

Operation cripple the cane toad in WA; Blues win the State of Origin series; Squiz-E sniffs a hundred fakes; and a meteor rocks New York City.

Hello and welcome to Squiz Kids Today ... your fresh take on what's happening in the world around you.

I'm Bryce Corbett

It's Thursday, July 18...

In Squiz Kids Today ... Operation cripple the cane toad in WA; Blues win the State of Origin series; Squiz-E sniffs a hundred fakes; and a meteor rocks New York City.

That's what's making news, kid's style...

THE LOWDOWN

You're going to hear a lot about cane toads this morning - as newspapers, radio, TV and social media analyse the results of last night's State of Origin decider - and more on that in a minute. And that's because the Queensland Maroons are also often referred to as the Cane Toads .. while the NSW Blues' are known as cockroaches. Why they couldn't have picked nicer animals - i don't know. But I digress.

Up at the top of Western Australia - scientists are wrestling with an actual cane toad problem. As in, real life cane toads. The animals that long-time listeners of this podcast will know are my least favourite in the world. Right up there with mozzies.

Scientists have drawn up a plan to stop the cane toads from migrating down out of the Kimberley - where they are already a pest - and into the rest of Western Australia.

Cane toads are an introduced species - meaning they're not native to Australia. And they're also what's called an invasive species. Meaning they take over habitats and kill our native animals and breed like crazy and generally cause all sorts of environmental damage to the ecosystems in which they live.

Researchers in WA are hoping that a long stretch of desert will form a natural barrier to the advance of the cane toads. Because they need ponds and waterways to survive the dry season.

But because cattle farmers have created wells and dams in this part of the country for their cows to drink from - the scientists have joined forces with farmers and Traditional Owners to create special, raised watering holes in the desert - so that cattle can still drink, but are too high for toads to access.

And if you've got your environmental on in class this term - be sure to check out the excellent Squiz Kids Shortcut we've produced on Invasive Species ... I've stuck a link to it - and a host of classroom resources relating to it - in today's episode notes.

You're welcome.

SPIN THE GLOBE

Each day we give the world globe a spin and find a news story from wherever it stops .. and today we've stopped in New York City - where all eyes were on the sky above the Statue of Liberty - after a meteor is believed to have crashed through the Earth's atmosphere with a massive boom - burning up in a long, horizontal fireball barely 40 kilometres above the Manhattan skyline.

Manhattan is the main island of New York City - where many hundreds of skyscrapers reach to the heavens and millions of people live and work.

The meteor visited the city during the middle of the day yesterday - freaking out thousands of residents who thought maybe aliens had come from outer space.

NASA - the American space agency, yesterday confirmed that day-time meteors were a common occurrence, and most pass over our heads and burn up without us even noticing.

SPORT TIME

Sixty five minutes was how long it took for the first try to be scored in the State of Origin decider last night in Brisbane in a hard-fought contest - and then, for Queensland, very quickly after that, it all fell apart.

Four minutes later the NSW Blues were across the line for their second try - which was enough to wrap up the game - and the series - with NSW finally winning by 14 points to 4.

It was widely hailed as one of the toughest games of the modern Origin era - with the teams so equally matched that the score sat at only two nil to Queensland at half time. |

It's the first win for NSW in an Origin decider in Queensland for 19 years – with the visitors just proving too strong in attack and defence.

The State of Origin shield now returns to Sydney - to await next year's competition. And the players now return to their clubs to set aside Origin rivalries, kiss and make up with team mates they've just been pitched in fierce battle against - and tackle what's left of the season together. And that's footy for you.

NEWSHOUNDS

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Every Thursday, Squiz-E the Newshound sticks his head into Squiz Kids HQ to report back on fishy things he's sniffed out on the internet. And this week - his nose has been working overtime.

Following the attempted assassination of former President Donald Trump on Sunday, social media has been awash with conspiracy theories and fake news - with people claiming the shooting was a set up, or staged, or a great big plot on the part of Trump's enemies or even an event that was staged by Trump's supporters, using fake blood, in an attempt to win sympathy. None of which have what we call any 'credible proof' to back them up.

It's a good reminder to be careful when we're on the internet - to always do as Squiz-E tells us - and that's to Stop, Think and Check whenever we come across a piece of information online. Think about who is telling us something - and whether they can be believed. Check to see if they have any proper credentials as a journalist - or if they're just some random who has set up a social media account and happen to have lots of followers. Remember: just because someone is popular doesn't mean they're right.

Good Newshounds know to only rely on trusted sources of information. Thanks Squiz-E - you've done it again!

THE S'QUIZ

This is the part of the podcast where you get to test how well you've been listening ...

1. What's the name of the statue in New York City that a meteorite passed over?
2. In which Australian state are scientists working on a plan to stop cane toads?

3. In State of Origin, the Queensland Maroons are also known as the cane toads - what are the NSW Blues also known as?

SHOUT OUTS

It's Thursday, July 18 ... today is Nelson Mandela Day - celebrating the birthday of a really important man in modern history ... I've stuck a link to a kid-friendly video explainer in today's episode notes.

It's also a special day for these Squiz Kids celebrating a birthday today... Cain from Rochdale, Audrey from South Brisbane, Bruce from Terrey Hills, Tomas from Thurgoona, Ava from Grovedale, Hayden from Gordon and Charlie from Sydney.

And we are still working our way through the belated school holiday shoutouts... so lets crack out the 'ol birthday reggae tune... hit it!

It's a happy *belated* birthday to... Will from Duncraig, Tazio and Lillie from Nightcliff, Ellie from Howrah, Elise from Launceston, Lucas from Newbridge Heights, Emmy from Box Hill North, Mina (pronounced Meena) from Cheltenham, Thomas from Mt Gravatt, Freya from East Brisbane, Olive from McDowall, Lakeisha from Mt Isa, Hunter from Woongarrah, Jazzy from Templestowe, Joanie from Cannon Hill, Kaden from Oran Park, Rosie from Griffith, Juliette from Yass, Emily from Wentworth Falls, Allira from Boronia, Ollie from Mernda, Emma from Middle Harbour, Elizabeth from Bundaberg, Vivienne from Bardon and Georgia from Parkinson.

We'll return to classroom shoutouts next week.

The S'Quiz Answers:

1. Statue of Liberty
2. Western Australia
3. Cockroaches

Don't forget .. if you've got a birthday coming up and you want a shout out - or if you want a classroom shout out - drop us a line at squizkids@thesquiz.com.au or fill out the form on our website.

Well - that's all we have time for. Thanks for listening to Squiz Kids Today -We'll be back again tomorrow with the kids vs adults weekly news s'quiz.

In the meantime, get out there and have a most excellent day. Over and out.