



Norfolk Island rodent control expansion to protect green parrots

The Threatened Species Commissioner has mobilised \$300,000 to expand rodent control in and outside of Norfolk Island National Park, helping to protect the island's iconic green parrot (*Cyanoramphus cookii*).

Project

This funding will enhance the rat baiting program across Norfolk Island National Park and expand it beyond the park's borders. This will complement work to tackle feral cats and substantially reduce direct and indirect impacts of rats on native species and their habitats. The project will:

- increase the number of rodent bait stations across Norfolk Island National Park, including filling gaps in the park's existing rat baiting network
- expand the existing network of bait stations to incorporate part of the bordering forestry reserve
- establish a program of ongoing servicing and monitoring to cover the expanded bait station network.



Photo: Green parrot (Abi Smith)

Funding

\$300,000

Partners

This builds on the rodent control program run by Parks Australia which manages Norfolk Island National Park.

This project is one of a suite of measures to protect the green parrot, guided by the Norfolk Island Region Threatened Species Recovery Plan. A range of partners contribute to green parrot protection under the plan, including Parks Australia, Massey University, the Foundation for National Parks and Wildlife, the Parrot Trust of Australia, the Parrot Society of Australia, BirdLife Australia, Island Conservation, the Nature Conservancy, the World Parrot Trust, the Parrot Society of the UK, the Mohamed bin Zayed Species Conservation Fund and Wildmob.

Background

Introduced rodents inhabit many of Australia's offshore islands and are a major threat to biodiversity. On Norfolk Island, the black rat and the Polynesian rat threaten the endangered green parrot by raiding the nests of this iconic bird, smashing and eating the eggs and killing the chicks.

Over the past 30 years the population of Norfolk Island green parrots has fluctuated dramatically, mostly due to the limited number of suitable nesting sites, competition for nests, and predation by cats and rats. Numbers reached very low levels in 2013, with an estimated 46–93 individuals in the wild and precious few breeding females. A range of partners swung into action to build the population back up, coordinated by Parks Australia through Norfolk Island National Park. Green parrot numbers are once again on the rise and are currently sitting at around 120. This boost to rodent control will protect and build on these gains.

Species to benefit

The Norfolk Island green parrot, plus other threatened species that are impacted by rats on the island, both directly (through predation) or indirectly. These include plant species, endemic land snails, ground-nesting seabirds, and forest birds such as the boobook owl, golden whistler and the scarlet robin.



Photo: Green parrot (Cassie Jones)

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