

MEDIA RELEASE

Thursday 10th March 2011



Dazza used with permission by creator Andrew Silke.

The CIA urgently needs you!

Cane toads will be hopping down the main streets of Iluka and Maclean in a few years if more people don't get outside and help.

That's the prediction from Clarence Valley Conservation in Action (CIA) Landcare Coordinator, Sharon Lehman.

"Cane toads are a highly invasive animal that is spreading rapidly through a number of key areas in the Clarence Valley", said Ms. Lehman.

"CIA volunteers and NPWS staff are desperately trying to hold the frontline from advancing further south and west while research is conducted and habitat modification trials are set up in an attempt to reduce the breeding success of these warty pests".

The Clarence Valley is home to the southern front of the Australian invasion of cane toads, with toads currently threatening Ashby, Iluka, Townsend, Brooms Head and Woombah.

"There is a great deal going on both at a federal and state level regarding how this pest is managed in Australia and my main aim right now is to try and keep the toad out of the Clarence River", said Ms Lehman.

"The main areas of concern are that they are sneaking south around Woombah and heading towards Iluka and trying to get past Ashby into the wetlands west".

"We also need to try and stop them getting south of Townsend and Brooms Head".

With a warm, wet winter sandwiched in between two wet summers, the cane toads are being found in areas they have never been seen before.

“During our normal, drier winter, many cane toads dessicate before the summer rains”, said Ms. Lehman.

“If the cane toads get west of Ashby or into the wetlands south of Sandon and Townsend, it really will be virtually impossible to slow the front” said Ms Lehman. “NSW is slowing getting their act together in terms of dealing with this toxic animal and it would be such a shame to have the wetlands of the Clarence Valley forfeited in the meantime”.

“When I started the CIA, I pledged to give it a good hard go for three years and this is our second season. CIA volunteers have picked up over 3,000 cane toads already this summer and we are just not prepared to throw the towel in on the Clarence Valley yet, but we need more help”.

The CVCIA Landcare is currently recruiting volunteers to join their toad busting teams across the valley. The next CIA training session will be held on Saturday 19th March at Lake Arragan Camping Area followed by a toad hunt around affected areas Saturday night.

“This is going to be a fun, entertaining, informal training session where people can learn to positively identify cane toads, collection methods, talk about safety and discuss the latest research on habitat modification”, said Sharon Lehman.

The workshop is free and open to everyone over the age of five interested in learning more about controlling and monitoring cane toads in the Clarence Valley. Bookings are essential for resourcing purposes. Please contact Sharon Lehman on 0411 020 394 or email sharon@cvcia.org.au to register your interest.

If you are unable to attend this training event, you are still welcome to join the CIA Landcare group and participate in future cane toad hunts. Visit www.cvcia.org.au to join or contact Sharon direct.

Information on how to collect cane toads yourself and appropriate humane disposal can be found on the CIA website.

END.

Contact:
Sharon Lehman
Mob: 0411 020 394; Hm: 6647 3477
Email: sharon@cvcia.org.au
Web: www.cvcia.org.au

NB. The CIA Landcare group is a community volunteer organisation so any promotion you can give would be very much appreciated. Cheers, Sharon.

ADVERT

Please provide quote to run this advert in this Saturday's paper asap.

<h1>Join the CIA!</h1>

Go out with teams of volunteers on organised cane toad hunt nights. Kids welcome! Volunteers needed!
Next CIA Training Session & Toad Hunt Saturday 19th March 2011
Book now and/or join the CIA by emailing sharon@cvcia.org.au or calling 0411 020 394. www.cvcia.org.au

Hopefully this can also run in any Upcoming Event, Things to Do pages or Community Announcements.

PHOTOS

Full images are attached to the email.



CVCIA Landcare volunteer, Jo Vestergaard, recording data from a male cane toad captured in the Townsend area. Photo: Sharon Lehman.



CVCIA Junior Landcarer member Bethany Van Haren is one of the many volunteers trying to keep the cane toad out of the Clarence River. Photo: Sharon Lehman.

NB. Beth has just been nominated for a Northern Rivers Landcare Award.



From small beginnings, so much impact. A newly hatched cane toad metamorph is toxic at all life stages. Sharon Lehman.

PICTURES



Image by Andrew Silke – permission to use it for CIA promotion has been obtained by the artist.