

Deny access
to woodheaps



Step 2 Remove warrens, deny breeding areas

This is the key to long-term rabbit control.

When applying wire mesh barriers around buildings make sure the mesh is undamaged and is at least 12cm trenched underground or with a 30cm apron placed outward. You may need to improvise to deny access.

Use various wire products
to deny access under
buildings and structures.



Old wire netting is
handy or purchase a
roll of 'foot netting'.

Step 3. Inspect regularly.

Check 2 weeks after works, then at least once a month (diary entry). Close any re-openings.

Theoretically, one burrow and one pair of rabbits can breed to over 180 rabbits in just 18 months!

After about 4-5 years of **active control**, rabbits are unlikely to continue trying to establish at your place.

FURTHER INFORMATION

AGRICULTURE VICTORIA

<http://agriculture.vic.gov.au/agriculture>
Pest, diseases and weeds

VICTORIAN RABBIT ACTION NETWORK

<https://rabbitaction.com/>

PEST SMART

<https://www.pestsmart.org.au/>

NOTE: Shooting, trapping, ferreting etc. are not realistic solutions. They are not getting at the root cause of the problem but merely harvesting the result.



Your local contact for support:

Author: Glen Scholfield and Alandi Durling

Photos: Osfield Consultants

February 2018

Printing supported by
The Rural City of Wangaratta



Creative Commons License

Peri-Urban Rabbit Control in North East Victoria by Glen Schofield and Alandi Durling is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial 4.0 International License.

PERI-URBAN RABBIT CONTROL IN NORTH EAST VICTORIA

DON'T BE A HOST

How to make rabbits unwelcome on your place



RABBITS

NOT WELCOME HERE

Sorry rabbits, you were not invited, you are not welcome here.

WHO IS RESPONSIBLE FOR CONTROL?

Rabbits are a declared pest in the State of Victoria [CALP Act 1994].

Individual land managers are responsible for the control of rabbits on their land.

A decision by one landholder not to control this pest also puts an unfair burden on their neighbors.



WHY CONTROL RABBITS

Rabbits are fertile breeders and have rapid growth rates therefore they eat vast amounts of vegetation.

Notice that they select the most nutritious plants - vegetable gardens are a favourite.

They can eat out all the grasses. These are then replaced by weedy species or annuals like capeweed which die out over summer leaving just dust.

Hosting rabbits that are not controlled by you or diseases, is fostering a disease resistant population.

Left uncontrolled, rabbits will decimate the paddock, garden or bushland and will annoy the hell out of your neighbours.

NEIGHBOURHOOD APPROACH

Lasting and effective control action taken by all landholders at the same time of the year is better than a 'patchwork' approach.

Positive results can be achieved at a broader landscape level when a community synchronizes rabbit control action.

SET TARGETS

By end of April ensure:

- There are no open burrows available on your place (close unused burrows too)
- The woodheaps are still, the burn piles are gone
- There is no rabbit activity underneath sheds/ structures

This is a district wide target.

LIFE CYCLE OF RABBITS

Reproduction is triggered by green nutrition, typically late March.

In ideal conditions, rabbits have a litter of 5-6 every month. Female offspring can start reproducing at 4 months of age.

The highest populations will be seen in spring.

By February the dry conditions, limited green pick and less water availability often means breeding has ceased and annual population numbers are at their lowest.

This provides the opportunity for the most efficient and effective control activities of the year.

Rabbits generally live 1- 2 years only. This makes breaking the cycle a realistic goal.

TRIED AND TRUE - RECIPE FOR SUCCESS

Step 1. Remove rabbits

If you would rather not kill rabbits, the answer is to **work with nature**. It's all about timing. The ravages of summer mean that rabbit numbers are at their lowest in February/March.

Summer has reduced the numbers so you don't have to poison.

Biological controls such as Myxomatosis & the Rabbit Calicivirus Disease are not a silver bullet. However, they are more active over summer so can also help to reduce rabbit numbers.

**NOW IS THE TIME FOR ACTION
AS NATURE HAS REDUCED
THE RABBIT NUMBERS!**

In February count the rabbits on your place (roughly), locate burrows or hideaways, note scratchings and dung heaps

Know what you've got.

