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Department of Biodiversity,  
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# WA Cane Toad initiative



Department of Environment and Conservation

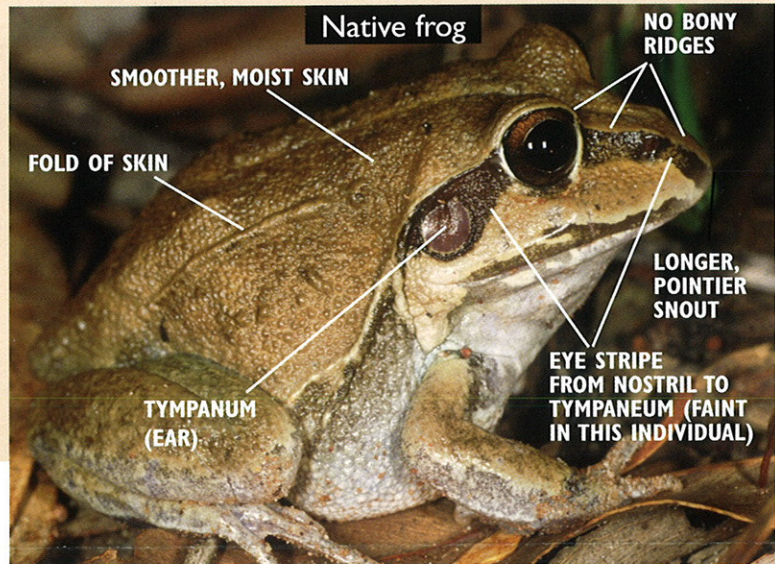
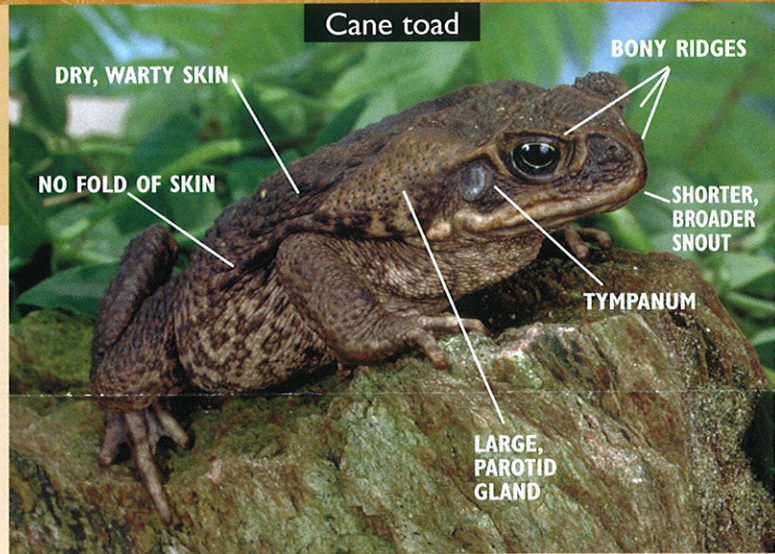
## Spot the difference

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 Northern Territory Adelaide River resident, Vivienne Sobeck, was left temporarily blinded after being squirted in the eye with cane toad poison.

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 Sobeck'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 operates 24 hours a day.

Remember, native frogs are sometimes mistaken for cane toads. For more information, go to the Department of Environment and Conservation's and Department of Agriculture and Food's websites at [www.naturebase.net](http://www.naturebase.net) or [www.agric.wa.gov.au](http://www.agric.wa.gov.au)

**24-hour Cane Toad Report telephone line: 1800 084 881**



# Native frogs



## Green tree frog

The green tree frog often enters houses, outside toilets and other structures. They are large, with females growing up to 11 cm long. They have smooth, light green skin on the upper surface, sometimes with inconspicuous white markings. A series of white spots may lead from the mouth to the forearms and may join to create a ragged stripe. They are largely confined to the Kimberley region. They have a 'wark-wark-wark' call which is very deep.



## Desert tree frog

This is not a particularly colourful frog but it has an obvious black stripe running along the side of the head and body. The upper body may be grey to brown in colour, with dark brown or black flecks. The frog is small, only three or four cm long, and is found in the Kimberley and Pilbara regions. It likes trees and shrubs beside bodies of water, and it makes a cackling call.



## Magnificent tree frog

This frog is about 10 cm long and can be distinguished from the green tree frog by the larger gland that covers the entire top of the head and by the cream patches on its back. It is found across most of the Kimberley to the north and east of Derby. It is frequently found in houses and other buildings and also lives in caves and rock holes. It has a slow, deep barking call.



## Rocket frog

The rocket frog is easily recognised by its slender, elongated body and long, triangular snout. It has large, bulbous eyes and a large, very obvious eardrum. The back has a pattern of light to very dark brown bars and blotches. The fingers have no webs and the long toes have very reduced webs. Rocket frogs grow to between 3.5 cm and 5.5 cm long and occur across much of the Kimberley. They are seen in areas of open forest, especially those next to swamps and mudflats. After one or two short notes, its call is a long series of 'wick, wick, wick' sounds.



## Northern dwarf tree frog

The Kimberley region is ideal for tree frogs, many of which live in restricted habitats and are rarely seen by visitors. This frog is less than 3 cm long, is pale green above, and has slender limbs with almost translucent forearms and a dark side stripe. The parts of the limbs that are usually hidden are orange. It lives along the coast and near large rivers from near Derby in the Kimberley through to most of coastal Queensland. The species is found in houses and other buildings, but is most commonly found in marshy areas prone to flooding. Its call is a 'reek, reek, reek' sound.



## Northern toadlets

The northern toadlet is a genus of small frogs which have small heads, squat bodies and short limbs. The toadlets have rough, warty skin, with unwebbed fingers. The eardrums are not visible. Nine species are found in the Kimberley region, two in the north-west arid zone and one in the northern central arid zone. They are often found in areas subject to flooding. Some species have a call consisting of one or more clicks. Others will make a squelching call.