



DISASTER: Rabbits are having a devastating impact.

Rabbits ruin Macquarie Island

LAST week at the University of Tasmania Jamie Kirkpatrick, Jenny Scott and Aleks Terauds presented talks about the destruction by rabbits of the vegetation on Macquarie Island.

I had heard about the rabbit problem in an article in the ANARE Club bulletin *Aurora* earlier this year. It was written by an expeditioner from the 1950s who had returned as a tourist after half a century. The article did not prepare me for the extent of the destruction of the vegetation. It is so massive that it hard to get one's mind around it.

Among other things, such as landslips and the loss of unique flora, the removal of the vegetation leaves seabird hatchlings without cover and open to predation by skuas. Rabbits move into nesting burrows, further stressing endangered bird species.

Interested in awesome environmental disasters? Keep an eye on this one. (It's part of Tasmania by the way).

George Cresswell
Goodwood

