

# The Bunny Boss!



Audrey Hayes, Campbell Smith  
and Freddy Simpson

Mullengandra Public School



## Creative Catchment Kids

Creative Catchment Kids is an initiative of Wirraminna Environmental Education Centre. It aims to improve engagement between our funding partners and school students by providing opportunities for positive and authentic ventures that encourage students to develop creative solutions to agriculture and natural resource management issues.

**[www.wirraminna.org/creative-catchment-kids/](http://www.wirraminna.org/creative-catchment-kids/)**

## Wirraminna Environmental Education Centre

The Wirraminna Environmental Education Centre is located in Burrumbuttock, north of Albury in southern NSW. Since 1995, the centre, which is adjacent to Burrumbuttock Public School, has provided opportunities for discovery and learning about the natural environment, the ecology of the local woodlands and the beauty of native plants.

**[www.wirraminna.org](http://www.wirraminna.org)**

## Enviro-Stories

Enviro-Stories is an innovative literacy education program that inspires learning about natural resource and catchment management issues. Developed by Peekdesigns, this program provides students with an opportunity to publish their own stories that have been written for other kids to support learning about their local area.

**[www.envirostories.com.au](http://www.envirostories.com.au)**

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**School:** Mullengandra Public School

## Local Land Heroes - Securing Our Region

In 2015, students involved in the Creative Catchment Kids program researched and wrote stories about their 'Local Land Heroes' who are involved in pest management in the Murray and Murrumbidgee regions. These heroes are local individuals, couples, a business or industries that have made a difference in their local community by contributing to the management of pest animals and plants. The program was generously funded by Murray Local Land Services and Riverina Local Land Services.

Local Land Heroes is part of Enviro-Stories, a PeekDesigns education program.



Local Land Services



Australian Government



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Michael Reid is the National Rabbit Facilitator based in Wodonga. He was born in 1979, in Wodonga, and grew up there. His mother was born in Berrigan, New South Wales, and his father was born in Johannesburg, South Africa. He has two older sisters.

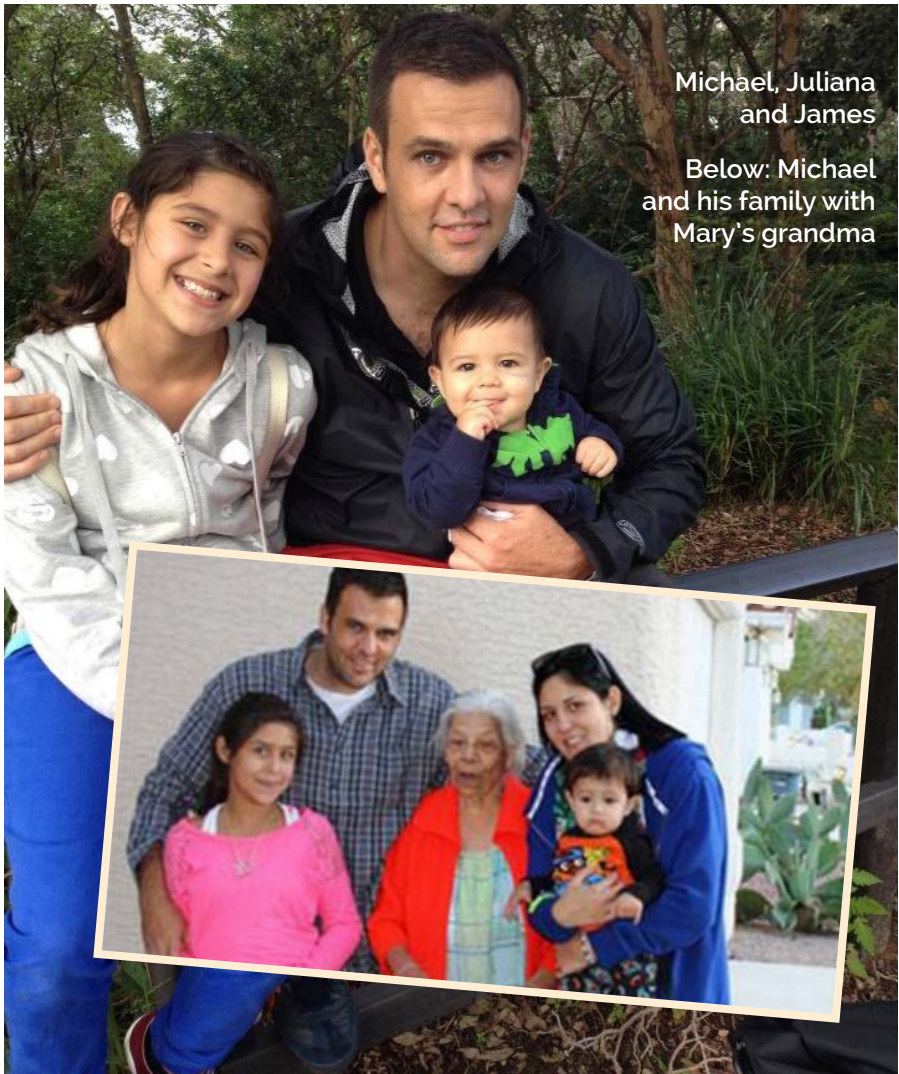


**Above: Michael and his parents**

**Left: Michael and his sisters,  
Nicole and Bridgette**

Michael went to primary school in Wodonga and High School in Yackandandah.

He met his wife, Mary, in Las Vegas at a friend's wedding. They have two children, James and Juliana. They like 'J' names.



Michael, Juliana and James

Below: Michael and his family with Mary's grandma

Michael's job as the National Rabbit Facilitator is to work with communities and the government to improve the control and management of rabbits by working together to find different ways we can go about managing pests.



Rabbits were introduced into Australia from England, in the 18th century. Unfortunately, their ability to adapt to the Australian environment and their rapid breeding saw them quickly become a pest.





Rabbits are herbivores (plant eaters). They live in groups of burrows known as warrens. The speedy spread of rabbits in Australia has led to the destruction of large areas of vegetation and to the extinction of many plant species.





Loss of vegetation leads to soil erosion. The exposed soil is washed or blown away, removing valuable soil nutrients required for new plants to grow. This soil is dumped in waterways, destroying water ecosystems.



Michael runs meetings and workshops to share methods and ideas to reduce the rabbit population. There are four main methods for reducing the rabbit population.



## Method One: Baiting

In areas where rabbits have caused damage, carrots or oats are placed in furrows for the rabbits to feed from. After a few feedings, poison is added to the carrots or oats. The rabbits eat the poisoned food and die.

## Method Two: Fumigation

Fumigation is a valuable tool in successful rabbit management. It is an effective follow up method to baiting and warren ripping. Fumigation is a particularly useful technique where other methods cannot be used, such as baiting.



## Method Three: Ripping

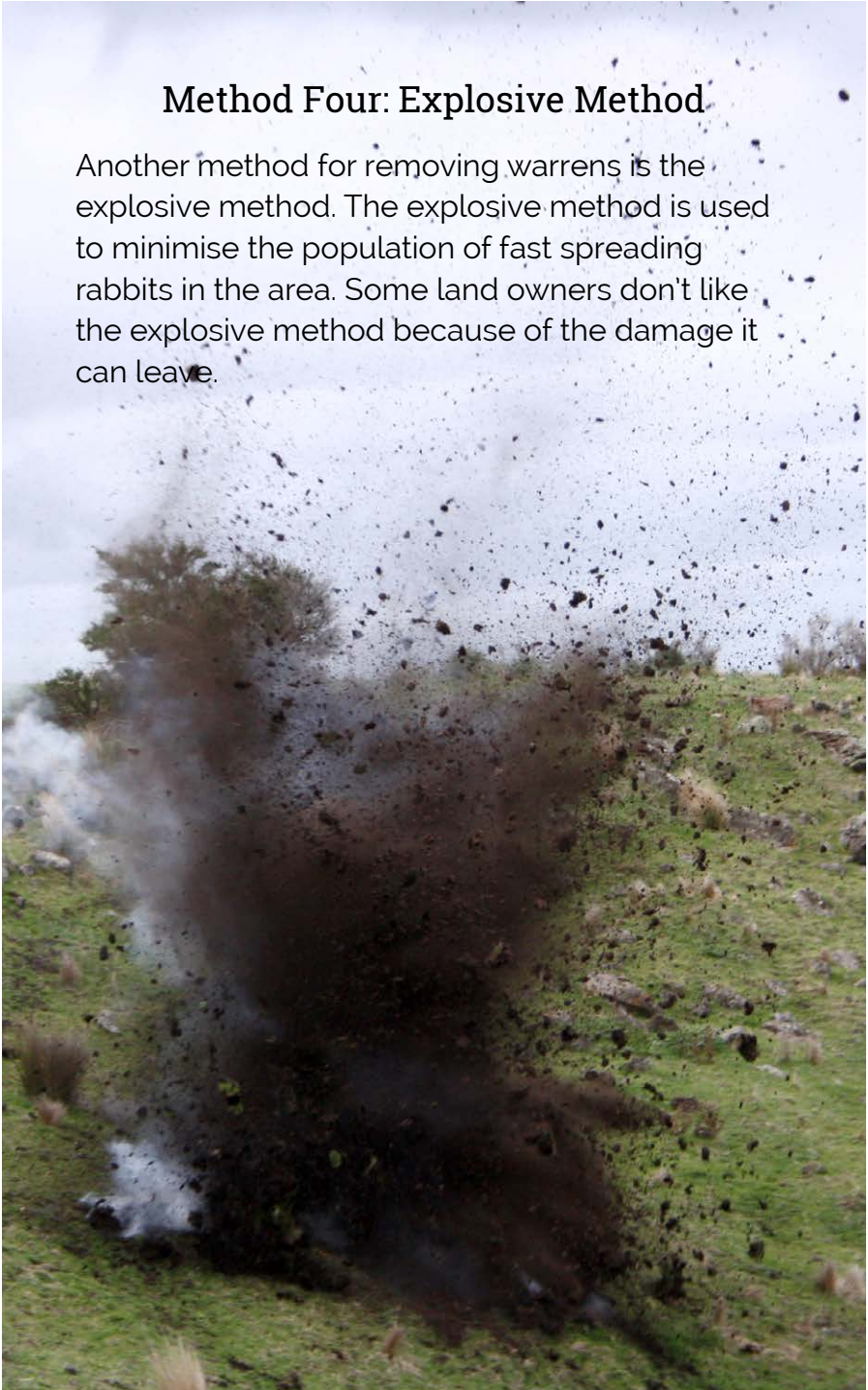
Ripping up rabbit warrens with an excavator or bulldozer is not just to bury the warren, but to ensure proper breakdown of the warren structure, destroying the rabbit's home.

Ripping is the most effective and most long-lasting method of control.



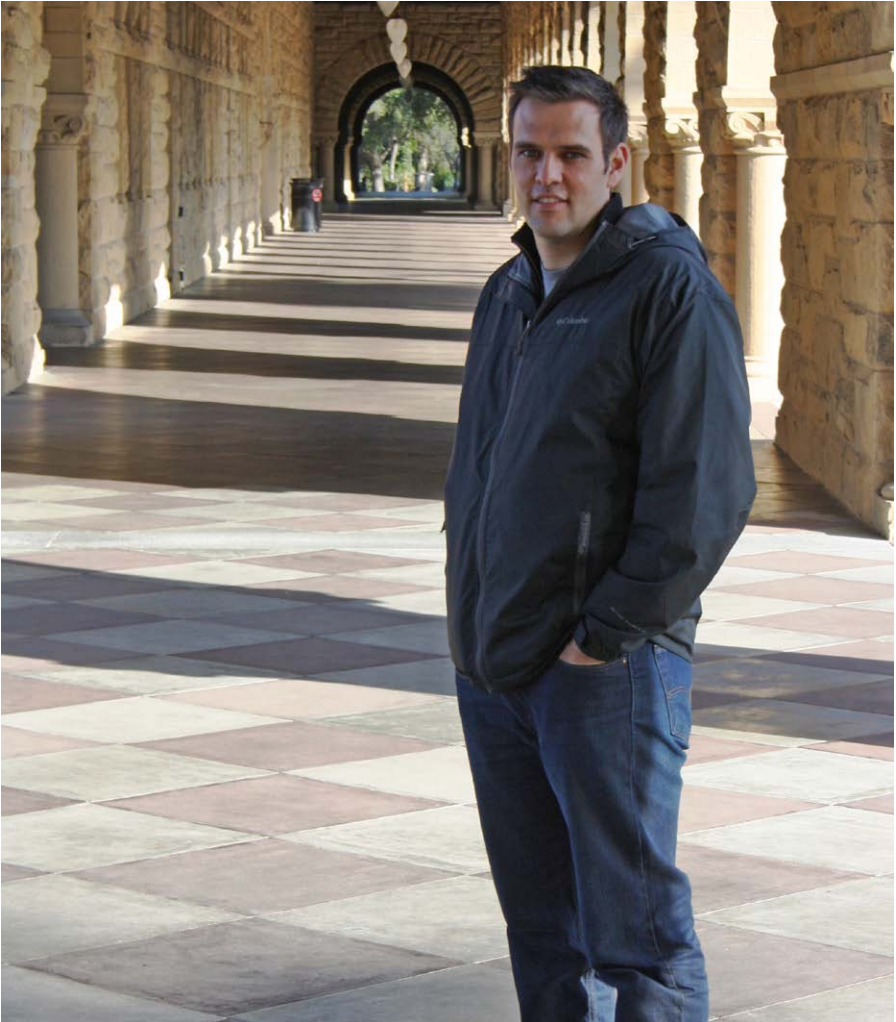
## Method Four: Explosive Method

Another method for removing warrens is the explosive method. The explosive method is used to minimise the population of fast spreading rabbits in the area. Some land owners don't like the explosive method because of the damage it can leave.





No one method is the best for reducing the rabbit population. It depends on the extent of the problem, the landscape and the land owners preferred method.



While at Stanford University in the United States of America, Michael learnt how important food production and looking after the environment will be in the future. This is why Michael is so passionate about his work, helping to reduce the impact of rabbits on agriculture and the environment.





Michael believes we have to work together to solve problems now and reduce the impact of these problems for future generations.

Michael follows the African saying...

“ If you want to go fast, go alone.  
If you want to go far, go together. ”



We (Audrey, Campbell and Freddy) would like to thank Michael for his time and sharing his story with us.





Michael Reid, Campbell Smith,  
Freddy Simpson and Audrey Hayes

2015 Year 5-6, Mullengandra Public School

## CONGRATULATIONS

Wirraminna Environmental Education Centre and  
the Creative Catchment Kids Program won the  
2015 NSW Junior Landcare Team Award and will be  
competing in the 2016 National Landcare Awards.



Local Land  
Services

