



PEOPLE AND PLACES

Rabbit Control is more than just Ripping.

By Greg Wood - Department of Primary Industries

I have just read the article by Janet Hagen in issue 35 of the GN and felt it warranted a response.

While Janet raises a number of concerns and questions related to rabbit control, most are not new and can be easily answered.

Janet makes the point that the standard method of rabbit control is to rip warrens with large excavators, which crushes native vegetation and leaves the soil open to erosion and weed colonisation.

Unfortunately, Janet is spot on in also saying that the standard approach now is often to rip and walk away.

The reality is that ripping is not an end in itself, but should be one component of a well integrated rabbit control program. Other components include poisoning, fumigation, shooting, follow up monitoring and treatment, follow up weed control and last but certainly not least, revegetation.

In Janet's Gooram example, she states that the property was already infested with weeds. In such a case, rabbit warrens would be easily identifiable, as they would be covered in nothing but weeds. Native vegetation certainly would not have a chance in the vicinity of an active warren. If warrens were not covered in weeds, they would be bare and already exposed to erosion.

In situations where rabbits are well established and have been for some time, the chance that control measures may impact on high biodiversity values is minimal, as high biodiversity values and rabbits don't often co-exist.

If I were to purchase the Gooram property, I would much prefer that was after 90 hours of ripping had occurred, not before. All that would be required would be to put a well planned revegetation program in place (which included weed management and follow up rabbit control) to establish either native vegetation or desirable pasture species.

By far the most important message from DPI when it comes to rabbit control is that it needs to be integrated and ongoing. As Janet says, poisoning in many areas seems to have dropped off the radar, but it is extremely effective in reducing numbers prior to ripping, which limits the chance of burrows being re-opened.

There have been dozens of research projects undertaken to assess the impact of rabbits on native species, all drawing the same conclusions. Once grazing pressure from rabbits or any other species is reduced, the capacity for native species to regenerate without further intervention is astounding. Re-seeding or planting may be required if high rabbit numbers have been present for a long time, but excellent results can still be achieved.

The bottom line is that in difficult, often inaccessible granite country such as the Strathbogie Ranges, ripping with heavy machinery is the only way to destroy active warrens, and destruction of the warren is the key to long term success in rabbit management.

What is the alternative? The alternative is to tolerate rabbits in our landscape. I think we all agree, this is not an option.

NOTES FROM HIGHLANDS PRIMARY

STUDENT OF THE WEEK



Kaylam : For really working hard to improve his behaviour and work habits.

Community Break up:

Next Friday is the Community Break up at the hall, starting at 6pm. Bring your own everything, BBQ available for cooking meat. HPS students will lead a sing a long of Christmas carols and Santa will arrive at 7.30pm.

Graduation:

Congratulations to our Year 6 Graduates this year, Jarrad and Brooke. They have decided to celebrate graduation a little differently this year compared to previous years. Next Wednesday 7th, Jarrad and Brooke will be joined by their families, staff and students in years 4- 6 to have a formal lunch at school. There will be speeches and presentations. Peg Lade will be talking about her days at school and reflecting on the many changes that have taken place since then.

WELCOME TO ISSUE 36

Please send any news to me at mirandayorston@bigpond.com or ring 57969261.

ADVERTISING IN TGN IN 2012 ONLY 12 SPOTS LEFT

I am now accepting requests for advertising space in TGN for 2012. There are 26 spaces and 13 spaces have already been taken. Spaces can also be used in memory of people or as a donation to the newsletter. The cost is the same as this year, \$250 for approximately 40 editions going to 202 households in hard copy and 336 email addresses.

HIGHLANDS/CAVEAT RURAL FIRE BRIGADE

The Fire Danger period for District 12 (shires of Mitchell & Murrindindi) commences Monday 5th December



Music Scholarship Winner:

John attended Yea Rotary last week to perform and receive his Four Fathers music scholarship. Well done John.

Tree Removal:

This was a little more than we anticipated but our building will be safer in terms of fire and falling limbs. Thanks to Paul and his crew for our wooden stepping stones and little tables and chairs. Thanks to Jarrad & Hayley who worked hard to make a fairy garden on Tuesday afternoon.



Thank you:

A huge thank you to Alistair and Les for burning the rubbish pile in the car park. Thank you also to Scotty for the offer. We are very grateful .

COMMUNITY WHAT'S ON CALENDAR - DECEMBER 2011/JANUARY 2012

Week beg 11th Dec	WHITEHEADS CREEK- TARCOMBE RFB TRUCK Mark Stokes Geoff Bond
Week beg 12th Dec	Terip Terip Recreation Reserve Mowing Roster Geoff & Jan Penny Mark Ireland
Dec 3 to Jan 29	GALLERY 34 invites you to a solo exhibition by ANTON COSTANTINO Silhouettes of the High Country 34 High Street, Yea Thursday to Saturday 9-4 Sundays & Public Holidays 10-4 Olivia Lawson Ph 03 5797 3222 info@gallery34.com.au www.gallery34.com.au Closed Dec 20 to 30
Friday 9th December	Highlands Community Christmas Gathering , Highlands Hall, 6pm onwards. BYO everything, BBQ provided. There will be no formal part to the evening, just come along, catch up with neighbours and enjoy yourself. Last year was a terrific evening with about 50 locals so let's see if we can encourage even more out of the woodwork this year. See you there. will be in place of 'Drinks on the Deck' at Highlands Community Hall. BYO everything - food for a BBQ, salad to share, chairs to sit on, etc. All welcome.
Friday 9th December,	All are welcome to a native seed collection morning with Cathy Olive at the Seymour Lighthouse Reserve, 10.00 am (Goulburn Valley Hwy, Seymour - travelling from Yea, just on the right before you enter Seymour). Cathy will show best collection techniques, seed storage, etc. BYO thermos and plate. RSVP Judy Brookes 57 972 563
Saturday 10th December	WHITE HART HOTEL AGAIN! First up....in music news, we're all excited to confirm the long awaited return of Nick Barker, playing with his band The Reptiles. They're appearing with the evening kicking off at 8.00pm with a tbc support act. A: 63 Hill St, Longwood, VIC 3665 T: 03-5798-5203 E: info@whiteharthotel.com.au
December 10 and 11	EUROA COMMUNITY CINEMA The Cup" (3 stars) This movie was released to coincide with the Spring Racing Carnival – I doubt those who attend the myriad of social activities surrounding this event would have time to go and see the movie! However that leaves the rest of us to enjoy another Australian movie based on the story of Damien Oliver's 2002 Melbourne Cup ride and what unfolded following the death of his brother Jason.
Saturday 10th December	TERIP TERIP RECREATION RESERVE CHRISTMAS BBQ All are welcome to join us at the Rec Reserve for a free Christmas BBQ from 6pm. Please BYO meat and drinks, and a salad or dessert to share. The BBQ will follow the last home matches for the year for the Terip Terip Tennis Club, so come along earlier if you would like to watch a few sets! For any enquiries, please contact Andrew Holloway (Rec Reserve Secretary) on 57904080.
Saturday 10th December	Black Market 10am - 12pm: Swap & sell your home produce at this local food exchange and "open garden". This month it's being hosted by Megan Hollick (home of metier aromatherapy), 10 Collas St, Seymour. Contact Paul Macgregor on 5797 0229, diversity@diversity.org.au , or Megan on 5799 0284 for more information.
Sunday 11th December	Celebrate Christmas at St. Davids Uniting Church Terip-Ruffy. Everybody is welcome to this special carol singing service with a visiting artist, starting at 2.00 pm and followed by afternoon tea. (Please note the Christmas Service will be held at the Uniting Church in Euroa.)
Tuesday, De- cember 13, 2011	PESTIVIRUS AND INFERTILITY Q & A Session Beef cattle fertility overview: Causes of infertility in cattle including Pestivirus - Vibriosis- plus practical on-farm biosecurity and disease prevention Time: 8.30 am - 10.30 am Venue: Tablelands Community Centre, old Ruffy School, Ruffy Cost: Free, morning tea provided RSVP: Thursday, December 8, 2011 to DPI District Veterinary Officer Lee Manning on (03) 5761 1507 or lee.manning@dpi.vic.gov.au
Tue 13th Dec	Highlands Caveat CFA Pre-Season Meeting at 7:30pm Please note a free sausage sizzle will be held at 7:00pm just prior to the meeting which starts at 7:30pm at the Highlands Fire Station All welcome We need as many people to come as possible to make up a quorum
Friday 16th December	Rocky Passes would like to introduce Birdie Aiken ... a talented local singer, song-writer who will be performing to celebrate the last tapas night for the year. From 6pm \$10 cover charge (half to Birdie, half to Graceworks Myanmar) Tapas and wine as usual. To book, please call 57969366 or contact@rockypasses.com.au
December 17 and 18	EUROA COMMUNITY CINEMA "The Hunter" (4 stars) Martin David (Willem Dafoe), a modern day soldier of fortune, is hired by a mysterious man in Paris to find a Tasmanian Tiger. Set in a remote part of Tasmania, Martin moves into a room in the home of Lucy (Frances O'Connor) who, along with her two small children, is grieving over her husband who went missing some time ago. A compelling storyline which could almost be classed as a thriller, features cinematography showing some of the most beautiful parts of Tasmania you are ever likely to see.
Sunday 18th December	White Hart Hotel 4.30pm -Hairy Lasso's - Look out Nick Barker, Longwood's got talent too !!!! Last shin-dig for 2011. A: 63 Hill St, Longwood, VIC 3665 T: 03-5798-5203 E: info@whiteharthotel.com.au
Saturday night 24th December	Christmas Eve Service At Christmas eve service will be held in the Caveat Church at 5pm. All welcome. It will include the Christmas story and carols. I would welcome a musician who could accompany the carol singing. Contact Stuart 5796 9358
	SUNDAY January 8, 2012 - Terip Terip Annual Tennis Tournament starting at 10.00am. Section 1 and 2 and juniors. - Approx 4 sets alternating partners. For further details contact Cindy Hayes 5790 4226 or Frances Lawrence 0427 904 262 ALL WELCOME
Thursday 27th January	Hughes Creek Catchment Collaborative meeting 7.30pm Terip Terip tennis Courts, all welcome

Classifieds & Community Notices

INTEGRATED BEEF HEALTH MANAGEMENT WORKSHOP

Due to popular demand, this four-day course will be returning to Yea, during February-March 2012.

WHEN: 13 February, 20 February, 27 February, 5 March 2012 (Mondays)

TIME: 9.00 am – 3.30 pm (each day)

WHERE: Yea Council Chambers, the Semi-circle, Yea (near Yea Library)

During the workshop participants develop skills to enable them to understand and overcome threats associated with poor disease management issues. They also learn how to address issues associated with poor nutrition, as well as develop and apply risk management strategies to offset these animal health issues. The four-day program offered by Goulburn Ovens Institute of TAFE (GOTAFE) will be run by Dr Rod Manning from Mike Stevens & Associates (and facilitated by DPI Beef Extension Officer, Alison Desmond).

Rod ran a vet clinic in Mansfield until 2002, and now operates a 1100-cow enterprise, comprising a 70% cow-calf and 30% steer trading and finishing operation in Mansfield, Alexandra and Benalla. Rod is highly respected in the beef industry for his entrepreneurial skills and has extensive experience working with producer groups through training programs to assist in promoting healthier and productive cattle herds. Alison is an experienced industry facilitator, who has had extensive involvement in delivering a range of accredited training programs to beef producers across the north-east.

Anyone is welcome to register their interest/queries with Judy Brookes (stating whether you are eligible for educational funding or not) by email (juncball@bigpond.com) or on 57 972 563.

HIGHLANDS CAVEAT FIRE BRIGADE NOTICES

Training: Tue 6th Dec, Tue 20th Dec at the Highlands Fire Shed 7pm, queries Les Lawson 57 969 265 Peter Roberts 57 969 301 Pre-Season Meeting: Tue 13th Dec 7:30pm at the Highlands Fire Shed

FOX AND WILD DOG COLLECTION SCHEDULE

Next round of collection points will be open as follows: Benalla: Wednesday 7th December 10;30-12;30 FOX ONLY Broadford: Thursday 8th December 10;30-12;30 FOX ONLY Mansfield: Wednesday 7th December 2;30-4;30 FOX AND WILD DOG

BITS OF BOTANY AND BIRDS

White-browed woodswallow. *Artamus leucorhynchus*

A flock of maybe 70 woodswallows passed through our block one day recently. They flew around for a few hours, chasing insects while calling to each other and sometimes perching on a dead tree. Then they moved on and I haven't seen any since. Most were White-browed but I also saw some Masked woodswallows in the flock. It's apparently common for these two to flock together though the third local species - Dusky woodswallow - keeps to its own kind. They are not true swallows, and though they zip around after insects in a similar fashion they have a chunkier body with broader wings and without the forked tail. They are nomadic, visiting Victoria mainly in spring and summer.

By Louise Currie



BOOK REVIEW

Painted Love Letters – Catherine Bateson

Although this book is tagged for teenagers it is one of those short, sharp poignant novels that will remain with you long after reading it. Chrissie's father has lung cancer diagnosed and although her family moves to Brisbane in the hope that chemotherapy treatment will prolong his life they are to be disappointed. Beautifully written, in small vignettes, Bateson has captured the pendulum moods of futility and hope sympathetically with tight, crisp prose. The painted love letters of the title are her father's paintings that he leaves as his legacy.

By Pauline Roberts

RUFFY GRAZING GROUP

A Nuts and Bolts of Grazing Management session was held at the Tablelands Community Centre (Old Ruffy School) on 11th of November with 23 local participants. Kate Sargeant and Claire Gerri from EverGraze hosted the morning's sessions on grazing principles and certainly provided a vast amount of information including detailed handouts. A barbecue lunch was provided by Department of Primary Industries and ably cooked by Ash Paech (Rutherglen) and Brad Costin (Broadford) and the group then made their way to Gerard Hill's property adjoining Hughes Creek. The afternoon session focused on the current grazing regime and pasture composition of the existing paddock incorporating river flats and steep hill country. An exciting part of the day was the identification of both native and introduced grass species. Discussion then centred around Gerard's plan to fence the steep hill country from the river flats and improve the productivity of the river flat country by pasture renovation and grazing management. Grazing management will also be implemented on the steep hill country to avoid bare hills in summer and associated erosion and salinity issues.

The next EverGraze session will be run early in 2012 on Feed Budgeting. Anyone who did not attend the first session and is interested in participating should contact Susan Sleight on 57904301 or email susan.sleight@dpi.vic.gov.

HELP WANTED

Someone with a ride on mower to occasionally mow around a house on Gum Road for approximately 2 hours. Ring Helen 0429855101

FOR SALE

"Eggs - free range - Helen Mckenzie - my chocks are laying really well - \$2 per dozen - please keep/supply your egg cartons. 03 57904211"

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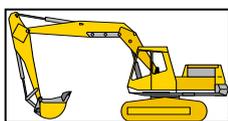
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