

Recently discovered toad species in Nev. face threats



Dixie Valley toads inhabit Nevada's Great Basin. Photo/Patrick Donnelly/Center for Biological Diversity

By Maya L. Kapoor, High Country News

Researchers at UNR have named three new toad species: the Dixie Valley toad, the Railroad Valley toad and the Hot Creek toad. This is an especially exciting feat because it's rare to find new species of any amphibians, the class of animals that includes toads, frogs, newts, salamanders and caecilians.

The most recent toad discovery north of Mexico, the Wyoming toad, was found almost half a century ago in 1968, and it has since gone extinct in the wild.

And while it's rare to find new amphibians anywhere, these toads are particularly intriguing because they live in the Great Basin region of Northern Nevada, which is one of the driest parts of the country, averaging slightly more than 13 inches of rain per year. The toads thrive in tiny, naturally

occurring oases such as small springs, wetlands or seeps, where thick vegetation makes them hard to spot during the day, according to a statement by researchers.

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