

18 March 2011

Jumping on board Toad Day Out

TOAD Day Out is heating up to be a big one this year in Charters Towers especially with a higher than normal wet season.

Natural resource management group NQ Dry Tropics is supporting the day on March 27.

Every year kids of all ages collect live toads for prizes.

Last year 2000 toads were collected in Charters Towers and 3000 in Townsville.

The Toad Day Out is making a difference in controlling toad numbers in this region.

If all of Queensland participated in this event, a little difference would become a huge one.

On the eve of Toad Day Out in Charters, each Todd and Toddina the Toad should be stored safely and brought to Blackheath and Thornburgh College for his or her big weigh-in on Sunday between 9am-11am.

Trained officials will identify that they are toads and not native frogs.

The toads are humanely disposed of using carbon dioxide gas, before they are used for research, by taxidermists or for fertiliser.

The NQ Dry Tropics website www.canetoadsnotfrogs.com.au has a few handy tips in making sure punters know the difference between a native frog or cane toad.

Cane toads grow to 17cm or more and they are not strong jumpers and instead do many short hops to travel.

Cane toads have very large poison glands on the shoulders, dry leathery skin and a thick ridge on the eyelids while a native frog has small round knobs or sucker discs on its fingers and toes for climbing.

Australia has no native toads and there are 27 species of frogs that live in the dry tropics. A number of them resemble cane toads.

Native frogs are usually only seen out and about during the wet season or when breeding. They are the ones you need to look out for when in a car on a rainy night.

NQ Dry Tropics' region includes the local government areas of Townsville, Charters Towers, Burdekin, Isaac, Barcaldine, Etheridge, Hinchinbrook, Palm Island and the Whitsundays. For more information call NQ Dry Tropics on 4724 3544 and check out www.frogsnotcanetoads.com.au.