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BUFO BUFO (Common toad): BREEDING PHENOLOGY. The Common toad (*Bufo bufo*) is a cosmopolitan species occupying a variety of terrestrial habitats all over Europe. As the species has a wide distribution it seems logical that there will be different reproductive patterns across its distribution.

The breeding season of this species is highly variable, influenced by altitudinal and climate gradients. In Spain, *B. bufo* is supposed to have a highly synchronized reproductive period (Richter-Boix *et al.*, 2006) but with regional differences due to latitude. In Doñana National Park (SW Spain), the breeding season begins in January-February (Díaz-Paniagua *et al.*, 2005); in mountainous populations from Madrid, reproduction occurs in June (Martínez-Solano *et al.*, 2006). In Cataluña, in the east of Spain, breeding onset ranges between January and March (Salvador & García-París, 2001).

During the monitoring of Gandaras de Budiño e Ribeiras do Louro wetland, Porriño, NW Spain (29TNG36), some strings of *B. bufo* eggs were detected on 6th December 2006. This is the earliest record of toad egg-laying recorded during the last 10 years of monitoring there. This fact was also coincident with the early metamorphosis of toadlets at that site, these being found during the first week of March 2007. The breeding season in Galicia starts in March according to published data about *B. bufo* in our region (Galan & Fernández Arias, 1993; Galan, pers. comm.) but it seems that there is a trend towards earlier breeding (Ayres & García, 2007; Ayres, 2008).

The temporal spacing of the toad breeding season is not well known, it would be interesting to obtain more information about reproductive differences due to altitudinal and hydroperiod gradients (Hartel *et al.*,

2007). Also, climate change could modify the breeding phenology of temperate amphibians and is known to affect reproduction and survival (Tryjanowski *et al.*, 2003; Reading, 2007; Sparks *et al.*, 2007). This could be the reason for these early spawn strings, as Galicia sometimes suffers in this decade severe drought during summer-autumn, with the driest period in the last 60 years recorded in 2006–2007. Daily maximum temperature was also high, reaching 20°C on some days. It seems that a combination of rainfall and high temperature could be the driving factor that led *B. bufo* to start the breeding season earlier than in previous years.

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