

Biosecurity Detector Dog Programme for the South Atlantic

The Government of South Georgia & the South Sandwich Islands is pleased to announce an extended biosecurity detector dog programme. This follows a successful pilot programme, where specially trained dogs were deployed on vessels bound for South Georgia tasked with detecting rats and mice. By ensuring there were no stowaway rodents on board, or among cargo, the dog team effectively made sure that no rodents could re-invade South Georgia.



Erin & Pipit (left) Megan & Samurai (right).

This next phase of the project will see the return of dog handlers Megan Vick and Erin Jackson, with veteran rodent detector dog Samurai and newcomer Pipit, a young springer spaniel who will remain in the Falklands as part of a long term biosecurity detector dog programme. Pipit has shown great promise in her early training. She is named after the South Georgia Pipit; a small songbird found nowhere else on earth, and whose numbers are recovering in the absence of rats on South Georgia.

This next phase of the project is in collaboration with the Falkland Islands Government, where the dogs' amazing sense of smell will be put to good use to detect biosecurity risks entering the Falkland Islands, and to prevent rodents from being accidentally moved around the Falklands to rodent-free areas in cargo or as stowaways on vessels.

The extended programme aims to identify a suitable long term solution to provide a Falklands-based biosecurity detector dog programme which will have wide reaching environmental benefits for both South Georgia and the Falkland Islands.

We are delighted to be working once again with Working Dogs for Conservation ([WD4C](#)), a US based organisation experienced in delivering conservation dog programmes around the world. The project is being supported by the South Georgia Heritage Trust ([SGHT](#)), Friends of South Georgia Island ([FOSGI](#)) and the [RSPB](#).