

Media Release:

23.10.09

Halloween Toadbusting at TWP

Forget the traditional pumpkins, ghosts and witches for Halloween, spend next Saturday evening helping to save our Top End native animals from the evil clutches of the notorious cane toad (*Chaunas marinus*) during a volunteer 'Toad Bust' at the Territory Wildlife Park on Saturday, 31 October 2009.

Territory Wildlife Park manager Dion Wedd said cane toad numbers are on the increase with the wet season fast approaching, so it's time to dust off the gloves and bust some toads before they reach their prime breeding season.

"Cane toads compete with many of our native species for habitat and food, while other species try to eat the poisonous toads and die as a result," Mr Wedd said.

"We've noticed a significant decline in the number of yellow spotted monitors and northern quolls roaming around the park since cane toads appeared in the Northern Territory.

"Regular cane toad busts at the park have been a great success, with more than 3500 cane toads captured and disposed of since the first one was found in August 2006.

"Our eradication program is greatly assisted by the help of the local community and school groups with regular toad busts, and monitoring to see what impact these busts have on toad numbers."

"We may not be able to eliminate them completely, but we can give our native wildlife a fighting chance by reducing toad numbers whenever possible."

Mr Wedd said volunteers who wish to come along to the toad bust should wear appropriate clothing and footwear, and meet at the Territory Wildlife Park gates at 6.30pm.

"Staff will provide our volunteers with directions on where the designated clean-up areas are within the park," Mr Wedd said.

"Gloves and bags will be provided for collection and disposal and the captured toads will be disposed of humanely."

For more information about the toad bust contact the Territory Wildlife Park on 8988 7200.

Ends

Media Note – for more information contact Dion Wedd on 8988 7200

Images:

- 1. cane toad (*Chaunas marinus*)**
- 2. northern quoll (*Dasyurus hallucatus*) in the Nocturnal House at TWP**

Issued: 9am Friday, 23 October 2009