

November 2017

Springfield Lakes



Nature Care Update

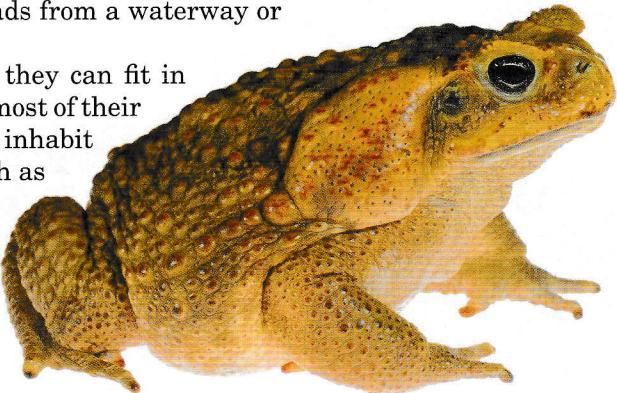
by Luise Manning



Springfield Lakes Nature Care Inc. was successful in receiving a Community Development Grant from Ipswich City Council to hold a Toad Busting Workshop. The workshop was presented by Ecologist Kay Montgomery who has previously trained community groups, Scouts and school students on how to find, identify and safely catch, and also how to humanely eradicate toads from a waterway or conservation area.

Ms Montgomery said, "Cane Toads will eat almost anything they can fit in their mouth, including pet food, carrion and household scraps but most of their food is living insects. They will even eat small native frogs that inhabit our lakes and rain gardens that are home for our native frogs such as the Pobblebonk."

In Australia, cane toads have no natural enemies and when other animals try to eat them, poison sacs that run down their sides secrete a toxin that kills predators in minutes. Their toxin can kill most native animals that normally eat frogs, such as quolls, lizards, goannas and snakes. The toads also pose a threat to pets such as cats and dogs especially as the toads come out at night.



Female toads can produce between 8,000 – 35,000 eggs at a time and usually breed twice a year. They lay their eggs in still or slow flowing water like ponds, dams or lakes. This makes our lake suburb the perfect breeding ground for them. They will often lay eggs a few days after rain in long jelly like strings.

Whilst it will be extremely difficult to rid our community of toads, we can do something to reduce the amount of cane toads, by removing the eggs, if you see them, by using a rake to drag them out of the water or catching the toads during the breeding season which is from September to March.

Compare the pair. Toads have tough, leathery skin with a distinctly warty appearance. The back colour is variable but usually grey, brown, reddish-brown or yellow and the belly is white with grey mottling. They have a bony ridge above the nostril and a venom-producing gland behind the ear. They have two webbed back feet but their front feet are not webbed. If it has four webbed feet then it is unlikely to be a toad.



Why not come to our next toad-busting night which will be held on Friday 17th November, 6.30pm at Spring Lake Park BBQ next to the pontoon. Bring a torch and a bucket. Meet Ecologist Kay Montgomery who will share with you her knowledge on how to safely catch and eradicate toads from your backyards. Gloves will be supplied to all participants.

Contact info@springfieldlakesnaturecare.org.au for more information or to register interest in the toad-busting event.