

Read the passage. Then answer the question below.

Watch Out for That...Toad!

Many creatures in the world are intimidating. There are powerful lions, poisonous snakes, and insects with vicious stingers. It is hard to imagine being threatened by toads. But for some people living in the northern parts of Australia, toads are an unpleasant fact of life. For the last 70 years, those people have had to deal with a menace known as cane toads. This is not your everyday sort of cute garden toad either. This creature is dangerous.

In 1935, a few of these toads were brought to Australia from Hawaii. The toads were supposed to be helpful. Australia's northern sugar cane fields were being routinely damaged by a pest called the grayback beetle. Because cane toads like to munch on these bugs, importing a few of the toads seemed like a good solution. It wasn't. Australia turned out to have too good a climate for cane toads, and it was not long before their numbers ballooned. Females were laying 8,000 to 35,000 eggs at a time at least twice a year! There are now millions of cane toads throughout Australia, and they are a danger to native insects and animals.

Why should harmless, little toads be such an issue? For one thing, cane toads are neither harmless nor little. The toads are extremely large, often growing as big as the size of a typical dinner plate. They contain poisonous venom that is capable of killing creatures as large as wild dogs and crocodiles. These toads also eat large numbers of honeybees that are needed to pollinate plants.

Australian scientists have spent many years searching for a solution to these pesky toads. However, the answer was simpler than they could have ever imagined. Apparently, these cane toads like the night life.

Researchers in the Northern Territory of Australia discovered that cane toads love the kind of bright, ultraviolet lights normally used in nightclubs. The toads like red and blue, but their favorite is a black light.

First a group called the Australia Frogwatch planned a "Toad Buster" project. They took the lights and put them inside a trap with a one-way door. They then put the traps at a remote station about 75 miles south of Darwin, the territory's capital. In less than a month, they had trapped 200 toads. A few months later, that number increased to 1,500 and is still climbing. The brightly lit traps attract clouds of insects and the combination of lights and bugs is simply too much for hungry cane toads to resist.

Scientists continue working to control the toad population. The story of cane toads in Australia is an example of how introducing a non-native species often causes an even greater problem than the one it is supposed to eliminate.

“Good intentions often lead to unintended consequences.” Write an essay explaining how this adage applies in Australia. Use evidence from the passage to support your response.