

# Antipodes Island Mouse Eradication Project



## The location

Antipodes Island is one of the most unique and untouched places in the world. Thousands of sea birds nest on the island and marine mammals fill the shores and surrounding seas. Many of the birds and plants found on Antipodes Island are found nowhere else, and right now they are under threat from an invasive predator – the common mouse.

## The problem

Mice are the only introduced mammalian pest, accidentally introduced in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, possibly by shipwreck. They are impacting significantly on the island's native populations of invertebrates and native birds and plants.



## Estimates of mice

The estimated mouse population is over 200,000 or up to 150 mice per hectare – quite a lot for a small island with lots of cliffs! Mice eat up to 15 or 20 times per day, and every mouthful impacts the Antipodes Island ecosystem.

## The goal

To make Antipodes Island one of the most safe and pristine places in the world for the native plant, bird and insect species at risk by ridding it of mice completely.

## Planning

It's a complex project with big logistical challenges. The island is remote, the weather is unpredictable, there's limited infrastructure, and no real harbour for shelter when unloading and loading a ship. Despite these challenges the Invercargill-based eradication team have been hard at work since 2013 planning and incorporating learning from other successful Subantarctic eradications such as rats on Campbell Island and rabbits and mice on Macquarie Island.

## The process

**One** big ship - **Two** helicopters - **thirteen** staff - **4,680** meals - **65 tonnes** of bait

## Timing

In June 2016 the eradication phase will begin on Antipodes Island, the team will be on the island up to 120 days. The winter months have been chosen as the best time as this will be when the mice numbers are at their lowest, food resources are scarce and mice have usually ceased breeding.

## Project partners

The project could not be considered without the valuable the assistance of our major partners the **Morgan Foundation**, the **World Wildlife Fund**, **Island Conservation** and generous donations from the **Public**.

**Find out more:** [www.milliondollarmouse.org.nz](http://www.milliondollarmouse.org.nz)

# Mouse Eradication Project - Key events timeline



A matching funds fundraising campaign is launched by the Morgan Foundation raising \$350,000 from WWF, and the public.

A wintertime slip damages huts essential to the project, & requires emergency repairs.

The Navy assists with dropping essential supplies ahead of the eradication phase of the project.

A temporary hanger is constructed on the island to house the helicopters and equipment from the elements.

The second and final application of bait is spread approximately 14 days after the first application.

Teams return to monitor the status of the eradication work.



2012

2013

2014

2015

2016

March

Late May

Early June

Mid June

July

September

2018



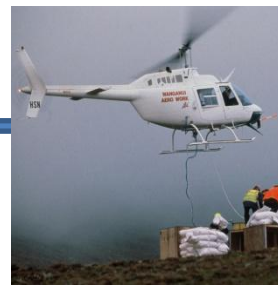
Project planning and background scientific baseline research begins.



Additional funding support is achieved from Island Conservation and DOC and project planning is progressing.



Staff and supplies land on the island and will stay for up to 120 days, depending on the weather, to complete the eradication phase of the project.



From mid June helicopters will begin spreading bait across the island, the first of two applications. The timing is at the mercy of the weather.



After several months of work on the island the team comes home!

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