



Media release

Electric Ants- are they in your backyard?

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Cairns and Far North Environment Centre (CAFNEC) and Biosecurity Queensland have teamed up to help stop the spread of the invasive electric ant. Electric ants may look similar to your harmless outdoor variety – but with a powerful venom and the ability to cause blindness in pets, they are on Biosecurity Queensland's hit list.

“Many people may not realise that these venomous pests are in their own backyard” says Sarah Hoyal, Co-ordinator of CAFNEC. “We cannot afford to allow this dangerous and damaging pest to become established in our region. Without help from the community, it's incredibly hard to track how far the ants have spread and to find new infestations.”

Cairns residents are encouraged to bring in dead ants from their home to CAFNEC's annual festival, Envirofiesta, on October 30. An expert from Biosecurity Queensland will be on hand to collect any small 1-1.5mm ginger coloured ants. Collected ants will be taken to a lab to be identified whether they are a dangerous species. Collectors will be later notified with an identification. “It's a great way to find out whether your family is safe” said CAFNEC Coordinator, Ms Hoyal.

Envirofiesta is an annual celebration of music, arts and the environment which raises much needed funds for CAFNEC. Envirofiesta is supported by Cairns Regional Council, Connect Magazine and Visiva Graphic Design.

This family friendly festival will be held from 10am-7pm at Cominos House, Greenslopes Street North Cairns. is on October 30th, Little Street park, Edge Hill, 10am to 7pm. Entry for '15 and under' and 'Pensioners' remain free. CAFNEC members entry is \$5 and non-members \$10. Check out www.envirofiesta.cafnec.org.au for details or contact CAFNEC.

For further information, comment and photo opportunities:
Steve Ryan, Festival Coordinator: 4032 1746, 0425 344 746

The Cairns and Far North Queensland Environmental Centre (CAFNEC) was established in 1981 to ensure the unique and special natural heritage of Far North Queensland is protected. CAFNEC thanks Jeremiah Johnson, Far Northern Soul Collective, Emmaline, BeetRoot, Improv, Soul Harmonics, Crooked Celtic, Drum Up Big, Yiss Mill, Job Stoppers and the Chad Vibe duo, Steve Baker & Friends, Terra Mystic and more for appearing at Envirofiesta.