

BARRABOOL HILLS LANDCARE

Barrabool Hills Landcare Group Newsletter. October 2022.

Wascally Rabbits!

Cute and Cuddly or devastating destroyers?

By Heike Dunn.



In Victoria feral or wild populations of European rabbits (*Oryctolagus cuniculus*) are declared as established pest animals under the Catchment and Land Protection Act 1994. Under this Act landholders have legal responsibility "to take all reasonable steps to prevent the spread of, and as far as possible eradicate, established pest animals from their land".

If that is not enough of a big stick and aside from destroying pasture, crops and plant communities costing the community 100's of millions of dollars a year, causing soil erosion and associated sedimentation of waterways, hosting parasites and diseases, being linked to increases in weeds and competing with native fauna for food and habitat, feral rabbits are listed as a key threat to over 300 threatened species of native plants and animals. So, under the Environment Protection and

Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 landholders are also legally obliged "to protect and manage nationally threatened species and ecological communities".

Rabbits are one of Australia's most serious pest animals as they are well suited to Australian conditions and breed prolifically. Just one pair of rabbits can re-infest your property and even low rabbit densities can seriously impact the regeneration of sensitive plant communities.

Effective rabbit control is achieved by using a key combination of control measures sometimes referred to as the "rabbit recipe" and it is undertaken as follows:

1. Allow biological control and natural mortality to reduce the rabbit population.
2. Bait to reduce numbers prior to

WHATS ON?

DECEMBER 2022

BHLG Christmas breakup, Friday December 9. Page 7.

FEBRUARY 2023

SAVE THE DATE!

BHLG Film Night, February 15. Page 2.

Rabbit Baiting Program

February 16, 20 & 23. Form on page 3 or buy online.

APRIL 2023

Nesting Box Workshop. April / May 2023. TBC

Landcare Projects Bus Tour. April / May 2023. TBC.

ripping – see next article

3. Remove harbour and destroy warrens (ripping).
4. Follow up with fumigation and further warren destruction.
5. Be persistent, remain vigilant and monitor regularly.

Agriculture Victoria, Victorian Rabbit Action Network (VRAN) and PestSmart (managed through the Centre for Invasive Species Solutions) are excellent sources of further information.

'Meet the Ferals', an interesting 10 min YouTube video produced and presented by ABC Landline reporter, Prue Adams, is part of a pest series worth watching. It looks at the history of rabbits, the devastating impact feral animals have on Australia's

CONTROLLING RABBITS IN THE BARRABOOL HILLS – BE PART OF THE COMMUNITY BAITING CAMPAIGN - FEBRUARY 2023.

The next Barrabool Hills annual rabbit baiting program is scheduled for February 2023 which will be the 18th year that the Barrabool Hills Landcare Group have assisted the community and coordinated the ordering of rabbit bait for individual landholders throughout the area in a major rabbit control program.

The baiting program uses the poison Pindone, which is mixed with fresh chopped carrots. Whilst all care should be taken in handling the poisoned carrots, you do not require

a specific license to do so. Pindone is a cumulative poison and to be effective it needs to be ingested by rabbits on three separate occasions.

The 2023 baiting dates are 16th, 20th and 23rd February 2023.

The Barrabool Hills Landcare Group will coordinate a bulk order of the fresh bait, which is then packaged for each landholder and made available for collection at two separate depots on each of the three dates.

If you would like to be part of the baiting program all the details are in the attached pindone - carrot order form. Please note the final date for accepting orders and payment is 7th February 2023.



... (continued from page 1)

environment and agriculture, discusses what scientists and land managers are doing to control these introduced pests and includes great archive footage. If you are interested, you can watch it through the VRAN website or the link below: <https://youtu.be/778Da7NCF6s>

References/links/credits/photos. <https://agriculture.vic.gov.au/biosecurity/pest-animals/invasive-animal-management/integrated-rabbit-control>

<https://vran.com.au/>

<http://www.pestsmart.org.au/animal-welfare/humaneness-assessment/rabbit/>

Barrabool Hills Landcare Group Rabbit Recipe Book 'FERAL FEAST'

In 2016 the Barrabool Hills Landcare community came up with a unique way to celebrate their 21st birthday and support their annual rabbit management programs.

We produced a colourful rabbit recipe book, Feral Feast. Featuring twenty one rabbit recipes, superbly illustrated with photographs of the dishes and the Barrabool Hills landscape, together with snippets of history and bespoke cartoons by a renowned local artist.

This is a beautifully presented book, an ideal gift for friends or family, with all profits going towards the efforts of the community to control rabbits. Books cost \$25 which includes GST and postage in a padded bag within Australia. Options for ordering and payment methods are:
EITHER

1/ Order & pay securely via our website <https://www.barraboolhillslandcare.org.au/shop/>. Payment options are bank transfer, credit card or PayPal.

2/ Pay by cash or cheque at any Bendigo Bank Branch (Account No 163791817) using your surname and Feral Feast as the Reference. You will however need to email your details including contact phone number and shipping address to barraboolhillslandcare@gmail.com or mail them to: 1133 Hamilton Hwy STONEHAVEN 3218.



BHLG MOVIE NIGHT

FILM : The Duke

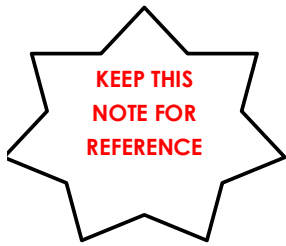
PLACE: Waterland, 1285 Barrabool Rd Barrabool.

DATE: 15th February 2023. TIME: 7pm.

COST: \$10 Donation to Anam Cara.

Bookings: Christa 0408 342 403.

Theatre holds a Maximum of 25 pax.



Rabbit Baiting 2023



EASY PEASY – JUST ORDER VIA OUR WEBSITE instead of filling in this form.

You will be able to pay by direct bank transfer, credit card or PayPal 😊

www.barraboolhillslandcare.org.au/shop

BAITING DATES FOR 2023
16th, 20th and 23rd February 2023

Orders are now being taken for the Barrabool Hills Landcare Group's annual rabbit baiting program. This successful program, now in its 18th year, is organized by volunteers for the community. Pindone is a cumulative poison. To be effective, rabbits need to ingest the baited carrots on **three** separate occasions over a one-week period.

ORDERING AND PAYMENT

The minimum quantity that can be ordered is 5kg for each of the 3 baiting days, costing \$84 (incl GST) in total. You will need to estimate how much bait you will need **for each of the three baiting days** ie 5 kg, 10 kg or 20 kg as per below. **Please call our Hotline if you need help** estimating or have issues with the website shop/payments.

Options for ordering and payment methods are:
EITHER
1/ Order & pay securely via our website
<https://www.barraboolhillslandcare.org.au/shop/>
Payment options are bank transfer, credit card or PayPal. You do not need to submit this order form but please keep it as a reminder for pick up dates etc.
OR
2/ Pay by cash or cheque at any **Bendigo Bank Branch** (Account No 163791817) using your surname as the Reference. You will however need to scan and email your completed order form to barraboolhillslandcare@gmail.com or mail it to: 1133 Hamilton Hwy STONEHAVEN 3218

Orders and payments must be received by **7th February 2023**.
⊗ Regrettably we are **unable to process any orders or payments received after this date**.
A Tax Invoice/Receipt will be emailed (where possible) after receipt of your payment. A paper copy will be provided upon request.

COLLECTION DEPOTS

Your entire order will comprise **three** separate allocations. These will be available for collection on the above **three** dates from only one of following two depots.

Depot 1 – Barry & Glenys Harvey - 232 Henty Main Road, Mt Moriac Ph 0407568292
Depot 2 – Brien & Judy Cohn - 25 Kingsbury Lane, Waurm Ponds Ph 0414835833

Please specify on the order form from which depot you will be collecting your baited carrot and it is essential you include a contact phone number below for the person collecting the bait. Orders need to be collected from the depot between **4pm** and **6pm** on the specified dates

HOTLINE
For more information, contact
Jim – President (0409 935 700) or Heike – Treasurer (0417 020 012)

It is the legal obligation of landholders to control rabbits on their property. One pair of rabbits can produce 180 offspring in 18 months and 12 rabbits eat as much as one sheep! Baiting, warren destruction and removal of areas where rabbits can hide are recognized as being essential components of an integrated rabbit control program

NAME

ADDRESS

EMAIL PHONE NO. OF PERSON COLLECTING BAIT

ORDER – ENTER NUMBER OF BAGS on **each** of the three baiting days

5kg bag for each of the 3 baiting days = \$84 x <input type="text"/> = \$	TOTAL PAYMENT MADE \$
10kg bag for each of the 3 baiting days = \$129 x <input type="text"/> = \$	Direct Credit Reference (ie SURNAME)
20kg bag for each of the 3 baiting days = \$228 x <input type="text"/> = \$	Collection Depot:
	Waurm Ponds <input type="radio"/> Mt Moriac <input type="radio"/>

The Microbial Necromass

The largest land storage of carbon. By Stephen Murphy.

As we walk over our properties, one footfall at a time, how many of us think about the diversity and density of the life forms in the soil that we are stepping on?

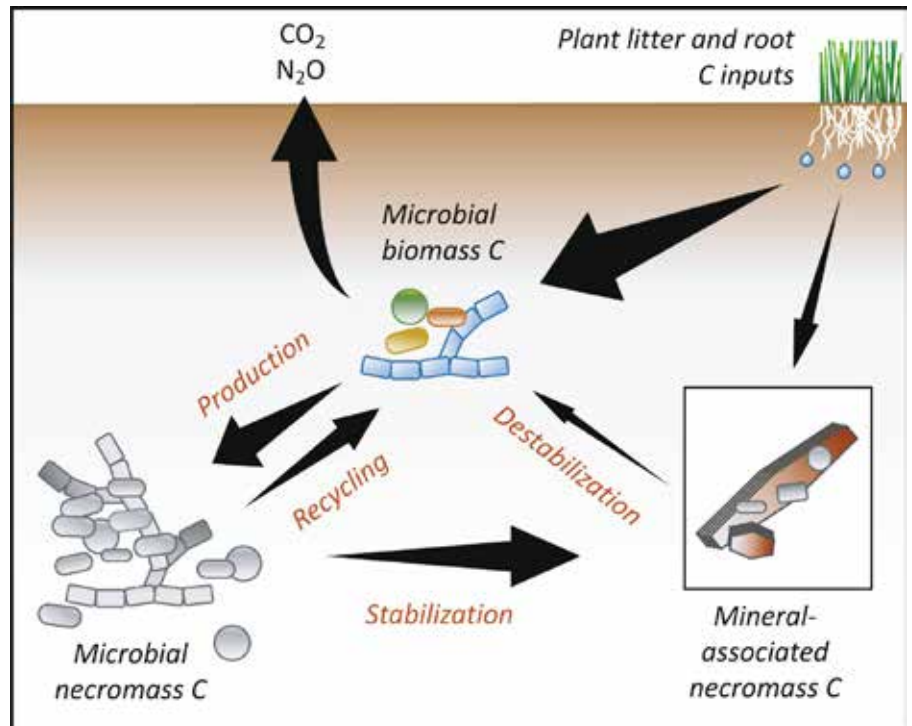
In just a teaspoon of good garden soil, according to microbial geneticists, there are one billion bacteria, several yards of fungal hyphae, several thousand protozoa, and a few dozen nematodes. That's peak hour in Burke Street Melbourne on steroids!

These important microbes are all living, doing an important job and contributing to the biomass of the soil. But what about the microbial graveyard, where all those small organisms are laid to rest? Microbiologists call this graveyard the microbial necromass.

It is found deep under the soil, where oxygen is in short supply and it is an important though little-known carbon stockpile. In fact, it is where most organic soil carbon is stored more or less permanently. This makes it critically important for carbon sequestration. It has been described as the largest store of carbon on land. At these deeper levels in the soil, it can provide up to 80% of the soil's organic matter.

The microbial necromass is the accumulated remains of dead microbial cells and root cell fragments. It is permanent in the soil because the low levels of oxygen at deeper levels protect it from decomposition. Necromass is organic matter that attaches to grains of soil and also includes the sugars, proteins, enzymes and DNA that are associated with microbial life.

Land managers can dramatically increase soil carbon storage by



optimizing necromass formation. To achieve this is not rocket science. Plant more deep-rooted perennial plants that will push into the soil depths where there is an 'oxygen-free zone'. These plants could be native trees and shrubs, part of a perennial pasture program or the practice of Regenerative Agriculture.

This is where the necromass will form around the plant roots, comprising the fungi and bacteria that support the health of these plants. You will be making an important contribution to carbon sequestration by increasing the microbial necromass in your soil.

SMALL GRANTS AVAILABLE!

Barrabool Hills Landcare Group has a Small Grants Program initiative available to all financial members.

Small grants are available for re-vegetation projects in the local area. Applicants must be current financial members of the Barrabool Hills Landcare Group and contribute 50% or more financially to the proposed project.

The maximum funding available per project is \$500. Application forms are available on our website barraboolhillslandcare.org.au



HOW TO ADDRESS FLUPROPANATE SHORTAGES

Reprinted with permission by the Victorian Serrated Tussock Working Party. June 10, 2022.

There are currently supply issues with the selective herbicide flupropanate, with supplies likely to be limited for some time. The shortages of flupropanate are more likely to impact landowners with larger properties and higher densities of serrated tussock.

Whilst supplies of flupropanate are limited there are a number of other management options:

- Redistribution of personal supplies of flupropanate to high priority areas.
- Spray topping with glyphosate as an alternative management strategy.
- Slashing before flowering.
- Plan ahead

Make sure to seek advice from an agronomist or chemical supplier for your particular situation, and always follow the product label.

Distribution of personal supplies of flupropanate

Some landowners have flupropanate supplies that could be redistributed to landowners with high priority serrated tussock infestations.

The VSTWP ask landowners and Landcare groups to:

1. Identify flupropanate supplies (the herbicide must be in its original packaging).
2. Work with landowners and Landcare to strategically allocate stores to manage high priority serrated tussock infestations across your region this coming season. Alternatively, landowners that are interested in selling large quantities of flupropanate can contact the VSTWP on info@serratedtussock.com

Spray Topping with Glyphosate

Spray topping uses low label rates of glyphosate to reduce or prevent seed-set in serrated tussock. This may help in reducing the serrated tussock while doing minimal damage to beneficial species.

It can be used as a broad acre treatment to stop serrated tussock seeding. It will not kill serrated tussock plants, but will affect them so that they do not flower, or if already in flower will not produce viable seed. However, spray topping will not kill seed once it is already formed on the plant. Always use with other methods of control such as spot spraying, chipping and grazing management.

Spray topping is suitable as a short term option only and particularly in pasture situations with medium to high level infestations of serrated tussock. The timing for spray topping is critical for this method to be effective. For glyphosate, treat prior to flowering, around mid-August to mid-October. Always apply herbicide in accordance with label directions.

Slashing before seed set

Slashing reduces the height and seed production of serrated tussock plants using a mower or slasher or similar tool. Slash before the weed flowers and reduce its height to just above ground level. Regularly clean machinery to prevent further spread. Slash weed-free areas first and train operators in machinery hygiene and identifying serrated tussock. Slasher covers and mower blowers may reduce the spread of seed.

Slash in late winter to early spring to prevent seed head production and to prepare for crops or pasture. Avoid

slashing when serrated tussock is in seed.

Slashing may limit seed production if conducted at the right time of year. It can reduce fire risk and limit soil disturbance. However, slashing doesn't kill the plant and can stimulate serrated tussock growth. It may increase the spread of seed without precautions such as machinery hygiene.

Follow up with regular mowing and slashing to maintain low serrated tussock growth. Control plants with other suitable techniques.

Plan ahead: Use this time to plan ahead. Identify alternative options to control serrated tussock. Developing a three year plan for controlling serrated tussock. Identify suitable contractors or what equipment you will need to do the work yourself. Talk to your neighbours and Landcare group about coordinated control for your area. Look through this website which has lot of information on the impacts of serrated tussock, identification notes, management options, and community support.



Message from the President.

By Jim Seager.

Welcome to all new and ongoing members.

This spring continues to be wet, presenting great establishment opportunity for those who have planted trees. While we are sure to have plenty of green grass for livestock through to Christmas, the weeds are prolific this year.

Some of our more invasive weeds such as Serrated tussock and Chilean Needle Grass are now seeding so it will require a big effort to control them.

The good season also increases rabbit numbers, so now is the time to sign up for our 2023 rabbit baiting program which is run every February using Pindone treated carrots. If you haven't baited before or need more information, use the contacts from the baiting form in this newsletter.

It is great to see members were out planting many indigenous native trees, shrubs and ground covers this spring. Follow up weed control heading into summer will improve their survival and help establish some great habitat & stock shelter for years to come.

Our recent past projects bus tour highlighted the need for planning, so consider what projects you want to do for 2023. Consider applying for assistance through our small grants program. (see our website). It is important to order plants in the next few months for next year and book up fencing contractors to avoid delays.

We are planning to run another bus tour in Autumn 2023 along with other events such as our film night in February and nesting box building workshop. Happy to hear other suggestions for events.

Thank you to our executive committee for their continued support and contribution. Heike our treasurer, Christa - Secretary, Leah - newsletter & website and all those members who contribute to the running of the landcare group. Special thanks to Jennifer Hallows who has agreed to manage the Barrabool Hills Landcare groups Facebook/ Instagram page.

Thank you to all those people who have chosen to make donations to our group over the past year. These donations will benefit members and the broader community by providing grants and information

to help landholders protect native vegetation, establish trees and control weeds & pests.

Please remember to update us with any changes in your details so we can keep you informed of our coming events.

Thanks to all the other contributors and for those who help get the newsletter out every two months. Thank you to Surf Coast and Geelong City Councils who print our newsletters. Remember we are always looking for new articles We are looking forward to seeing you at our Christmas break up on December 9th.

HAVE YOUR SAY

GEELONG'S PLAN FOR NATURE

CITY OF GREATER
GEELONG



The City of Greater Geelong is preparing a new Plan for Nature to protect and enhance habitats for our wild species, and we need your help.

The Plan for Nature will set the future direction for nature programs in Greater Geelong.

We invite you to contribute to the plan by visiting the Have Your Say Page: yoursay.geelongaustralia.com.au/planfornature and sharing your ideas for nature and telling us about the wild places you enjoy.

Meet the team for a chat in-person and on-line:

- **On-line** - 10am - 11.30am - Wednesday 9 November - Register by visiting yoursay.geelongaustralia.com.au/planfornature
- **Wurriki Nyal** - 3.30pm - 6.30pm, 16 November 2022, 137-149 Mercer Street, Geelong
- **Geelong Waterfront Makers and Growers Market** - 6 November 2022, Steampacket Gardens, Eastern Beach Road, Geelong
- **Lara Community Market** - 13 November 2022, Cnr McClelland Avenue and Rennie Street, Lara
- **Drysdale Community Market** - 20 November 2022, Drysdale Recreation Reserve, Duke Street, Drysdale
- Follow us on facebook or Instagram and share posts with your friends to encourage more people to get involved

The opportunity for community members to share their ideas about nature and contribute towards the plan continues through to 5.00pm Monday 16 January 2023.

What Bird Is that?

By Tim Harte.

Sandy Cameron and Ric Walter identified the species of bird in the October BHLG newsletter correctly, well done Sandy and Ric. The bird was a Spotted pardalote (*Pardalotus punctatus*).



The October 2022 mystery bird - Spotted pardalote (*Pardalotus punctatus*).

Spotted pardalotes are known for being one of Australia's smallest birds and their unique nesting location, in horizontal tunnels dug in the soil of creek banks, escarpments or areas of disturbed earth.

Spotted pardalotes feed up high in the canopies of eucalypt trees, gleaming invertebrates off eucalypt leaves and performing beneficial ecological services for these trees, keeping them healthy by managing the invertebrate parasite load.

This issue's mystery bird (far left) is a well-known species of waterbird in South-Eastern Australia. In early spring this species can be heard quacking throughout the Barrabool Hills as they search for suitable nesting hollows in old dead stag red gum trees and trees near bodies of water.

This issue's mystery bird?



Email us with your 'what bird is this?' answer, the first person to answer correctly will have their name published in the next newsletter.



INVITATION

END OF YEAR BREAK UP & CHRISTMAS CELEBRATION

PLACE: "WARRAWEE"

200 Monahan's Rd

Gnarwarre

Date: Friday Dec 9th 6.30 Start

Let's have a wonderful celebration of all our Landcare achievements on 9th December at Ken and Francis's lovely farm.

Koala Clancy have established many trees amongst the newly established wetland

Invite your family and neighbors and join us for a wonderful celebration of the year to come, with lots of new Landcare initiatives planned in 2023

BYO Meat and Drinks and Chair

SALAD or DESSERT to share

BHLG will provide nibbles, cheese, and wine for Pre- Dinner

Our event will be COVID COMPLIANT

ie DO NOT COME if you are UNWELL

RSVP CHRISTA JONES barraboolhillslandcare@gmail.com

Mob: 0408 342 403 by MONDAY 5TH DEC

MERRY CHRISTMAS



BECOME A MEMBER.

Join our vibrant Barrabool Hills Landcare community and help support our projects and events? Only \$15 annually per family.

Go to our website for all the details on how to join www.barraboolhillslandcare.org.au or email us at barraboolhillslandcare@gmail.com

CONTRIBUTIONS TO OUR NEWSLETTER.

Contributions to the newsletter are most welcome. Let your fellow community and members know what is happening in the Barrabool Hills.

Send articles and photos to barraboolhillslandcare@gmail.com. Deadline for next issue is 16/01/23.

Members are able to advertise their Barrabool Hills business in the newsletter @ \$30 per issue (space allowing). Ads. are approximately 50 mm x 70 mm, and will be printed provided there is space.

CONTACT US

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SOCIAL MEDIA

Facebook: [barraboolhillslandcare](https://www.facebook.com/barraboolhillslandcare)

Instagram: [barraboolhillslandcaregroup](https://www.instagram.com/barraboolhillslandcaregroup)

Website: barraboolhillslandcare.org.au

Special thanks goes to the Leigh family for distributing the newsletter and the SurfCoast Shire for kindly printing this edition.

Become a member of BHLG! Join, renew or update your membership now.

Annual memberships are due in July each year. But you can join at any time. Group memberships are just \$15.

If you provide updated details including emails, you will get the latest information on upcoming events, such as community planting days & catchment bus tours. You will also be eligible for our small grants program and be able to access our equipment to

help with vital projects including tree planting, weed and pest control. Additionally there are often larger regional projects which you can benefit from for weed control and re-vegetation. Our members have a broad range of experience and may be able to provide advice

on weed identification and control, preparation for tree planting and indigenous plant lists.

To join, renew or update information:
www.barraboolhillslandcare.org.au
or email us at
barraboolhillslandcare@gmail.com