

Spot the difference

Reported sightings of cane toads are investigated by the WA cane toad surveillance team.

However, most reports have been found to be false alarms with native frogs being mistaken for cane toads.

Here are the differences between the giant frog (*Cyclorana australis*) and the cane toad.

- Skin: cane toads have a dry, warty skin whereas giant frogs have a smoother, moist skin. The giant frog also has folds of skin along its flanks whereas a cane toad does not.
- Parotid glands: both species have a visible tympanum (ear) but a cane toad has enlarged parotid glands behind the tympanum whereas a giant frog does not.
- Head: a cane toad has a shorter, broader snout with bony ridges that extend from the snout to the eyes whereas a giant frog has a longer, pointier snout without bony ridges.
- Colour: a giant frog usually has a dark stripe that extends from the nostril, through the eye to the tympanum whereas a cane toad does not. However, there is considerable colour variation among giant frogs and sometimes the stripe is indistinct.



Careful how you handle them...

Take care when dealing with cane toads.

A NT Adelaide River resident, Vivienne Soback, was squirted in the eye with toad poison recently.

She'd heard a cane toad in her backyard, caught it and tried to kill it.

Unfortunately, the steel mallet, came down on the toad's poison glands, spraying the liquid into Ms Soback's eyes, leaving her virtually blind for 10 hours.

Darwin-based organisation FrogWatch says the incident highlights the need to take care when destroying toads.

It recommends putting the pests in a bag in the freezer, or at least wearing goggles when hitting them on the head.

What should you do if you see a cane toad?

Report any possible sightings of cane toads in WA to freecall 1800 084 881 which is operating 24 hours a day.

Remember, native frogs are sometimes mistaken for cane toads. For more information, go to the CALM and Department of Agriculture websites at www.naturebase.net or www.agric.wa.gov.au