

Cane toads a major problem in Australia

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Cane toads are capable of moving nearly 1 mile in one night and that is translating into a major problem in Australia.

Scientists, writing in the journal *Nature*, say cane toads -- *Bufo marinus* -- are developing a leggier, faster-moving form that is now moving quickly across the continent.

The amphibians that can weigh more than 4 pounds were introduced to Queensland from South America in 1935, in an attempt to wipe out cane beetles, a pest that was destroying sugar crops in northeast Australia, the BBC reported.

Since then, the toads have become a major threat to indigenous animals, killing snakes, lizards, water birds and even crocodiles.

Scientists told the BBC the toads are moving at a rate five times faster than when they arrived in Australia -- covering an average of nearly 35 miles annually.

Researchers have been unable to devise a method of controlling the spread of the toads, which scientists say are causing an "ecological nightmare."

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