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# Observations on the occurrence of *Rana dalmatina* Bonaparte, 1840 in Basque provinces (Amphibia, Ranidae)

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Although several *Rana dalmatina* sites in Basque provinces have been published, its occurrence in this region has not been generally accepted. Amestoy (1955) mentions Zurbano (according to U.T.M. coordinates zone 30T WN 34), Iruraiz (30T WN 44) and Gopogui (30T WN 25). J. Ibaranda (in Amestoy, 1955) has found *Rana dalmatina* on Mount Altube (30T WN 15). These four sites in the province of Alava are not dated. Gállego (1970) mentions an observation of *Rana dalmatina* in 1967 near Echarri-Aranaz (30T WN 75) in the province of Navarra. Martínez Rica (1983) cites Gállego (1970) and moreover maps a locality near the French border (30T XN 08) without documentation. These localities have been introduced on the map (Fig.1). To judge from his distribution-map, Fuhn (1960) seems to accept the occurrence of the Agile Frog in Basque provinces. Andrada (1980) records that the Agile Frog has recently been found in Basque provinces but gives no further documentation. Other authors do not accept the published observations. Salvador (1974) and Arnold, Burton and Ovenden (1978) apparently regard *Rana dalmatina* as absent in the region.

On march the 23rd of 1980 we found two egg clumps in a small and shallow puddle near the northern margin of a large lake (Embalse de Ullivarri) in the north of the province of Alava (30T WN 35) at an elevation of about 600 m. Each clump was attached around a plant in the way known from *Rana dalmatina*. During the afternoon of the same day just under the «Alto de Altube» (599 m), we passed a rather large marsh, surrounded by versants overgrown

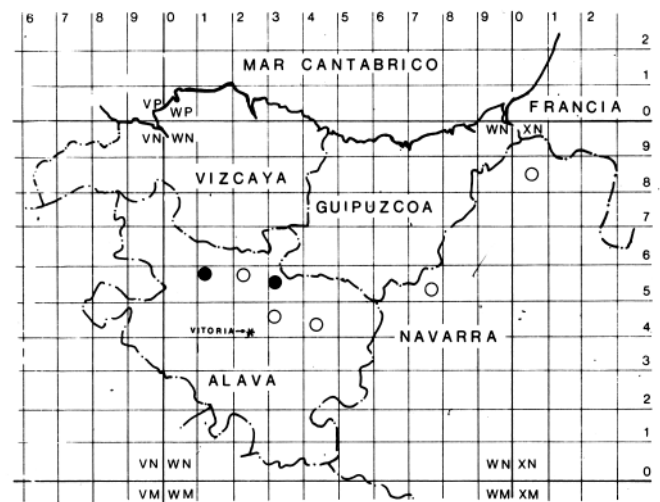


Figure 1.- *Rana dalmatina* in the Basque provinces (on U.T.M. grid; each square is 10 x 10 Km<sup>2</sup>). Open circles: old data from literature. Black circles: our data.

by trees and bracken (*Pteridium aquilinum*)(30T WN 15). The marsh itself contained a dense vegetation of algae, grass, cat tail (*Typha spec.*) and other marsh plants. In the part where the cat tail was growing we saw about 40 egg clumps, each fixed around a plant or a twig. All clumps were free from one another. In *Rana temporaria* Linnaeus, 1758 the spawn is deposited in a different way. Besides, we found three adult males of *Rana* with long legs, almost unspotted bellies and throats, large and pronounced eardrums, strikingly banded legs, general colouration as in the Agile Frog (reddish-brown, with a grey hue), and snout-vent lengths of 56, 57 and 58 mm, respectively, which clearly represented *Rana dalmatina*. Because of the mentioned characters, confusion with *Rana temporaria* is unlikely. Long-legged *Rana temporaria* do exist in the Pyrenees and northwestern

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Photograph 1.- Marsh at «Alto de Altube», spawning site of *Rana dalmatina* (photo 4-III-1982).



Photograph 2.- *Rana dahatina* specimen from «Alto de Altube» on 4-III-1982.

Spain (Veenstra in prep.; see also Dubois, 1982) but all other characters indicate *Rana dalmatina*. From *Rana Iberica* Boulenger, 1879 they are also distinct (size, colouration, habitat).

In 1982, on March the 4<sup>rd</sup> the observations near the «Alto de Altube» could be confirmed by one of us. Photographs of the site and of live specimens were made (see below), and two animals were collected and are now in the collection of the Zoological Museum of the University of Amsterdam (reg. no. 7513).

## SUMMARY.

In 1980 and 1982 the occurrence of *Rana dalmatina* in the surroundings of Vitoria (Basque provinces) was established. A short description of habitats and animals is given. Previous data of *Rana dalmatina* in Basque provinces are ordered.

## RESUMEN

Durante 1980 y 1982, se comprobó la presencia de *Rana dalmatina* en los alrededores de Vitoria (País Vasco). Se presenta una breve descripción del hábitat y de los animales y se pone en orden los datos anteriores sobre *R. dalmatina* en el País Vasco.

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