

# HAVE YOU SEEN THIS TOAD?

## What do cane toads look like?

Cane toads can be distinguished by their warty skin, the bony ridges over each eye and the enlarged gland on each shoulder. They can grow up to 15 centimetres in length and range from an olive-brown to reddish-brown on their backs with a brown flecked pale white or yellowish belly.

## Are cane toads poisonous?

The gland on each shoulder of a cane toad can produce a secretion toxic to both humans and animals. For humans this secretion can cause both skin and eye irritations, or a slowing of the heart if it is ingested. In extreme cases, animals such as pigs, dogs and cats have been known to die after eating a cane toad.

## Could cane toads establish in New Zealand?

Cane toads thrive in tropical and sub-tropical environments. They can live up to 10 to 16 years and breed twice a year, laying up to 40,000 eggs. Cane toads are extremely serious pests in the places they have been introduced. It is not clear whether they could establish in northern New Zealand but should they do so they would pose a serious environmental threat and would be difficult or impossible to eradicate if spread over a wide area.

## What do I do if I find the cane toad?

If you see an animal you believe to be the cane toad please try to contain it, taking care not to touch it. Place it in a moist container with holes in the lid and store in a cool place. If contact is unavoidable it is preferable you wear gloves, and perhaps even protective glasses as cane toads under extreme duress can spray the toxic



Cane Toad – *Bufo marinus*

secretion through the pores of their skin for up to a distance of one metre.

If your skin is exposed to the toad's secretions, thoroughly wash the contacted areas as soon as possible. Ensure you do not rub your eyes, lick your fingers, smoke a cigarette or eat prior to washing your hands. If you feel faint or find your heart rate is unusually slow seek medical attention immediately.

If you are reluctant to catch the toad leave somebody to watch it and call 0800 80 99 66.

Protect your pets by preventing them from touching the cane toad and contact your vet immediately if your pet eats it.

## THE THREAT

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If you suspect you have found a cane toad, please call:

**0800 80 99 66**