

Rabbit management post fires



From the Victorian Rabbit Action Network

The conditions in the paddock after a fire can provide an opportunity to target local rabbit populations.

The VRAN team suggest the following plan of attack in fire-affected landscapes:

- Map rabbit warrens. With the reduced vegetation cover, rabbit warrens may be more visible now. A good first step in your rabbit control program is mapping warrens.
- Baiting is an essential component of integrated best practice rabbit control, undertaken prior to destroying warrens. But note the following point.
- Protect native wildlife and domestic animals. Native animals may be using rabbit burrows for shelter, and baiting programs will attract hungry animals. In a burnt landscape, baits may be more attractive to non-target species (domestic and native) than under normal conditions. Carefully consider your bait placement and check the uptake of free feeds prior to laying the treated bait.
- To identify animals in the treatment area you can simply observe footprints in ash beds or install a remote camera.
- Destroy warrens. Warrens are key to rabbits being able to re-establish their population post-fire. By ripping or destroying these, it limits their success.
- Continue to manage woody weeds. This will limit places for rabbits to shelter under.
- Work with your neighbours. Rabbits won't stop at your property boundary, so

collaboration 'over the fence' will ensure your program is more effective.

- Keep a soft footprint on the landscape. Be careful to avoid further damage to the environment and Aboriginal cultural heritage sites. Obtain the necessary permits and, if you are unsure, seek advice from Agriculture Victoria, DELWP, Aboriginal Victoria or local council.
- To plant or not to plant. Take a look at this [Restoring our landscapes guide](#) as a starting point and seek advice from local experts from Landcare and Catchment Management Authorities.
- For more tips, take a look at the VRAN [rabbit management recipe video](#).

For further advice on managing rabbits post-fire, contact VRAN Executive Officer, Heidi Kleinert: heidi.kleinert@agriculture.vic.gov.au

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