

The Marlborough Rabbit



Special Interest Articles:

- Rabbit Trend Monitoring
- Rabbit Research
- Curly Question?
- Rabbit Control Planning
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- Pellet Trailer for Hire
- Rabbit Introduction to Marlborough
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MAKE THE MOST OF THE 'WET' SEASON

Numbers have taken a real hit in many areas due to the exceptional growth this season.

While numbers are down, hit them hard over the rest of Autumn and Winter to have a small breeding base come Spring.

Marlborough District Council - Biosecurity Section

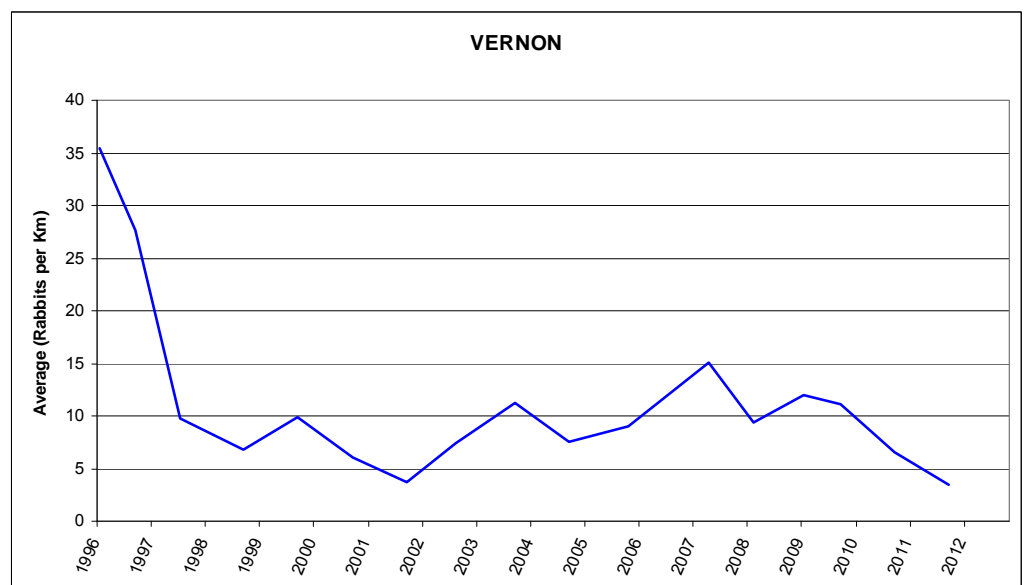
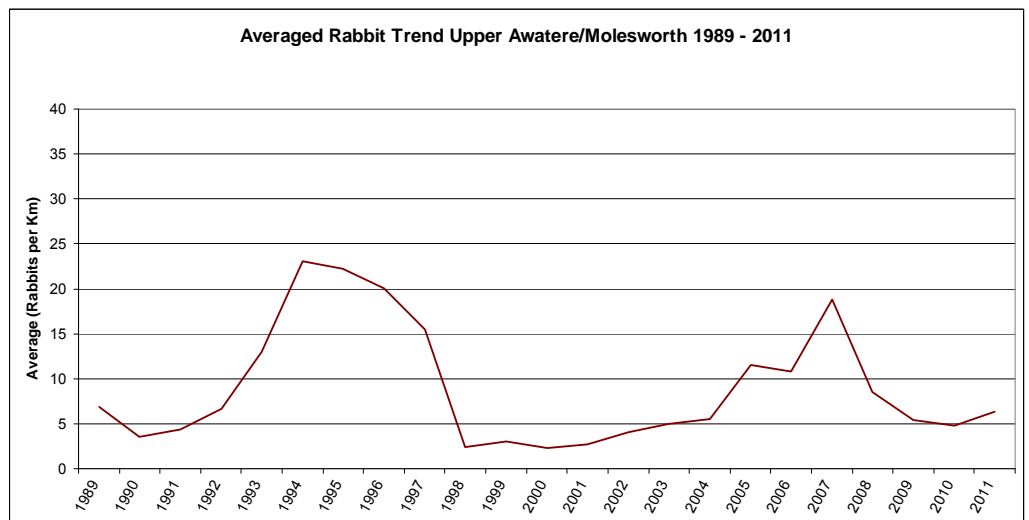
Phone: 03 520 7400

Phone: 03 520 7503 Senior Biosecurity Officer (Animals)

Rabbit Trend Monitoring

As part of historical, annual trend monitoring, rabbit night counts are carried out on set routes. The majority of these routes were established over 10 years ago so a good story of trends has been developed. Of the 13 routes, 11 are in the Upper Awatere/Molesworth, with one established in Vernon/Redwood Pass/Dashwood area, and one at Coastal Ward.

An average for the Upper Awatere (7 routes) and Molesworth (4 routes) counts can be seen below, along with the Vernon route. The first count was carried out at Coastal Ward in 2012 with a result of 1.9 rabbits/km.



Individual night count route trend graphs can be viewed on the Council website:

<http://www.marlborough.govt.nz/Environment/Biosecurity/Pest-Animals/Containment-Control-Pest-Animals/Feral-Rabbit/Rabbit-Night-Count.aspx>

Rabbit-related Research Update

As part of ongoing research carried out by Landcare Research (with support from Otago Regional Council), the winter of 2011 saw trial work commence using different carrot application rates for use with 1080.

This brief was published in the High Country Federated Farmers newsletter "Tussock Talk":

"...We examined if new bait application methods, aimed at reducing the amount of bait and 1080 used in poison operations, could significantly reduce control costs but still achieve high reductions in rabbit numbers.

As a first step, we sowed toxic bait in strips 75 metre apart as opposed to broadcasting bait to get complete coverage which is current best practice. This method reduces the amount of bait and fixed-wing aircraft flight time required to spread the bait by 66 percent, but still provides sufficient bait for all rabbits within the treated area to obtain a lethal dose. We similarly manipulated the second non-toxic pre-feed in some trials to further reduce the amount of bait and flight time required.

We found that experimental treatments were as effective at reducing rabbit numbers as the current practice of broadcasting bait. The amount of bait spread on treated properties was reduced from 30 kg per hectare to 10 kg per hectare (i.e. a 66 percent decrease), with similar proportional reductions in the amount of 1080 used per hectare. Costs were reduced by 25 percent when this method was applied solely to the toxic application, whereas costs were reduced by 50 percent if the new sowing methods were applied to one pre-feed and the toxic application.

Our initial trials have shown great promise in reducing rabbit control costs using 1080. In subsequent years, we aim to assess the efficacy of reducing the sowing rates still further (e.g. 5kg/ha), and whether increasing the concentration of 1080 from the current best practice of 0.02 percent to 0.04 percent will enable even lower sowing rates to be effective."

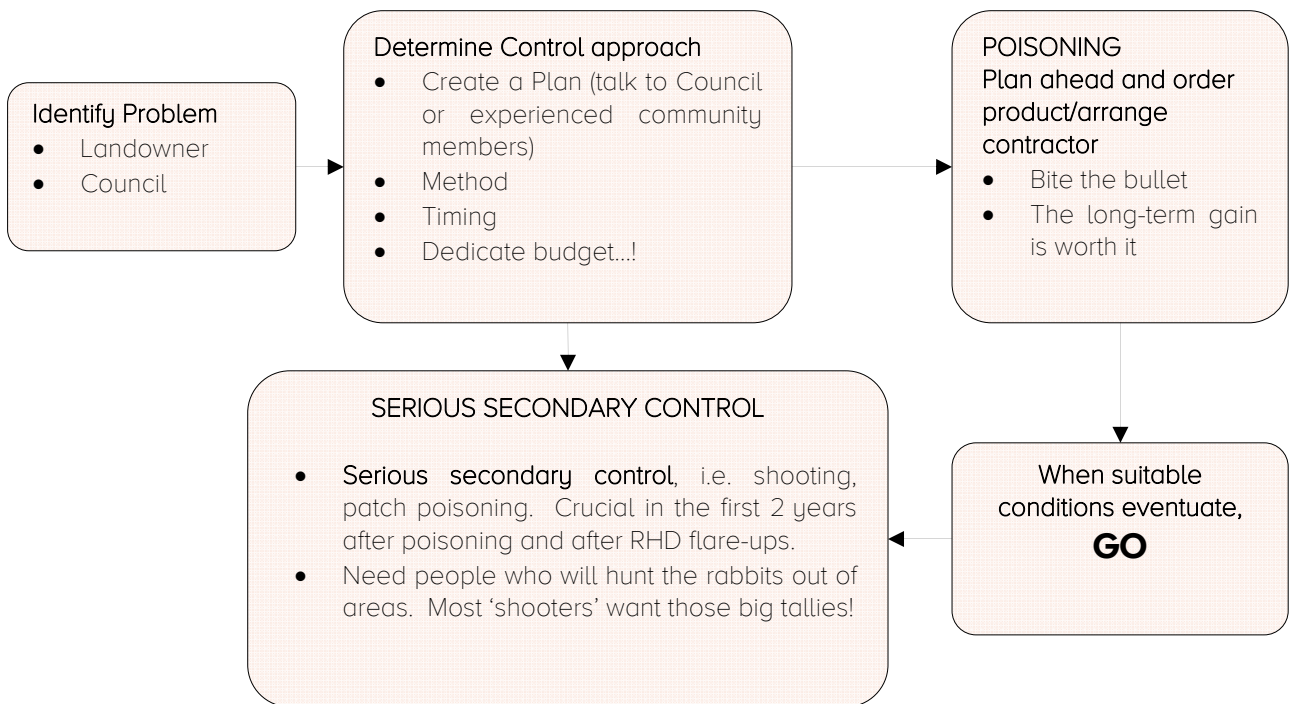


Curly Question?

When were the first rabbits released in Marlborough?

Answer on Page 4

Rabbit Control Planning Process



Poison Licensing

A Controlled Substance License (CSL) is required to broadcast spread Pindone pellets. A CSL and Approved Handler Certificate is required for other rabbit-related vertebrate pest toxins.

For further requirements, contact an ERMA approved Test Certifier.

Test Certifiers serving Marlborough:

- CanTrain NZ Limited (Geoff Allinson)
Phone: 027 493 3034 or Mobile: 027 675 1929
Email: geoff.allinson@xtra.co.nz
- AsureQuality (David Harman)
Phone: 03 545 7772 or Mobile: 021 752 179
Email: harmand@asurequality.com

Cereal Pellet Trailer for Use

Council has recovered a spreading trailer (with tyne) from the Service Delivery era that was used primarily for oats in the past.

It has also been tested and calibrated for use with Pindone pellets.

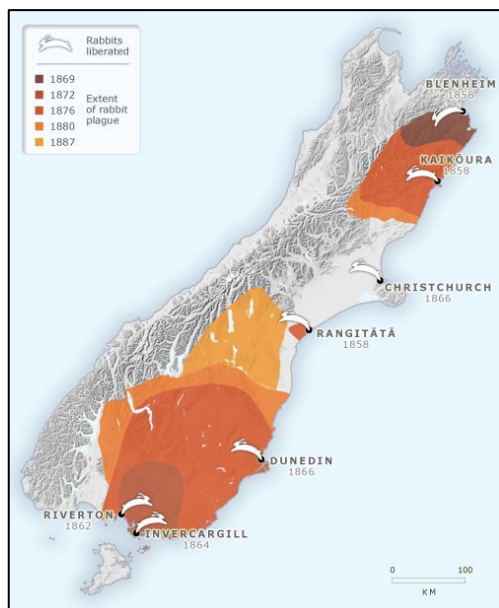
It is available for hire at **NO COST** on the proviso that best practice instructions are followed. This can involve getting it dropped off with a short induction on its use.

For details and bookings, please contact:

- Jono Underwood
jono.underwood@marlborough.govt.nz
520 7503
021 911 480



Rabbit Introduction to Marlborough – c.1858



Rabbits were released inland from Blenheim in 1858 and again in 1865. In the early 1870s they spread up the Wairau and Awatere rivers into inland Marlborough. At the same time, silver-grey rabbits that had been released near Kaikōura about 1862 moved into the drier inland areas. By about 1887 both of these populations began encroaching on the Amuri district in North Canterbury.



Tinned rabbit meat was manufactured in Blenheim around 1900. The export industry never eventuated with little demand from Britain.

Eph-F-MEAT-Gear-130. Alexander Turnbull Library, National Library of New Zealand

Source: K. A. Wodzicki, *Introduced mammals of New Zealand: an ecological and economic survey*. Wellington: Department of Scientific and Industrial Research, 1950, p. 108

Suppliers/Useful Contacts

Poison Products

Enquire through your rural supply store, or through your service provider.

Direct contact can also be made with:

Pest Management Services

Phone: 0800 111 466
www.nopests.co.nz

Service Providers

Tasman Pest Control

Contact: Bruce Waddell
 PO Box 17
 Brightwater
 Nelson 7051
 Phone: 03 542 4347
 Mobile: 027 212 3849

Service Providers

Excell Biosecurity

PO Box 171
 Kaikoura 7340
 Phone: 03 319 5084
 Fax: 03 319 5839
 Mobile: 021 687125
bsmith@excellcorp.co.nz

Feral Animal Services

Contact: Nick Latter
 63 Gibsons Road
 RD 3
 Blenheim 7273
 Phone: 03 572 7353
 Mobile: 021 0263 1283
feral.a.s@farmside.co.nz

Service Providers

Andrew Withers

Mt Riley Road
 RD 1
 Havelock 7178
 Phone: 03 572 9565
 Mobile: 021 270 2849
valleypestcontrol@paradise.net.nz

Council gives no warranty as to the accuracy, completeness or currency of the Service Providers listed. Nor does it make any statement on the competence or other technical attributes of the listed parties. Council recommends that persons wishing to avail themselves of the services of any one of the listed operators undertake their own enquiry as to the suitability of that party.