

Information Sheet

Foundation for Rabbit-Free Australia Grants

Foundation for Rabbit-Free Australia invests in a wide range of projects, in its' own right and often in partnerships. The Foundation may be called upon to 'top-up' or add value to existing projects, it invests in blue-sky science, and it puts a lot of effort into retaining a critical mass of knowledgeable rabbit researchers. It has also a long history in promoting 'Bilbies Not Bunnies' through our trademark, 'Easter Bilby', and is especially thankful to Haigh's Chocolates for the ongoing support in that regard. Examples of projects in which the Foundation has been involved include:

Researching rabbit controls:

- Investigations into the effectiveness of different strains of calicivirus, and fieldwork to better understand the factors affecting variability in calicivirus impacts.
- Exploring the role of flies in the spread of calicivirus and the development of techniques to sample and analyse flies as a way of tracking the spread of calicivirus.
- Exploring the interaction between myxomatosis and calicivirus (e.g. the increased susceptibility of rabbits to calicivirus after experiencing myxomatosis), using data from the long-running Turretfield monitoring site; and capturing the understanding in a model of rabbit populations.
- Developing rabbit population models including the influence of genetics and environmental factors on the susceptibility of rabbits to different diseases.
- Exploring the emerging field of gene-drive technology as a potential control mechanism.

Understanding wild rabbits and their impact:

- Radio-tracking wild rabbits to better understand their behaviour.
- Genetic studies exploring the family trees of wild rabbits at the Turretfield monitoring site and the role of genetics in rabbit susceptibility to biological controls.
- Analysis of rabbit genetics from across Australia, the subsequent identification of six genetic clusters, and assessing genetic differences as prospects to influence resistance to diseases.
- Radio-tracking bilbies as part of an investigation of competition between rabbits and bilbies.
- Assisted with fencing of the TGB Osborn Vegetation Reserve, Koonamore Station, to record the long-term benefits on vegetation, from the removal of rabbits.



RABBIT-FREE AUSTRALIA SUPPORTS RESEARCH FIELD WORK

R&D Capacity building:

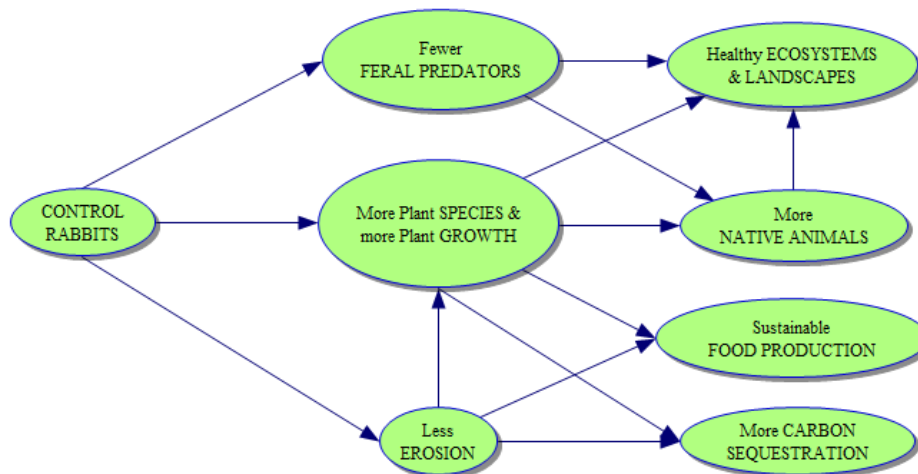
- Travel grants so Australian researchers could attend overseas conferences and visit international research facilities; and assisting overseas research experts to visit Australian counterparts.
- Convened, and contributed to, national workshops to identify research priorities and stimulate increased investment.
- Advocated for, and assisted in, national investment and coordination for research into wild rabbit controls.

Information Sheet

Information delivery, promotion and communication:

- Easter Bilby – promotional celebrations with long-term collaborators Haigh’s Chocolates and the Adelaide Zoo.
- Easter Bilby books, pantomime, and a children’s ‘Action Pack’, telling the story of why we promote ‘Bilbies Not Bunnies.’
- ‘Those Wild Rabbits’, the award-winning book about the impact of rabbits on Australia.
- Publication of rabbit control guidelines at national and regional levels.
- Rabbiting-On – a program by the ABC to mark 150 years since the introduction of European wild rabbits to Victoria.
- Innumerable submissions to government inquiries, national strategies, reviews and summits.
- Our website and regular posts on social media.

BENEFITS of RABBIT CONTROL



THE FOUNDATION PLANS TO REVAMP THE WEBSITE TO BETTER CONVEY THE BENEFITS OF RABBIT CONTROL

Promoting on-ground action:

- Supporting the control feral animals (rabbits and cats) as a precursor to the re-introduction quolls, bilbies and other native animals.
- Collaborating with ACRE – a program by Rotary Australia encouraging on-ground control of wild rabbits – and promoting citizen science, such as RabbitScan.
- Encouraging governments to support community-driven rabbit control programs.

For more information see ‘Our Projects’ at: www.rabbitfreeaustralia.com.au

For news updates, or to join the conversation, follow us on Facebook (@RabbitFreeAustralia) or Twitter (EastaBilby).

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