



## Goulburn Broken Landcare Snapshot 2004/05



**Landcare Group Name:** Longwood East Landcare

**Group Contact Person:** Tony Court

**Contact Phone Number/s:**

**Length of Group Operation:** 18 years

### Your Story of Success

**Project Name:** Rabbits Project

**Project Location:**

**Project Partners (if any):**

**Project Funding Source/s & Amounts:**

**Project Description:** (300-500 words)

Longwood East Landcare is part of the Granite Creeks Group. The original aim of the group was to rid the hill area of rabbits which were a big concern in the area. The group had a lot of assistance when they first started and it has continued on a yearly basis with "Rabbit Busters".

There has been a significant reduction in rabbit numbers since the commencement of this project. Methods used include 1080 baiting, gas guns and pellets.

Most of the area would be categorised as "lifestyle blocks" rather than the farming community and the project has worked well. Some of the areas can now be classed as "rabbit free". It has been a lot of hard work and our biggest challenge now is educating new people that come into the area to let them know what it was like before and how it is changing to the extent where we are getting a lot of re-growth; trees that never used to get above the ground are now growing and in some areas they are now about 10 years old. So around the area the controls have made a lot of difference.

Some people are against the use of 1080 because of what it can do to the native fauna but the benefits that have been gained out way the disadvantages. The biggest objection to the use of 1080 is that people need to confine their dogs for quite a period of time. During the winter months, we also look at using gas guns which can be put into the warrens and exterminate the rabbits. The group does not encourage shooting on the properties because the properties are small and it can create a problem in the area.

The other activity done in conjunction with the poisoning programme is the ripping of warrens which has been very effective along with the removal rabbit harbour (bracken & similar). However bracken is now being classified as native vegetation. This creates a problem as the group has found a lot of rabbits and their warrens hidden amongst the bracken.

The group feels that this is being over-regulated. The authorities require a permit for the removal of bracken. The group has found that many people do not want to go through the process of obtaining permit. A conflict exists because while the bracken provides a harbour for rabbits and foxes, it also provides habitat for blue wrens. Where bracken has been removed the group has been replacing it with other understorey planting.

In one area the group have removed the bracken, ripped and planted understorey plants which have created a corridor down to the creek. This has also created controversy as the group has been accused of reducing the biodiversity by removing the fallen tree etc.

The landholders were contacted by mail and asked to reply giving their approval or otherwise. A positive side effect has been the number of foxes killed by taking the poisoned rabbit.