

what lakes?

Trends
Sierra Nevada 698.111-15
HERPETOLOGICAL NOTES lakes 775

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ALLOTOPIC DISTRIBUTION OF NATIVE FROGS AND INTRODUCED FISHES IN SIERRA NEVADA LAKES OF CALIFORNIA: IMPLICATION OF THE NEGATIVE EFFECT OF FISH INTRODUCTION.—In high elevation (>2500 m) lakes of the Sierra Nevada of California, the distribution of a native ranid frog (*Rana muscosa*) and introduced trout (*Salmo* spp.) and charr (*Salvelinus* spp.) appear to be allotopic, i.e., populations of frogs and fish appear not to co-occur in the same lake (e.g., Grinnell and Storer, 1924; Zardus et al., 1977). Although the nature of this relationship is poor, the relationship is substantiated by the occurrence of unusually large numbers of *R. muscosa* in lakes that lack fish. Prior to the stocking of Sierra Nevada lakes with salmonid fishes, which began over a century ago, fish were absent from most of this region (Hubbs and Willis, 1948; Christenson, 1977). Today, the fishes of high Sierra Nevada lakes are populations of trout and charr (Christenson, 1977).

The apparent allotopic distribution of frogs and fish has been interpreted as a case of elimination of native frog populations due to predation by introduced fishes (Grinnell and Storer, 1924; Walker, 1946; Hayes and Jennings, 1986). The hundreds of high Sierra Nevada lakes that now contain trout and charr may have previously supported substantial populations of frogs. Hayes and Jennings (1986) argued that predation by introduced fishes is the most compelling hypothesis explaining the apparent declines that have occurred among most of the native ranid frogs in western North America.

The present study tests the hypothesis that populations of two native frogs, *R. muscosa* and *Pseudacris (=Hyla) regilla*, and introduced fishes do not co-occur in high Sierra Nevada lakes. The study also assesses the importance of lake depth in determining the occurrence of these animals.

Methods.—Data were obtained for 67 lakes in the Tablelands and Ansel/Blossom lakes areas of Sequoia National Park and Kings Canyon National Park, both in California. These two areas were selected because both frogs and fishes occur in each area, numerous lakes occur in each area, and both areas lie within a 1 d hike from a road. The two areas, which together are approx. 18 km² in total area, lie 23 km apart in the watersheds of the Kings and Kaweah rivers. Forty-nine of the lakes surveyed appear on U.S. Geological Survey 15 min quadrangles (Mineral King, Triple-Divide Peak); the remainder are small and, in some cases, ephemeral. The precise locations and other data for all lakes are on file at Headquarters, Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks, Three Rivers, California.

Surveyed lakes ranged from approx. 2910–3430 m in elevation, from approx. 0.004–7 ha in area, and from 0.3–37 m in maximum depth. Rooted vegetation was generally sparse and restricted to water shallower than 0.5 m deep. Shorelines were typically rocky, surrounded by subalpine forest or alpine fell-fields plant communities of Munz and Keck (1965). Fingerling rainbow trout (*Salmo gairdneri*), brook charr (*Salvelinus fontinalis*), and possibly golden trout (*Salmo aguabonita*) have been introduced to several lakes in each area at various times since about 1930, and possibly earlier (Meyer, 1965; Christenson, 1977; Zardus et al., 1977). Anuran amphibians observed in each area were the mountain yellow-legged frog (*R. muscosa*) and the Pacific treefrog (*P. [=Hyla] regilla*). *Bufo bo-*

OCCURRENCE OF FISH AND TADPOLES IN LAKES DEEPER THAN 1.5 M DEEP. Values represent number of lakes. The data from Zardus et al. (1977) are for lakes that were included in the present study. The distributions of fish and tadpoles in lakes did not overlap in the present study ($P < 0.001$), nor in Zardus et al. (1977) (G-test, $P < 0.01$).

Present study			Zardus et al. (1977)		
Fish present	Fish absent	Total	Fish present	Fish absent	Total
0	30	30	0	2	2
7	3	10	116	5	121
7	33	40	116	17	133

Maximum depth of the lakes was measured by a plumb line from a small boat in lakes that were deeper than 1.0 m. In lakes deeper than 1.0 m, the point in the lake was visible from shore. Depth at this point was estimated. The depth of lakes shallower than 1.0 m was estimated visually or by plumb line. Sites are described in Sokal and Rohlf (1971).

Fish and tadpoles were all present in lakes in the two study areas. Fish and tadpoles did not coexist in lakes surveyed, yet 49 lakes contained fish or tadpoles. To test the hypothesis that the distributions did not overlap, data were selected for lakes deeper than 1.5 m. In lakes to such lakes (Fig. 1). In the 40 lakes deeper than 1.5 m, fish and tadpoles had a non-overlapping distribution ($P < 0.001$). This pattern was apparent in the $R. muscosa$ distribution ($n = 40$ lakes, 14 contained tadpoles, Fig. 1) and in the $P. regilla$ distribution ($n = 40$ lakes, 14 contained tadpoles, Fig. 1). However, this is significant only for $R. muscosa$ ($P < 0.001$). The analysis of the data from Zardus et al. (1977) for 133 other lakes also showed that the populations of fish and tadpoles do not coexist (Table 1, $P < 0.001$). In a similar analysis, the hypothesis of

TABLE 2. OCCURRENCE OF *Rana muscosa* TADPOLES AND *Pseudacris regilla* TADPOLES IN LAKES GREATER THAN 1.5 M DEEP. Lakes containing fish are excluded. Values represent number of lakes. The distributions of the two species among the lakes were not significantly different (G-test, $P > 0.05$).

	<i>P. regilla</i> tadpoles present	<i>P. regilla</i> tadpoles absent	Total
<i>R. muscosa</i> Tadpoles present	6	25	31
<i>R. muscosa</i> Tadpoles absent	3	3	6
Total	9	28	37

overlapping distributions of *R. muscosa* tadpoles and *P. regilla* tadpoles was tested (Table 2). The minimum depth for analysis was 1.3 m, which is approximately the minimum lake depth for *R. muscosa* (Fig. 1). Among the 37 lakes greater than 1.5 m deep which did not contain fish, the distributions of *R. muscosa* and *P. regilla* populations did not differ significantly (Table 2; G-test, $P > 0.05$). Six lakes contained both *R. muscosa* and *P. regilla* tadpoles (Table 2).

Lake depth is an important factor determining the occurrence of fish and *R. muscosa* tadpoles. Fish appear to be restricted to lakes with a maximum depth greater than approx. 1.5 m, and *R. muscosa* tadpoles to lakes with a maximum depth greater than 1.3 m (Fig. 1). In lakes with maximum depths greater than these values, the occurrence of fish and *R. muscosa* tadpoles was not significantly influenced by depth. This is shown by a comparison of the maximum depth of inhabited and uninhabited lakes for each of these two taxa (Fig. 1; Mann-Whitney U test, $P > 0.05$). In contrast, *P. regilla* tadpoles occurred in even the shallowest lakes (Fig. 1). However, *P. regilla* inhabited lakes with significantly shallower maximum depths than either *R. muscosa* or fish (Mann-Whitney U test, $P < 0.001$ in both cases). The distribution of *P. regilla* tadpoles was not significantly influenced by lake depth above the minimum lake depth of 0.3 m (Mann-Whitney U test, $P > 0.05$).

The present study documents the distribution of fish and viable frog populations in high Sierra Nevada lakes (e.g., Grinnell and Storer, 1924; Cory, 1963; Zardus et al., 1977). The distribution of trout and charr

in the study areas has been established by stocking, which has been repeated in hundreds of lakes in the Sierra Nevada for over at least four decades (Christenson, 1977; Zardus et al., 1977). The exclusion of frog populations from lakes containing introduced salmonids may be due to predation on tadpoles and frogs by the introduced fishes. *Salmo* spp. and *Salvelinus* spp. are almost exclusively insectivorous or carnivorous (Moyle, 1976) and will strike tadpoles of *R. muscosa* when they are placed in a lake (pers. obs.). Cory (1963) reported that larval and post-metamorphic *R. muscosa* show a distinctive escape behavior in waters containing fish but lack such behavior in waters devoid of fish. Tadpoles and frogs have few refuges from fishes in high Sierra Nevada lakes that are deep enough to support fish because during most of the year these lakes lack vegetative cover, and large tributary streams are lacking. Moreover, in the case of *R. muscosa*, tadpoles at high elevation always overwinter at least once, during which time they seek the warmer, deeper water beneath the ice cover (Bradford, 1984).

The impact of introduced salmonids on *R. muscosa* populations may have been substantial. Prior to stocking of high Sierra Nevada lakes and streams with trout and charr, virtually all high Sierran lakes were barren of fish (Hubbs and Wallis, 1948; Moyle, 1976; Christenson, 1977). Although several native salmonids inhabited the west slope of the Sierra Nevada, steep canyon gradients prevented colonization of high elevation lakes and streams as Pleistocene glaciers receded, except for much of the upper Kern River basin that was not subject to glaciation (Schreck and Behnke, 1971; Moyle, 1976; Christenson, 1977). Prior to stocking, however, populations of *R. muscosa* may have been present in most lakes and streams of the high Sierra Nevada. Evidence for this assertion is that the historic range of *R. muscosa* is primarily the Sierra Nevada at 1400–3700 m elevation (Zweifel, 1955) and *R. muscosa* populations currently occur in a large proportion of the lakes deeper than 1.5 m that lack fish (present study; pers. obs.). In many of these lakes, *R. muscosa* are exceedingly abundant (Grinnell and Storer, 1924; Bradford, 1983, 1984). In some cases hundreds of frogs and hundreds of tadpoles can be counted along a 100 m section of shoreline (Bradford, 1984). As a result of stocking with salmonids, about 60% of the approx. 3000 lakes in the Sierra Nevada are now inhabited by fish, primarily rainbow trout, gold-

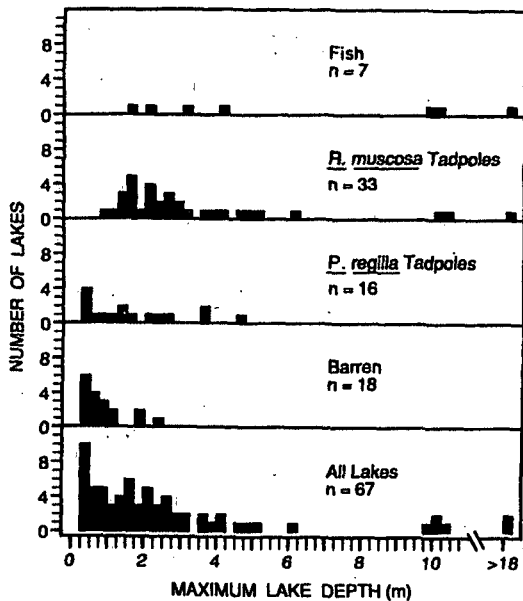


Fig. 1. Occurrence of introduced fishes (rainbow trout, *Salmo gairdneri*, or brook charr, *Salvelinus fontinalis*) and tadpoles of the mountain yellow-legged frog (*Rana muscosa*) and Pacific treefrog (*Pseudacris* [*Hyla*] *regilla*), as a function of maximum depth in 67 high Sierra Nevada lakes. Tadpoles did not coexist with trout or charr in any lakes, whereas *R. muscosa* and *P. regilla* tadpoles coexisted with each other in seven lakes.

reas may be present but was not observed during the lake survey or other visits.

Each lake was examined at least once for the presence of fish and tadpoles during the summers of 1978 or 1979. The occurrence of fish was determined by visual observation from shore or boat of individual fish or signs of surface feeding. These determinations were corroborated by data in recent National Park Service surveys (Zardus et al., 1977), general knowledge of backcountry rangers, and/or the presence or absence of signs of fishermen. The presence of tadpoles was assumed to represent the existence of a reproductively viable population of frogs in a lake. During the summer, tadpoles of both *R. muscosa* and *P. regilla* occur almost entirely in shallow water near shore (Bradford, 1984) and are easily detected by searching the shoreline, even in the deepest lakes. The entire shoreline was searched in all but the largest lakes, in which case at least one-third of the shoreline was searched.

TABLE 1. OCCURRENCE OF FISH AND TADPOLES IN LAKES GREATER THAN 1.5 M DEEP. Values are number of lakes. The data from Zardus et al. (1977) exclude four lakes that were included in the present study. The data for tadpoles from Zardus et al. are for "tadpoles or frogs visible in large open water." The distributions of fish and tadpoles among the lakes did not overlap in the present study (G-test, $P < 0.001$), nor in Zardus et al. (1977) (G-test, $P < 0.01$).

	Present study			Zardus et al. (1977)	
	Fish present	Fish absent	Total	Fish present	Fish absent
Tadpoles present	0	30	30	0	28
Tadpoles absent	7	3	10	16	11
Total	7	33	40	16	39

The maximum depth of the lakes was measured by plumb line from a small boat in the 47 lakes that were deeper than 1.0 m; the remainder of lakes deeper than 1.0 m whose deepest point in the lake was visible from shore and the depth at this point was estimated visually. The depth of lakes shallower than 1.0 m was estimated visually or by plumb line. Statistical tests are described in Sokal and Rohlf (1981).

Results.—Fish and tadpoles were allopatrically distributed among the lakes in the two study areas. Fish and tadpoles did not coexist in any of the 67 lakes surveyed, yet 49 lakes contained either fish or tadpoles. To test the hypothesis that the distributions did not overlap, data were compared for lakes deeper than 1.5 m. This depth was selected because fish appeared to be restricted to such lakes (Fig. 1). In the 40 lakes deeper than 1.5 m, fish and tadpoles showed significantly non-overlapping distributions (Table 1; $P < 0.001$). This pattern was apparent for fish vs *R. muscosa* distribution ($n = 40$ lakes, 28 of which contained tadpoles, Fig. 1) and fish vs *P. regilla* distribution ($n = 40$ lakes, seven of which contained tadpoles, Fig. 1). However, the pattern was significant only for *R. muscosa* (G-test, $P < 0.001$). The analysis of the data in Zardus et al. (1977) for 133 other lakes in the region also showed that the populations of fish and tadpoles do not coexist (Table 1; $P < 0.01$).

In a similar analysis, the hypothesis of non-

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Discussion.—The present study confirms the assertion that fish and viable frog populations do not coexist in high Sierra Nevada lakes (Grinnell and Storer, 1924; Cory and Grinnell, 1977). The distribution of t

en trout, and brook charr (Meyer, 1965; Christenson, 1977), and may be devoid of *R. muscosa*.

The impact of fish introduction was probably much less significant for populations of *P. regilla* and the other two aquatic breeding anurans that occur at high elevation in some parts of the Sierra Nevada, *B. boreas* and *B. canorus*. These species metamorphose within one season (Karlstrom, 1962) and thus are not restricted to permanent or deep water. In the present study, *P. regilla* inhabited significantly shallower lakes than fish; more than one-half of the lakes inhabited by *P. regilla* were shallower than any lake inhabited by fish (Fig. 1).

Lake depth appears to be a significant factor determining the occurrence of fish and *R. muscosa*, largely because both fish and *R. muscosa* tadpoles are restricted to permanent water. *Rana muscosa* tadpoles require two (and sometimes three) summers to develop through metamorphosis (Zweifel, 1955; pers. obs.). Moreover, overwintering fish and frogs (but not tadpoles) are susceptible to winterkill due to oxygen depletion in shallow lakes (Bradford, 1983). Consequently, both fish and *R. muscosa* occur primarily in lakes greater than about 1.3 m deep. In contrast, *P. regilla* tadpoles at high elevations undergo metamorphosis within one season and inhabit many lakes that are shallow and dry up during late summer (pers. obs.). *Pseudacris regilla* may select shallow lakes for breeding because water temperature is generally higher than in deeper lakes (unpubl.). Metamorphosed *P. regilla* overwinter on land.

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ORIENTATION AS AN ORIENTATIONAL MECHANISM IN MIGRATING *AMBYSTOMA MACULATUM*.—Olfaction is one possible mechanism by which amphibians orient themselves to sites in which to breed. Holmquist (1967) provided experimental evidence has been provided that *Ambystoma maculatum* successfully this ability in salmon streams (1961), Twitty (1966), and Twitty (1967). Twitty (1966) and Twitty (1967) demonstrated orientation and homing abilities in migrating green salamanders, *Ambystoma maculatum*, and marbled newts, *Taricha rivularis*. Twitty (1966) and Ferguson (1967) demonstrated orientation mechanism in *Ambystoma maculatum* and more recently, Phillips (1980) provided evidence that the earth's magnetic field is used for orientation in *Notophthalmus viridescens*.

Twitty (1966) displacement experiments have demonstrated olfaction as an orientation mechanism in *Ambystoma maculatum* (1968) studied the effects of olfactory damage on *T. rivularis*. Without olfactory abilities were reduced, and orientation was limited to individual olfactory nerve endings. In addition, Twitty (1967) *Ambystoma maculatum* displaced by Madison, Wisconsin, *Ambystoma maculatum* displaced by Madison, Wisconsin, olfaction as the most likely orientation mechanism. A third study by Holmquist (1967) involved displacements of *Desmognathus fusus* 90 m above and below home stream. Salamanders moved downstream more quickly than those upstream and Holmquist suggested that cues from the substrate may have been used. Ferguson (1971) suggested that olfaction is the primary orientation mechanism in salamanders migrating on overcast and rainy days because such conditions prevent use of visual cues. *Ambystoma maculatum* under these conditions, and therefore predicted that olfaction would be a primary orientation mechanism for this species. Components of pond water, mud, and stream water have been suggested as possible olfactory cues in salamanders (Hershey 1980). Our purpose was to determine if *A. maculatum* can discriminate between substrates saturated with mud from two ponds, one of which was home pond and the other a "foreign" pond 3.8 km to the west. Selective preference for home pond substrate would suggest olfaction as an orientation mechanism.