



Clarence Valley Cane Toad Operations Newsletter

Volume 1—February 2010

What is this?

Thank you for picking up the first volume of the Clarence Valley Cane Toad Operations Newsletter. You have received this because it is thought that you live in an area infested with cane toads—or at risk of becoming infested.

This newsletter contains a map of known cane toad areas, updates you on what is being done in the Clarence Valley and provides information on how you can help reduce the spread of this poisonous and toxic pest.

If you would like to know more about cane toads or what the CIA is doing, check out the CIA website at www.cvcia.org.au or by phoning the CIA Coordinator, Sharon Lehman on 0411 020 394.

Did you know?

It is very easy to distinguish cane toad spawn from native frog spawn because Australia has NO native toads. The cane toad is the only toad in Australia. Cane toads lay a very distinctive jelly-like strand of spawn with black dots (eggs) running along it.



Keep an eye out for cane toad spawn.

If seen, cane toad spawn should be netted from the water and left on the grass to dry out. Each female can lay up to 50,000 eggs so removing spawn can really help reduce cane toad spread.

What is the CIA?

The Clarence Valley Conservation In Action (fondly known as the CIA) is a newly formed Landcare Group networking people in the Clarence Valley who want to be actively involved in actually doing something to help our native wildlife.

There are numerous arms of the CIA from Common Myna trapping to shorebird watching, but this newsletter is targeting the CIA cane toad control efforts to date and how you can help.



CIA volunteers may be collecting in your area.

If you live in a cane toad affected area, you may see cars driving slowly along your road at night and people in shiny vests with torches scanning the roads. These are CIA volunteers involved in manual cane toad removal.

We are picking up the toads by hand and then they are chilled and frozen. The CIA now has over 60 volunteers and have already picked up over 1,500 toads in the Clarence Valley this season.

Areas currently targeted are Yamba, Mororo, Woombah, Palmers Island, Townsend, Micalo Island, Warregah and Ashby.

CIA volunteers will **NOT** enter any property without the express permission of owners.

Where are the toads?

In NSW there is a gap between here and Woodburn which is the edge of the continuous population. The Clarence Valley is best thought of as an outlier to the main population north, which is why community efforts are worth the effort.

There has also been two disjunct breeding populations at Brooms Head and Port Macquarie (Lake Innes) for many years. Extensive NPWS and community efforts have minimized both populations to the point where it is thought the Port Macquarie population has been eliminated and Brooms Head sightings are becoming less common.

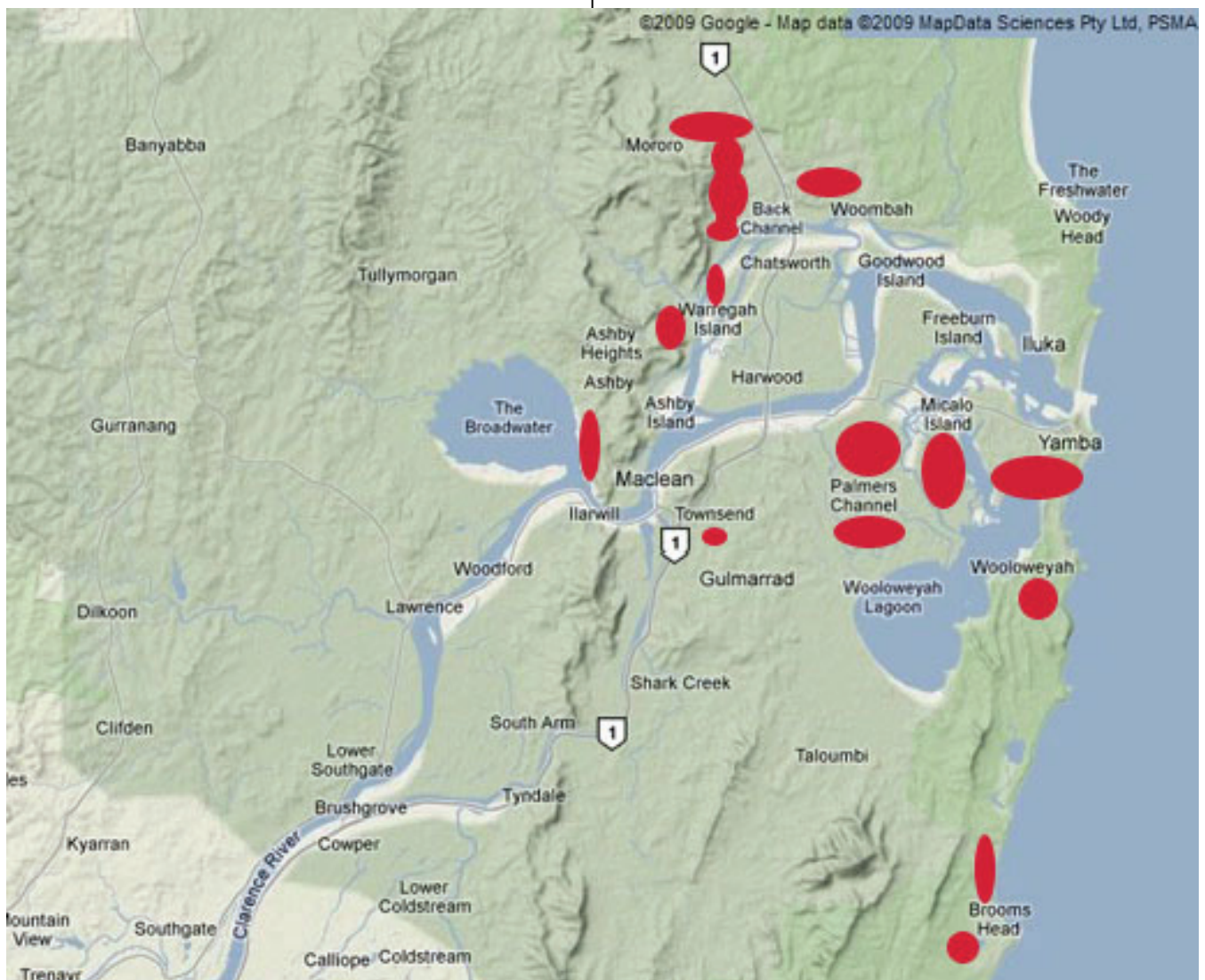
There will always be the odd vagrant toad pop up somewhere but monitoring "spot fire" outbreaks of breeding toads is very important to reduce the risk of further spread of cane toads in NSW.



Learning about frogs & cane toads at CIA stalls.

This season CIA volunteers have already held a training and information day for new volunteers, manned three information stalls in shopping centres around the valley, set up fridge and freezer drop off points for humane euthanasia and visited Casino to impress upon them the importance of cane toad control above the Clarence Valley.

This summer, CIA volunteers will be conducting weekly toad hunts in the Clarence Valley in an effort to reduce the spread of the cane toad.



The red patches show the known distribution of cane toads in the Clarence Valley as at mid 2009. Have we got it right? Please let us know if you have toads and they are not shown here. Image courtesy of Google Earth.

What can I do?

There are many things you can do to assist CIA volunteers and others trying to reduce the spread of cane toads in the Clarence Valley. Here are a few suggestions:

1. **Report all toad sightings.** This is essential if we are to keep track of where they are and how fast they are moving (see right).
2. **Control toads on your own property or street.** Visit the CIA website for help or call Sharon Lehman on 0411 020 394. Remember there are a number of fridges and freezers set up around the Clarence Valley now for drop off points.



Help keep the toads out of the Clarence River.

3. **Join the CIA Landcare Group and come out on our weekly cane toad hunts.** They are fun, good exercise and children are welcome.
4. **If you have dams and think there may be toads in them, please call the CIA to report a potential breeding site.** With your permission, we will send a team of CIA volunteers to remove as many toads as we can from your dam.
5. **Learn how to correctly identify cane toads by both sight and sound.** Visit the CIA website for links to excellent sites showing native frog photos and even listen to a cane toad call online.

If you would like to know more about cane toads check out the CIA website at www.cvcia.org.au or phone the CIA Coordinator, Sharon Lehman on 0411 020 394.

Seen a Toad?



Data used courtesy of Andrew Silke

Report all Cane Toads in the Clarence Valley!

to NPWS: 6641 1506
or the CIA: 0411 020 394
via website: www.cvcia.org.au
or email: toads@cvcia.org.au

Did you know?

Cane toads are an incredibly lazy animal. They rarely move through thick vegetation and prefer dams with gently sloping sides. As amphibians, they need to access water at least every 4-6 days and require water to breed in.



This dam is the type preferred by cane toads.

The CIA is discussing habitat modification with landowners in an effort to reduce the breeding success of cane toads. For example, if your dam is only used for irrigation, next time do not slash up to the water line. This will make it more difficult for the cane toads to access the water. Look out for CIA flyers in production for more on this issue.

Did you know?

The cane toad leather industry is going very well in Australia. Everything from handbags and hats to bowties are available. A lady has even recently started making high heel shoes out of cane toads!



To see a range of toad leather items available locally visit the CIA website at www.cvcia.org.au and click on "hop to toad leather sales". You can pick up a nice toad belt buckle and all proceeds fund volunteer resources such as torches and gloves.

What now?

Please keep an eye and ear out for cane toads in your area. Critical areas are Ashby, Townsend and Palmers Island. If you see a cane toad, please report it through the CIA website or by calling 0411 020 394.

You will receive a second newsletter towards the end of this cane toad season (may 2010) letting you know how cane toad control operations went so please report your own control efforts so we can include them in the database.

The CIA motto is come on, DO SOMETHING. We are confident we can make a difference.

Thank you for your interest.

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Find out what is being done in your area to reduce the spread of the cane toad and how you can help.



Supporters of CIA Operations

These organizations are all working together to reduce the spread of cane toads in the Clarence Valley.

