

Rabbits can be excluded from your property by using rabbit-proof fencing. Although expensive, this is a cost-effective, one off expense. With regular maintenance of the fence and control within the fenced area, you can aim for your property to become rabbit free.

### Trapping

Trapping is not generally considered efficient for rabbit control, however, can be used when there is concern about off-target species. Different types of traps such as cage traps or soft-jawed traps may be used. This is not a cost-effective method and means that you are left with a live rabbit to destroy.

Rabbit-specific diseases have been released in Australia as a form of biological control. These include Myxomatosis and Rabbit Haemorrhagic Disease Virus (RHDV), previously known as calicivirus. Alone, they cannot control rabbits, however they are useful in knocking down rabbit population numbers.

For further information and advice on rabbit control, please contact the Bass Coast Landcare Network Rabbit Project Officer or Agriculture Victoria.

Disclaimer: The advice in this publication is intended as a source of information only. Information used in this brochure has been sourced from: Agriculture Victoria [www.agriculture.vic.gov.au](http://www.agriculture.vic.gov.au)

#### **Bass Coast Landcare Network Rabbit Project Officer**

**Chantelle Geissler**

**Mobile:** 0456 390 423

**Phone:** (03) 5678 2335

**Email:** [chantelle.geissler@basscoastlandcare.org.au](mailto:chantelle.geissler@basscoastlandcare.org.au)

**Website:** [www.basscoastlandcare.org.au](http://www.basscoastlandcare.org.au)

## Urban Rabbit Control

**Rabbits are Australia's most significant pest animal. They cause several problems, including:**

- Destroying vegetation and your garden
- Competing with native animals and stock for both food and shelter
- Causing soil erosion



**Under the Catchment and Land Protection Act 1994, it is a landholder's legal responsibility to control rabbits.**

**There is no one quick solution to rabbit control. Effective control is only achieved by using a combination of methods.**

## How to plan a rabbit control program

### Work with your neighbours

Rabbits are not contained by property boundaries. Find out what your neighbours are doing about rabbits, and perhaps you can work together and co-ordinate control. Your hard work can be wasted if rabbits recolonise your property from other areas.

### Identify areas of rabbit activity

Rabbits are territorial and live in warrens, but can also harbour around buildings, sheds or weedy areas. Look for signs of fresh diggings, scratchings or dung. Establish a map of warrens for your property, including active entrances.

## Calculate rabbit numbers

Set a specific walking route on your property, which you can regularly return to. Walk this route with a strong torch at dusk and count how many rabbits you see. It is also useful to note where they run to when disturbed. Spotlighting can be done pre and post control to see how effective your control work has been.

**Remember, one rabbit is too many!  
One pair of rabbits can easily and quickly re-infest your property.**



**Rabbit scratchings  
in an urban garden**

## Methods of rabbit control

Traditional rabbit control methods of baiting and shooting are not possible on smaller, urban properties under 1000m<sup>2</sup> in size. However, other methods can be used to control rabbits on your property.

### Reducing Rabbit harbour

Reducing rabbit harbour can be done almost all year round but is more effective when rabbit numbers are reduced. Noxious weeds, such as blackberry and gorse, are excellent rabbit homes. Remove all weeds to destroy possible rabbit harbour. Contact the Bass Coast Shire Council before clearing any indigenous vegetation. You can also reduce rabbit habitat by restricting access to other areas such as under your house or shed.