Dr Samantha Bainbridge has spent decades studying common toad populations in Canada. Her studies have found that their population has reduced significantly (by more than 80%) as a result of a relatively new virus that is spreading through Canada.

The *Avirus* disease, which causes a range of symptoms including skin ulceration and haemorrhaging of internal organs, has really only been seen in Canada for the last 15 years, but it is spreading rapidly. Her studies have found that this disease has caused sudden mass die-offs of toads, and while some populations of toads suffered from infection year on year, others bounced back from the mass mortality events.

Her research suggests that some toads may be immune to infection by the virus.

To minimise the serious threat that this disease poses to the Canadian amphibians, Dr Bainbridge says that further research needs to be conducted to understand more about the virus and to understand how the disease spreads.