

## Farallon Islands Restoration Project, California



### WHY ARE THE FARALLON ISLANDS IMPORTANT?

- HOST THE LARGEST SEABIRD BREEDING COLONY IN THE U.S. OUTSIDE OF ALASKA AND HAWAII
- HOME TO 25% OF CALIFORNIA'S COASTAL BREEDING SEABIRDS, WITH MORE THAN 300,000 INDIVIDUALS OF 13 SPECIES
- SUPPORT ABOUT HALF OF THE WORLD'S POPULATION OF RARE ASHY STORM-PETRELS
- REFUGE AND BREEDING GROUNDS FOR FIVE SPECIES OF MARINE MAMMALS

### OUR MISSION

Restore the native ecosystem of the Farallon Islands.

### OUR VISION

The islands' native species have recovered from the impacts of invasive house mice.

### THE PROBLEM

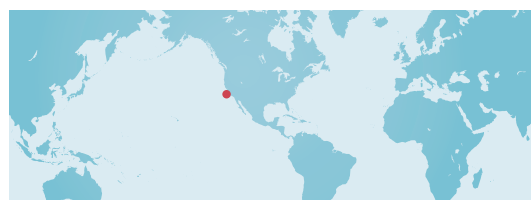
Invasive house mice on the South Farallon Islands are negatively impacting native wildlife populations, particularly the rare Ashy Storm-petrel (listed as a Species of Management Concern by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and Endangered by the International Union for Conservation of Nature).

### THE SOLUTION

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, PRBO Conservation Science, and Island Conservation propose to protect the rare Ashy Storm-petrel, endemic salamanders and crickets, and the entire Farallon ecosystem by removing invasive house mice.

### MEASURING IMPACT

The partners monitor native wildlife on the islands before and after removal of invasive house mice to evaluate the success of the project.



**Farallon National Wildlife Refuge** The South Farallon Islands are a group of islands and islets located 28 miles west of San Francisco, California. They were added to the refuge (first established in 1909 by President Theodore Roosevelt) in 1969.

TO LEARN MORE ABOUT THE PROJECT, VISIT:  
[WWW.RESTORETHEFARALLONES.ORG](http://WWW.RESTORETHEFARALLONES.ORG)

## FARALLON ISLANDS RESTORATION PROJECT

The islands of the Farallon National Wildlife Refuge host the largest seabird breeding colony in the United States outside of Alaska and Hawai'i. Twenty-five percent of California's breeding seabirds, with more than 300,000 individuals of 13 species, are found there. About 50% of the world's population of the rare Ashy Storm-petrel breed on the Farallon National Wildlife Refuge islands. Unfortunately, the presence of introduced, non-native house mice threatens this globally significant seabird colony.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, PRBO Conservation Science, and Island Conservation have partnered together to restore native seabird populations on the islands, particularly the Ashy Storm-petrel. Removing invasive house mice will provide safer breeding habitat for seabirds and other native animals. Once invasive species are removed from islands, island ecosystems often can recover quickly.

### RESTORING THE FARALLONES ECOSYSTEM

**1. WHAT NATIVE WILDLIFE ARE FOUND HERE?** The islands are home to 13 species of breeding seabirds including the world's largest population of the rare Ashy Storm-petrel, five species of marine mammals, many species of migratory birds, and a salamander and cricket found nowhere else in the world. Additionally, Great White Sharks, several whale species, and many other marine creatures forage in the surrounding waters.

**2. WHY IS THE ECOSYSTEM SO RICH?** The Farallon Islands sit at the Continental Shelf's edge, where the ocean floor plunges from 300 feet to more than two miles deep. This change creates perfect conditions for ocean upwelling. Cold water upwelling produces an abundance of nutrients, providing food for marine krill, fish, birds, and mammals. Habitats on the islands provide breeding and resting places for wildlife.

**3. DOES ANYONE LIVE THERE?** A small contingent of researchers from PRBO Conservation Science reside on one of the islands to monitor native species. Refuge managers and other researchers occasionally visit the islands. The refuge is closed to the public, but boat tours take passengers close enough to see birds and other native animals.

**4. HOW DO HOUSE MICE HARM NATIVE SPECIES?** Invasive house mice on the Farallones alter the food web by attracting numerous migrant Burrowing Owls to the islands. When the mice numbers decline in winter (a normal part of the mouse population cycle), the owls turn to Ashy Storm-petrels for food. Mice also feed extensively on native invertebrates and spread invasive plant seeds.

**5. WHAT IS THE GOAL OF THE RESTORATION?** The removal of invasive mice from the Farallon Islands will help restore the Farallon ecosystem by providing safer habitat for native animal and plant species, such as the Ashy Storm-petrel, Farallon Arboreal Salamander, and Farallon Camel Cricket. Increases in native seabird populations, particularly the Ashy Storm-petrel, as well as salamanders and invertebrates, are expected.



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