

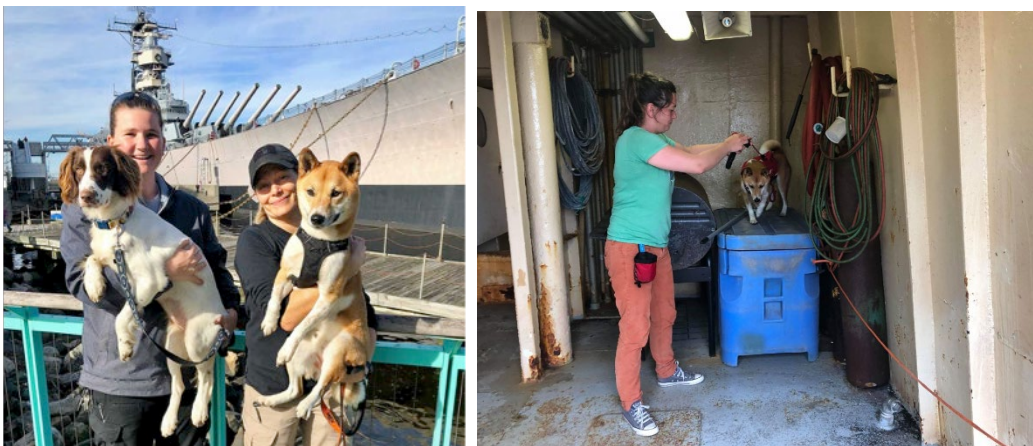


BIOSECURITY: HELPING TO REBALANCE SOUTH GEORGIA'S ECOSYSTEM

Report for Noble Caledonia Charitable Trust (NCCT)

South Georgia was declared rodent-free in May 2018 following the £10 million Habitat Restoration project carried out by South Georgia Heritage Trust (SGHT) and Friends of South Georgia Island (FOSGI). Since then, SGHT and FOSGI have been supporting a biosecurity programme, implemented by the Government of South Georgia & the South Sandwich Islands (GSGSSI), which is designed to provide a front-line of defence against re-infestation.

In April 2020, NCCT generously awarded a grant of £3393 towards the 2019/20 rodent detection programme. This will contribute to the cost of a permanent, locally based rodent dog detection team. Having the team in place is vital to protect South Georgia from reinvasion by alien species. A rodent detection dog called Sammy, who with his handler Naomi is based in the Falkland Islands, 'sniffs out' rodents hiding on vessels or in cargo bound for South Georgia, to prevent them reaching and re-infesting the island.



Erin & Pipit (left), Naomi & Sammy (right)

Project Impact

Thanks to the financial support of organisations like NCCT, biosecurity has become a welcome and accepted part of everyday life for residents and visitors to the region. We know that just one pregnant rat allowed to reach South Georgia's shores would, in time, re-infest the entire island, undoing a decade's conservation work and the efforts of supporters like NCCT. Due to glacier melt, it is highly unlikely that a second island-wide eradication could be attempted. That is why it is so important that we continue to assist GSGSSI in the implementation of this long-term biosecurity programme and we are grateful to NCCT and passengers on MS Island Sky for their generous support.