



### ***Project Island Song - looking after the pest-free islands of the Bay of Islands***

All of the islands of the eastern Bay of Islands (Ipipiri) are now rat-, mouse- and stoat-free. Many hours and money has been spent to get them to this stage; more will be spent in the future to keep them pest-free. Efforts are also now going into getting rid of weeds, restoring the original bush cover of the islands and reintroducing native species. Before too long the islands of the Bay will be filled with the songs of birds that once lived there.

When you visit or stay on these islands, you can help Project Island Song by taking the following steps:

#### *Before going out to the islands:*

- Make sure any camping gear that will be used on Urupukapuka Island is stored in a rodent- and invertebrate-controlled area in order to minimise the risk of transporting pests to the islands.
- Clean all tents by exposing them to sunlight, drying them and thoroughly checking them for soil, seeds and plant material, invertebrates and rodents, etc, before leaving the mainland.
- Confirm your campsite booking either on-line <http://booking.doc.govt.nz/> (DOC campsites on Urupukapuka Island only at Urupukapuka, Cable and Sunset Bays) or [www.explorenz.co.nz](http://www.explorenz.co.nz) (Zane Grey cabins and campground in Otehei Bay)
- Include biosecurity as a topic in any pre-trip briefings. You could cover questions such as:
  - Q. How can predators, unwanted insects and weeds reinvade the islands?
  - A. With the help of people, they could hitch a ride in bags (rats, mice and insects), on the soles of shoes, in pockets and in Velcro on clothing (weed seeds)
  - Q. What can we do to help Project Island Song restore the islands?
  - A. **STOP** (on the mainland), **CHECK** your gear (for stowaways) and then **GO** (and have fun).
  - A. Report any sightings of rodents to DOC on 0800 DOC HOT (0800 362 468).
  - A. Consider joining the Guardians of the Bay of Islands – the voluntary community group working with Project Island Song (form attached). [www.projectislandsong.co.nz](http://www.projectislandsong.co.nz)
  - Q. What does 'pack in, pack out' mean?
  - A. Everyone is responsible for taking their own rubbish (including food wrappers and drink bottles) off the island.
  - Q. Why are rats and ants (Argentine) considered biosecurity risks?
  - A. Rats eat native birds and their eggs, as well as seeds, fruits and other bird food. Argentine Ants can kill native birds.
- Hand out a biosecurity checklist to group participants (see attached).
- Approach DOC Bay of Islands Area office (09-4039006) for biosecurity sessions or Guardians of the Bay of Islands ([hodealy@doc.govt.nz](mailto:hodealy@doc.govt.nz)) for Project Island Song activities.
- Include environmental behaviour as a topic in any pre-trip briefing. The DOC Environmental Care Code is attached.

## Group information pack - Project Island Song

### *Before boarding the boat:*

- While still on the mainland, and as close to departure time as possible, make sure your gear is checked and sealed to reduce risk of reinvasion. Clothing and shoes should also be clean and free of soil and seeds. If unsure, unpack and re-inspect, then re-pack again. Sealable day packs, overnight bags and solid sealable containers are suitable. Cardboard boxes and shopping bags are not suitable as mice can easily get inside.
- All food should be packed and stored into sealed containers for transport.

### *On arriving at the islands:*

- To minimise the risk of rodents getting ashore, vessels (excluding dinghies and kayaks) should not stay landed on the beaches of the Eastern Bay of Islands except for loading and unloading stores and passengers. At all other times vessels should be anchored offshore.
- If you see signs of insects or rodents in packages, do not take them ashore.

### *While on the islands:*

- When unpacking gear on the islands, check for any signs of rodents, insects, and other animals and plants. It is better to unpack gear within an enclosed space i.e. tent.
- Keep your eyes open for any signs of rodents – tracks (on sandy beaches), droppings, chew marks on packaging or food. An identification sheet is attached.
- Report any rodent sightings or signs (droppings or tracks) either on board vessels, near or on the islands, to DOC Bay of Islands Area office 09-407 0300 (office hours), 0800 DOC HOT (0800 362 468) (afterhours). The quicker the report, the sooner a DOC ranger will be able to respond.
- Pack all inorganic rubbish securely and remove it from the island for appropriate recycling or disposal. Over summer, please buy the appropriate rubbish bag and use the rubbish barge moored off the south-eastern side of Moturua Island.
- Do not burn any rubbish on any islands in the eastern Bay of Islands.

### *When leaving the islands:*

- Take only photos, leave only footprints.
- Pack all your rubbish out with you.

# STOP!

## ANTS IN YOUR PANTS? - MICE IN THE RICE?

UNLIKELY BUT... Small animals, ants and weed or exotic seeds are the biggest threats to the pest-free status of the special islands of Ipipiri (eastern Bay of Islands).

Equipment which has been up in the attic, or out in the shed, could be hiding animals, insects or seeds so we are asking for your help.

**Please check your items before you pack and, where possible, carry them in zipped up bags or sealed containers. Before you land on the islands, tick the appropriate boxes below, sign and date the form and hand it to your group leader.**

Items being carried	Action	Yes. I have done this
Packs	Packs need to be shaken and checked inside including the pockets.	
Footwear	Shoes and boots need to be mud- and seed-free. Check treads of the soles, laces and tongues of shoes.	
Clothing	Woolly socks, clothing and velcro closures can carry seeds. Please check them.	
General gear and clothing	Once gear is checked it should be carried in bags with a draw-string or zip fastener.	
Tents, groundsheets and other camping gear	Tents need to be opened up at home and given a good shake.	
Bedding	Sleeping bags and pillows (if not used on the beds at home) need to be checked.	
Food	Food should be carried in sealed containers.	
Boat/kayak	Check your boat/kayak. It is a good idea to keep a couple of baited traps on board at all times.	

Signed

Date




**THANKS – BY CHECKING YOU MIGHT HAVE MADE ALL THE DIFFERENCE**

## Project Island Song Biosecurity Flyer

**PLEASE HELP PEST-FREE ISLANDS**

**STOP!  
CHECK!  
& GO!**  
*(and have fun)*



**Before leaving the mainland check your:**  
• clothes & footwear • bags • boat  
• camping gear & tent  
*(put food in sealed containers)*

Rats / Mice      Ants      Weed Seeds

**PROJECT ISLAND SONG**  
[www.boiguardians.co.nz](http://www.boiguardians.co.nz)

KEEPING PESTS OUT  
PLANTING TREES  
BRINGING BACK BIRDS



### I've found pests in my gear

#### On the mainland before leaving

- Clean your gear again and get rid of the pests

#### On my own boat

- Make sure the pest has been destroyed before you land
- Don't throw rat/mouse overboard as they can swim

#### On a commercial vessel

- Tell the crew what you have found and where it is

### If you see pests or rat tracks on the islands

Call 0800 DOC HOT (0800 362 468)

### Want to help?

- Remember to check your gear and vessel before you set out, every time
- Volunteer, email: [info@boiguardians.co.nz](mailto:info@boiguardians.co.nz)
- Become a Guardian of the Bay – Fill out the slip below or visit [www.boiguardians.co.nz](http://www.boiguardians.co.nz)
- Find out more about Project Island Song go to:  
[www.boiguardians.co.nz](http://www.boiguardians.co.nz)  
[www.doc.govt.nz/projectislandsong](http://www.doc.govt.nz/projectislandsong)  
[www.terawhitimarae.maori.nz/conservation](http://www.terawhitimarae.maori.nz/conservation)

Please send me Guardians of the Bay of Islands membership details.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Post to: PO Box 367, Paihia 0247, Northland, NZ



## Care code check list

### Protect plants and animals

- Treat New Zealand's forests and birds with care and respect. They are unique and often rare.

### Remove rubbish

- Litter is unattractive, harmful to wildlife and can increase vermin and disease. Plan your visits to reduce rubbish, and carry out what you carry in.

### Bury toilet waste

- In areas without toilet facilities, bury your toilet waste in a shallow hole well away from waterways, tracks, campsites, and huts.

### Keep streams and lakes clean

- When cleaning and washing, take the water and wash well away from the water source. Because soaps and detergents are harmful to water-life, drain used water into the soil to allow it to be filtered. If you suspect the water may be contaminated, either boil it for at least 3 minutes, or filter it, or chemically treat it.

### Take care with fires

- If you do use a fire, keep it small, use only dead wood and make sure it is out by dousing it with water and checking the ashes before leaving.
- Portable fuel stoves are less harmful to the environment and are more efficient than fires.

### Camp carefully

- When camping, leave no trace of your visit.

### Keep to the track

- By keeping to the track, where one exists, you lessen the chance of damaging fragile plants.

### Consider others

- People visit the back country and rural areas for many reasons. Be considerate of other visitors who also have a right to enjoy the natural environment.

### Respect our cultural heritage

Many places in New Zealand have a spiritual and historical significance. Treat these places with consideration and respect.

### Enjoy your visit

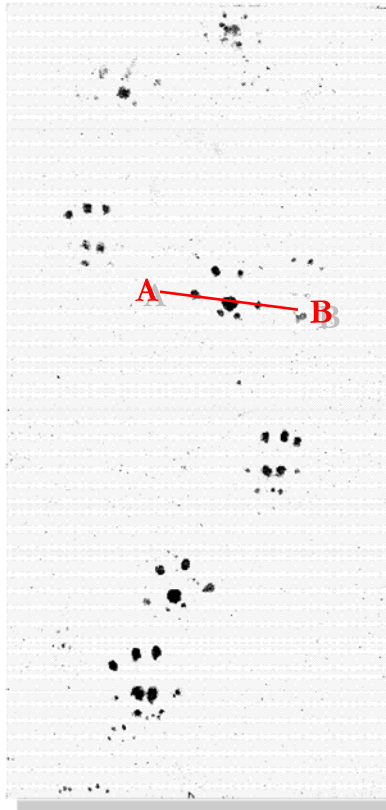
- Enjoy your outdoor experience. Take a last look before leaving an area; will the next visitor know that you have been there?
- Protect the environment for your own sake, for the sake of those who come after you, and for the environment itself.

*Toitu te whenua/Leave the land undisturbed*

For more information about caring for the environment visit the DOC website: [www.doc.govt.nz](http://www.doc.govt.nz)

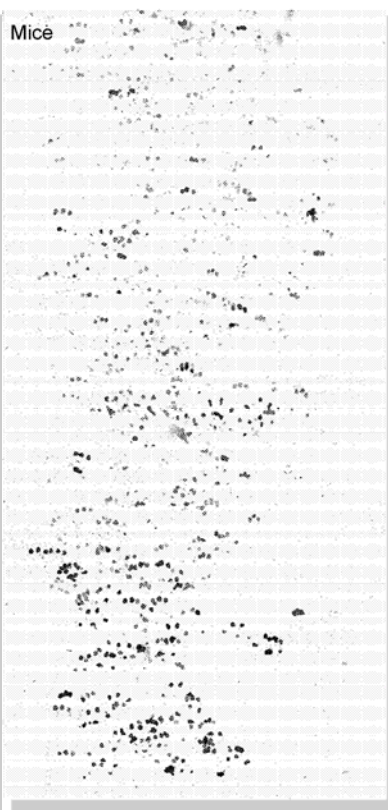
### Rodent and Stoat print reference

Rat and mouse, katui, P17



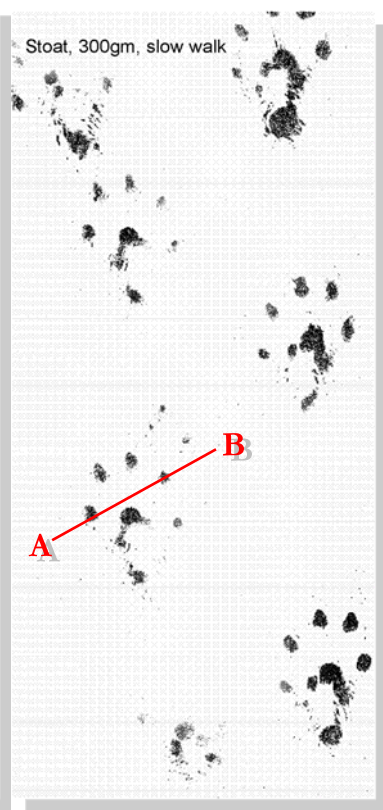
Rat prints (Fig 1a)

The layout of rat tracks are fairly circular in shape, and if a line is drawn between the toes 1 and 4 on the fore foot (Fig 1a Line A-B), the line will bisect or lie behind of the central foot pad.



Mouse prints (Fig 1b)

Mouse tracks are similar in layout to rat tracks but much smaller. Sometimes they only leave sets of 3 toe prints. Look for patterns that repeat themselves at regular intervals.



Stoat prints (Fig 1c)

The layout of stoat tracks are more oblong in shape, often furry, with toes 2 and 3 close together. A line drawn between toes 1 and 4 on the fore foot (Fig 1c Line A-B), the line will lie in front of the central foot pad.

Rat droppings



Mouse droppings



Stoat droppings



Also keep an eye out for other signs of pest animal presence such as droppings, fur and small animal kills.

## Group information pack - Project Island Song

Sand is like a giant tracking tunnel and a good place to spot tracks and sign of pest invaders. Look out for tracks along sandy beaches whenever possible. If you see any suspicious looking tracks call 0800 DOC HOT (0800 362 468).



Rat track (Circular)

Stoat track (Elongated)

