



HENDERSON ISLAND NEWS

Progress on Plans to Restore World Heritage Site

Henderson Island Facts

- Part of the Pitcairn Island group, a UK Overseas Territory in the South Pacific
- The last near-pristine limestone island of significant size in the world
- Home to over 55 unique species, including 4 species of endemic landbird
- Only known breeding site of the endangered Henderson petrel
- Global stronghold of the gadfly petrel group
- Declared a natural World Heritage Site in 1988



Government
of Pitcairn Islands

Welcome to the first issue of Henderson Island News, the newsletter of the Henderson Island Restoration Project. The Project, a partnership between the RSPB and the Pitcairn Island Government, aims to restore Henderson Island World Heritage Site by removing the introduced Pacific rats which are devastating its unique wildlife.

For several years, the RSPB has been working with other partners to develop plans for the restoration of Henderson Island. Following completion of a feasibility study in 2008, an OTEP-funded research expedition visited Henderson in September 2009 to resolve outstanding technical issues. The expedition team concluded that an eradication project is technically feasible, giving the green light to



Murphy's petrels on Henderson Island. Over 25,000 petrel chicks are killed by rats on Henderson every year. (Richard Cuthbert)

proceed if the funding can be raised.

With the information from the expedition, and support from OTEP and Packard, a revised operational plan has now been drafted and work is underway to raise the necessary funds: an estimated £1.7 million. Funds need to be secured to allow for a one-year planning timeframe, so we are aiming to have the majority of income

secured by August 2010. The eradication operation itself is tentatively scheduled for July-August 2011, with the aim of being able to declare Henderson rat-free by late 2013, the 25th anniversary of Henderson's designation as a World Heritage Site.

The feasibility study and draft operational plan are available on request.

Update on Fundraising: Exclusive Henderson Island Raffle Launched



The *Clipper Odyssey*— two luxury cabins for two are to be won. (*Zegrahm Expeditions*)

To help fund the project to remove rats from Henderson Island, the RSPB is raffling two luxury cabins for two, each worth over £16,000, on a luxury cruise across the Pacific from Tahiti to Easter Island. These fantastic prizes, generously donated to the project by Zegrahm Expeditions, provide the rare opportunity to visit both Pitcairn and Henderson Islands. Moreover, the winners will be guided by Peter Harrison, widely considered to be the world's foremost authority on seabirds and a passionate advocate for Henderson Island.

With a maximum of only 400 tickets to be sold, purchasers have an excellent chance of winning one of these two trips. Raffle tickets for this amazing opportunity cost £500, and all proceeds will go directly towards the RSPB's work to restore the World Heritage Site and save the Henderson Petrel from its slide towards extinction.

Dieter Hoffmann, Head of Global Programmes at RSPB, said "From

the cultural wonders of Tahiti, the remote beauty of the untouched Marquesas, and the mysteries of Easter Island, this will be an unforgettable cruise. Above all, this trip is one of the very few opportunities to visit the unique Henderson Island."

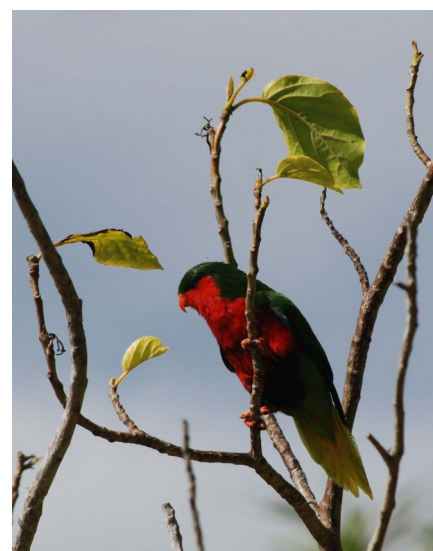
Fundraising Progress

The total cost of the restoration project is estimated at £1.7 million. The RSPB has so far raised over £845,000, of which £210,000 has been contributed by the UK Government. The RSPB is calling on the UK Government to make a total contribution of £500,000 in order to meet its legal responsibility towards this UK World Heritage Site.

At present only 0.04% of the UK Government's spending on biodiversity conservation goes to the UK Overseas Territories— the equivalent of just £1,860 for each of their 96 critically endangered species. The RSPB is emphasising that this project represents some of the most cost-effective conservation that money can buy: the Henderson petrel saved from its slide towards extinction, a large (37km²) island restored, at least ten further unique species safeguarded for future generations, and a globally significant seabird sanctuary created (research suggests that seabird populations will increase up to a hundred-fold once rats are removed)- all for just £1.7 million.

Raffle Notes

1. To buy a raffle ticket please contact Evelyn Johnson on 01767 6 9 3 3 3 2 or evelyn.johnson@rspb.org.uk.
2. The cruise runs from 3-20 October 2010. Please note that the prize does not include the cost of flights, but Zegrahm Expeditions can provide details and help with flight bookings.
3. Only residents of England, Wales, and Scotland may purchase a raffle ticket.
4. Raffle closes 21 June 2010. Winners will be invited to collect their prize at a Henderson Island evening reception at the Foreign & Commonwealth Office, in the company of Sir David Attenborough.



The vulnerable Henderson Lorikeet, endemic to Henderson Island.
(Richard Cuthbert)

Supported by:

the David & Lucile Packard
FOUNDATION



Contact Us

If you would like any further information about the Henderson Island Restoration Project, please contact Jonathan Hall, Henderson Island Project Coordinator, at:

Email: jonathan.hall@rspb.org.uk

Tel: +44 (0) 1767 693008

Fax: +44 (0) 1767 683211

Postal Address: RSPB, The Lodge, Sandy, Bedfordshire, SG19 2DL, United Kingdom