

RABBIT DAMAGE ON MACQUARIE ISLAND - WHAT CAN BE LEARNT THROUGH PHOTO-MONITORING?

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Photo-monitoring of the Macquarie I. landscape and vegetation has assisted us in monitoring the impact of introduced rabbits. This work has been conducted over 20 years and has enabled us to determine the type, nature and extent of degradation across a range of vegetation communities. The studies have shown how rabbit grazing can be measured at different temporal scales, identifying large-scale vegetation change and small scale community structural change. This work has also enabled us to monitor the impacts of rabbit grazing on albatross and petrel breeding colonies. Photo-monitoring allows us to present a visual representation of how introduced rabbits have impacted the Macquarie I. landscape, flora and fauna. Analysis of the image series assists in the design and implementation of feral animal eradication and subsequent requirements for island recovery.