

Our Arroyo Ecosystem

California Toad

Anaxyrus boreas halophilus

An adult California toad is a medium-sized toad, measuring anywhere from 2-5 inches long. Its coloring is greenish, tan, reddish brown, dusky gray, or yellow on top with a light-colored stripe down the middle of its back. Its warts are often rusty and set on dark blotches.

To defend itself, these warts and parotid glands (kidney-shaped raised areas just behind the eyes of a toad) emit a toxin, though some predators are immune to it, and others attack its under-side.

In the spring and early summer, toads are often found at the edge of water, sometimes basking on rocks and logs. At other times of the year they can be found farther from the water where they spend much of their time in moist terrestrial habitats. Toads use rodent holes, rock chambers, and root system hollows as refuges from heat and cold.

Their diet consists of invertebrates, which they locate by sight, then lunge, extending their large sticky tongues to deliver it to their mouth.

Visit www.californiaherps.com for more information on this and other reptiles and amphibians.

