



Cover Photo: Early Holocene warming and drying in the Mojave Desert, USA, has resulted in isolation of remaining patches of aquatic habitat, primarily springs. Red-spotted toads (*Bufo punctatus*) inhabit such patches in each of the canyons about 2 km apart in the mountains on the right of the photograph, as well as a site 10 km from the nearest occupied site in the mountains near the horizon in the center left of the photograph. We tested the prediction from metapopulation theory that patch occupancy is inversely related to patch isolation. Patch occupancy was influenced by local habitat conditions and patch size, but not patch isolation, suggesting that toads frequently disperse across much larger distances than previously thought. The view is looking south from Red Rock Canyon National Conservation Area, west of Las Vegas, Nevada. Photo by D. F. Bradford, from "Habitat patch occupancy by toads (*Bufo punctatus*) in a naturally fragmented, desert landscape," *Ecology* 84(4), April 2003.

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