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Thousands of hissing cockroaches seized in Australia – 8th June 2026

Level 4

Officials in Australia found more than 100,000 cockroaches being smuggled into the country. There were thousands of Madagascar hissing cockroaches. These are giant bugs that can be as large as the palm of a person's hand. The value of the bugs was around \$143,000. A spokesperson gave a warning to cockroach breeders: She said: "If you are found to possess, breed or trade exotic cockroaches...they will be seized and you could face penalties."

The cockroaches were probably imported to be reptile food. A snake catcher said the giant roaches were cheaper than feeding lizards many smaller bugs. She said if the cockroaches had a disease, they could wipe out all of the crickets, which birds need for food. She also said that if diseased cockroaches entered the food chain, they could "potentially wipe out a whole lot of native animals". The seized bugs will be killed by the authorities.

Level 5

Officials in Australia seized more than 100,000 cockroaches being smuggled into the country. It was the largest ever seizure of illegal invertebrates. The officials found thousands of Madagascar hissing cockroaches. These are giant insects that can be as large as the palm of a person's hand. The value of the seized bugs was around \$143,000. An environment spokesperson gave a warning to cockroach breeders: She said: "If you are found to possess, breed or trade exotic cockroaches...they will be seized and you could face penalties under federal law."

The seized cockroaches were probably imported to be reptile food. A professional snake catcher said the giant roaches were cheaper than feeding lizards smaller bugs. She added that they could become an invasive species and cause harm to native creatures like crickets. She said if they had a disease, they could wipe out all the crickets, which birds need for food. She also said that if diseased cockroaches entered the food chain, they could "potentially wipe out a whole lot of native animals". The seized bugs will be killed and disposed of by the authorities.

Level 6

Customs officials in Australia have seized more than 100,000 cockroaches that were being smuggled into the country. Included in the seizure were thousands of Madagascar hissing cockroaches. These are giant insects that can be as large as the palm of a person's hand. There was also a large number of dubia cockroaches. The value of the confiscated bugs was around \$143,000. Authorities said it was the largest ever seizure of illegal invertebrates. An environment spokesperson warned potential roach breeders: "If you are found to possess, breed or trade exotic cockroaches...they will be seized and you could face penalties under federal law."

The seized cockroaches were probably imported to be fed to pet reptiles. Professional snake catcher Stefanie Lesser said the roaches were more "cost-effective" than feeding lizards smaller bugs. Ms Lesser added that the roaches could have become an invasive species and caused a lot of harm to indigenous creatures like crickets, which birds rely on. She said: "If they got out and they had a disease on them, they could potentially wipe out all the crickets." She told the Australian Broadcasting Corporation that if diseased cockroaches entered the food chain, they could "potentially wipe out a whole lot of native animals". Sadly, the impounded bugs will be killed and disposed of by authorities.