

# Field Report, June 26th 2009 - Spanish Pyrenees

by Frank Deschandol



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Looking for *Hyles nicaea*, a very scarce moth (Sphingidae) in southern France, I decided to spend a short day in the Spanish Pyrenees, near Jaca, especially to seek *Rana pyrenaica*... once again. I missed this frog during my latest trip and also some years ago, and of course I was very frustrated !

After a while, overturning a lot of stones in a small brook, I found at last the first one. Unfortunately, further investigations gave nothing except some *Calotriton asper*.

In water, plenty of tadpoles : *Bufo spinosus*, a few *Alytes obstetricans obstetricans* and some small indeterminate ones.

By night I could locate 3 other *Rana pyrenaica*, again *Calotriton asper*, larvae of *Salamandra salamandra fastuosa* and two *Alytes obstetricans obstetricans* by their songs.

Overall, I think *R. pyrenaica* is essentially nocturnal, that's why I missed it everytime by day. That's the key to success. Moreover, I was surprised to find one frog next to a log from about 5 meters of a torrent.

I saw 5 or 6 juveniles of frog in the grass, about 1.5 cm. I think they could be *R. pyrenaica* rather than *R. temporaria*, but that requires confirmation.

I also found a lot of *Podarcis muralis* everywhere. On the way, unfortunately a sub adult of *Malpolon monspessulanus* injured by a car at the middle of the road. I thought it was dead but the snake seemed to be roughly Ok in spite of a bloody eye. I let it go in a bush.

At La Pierre St Martin, a young *Zootoca vivipara* and again a lot of *Podarcis muralis*. I reached Le Havre the very next day.



*Hyles nicaea*, imago male and caterpillar



*Calotriton asper*



*Calotriton asper*



*Calotriton asper*



Biotope



*Rana pyrenaica*



*Rana pyrenaica* (same)



*Rana pyrenaica* juvenile



*Rana pyrenaica* juvenile



*Rana pyrenaica* juvenile



*Rana pyrenaica*



*Rana pyrenaica*



« big » *Rana pyrenaica* of maximum size (4.8 cm)



*Rana pyrenaica* (same)



*Rana pyrenaica* (same)



*Alytes obstetricans obstetricans*



*Alytes obstetricans obstetricans*



*Bufo spinosus*



*Bufo spinosus*, tadpoles



*Orchis ustulata*



*Podarcis muralis*



*Podarcis muralis*



*Malpolon monspessulanus*, injured



*Malpolon monspessulanus*, injured



*Smerinthus ocellatus*, male



*Calopteryx xanthostoma*, male

**Amphibians (5) :**

*Rana pyrenaica*  
*Bufo spinosus*  
*Alytes obstetricans obstetricans*  
*Calotriton asper*  
*Salamandra salamandra fastuosa* (larvae)

**Reptiles (3) :**

*Zootoca vivipara lousilantzi*  
*Podarcis muralis*  
*Malpolon monspessulanus*

**Total = 8 spp.**