



## Eggs

The egg masses (spawn) of cane toads are unlike those of most native frogs. Toads produce chains of black eggs about one millimetre in diameter enclosed in a thick transparent, gelatinous cover, forming long strands about three millimetres thick.



Cane toad eggs.



Native frog species eggs.

## Tadpoles

Cane toad tadpoles are different from native species; toad tadpoles are jet black and reach a maximum of about 30 millimetres long from head to tail. They have non-transparent abdomen skin, and their tails are nearly the same length as their body. The tail has a jet black central muscle with totally transparent fins with no spots or pigment. The tadpoles of native frogs can be very dark (but not jet black) with lighter or transparent abdomen skin and longer tails.

Native tadpoles and the cane toad tadpole shown at same size. Note position of eyes in each tadpole, and relative length of tail in relation to body.

**Rocket frog**  
(small one)



**Cane toad**  
(jet black)



Cane toad tadpole has bigger nostrils and wide body across gills (behind eyes).

**Northern dwarf tree frog**



Toad tadpoles form large, slow-moving groups that do not rise to the surface to 'breathe'. In contrast, tadpoles of native frogs do rise to the surface, having developed lungs sooner.

## Juvenile toads

Newly formed toads (metamorphs) are small in size (nine to 11 millimetres) compared to adults, and can be identified by their large numbers and daytime activity near watery breeding sites.

### For more information and assistance contact:

For Kimberley residents and visitors please call DEC's Kununurra office on (08) 9168 4200.

For all other areas of WA please call 1800 084 881.

[www.dec.wa.gov.au/canetoads](http://www.dec.wa.gov.au/canetoads)

# Is it a cane toad?

**Up to two-thirds of suspected toads turn out to be harmless native frogs, so it is important to correctly identify them.**

Cane toad skin is dry and warty, rather than moist and slippery like many native frogs, and usually a dull, brownish colour.

The big glands on the cane toad's shoulder release a poisonous milky substance when the toad feels threatened.

Cane toads have a very distinctive bony 'm'-shaped ridge over their nose. These ridges meet in the middle.



Adult cane toads are heavily built, and average between 100mm and 150mm in length.

Cane toad feet don't have suckers on the end of the toes.

The call of a male toad is like a guttural trill.

Native Kimberley frogs



Litoria inermis - bumpy rocket frog

Native Kimberley frogs



Platyplectrum ornatum - ornate burrowing frog



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## Here are some tell-tale features:

Cane toads are the only true toads present in Australia. They are heavily built and are typically 10 to 15 centimetres in length. They are able to grow to more than 23 centimetres and can weigh more than one kilogram. However, in areas with high toad densities, individuals rarely exceed 10 centimetres in length.

### Appearance

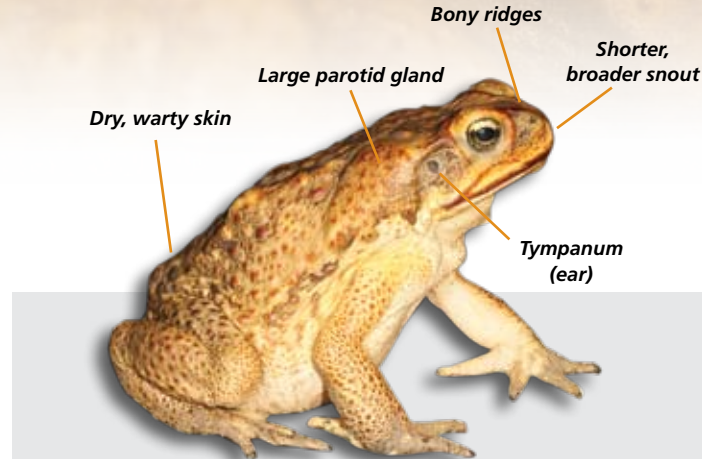
The skin of a cane toad is dry and rough, rather than moist and slippery like many native species. The backs of male toads have raised warty lumps that feel like sandpaper when they're rubbed, while females have slightly smoother skin with less prominent lumps. The colour on top of adult toads' bodies ranges from dull brown to yellowish or blackish (never bright greens, though juveniles have a brighter camouflage pattern that dims with age). The under parts are usually a dirty cream colour and juvenile toads have a grey and cream marbled pattern that is lost with age.



Skin of a cane toad.



Glands of a cane toad.

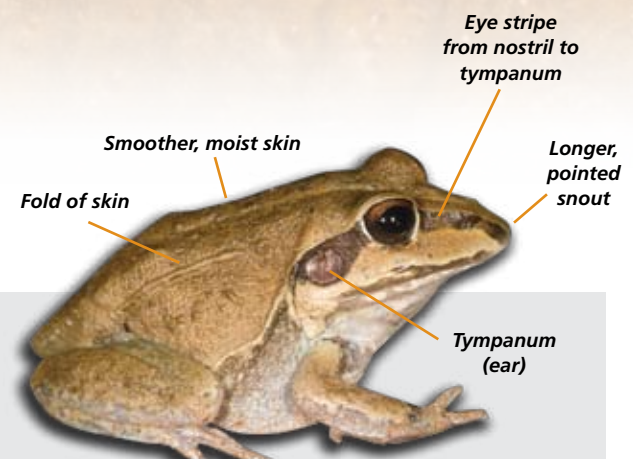


cane toad

The large glands on the shoulder can sometimes exude a poisonous milky substance when the toads are threatened. Other distinctive features include a visible ear drum, and 'm'-shaped bony ridges on the head, which separate them from some native species that are commonly confused with cane toads, such as the ornate burrowing frog and the giant frog. The lack of suckers (enlarged toe pads) on the digits separates the cane toad from the tree frog.

### Behavioural characteristics

The call of the male is a guttural trill and sustained



native giant frog

for about 30 seconds. It is very different to most native frog calls.

Like many native frogs, adult cane toads are most active at night in open areas such as roads and lawns. Sometimes they congregate beneath street lamps and other lights to catch insects.

On land, toads walk and bound short distances but do not leap and are not capable of climbing smooth surfaces like some native frogs. They also typically sit more upright than many native frogs.

Native Kimberley frogs



Cyclorana australis - giant frog

Native Kimberley frogs



Cyclorana longipes - long-footed frog

Native Kimberley frogs



Litoria meiriana - rock hole frog

Native Kimberley frogs



Limnodynastes convexiusculus - marbled frog

For more information about identifying native frogs, visit [www.dec.wa.gov.au/canetoads](http://www.dec.wa.gov.au/canetoads)