

# Australia's cane toads face death by cat food

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A poisonous cane toad sits on a keeper's hand at the Taronga Zoo in Sydney. Australia is beset by millions of the creatures after they were introduced from Hawaii in 1935 to control scarab beetles.

Australia's vile and poisonous plague of cane toads may finally have met its match -- and it comes in a tin of cat food.

After years spent trying to batter, gas, run over and even freeze the toxic [toads](#) out of existence, scientists say just a dollop of Whiskas could stop the warty horde.

The cat food attracts Australia's carnivorous meat ants, which swarm over and munch on baby toads killing 70 percent of them.

"It's not exactly rocket science. We went out and put out a little bit of cat

food right beside the area where the baby toads were coming out of the ponds," University of Sydney professor Rick Shine told public broadcaster ABC.

"The ants rapidly discovered the cat food and thought it tasted great.

"The worker ants then leave trails back to the nest encouraging other ants to come out there and forage in that area, and within a very short period of time we got lots of ants in the same area as the toads are."

Australia is beset by millions of [cane toads](#) after they were introduced from Hawaii in 1935 to control scarab beetles.

The toads, which are prolific maters, eat anything and are incredibly tough, secrete poison that kills pets and wildlife and injure humans, prompting several -- unsuccessful -- campaigns to wipe them out.

"Even the ones that don't die immediately, die within a day or so of being attacked," Shine said, adding that native [frogs](#) were able to dodge the hungry [ants](#).

"It's a simple, low-risk way of reducing the number of baby toads coming out of those ponds."

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