

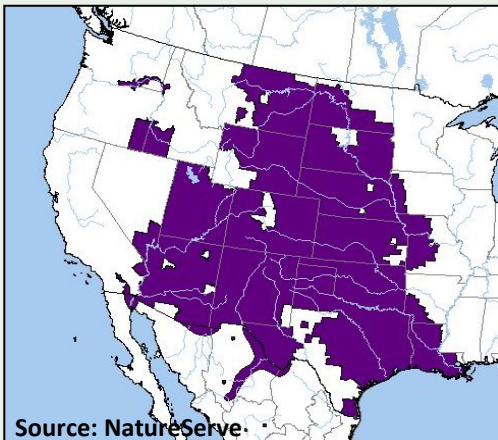
# Woodhouse's Toad and the Department of Defense



Picture by: UC Davis Museum of Fish and Wildlife Biology

The Woodhouse's Toad (*Anaxyrus woodhousii*) is an abundant and widespread toad species occurring primarily in the central and southwestern U.S. Its name comes from Samuel Washington Woodhouse, a surgeon and naturalist who explored the southwestern U.S during the mid-19th century.

**Description:** The adults of this species are typically between 1¾ to 4 inches (4.4 to 10.2 cm) in snout-vent length. Females grow much larger than males. Its background color may be gray, brown, olive, or yellowish, speckled with numerous small dark spots that usually contain 1-2 warts. A narrow, white or pale, vertebral stripe runs down the middle of the back of adults, and prominent cranial crests and elongated parotoid (poison) glands are present on each side of the back of the head. They have a cream or beige underside that may have dark flecks.



Source: NatureServe

**Range:** This species is found primarily in the central and southwestern U.S., and portions of adjacent northern Mexico. Isolated populations occur in southeastern Washington, southeastern Oregon, and southwestern Idaho.

**Habitat:** This species inhabits grasslands, desert and semi-desert shrublands, woods, floodplains, and agricultural areas. It burrows underground or hides under rocks, plants, or other cover when inactive. Breeding typically occurs between February and July. Eggs and larvae develop in the shallow water of marshes, rain pools, ponds, stock tanks, lakes, reservoirs, flooded areas, and other bodies of water lacking a strong current. Adults may migrate up to several hundred meters between breeding pools and adjacent non-breeding terrestrial habitats. This is one of very few native anurans that co-exists well with American Bullfrogs, crayfishes, and a variety of introduced fishes.

**Behavior:** The Woodhouse's Toad is mostly nocturnal, but juveniles are sometimes found active during the day. It is a generalist predator that consumes a variety of insects and other small invertebrates. Near urban or developed areas, Woodhouse's Toads will congregate under outdoor lights at night to hunt for insects. The breeding call for this species is a loud *waaaaah* lasting about 1-4 seconds and emitted up to several times per minute. The call has been described as sounding like an infant's cry or the call of a sheep.

**Military Interactions:** This species may be common in military training and housing areas. Its presence is often favored in housing areas since they will consume a variety of insect species.

**Conservation Status:** There is currently no state or federal conservation status for this species. It is listed as G5-Secure by NatureServe and Least Concern by IUCN.

**Threats/Planning Considerations:** Threats to this species include habitat loss, chytrid fungus, and road mortality. Military natural resource managers should try to protect upland non-breeding and wetland breeding habitats used by this species.

## Occurrence on Military Lands

| Confirmed   | Potential   |
|---|---|
| Confirmed present on 7 Air Force; 19 Army; 1 Marine Corps; and 7 Navy properties. | Up to an additional 20 Air Force; 20 Army; 2 Marine Corps; and 5 Navy properties. |

