

The tadpole of *Physalaemus henselii* (Peters) (Anura: Leiuperidae)

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Abstract

Although *Physalaemus* frogs are prominent members of Neotropical herpetofauna, larval stages are not known from more than half of the species in this genus. Herein, we describe the tadpole of *Physalaemus henselii* based on samples collected in Departamento de Rivera, northern Uruguay. General aspect and major external morphological features are similar to most of other known tadpoles of *Physalaemus*. Remarkable character states are a medial vent tube and the presence of dorsal and ventral gaps in the row of marginal oral papillae. *Physalaemus henselii* has been successively assigned to the *P. cuvieri* and to the *P. henselii* species groups, but no conclusions can be drawn in support of these associations from external larval morphology. Instead, we found that some character states may contribute to relate species, like the presence of a ventral gap in the marginal row of oral papillae which is shared by *P. albonotatus*, *P. cuqui*, *P. cuvieri*, *P. fernandezae* and *P. henselii*. This character state is unique among non-bufonid anurans, although it is also present in some species of the related genus *Pseudopaludicola*. In addition, *P. albonotatus*, *P. cuqui* and *P. cuvieri* tadpoles can be differentiated from *P. fernandezae* and *P. henselii* by the presence of two small ventrolateral gaps, which are absent in the latter.

Key words: Amphibia; larval morphology; Leptodactylidae; Uruguay

Introduction

Frogs of the genus *Physalaemus* are widely distributed in the Neotropical region, east of the Andes. In a recent taxonomic review based on phenetic comparisons, Nascimento *et al.*