN. Das nördlichste Vorkommen liegt bei Taif in Saudi-Arabien (21°16'N, 40°25'E), das südlichste bei Mawah (14°13'N, 44°23'E) im Jemen.

Key words. Arabian Peninsula, Yemen, Saudi Arabia, biogeography, distribution pattern, vertical distribution.

Introduction

Hyla savignyi was first described by AUDOUIN from Syria in 1827 (DUELLMAN 1977). BOULENGER (1882) assigned the species to *Hyla arborea* as *Hyla arborea* var. *savignyi*, and NIEDEN (1924) subsequently gave it subspecies rank, i.e. *Hyla arborea savignyi*. Nowadays, *Hyla savignyi* is again generally accepted as a distinct species (SCHNEIDER & NEVO 1972, BRZOSKA & SCHNEIDER 1982, SCHNEIDER et al. 1984, SCHNEIDER 1974, FROST 1985). In addition to morphological characters, *Hyla savignyi* differs from other *Hyla* species by its distinct mating calls which are intermediate between *H. meridionalis* and *H. arborea* in all parameters (SCHNEIDER & NEVO 1972, BALLETO et al. 1985).

The distribution of *H. savignyi* extends from Turkey in the west to Georgia, Armenia, Azerbaijan und Iran in the east and south-east, and to Israel, Palestine and Jordan in the south. In Turkey, both *Hyla savignyi* and *H. arborea* are found: *H. arborea* is confined to the west, and *H. savignyi* to the south-east and the east. Both species meet on the Mediterranean coast near Anamur (see e.g. KAYA & SIMMONS 1999, SCHNEIDER 2000, 2001). A first record from southern Arabia was given by PARKER (1938) who collected some specimens from Abha in the Asir Mountains of Saudi Arabia. A few years later, PARKER (1941) found the species also near Sana'a in Yemen. This isolated occurrence of the species in southwest Arabia was subsequently confirmed by others, including SCHMIDT (1953), BALLETO et al., SCHÄTTI & GASPERETTI (1994), and SCHÜTTE (1986). Based on these literature records and