

COMMON TOAD

The Latin name for the Common toad is *Bufo bufo*.

The toad is a frog-like amphibian that is usually distinguished from frogs by the roughness of the skin and by shorter hind legs.

Toads are shy, usually nocturnal animals, hiding during the day in dark, damp places and hopping about at night in search of insects, grubs, slugs, worms and other invertebrates.

The females may reach about 14cm and the male 9cm. Toads are often brownish or greyish in colour and have warty skin, a flat head and swollen parotid glands on the side of the neck behind the eyes, bright, jewel-like eyes with a transverse pupil, and slightly webbed toes. They are often fatter than frogs and cannot leap as far. The tongue of the toad is attached to the front of its mouth.

When the toad catches its prey the tongue is flicked forward from the mouth and the sticky tip grasps the prey and carries it back to the mouth. The tongue produces quantities of mucus to help in swallowing the prey.