

Formulation of Fibonacci rabbits with death

-Matt

May 16, 2019

Let I_n denote the number of immature rabbits at time n , M_n denote the number of immature rabbits at time n , and T_n denote the total number of rabbits at time n . Let us also assume that rabbits die after k months. For the standard Fibonacci sequence (i.e. $n < k$), we have

$$I_{n+1} = M_n, \quad (1)$$

$$M_{n+1} = M_n + I_n, \quad (n < k), \quad (2)$$

$$T_{n+1} = M_{n+1} + I_{n+1}. \quad (3)$$

In plain language, equation (1) states that the number of immature rabbits at time $n + 1$ is equal to the number of mature rabbits at time n , whilst equation (2) states that the number of mature rabbits at time $n + 1$ is equal to the number of mature rabbits at time n plus the number of immature rabbits at time n . Equation (3) states that the total number of rabbits at time n is also equal to the number of mature rabbits at time n plus the number of immature rabbits at time n .

For $n > k$, equation (2) is redefined as

$$M_{n+1} = M_n + I_n - I_{n+1-k}, \quad (n \geq k). \quad (4)$$

Following through the same procedure as before, this time substituting equations (1) and (4) into equation (3), we have

$$\begin{aligned} T_{n+1} &= M_{n+1} + I_{n+1}, \\ &= (M_n + I_n - I_{n+1-k}) + M_n, \\ &= (T_n - I_{n+1-k}) + M_n, \\ &= T_n - I_{n+1-k} + (M_{n-1} + I_{n-1} - I_{n-k}), \\ &= T_n - I_{n+1-k} + (T_{n-1} - I_{n-k}). \end{aligned} \quad (5)$$

Rearranging equation (5) and noticing from equation (1) that $I_{n+1-k} = M_{n-k}$, we have

$$T_{n+1} = T_n + T_{n-1} - (M_{n-k} + I_{n-k}),$$

which, upon substituting equation (3), gives our final recurrence relation

$$T_{n+1} = T_n + T_{n-1} - T_{n-k}. \quad (6)$$

The sequence is initialised as follows:

$$\begin{aligned} n < 0 : \quad T_n &= 0, \\ n = 1, 2, 3 : \quad T_n &= 1. \end{aligned}$$