

## American Toad

### **The tale of the tiny toad.**

December 25, 2009

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A toad in the hand is worth two in the bush.

I have another proud new addition to the family to introduce to you today. This addition is special, because I didn't acquire him in the usual way – via a reptile show, pet shop, or even eBay. Instead, I captured him outside while taking my dog for a walk! He is a plump young American toad (*Bufo americanus*), which also happens to be my favorite amphibian.

Unbelievably, I found this toad at the end of October, long after the average toadlet has grown much larger and hopped off to find suitable shelter for the winter months. This makes me think that he must've been out shopping for a last minute Halloween costume and lost track of time. So I was quite surprised to see him sitting calmly by a lamppost at midnight, trolling for bugs. I easily scooped him up and took him inside with me.

We decided to name our new toad Cap'n Scrappy, because he looked like a little tough guy – out there in the cold, fending for himself at such a young age. He is so tiny in comparison to the members of my other two groups of more portly toads. I would never risk having him live together with my Great Plains toads, and certainly not with my Cane toads, as he would make nothing more than a quick snack to them. Not to mention that they are different species and it would be best to keep separately. So for now I have created him another little fortress of solitoad, until I can perhaps find him a little friend next spring.

Cap'n Scrappy has become my little bufo buddy, and is the calmest little toad that I have ever seen. He doesn't even try to hop away when I pick him up or squirm around when I hold him. I am assuming that he is a little dude, not only because he is too small to be able to talk yet, but also the coloration on his throat leads me to believe that he is male. This youthful new resident brings my toad head-count to Lucky #7. That's one big bunch of bufos!

So from me and all of my toads, we wish for you and your family to have a very "Hoppy Holiday!"

-The Toad Talker

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