

Threatened amphibians of Scania (southern Sweden)

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13 amphibians species are distributed in Sweden, 7 of the species have there distribution limited to the southern part of the country. Southern Sweden belongs to the nemoral zone which is the main explanation to the distributional pattern. The human influence of species rich landscape of the south is striking, and probably the main reason why 6 of these species are threatened.

Fire bell toad (*Bombina bombina*)

Widely spread in the southern Scania during the 18Th-century. Seemed to start declining already during the 19Th-century, in 1960 it went extinct from Sweden. The species need shallow and sun exposed ponds and seams to be sensitive to eutrophication and overgrowing. Thanks to reintroduction of Danish fire bell toads and to pond restorations, a population have been re-established in Sweden.

Garlic toad (*Pelobates fuscus*)

Pretty common in the southern and western parts of Scania until the 1960, but declined with 99% between the 1970 and 1990 and was close to extinction during 1995. Increased car traffic and modern agricultural methods seems to be the main reason behind the declines. However, pond construction in remaining suitable areas during recent years has changed the trend into a positive direction.

Tree frog (*Hyla arborea*)

Known from the southern and eastern parts of Scania and the southwest of Blekinge from the 19Th-century. Dramatic decline during the 20Th-century which reach the bottom during the 1980 as a consequence of radical habitat destruction, the construction of the main airport in Scania during the 1970 destroyed about 30% of the entire Swedish tree frog population. The core habitat remaining for the species was threatened by crayfish cultivation. The situation for the tree frog got attention by the media and the debate that followed was the start of pond restorations, not only for the tree frogs but for Swedish amphibians in general. Nowadays Sweden has the largest population of tree frogs in the northern Europe thanks to protection of the core habitat and pond restoration.

Green toad (*Bufo viridis*)

During the 19Th-century the species was probably spread along the coastlines of Scania, Blekinge, Småland, Öland and Gotland. The green toad is connected to sunny pastures in the coastlines and has declined rapidly during the 20Th-century. Since the 1990 only two vial populations remain in Sweden, both are situated in the south-western parts of Scania. Reintroduction to localities in the former distributional areas has with a few exceptions completely failed. The future for the remaining populations is uncertain; at the moment green toad is the only amphibian species in Sweden that are at the boarder of extinction.

Natterjack toad (*Bufo calamita*)

Quite common in the coastal range of southern Sweden until the 1960, during the following years the species

declined rapidly. The decline was probably a result of the conversion of small scale to large scale agricultural structures. The disappearance of flooded pastures that followed, probably explain the negative trend since natterjack toad is dependent on temporary wetlands for its reproduction. Habitat restorations have to some extent been carried out recent years, but more needs to be done until the situation is under control.

Agile frog (*Rana dalmatina*)

Connected to older deciduous forests in the south-eastern parts of Sweden, the species also depends on fish free ponds for its reproduction. The Swedish distribution is divided into eastern Scania, western and eastern Blekinge, adjusted parts of Småland and Öland. Agile frog is declining all over its distribution, for the moment the situation in western Blekinge is very serious and it is probably going to be extinct from this region within a few years if habitat restoration not is carried out.