



## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **More Than One Million Endangered Houston Toad Eggs Released in Texas State Park, With Toadlets Now Emerging**

*Amphibian and Reptile Conservancy and Partners Advance Long-Term Species Recovery*

BASTROP, TEXAS, April 29, 2026 - Conservation partners released more than one million Endangered Houston toad eggs in Bastrop State Park during March and April, and [toadlets](#) are already beginning to emerge. Collaborators from the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD), the Amphibian and Reptile Conservancy (ARC), and the Houston Zoo led the effort alongside an extensive partnership network.

The federally-listed Houston toad has declined dramatically and is now known from just two wild populations in Central Texas. With so few toads remaining, efforts like this are a critical step to help prevent extinction in the wild.

“When drought conditions dried out the ponds where we’d planned releases, our partners didn’t miss a beat,” said JJ Apodaca, ARC Executive Director. “They worked together to identify a site that could still support the effort, which is exactly what long-term recovery for a species like this requires.”

The team selected a [larger pond](#) within Bastrop State Park with shallow edges for developing [tadpoles](#), nearby sandy soils for burrowing, and open savannah and meadow habitat needed for [dispersal](#).

“It was really remarkable to see how quickly the toadlets developed and moved into the surrounding habitat,” said ARC Private Lands Biologist Zach Truelock. “During a light rain, we saw them dispersing away from the pond into the savannah.”

[Egg releases](#) have been a long-standing part of Houston toad recovery efforts, helping supplement populations in priority areas while broader habitat restoration and private lands conservation efforts continue across the species’ range. Captive breeding partners, including the Houston Zoo, have worked for more than a decade with state and federal agencies to produce and release millions of eggs as part of coordinated reintroduction into suitable habitat.

“These releases are an important tool in the recovery process, especially when paired with ongoing habitat management,” said Paul Crump, TPWD State Herpetologist. “What we’re seeing in Bastrop reflects years of coordinated work across partners to improve conditions on the landscape and support the long-term persistence of the species.”

Monitoring efforts are now underway to track the success of the [release](#) while minimizing disturbance to the developing toads. Teams are using a combination of visual surveys along nearby roads and targeted field observations in surrounding habitat, rather than frequent disturbance around breeding ponds that could inadvertently impact [emerging toadlets](#).

In addition, tadpole surveys conducted earlier in the season helped document development within the ponds, and researchers are planning to deploy acoustic recording devices to detect returning males during future breeding seasons.

TPWD, ARC, and the Houston Zoo work with a broader partnership network supporting Houston toad recovery that includes the US Fish and Wildlife Service, Texas State Parks, Texas State University, the Boy Scouts of America – Capitol Area Council, Pines and Prairies Land Trust, the Fort Worth Zoo, and a network of private landowners across the species’ range.

While long-term recovery of the Houston toad remains a complex challenge, continued releases combined with habitat restoration across the landscape are helping to improve outcomes for the species. The work builds on more than a decade of coordinated breeding and release efforts in Bastrop County, now paired with expanded habitat management.

“What makes this work meaningful is seeing partners come together and adapt in real time to keep conservation efforts moving forward,” said Apodaca. “Every step like this adds up to a better chance for the species over time.”

### **About Amphibian and Reptile Conservancy (ARC)**

Amphibian and Reptile Conservancy, or ARC, is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit focused on identifying and conserving the highest priority places for amphibians and reptiles in the United States. We protect endangered amphibians and reptiles through a strategic, scientific, and passionate approach. We believe the conservation of amphibians, reptiles, and the habitats they depend on is vitally important. To learn more, visit [ARCProtects.org](https://ARCProtects.org).

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