



Cane Toad Tadpole Identification Fact Sheet.

A combination of tail length, colour, size, and eye position should allow you to positively identify a cane toad tadpole. Tadpoles are very dark and look black, they have a tail that looks thin and is relatively short and the eyes are towards the top of the head rather than the sides. Cane toad tadpoles are also quite small, only about 22 - 30mm including the tail, when they get legs.

Colour

Cane toad tadpoles are very dark, they look quite black. Most native tadpoles are brown or grey. The native Marbled Frog tadpole, see below, is black also but it has a long ribbon like tail with a pointed tip, which is also black.

Body shape and Size

The body is noticeably broad across the gill region just behind the eyes and the nostrils are obvious. The eyes are more on top of the head than on the sides. The entire tadpole, including the tail is only about (TL)20 - 30mm when the back legs appear. Many native species are much bigger.

Cane Toad *Bufo marinus*

Dorsal (top of body)



Ventral (underside of body)



The underbelly(ventral surface) of the cane toad tadpole is also black around the abdomen. With most native species the underbelly is either clear, silvery white with copper sheen, or densely speckled with copper.

Tail

The fins along the tail of the cane toad tadpole are clear while the muscle in the tail is black. This makes the tadpole look like it has a small fine tail. The Marbled Frog tadpole has bigger, dark fins and looks like it has a wide, 'ribbon-like tail'. Many native species have more colour in the fins, even if just the veins are pigmented.

Tail Length

The length of the tail is a key difference. The cane toad tadpole tail is one to one and a half times the length of the body. Native tadpoles generally have longer tails usually from two to three and a half times longer than the body.

Marbled Frog *Limnodynastes convexiusculus*

The Marbled frog tadpoles are also black but are much larger than toads(TL75mm+) and the tail is two and a half times the length of the body. Also the tail fins are pigmented and not clear.



Green Tree Frog *Litoria caerulea*

Tree frogs are generally brown rather than black, they have tails 1.5 to 2 times as long as the body, (TL65mm), and the tail fins have fine markings. Their eyes tend to be towards the side of the head.

