

Green waste - disposing of your undesirables

Why do people weed?

The most likely answer is to remove undesirable plants, also known as green waste, from their property.

What makes up green waste?

Green waste is made up of plants that are undesirable for various reasons. This includes plant cuttings and more importantly, aggressive plants which are those that have a tendency to take over, are hard to kill, and seed or reproduce prolifically.

This group is the real threat to our environment when dumped in uncontrolled surroundings like creeks, riverbeds and wasteland where they continue their weedy habits. The list of plants in Canterbury that threaten our environment is very long. It includes ivy, German ivy, old man's beard, periwinkle, Mexican daisy, buddleia, boneseed, montbretia, gunnera tinctoria and Japanese honeysuckle.

The list of garden escapees, which have successfully established themselves, is growing.

The pest plants we are seeing in our environment are only the tip of the iceberg as far as the potential for spread goes.

While no-one disputes a person's right to grow plants of their choice in their garden (except for pest plants declared unwanted organisms or restricted plants), that right must come with a responsibility to ensure that when the plants are no longer wanted, they are disposed of in such a way that they do not become the old man's beard or boneseed of the future.



Rampant old man's beard - possibly the result of green waste dumping

Disposing of undesirable plants in a way that does not allow them to pollute the environment is important.

There are green waste disposal areas at some recycling centres and at dumps at a cost. The irresponsible choose to save themselves \$10 - \$20 by taking their rubbish to the first spot they can find where they are not likely to be seen dumping it.

Another group seems to believe that they are doing no harm by dumping green waste because it 'breaks down' and isn't going to be unsightly or damaging. What they don't realise is that these plants and cuttings will behave exactly the same way in the wild as they do in the garden. This is what makes them such a threat to the environment.

Please think about the damage you may be causing. If you cannot compost your garden waste on your own property, please do not dump it in a riverbed.

Old man's beard update

The previous issue of the Kaikoura Pest News reported a major old man's beard problem developing in the Kaikoura district. This season the problem remains, however the wheels are in motion to begin control programmes, and some have already started.

Control work began this season in the Kowhai River Reserve. Isolated infestations in the upper reaches of the Kowhai River were targeted and work has been progressing downstream gradually moving into the areas of heavier infestation. Future work will be prioritised and will include any required maintenance of areas already treated, any outstanding boundary clearance work and then heavily infested areas.

A similar approach has been taken in the Waimangarara River Reserve.

Cutting and stump treating vines in high value environmental areas near Oaro is underway in the south, and land occupiers are being advised of the work they need to do on their properties.

Under the Regional Pest Management Strategy 2003, there are rules to provide a defined level at which land occupiers must carry out control work.

If you have infestations under 100 m² in area or infestations growing within 20 metres of an adjoining property boundary, you are legally required to destroy them.

If you have old man's beard growing on your property, expect a visit or a phone call from Biosecurity staff.

Larger infestations falling outside control requirements in high value environmental areas may also be targeted to protect biodiversity values. These infestations are currently being identified.

If there is a commitment from communities to take action, Environment Canterbury will facilitate Community Initiative Programmes to destroy old man's beard in those areas.

Old man's beard will not go away. We need to act now because the job will only grow larger.

Control can be achieved if everybody takes responsibility and does their bit. The problem is far too large for one group to tackle, but working as individuals, companies and community groups this problem can be managed and our native vegetation can be protected.

Bovine Tb control progress in the Kaikoura Pest District

Steady progress is being made with controlling and containing Bovine Tb in the Kaikoura district. The goal is to prevent Tb infecting cattle and deer herds and re-establishing in the district.

The 2005-06 possum control programme has been completed in accordance with all contract specifications. The contract targets have got tougher as possum operations get older.

The 2005-06 ferret control programme has also been completed with tallies up on last season.

Funding for 2006-07 Canterbury programme has been reduced so the Vector Control Programme is more targeted to problem areas. Kaikoura's programme is similar to last seasons with initial work to be undertaken in the Conway North and Kowhai / Swyncombe operations.

Environment Canterbury has measured the recovery rates of the blocks that were aerielly treated with 1080 pellets in 2000 and found that numbers have increased substantially since the operation.

The Kaikoura programme for the 2006-07 financial year is:

Clarence East	Complete possum and ferret control
Clarence West	Complete possum and ferret control
Conway North	Targeted possum and ferret control
Hapuku	Complete possum control
Kekerengu	Targeted possum and ferret control
Kowhai / Swyncombe	Targeted possum and ferret control

From the 2004-05 ferret season 202 ferrets were tested for Tb with 13 confirmed (6.4 %).

A wildlife survey has been undertaken in the Puhi Puhi Valley. Results are pending.

The information in this Kaikoura Pest District Summary to June 2006 is from North Canterbury Tb Contracts Manager, Phillip Spencer.



Feature pest

Rough horsetail - *Equisetum hyemale*

Rough horsetail is an evergreen perennial plant that grows to just over a metre in height and dies down in winter. It is rush-like in appearance and has a green, jointed stem that is ridged and cylindrical and may terminate in a spore-bearing body resembling a pinecone.

Rough horsetail spreads rapidly by underground rhizomes and is extremely difficult to control once it is established. It can displace desirable plant species and is usually spread via the movement of soil containing rhizomes or through deliberate planting.

Rough horsetail prefers moist areas such as ponds and lake margins, but once established, it will adapt to a wide range of conditions. It can even be found growing through the cracks in concrete.

Rough horsetail is classified as an unwanted organism and is listed on the National Plant Pest Accord. This means that it cannot be sold, propagated or given away. Any suspected new infestations should be reported immediately to a Biosecurity Officer

Kaikoura movement control herds (at 20th July 2006)

	Cattle	Deer	Total
October 2002	7	0	7
January 2003	6	0	6
June 2003	7	0	7
October 2003	8	0	8
January 2005	4	1	5
June 2005	4	1	5
August 2005	4	1	5
January 2006	5	1	6
June 2006	5	1	6

2005-06 vector tallies

Operation	Possum	Ferret
Clarence East	280	41
Clarence West	76	168
Conway	1616	8
Hapuku	414	14
Kekerengu	372	29
Kowhai / Swyncombe	2057	27
Totals	4815	287

Movement control herds - Northern Region

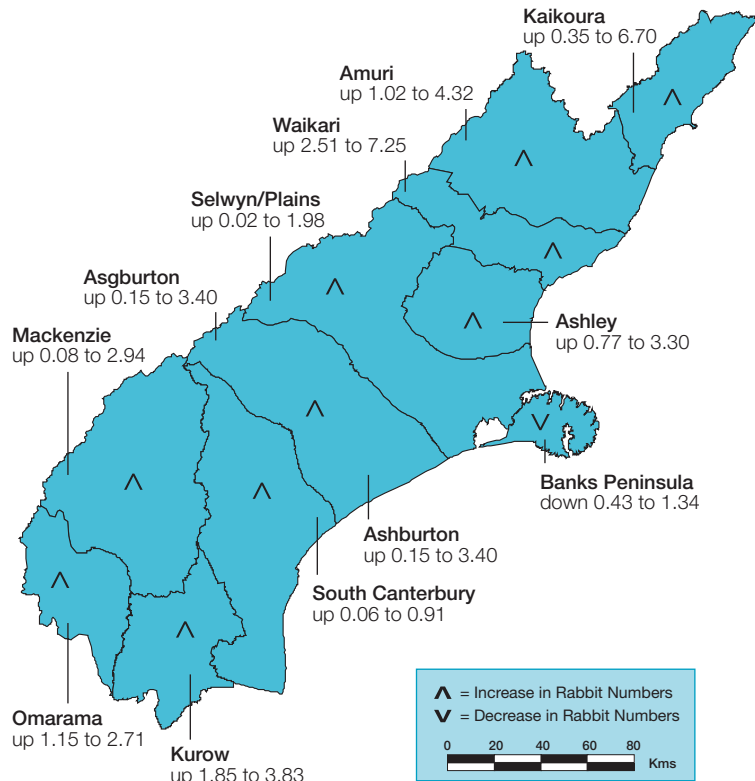
June 2006	Cattle	Deer	District Totals
Kaikoura	5	1	6
Amuri	4	1	5
Waikari	3	7	10
Ashley	0	2	2
Totals	12	11	23

Canterbury regional rabbit trends 2005



District changes in average rabbits per kilometre at a glance

2005 Canterbury district changes in average rabbits per km from previous year



This year is the first since the illegal 1997 introduction of rabbit haemorrhagic disease (RHD) that landowners have been given notice under the Biosecurity Act that rabbit numbers on their land exceeds Environment Canterbury's RPMS trigger level (level 3 and increasing on the modified McLean scale). There is no direct comparison between Modified McLean scale and average rabbits per kilometre from nightcount transects, due to the wide variability of visible range when traversing nightcount transects.

It is however considered as an approximate general measure that level 3 Mod. McLean scale is equivalent to ten rabbits per kilometre.

There are currently six pest districts in the Canterbury region where some individual properties show high rabbit numbers coupled with high levels of immunity to RHD.

They are Kurow, Mackenzie, Ashley, Waikari, Amuri and Kaikoura. See chart top right.

The Kaikoura pest district has the second highest mean number of rabbits of Canterbury's eleven pest districts at 6.7 rabbits per kilometre.

However with only three properties covered by the four transects, district representation is very limited.

Annually during the breeding season some areas boom and rabbit numbers exceed level three on the Modified McLean scale. The post Christmas / autumn RHD epidemic is reducing these levels but in some areas only just below the trigger level.

Two samples of about 30 rabbits each have been taken within the district to check on RHD antibodies:

May 2005 Bluff Station
85.3 % of 34 sampled were immune.

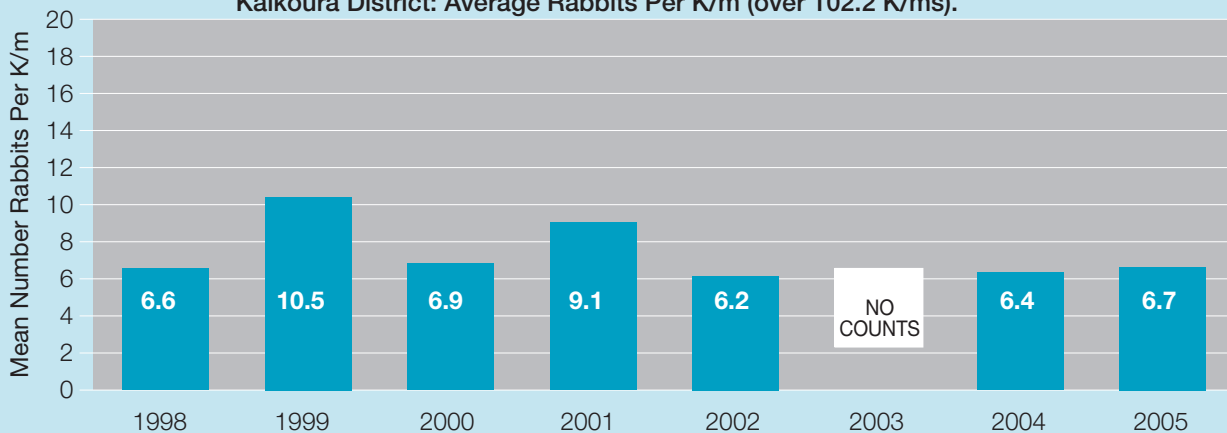
Sept 2005 Lower Clarence
42.1% of 37 sampled were immune.

Both these areas had high numbers of rabbits present in the sample area, It is obvious at these levels that RHD will

continued over ...

Kaikoura District Annual Mean 1998-2005.

Kaikoura District: Average Rabbits Per K/m (over 102.2 K/ms).



... Regional Rabbit Trends 2005, continued from page 3

Kaikoura district individual transect means 1998-2005

Property ID	kms	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
Kaikoura 1	25	3.40	4.20	1.80	6.28	2.04	No Counts	1.80	1.84
Kaikoura 2	25	12.00	15.10	7.13	17.21	12.32		12.36	6.88
Kaikoura 3	31.7	5.80	11.00	9.63	4.91	5.41		4.34	6.50
Kaikoura 4	20.5	5.00	11.70	8.85	7.90	4.95		6.90	11.56
	102.2								

The information in this report is from motorcycle nightcount transects. These transects are completed annually, normally in early spring before access difficulties arise with lambing.

have a limited impact and other control measures should be implemented to reduce the amount of immune rabbits in these populations. This type of result is occurring in a number of districts. It is imperative that landowners are proactive in their rabbit control measures if they wish to keep numbers down.

The majority of transects this year were monitored slightly later, between September and December of 2005.

Although this period covers the main seasonal breeding pulse of rabbits, the data in this report does not reflect the annual peak rabbit population because many kittens are underground in breeding stops or still being carried as monitoring is undertaken.

This information is from the 2005 Regional Rabbit Trend Report prepared by Brent Glentworth, Southern Biosecurity Team Leader.

Your representatives on the Kaikoura Pest Management Liaison Committee are:

Bob Todhunter (Chairperson)	Clarence
Mark Hislop	Kaikoura
Kerry Harris	Kaikoura
Peter Small	Inland Road
Graham Collins	Kaikoura
Albert Heyer	Stag & Spey Rd
Pierce Throssell	Parikawa
Sandy Chaffey	Kekerengu
John Harrington	Conway Flat
Tim Anderson	Hundalee
Mike Morrissey	Dept. of Conservation

Environment Canterbury Councillor and Pest Portfolio Chairman Robert Johnston and Councillor Ross Little, both councillors for North Canterbury also attend committee meetings.

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Members of the Committee represent the ratepayers of the Kaikoura district geographically. The committee meets one or two times a year to discuss plant and animal pest issues and make recommendations that will help Environment Canterbury to manage plant and animal pest matters.

Rooks

Environment Canterbury has an eradication goal for rooks. In the early 1990s Kaikoura had a population of over 100 birds, but over the last few years the number has remained quite static at around seven to ten. These birds are intelligent and very wary. The best time to control them is at the onset of breeding. Please report sightings to Environment Canterbury freephone 0800 EC INFO (0800 32 46 36), with a thorough location, description or map grid reference. Please do not attempt to control them because birds are easily dispersed which makes finding them difficult.

Pay us an e-visit

Copies of this and past issues of this newsletter are available at www.ecan.govt.nz. If you would like to see more information on this site about animal and plant pest management, please phone pest portfolio manager, Rob Phillips on 353 9009 ext 7069 or rob.phillips@ecan.govt.nz

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