



PRESS RELEASE

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Tasman Island pest eradication program success

Tasman Island has been declared cat-free, following the success of a program to eradicate the feral pests that have wreaked havoc on the island's populations of ground-nesting seabirds.

Rangers from the Department of Primary Industries, Parks, Water and Environment have monitored the island regularly since the establishment in 2009 of the eradication program, which has been strongly supported by ecotourism operator Pennicott Wilderness Journeys.

A final check of the 120-hectare island recently found no sign of feral cats and the island has been declared free from the predators, which were killing an estimated 50,000 birds every year.

Rob Pennicott says that he and his staff are thrilled to have been able to support the Tasman Island initiative through a \$65,000 donation to the Wildcare Tasmanian Coast Conservation Fund, which Rob and his family established to assist important Parks & Wildlife conservation projects.

"It's great to know that we've played a part in saving tens of thousands of fairy prions, short-tailed shearwaters and other seabirds that breed on Tasman Island," Rob says. "These wonderful native birds will now increase in numbers, free from the threat of predatory felines."

Rob paid tribute to the Parks and Wildlife Service staff who carried out the preliminary research, worked on the field activities and conducted the follow-up monitoring of the program.

"It's been a true team effort between Parks and Wildlife, Wildcare and our Tasmanian Coast Conservation Fund," he says. "Everyone involved with Pennicott Wilderness Journeys feels great satisfaction at seeing this program achieve success."

And every day, as our boats pass close to the island's rugged sea crags, it's great to be able to explain to our guests that they have played a role in the program's success, because a proportion of every ticket goes to help the work of the Fund.

"The projects we support through the Wildcare Tasmanian Coast Conservation Fund focus on the special places where we and our staff earn our living, so it's only fitting that we support the environment in return. And this is just the start – we are excited about the prospect of assisting more significant Tasmanian coastal conservation projects in the future," Rob Pennicott says.

For more information on Pennicott Wilderness Journeys, contact Trina Mangels, Marketing Manager on 0407 833 741 or email marketing@pennicottjourneys.com.au

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