



Heidi Kleinert
Executive Officer, Victorian Rabbit Action Network



Geral Leach
Chair, Victorian Rabbit Action Network



Lisa Adams
Former National Rabbit Facilitator



Neil Devanny
VRAN mentor
President, Granite Creeks Project



Peter Barnes
VRAN mentor
Trust for Nature Property Manager



Tim Bloomfield
VRAN mentor
Pest Animal Consultant



The European rabbit is Australia's most destructive, vertebrate invasive species. A handful of wild rabbits were introduced by settlers in Victoria in the mid-1800s for hunting, and by the 1920s there were more than 10 billion spread across most of the country.

Today the rabbits cost Australian farmers more than 250 million dollars in lost production each year, they damage sensitive Aboriginal cultural heritage sites and they can endanger over 300 threatened plant and animal species.

Rabbits don't stop at property boundaries and so the issue of rabbits is not one we can solve individually, so if we have any hope of restoring degraded landscapes on private or public lands we need to work better together.

The Victorian Rabbit Action Network is a new approach to tackling the rabbit problem, and it brings together community, government, science, and private organisations to share the problem-solving and decision-making on how we invest in delivering rabbit management programs across the state of Victoria.



It is really important to empower the community, so that the people who have to provide the solution are actually involved in the decision-making. They then have ownership not only of the problem but of the outcome as well.



The impact of having the marginalized voices, the diverse voices, was that we got a much better understanding of the rabbit problem, because often it was those people that held key knowledge as to what the difficulties were. And also it helped us to generate better ideas and it was often surprising of where those ideas came from, often it was the quiet person at the back of the room that had to be invited to speak.



The more people get involved in it the better, because numbers are what actually make it work.



Collaboration is absolutely essential in this because of the fact that people have to have a joint understanding of the problem and a joint strategy for addressing the problem.



If we can all get the whole story, we are so much better equipped to find ways for it.



It always impresses me with larger groups from all over the state, they come together, they swap ideas, they learn from each other, the mentors are just great.



We're there because we want to change the landscape, and make a landscape that's not created by what rabbits decide to eat or not eat.



Rehabilitating landscapes, this creates that network that provides the resilience for people to be able to have trouble in one area but call upon support from other areas where they might need expertise or just the moral support to keep going.



Connecting knowledge and know-how locally, regionally, nationally, and globally.



There is no long term fix in terms of rabbits with the known technology, we know that this is something that has to be worked on, not just through our lifetimes but it has to survive intergenerational change as well, so it's really important that we see it as not a quick fix.



VRAN has reached more than 6000 people, covering more than 2.5 million hectares on public and private land.