

Pests and Biosecurity on the Chatham Islands



Bringing pets into the Chathams?



chatham islands council



What you need to know ...

The Chatham Islands environment is unique and beautiful and the economy is highly dependent on farming and fishing. The Chatham Islands are free of many pests and diseases which cause economic and environmental problems on mainland New Zealand.

The importance of biosecurity

The Chatham Islands has a Pest Management Strategy to help protect the environment and economy from unwanted pests and diseases. Some animals commonly kept as pets in New Zealand could easily become pests on the Chathams or carry pests as 'hitch-hikers'.

Animals that are prohibited from the Chathams:

Rabbits

Rabbits and hares are NOT present on the Chathams. A female rabbit can produce up to 40 young per year. They compete with stock for grazing and could cause significant economic and environmental damage.

Mustelids (ferrets, stoats and weasels)

These predators are NOT present on the Chathams and would cause significant harm to the unique bird life if introduced. Ferrets are also known to carry bovine tuberculosis.

Movement of these animals is prohibited under the Wild Animals Control Act.

Pets to avoid bringing in:

Goats

Goats are a Total Control Pest under the Chatham Island Pest Management Strategy and there are restrictions on these potential pests. A feral goat population can double in number every two years.

Wild goats are agile animals and are able to exploit most habitats, damaging native vegetation, young trees and contributing to the erosion of soils.

For more information please contact the Biosecurity Officers on 03 305 0033
or email info@chathamislands.govt.nz



Exotic fish

There are no known freshwater pest fish on the Chathams. Many of New Zealand's waterways have been invaded by exotic pest fish such as koi carp, rudd, perch, tench, mosquito fish and catfish which have either been accidentally or deliberately introduced. The release or escape of aquarium stock is a significant and ongoing source of new establishments.

Pest fish could thrive in the pristine waterways of the Chathams. They could prey on native species or modify the aquatic ecosystems by their feeding habits.

Bringing in freshwater fish may also bring in freshwater weeds. A small weed fragment can be enough to start a new infestation which could be expensive or even impossible to eradicate.

Please leave all fragments of waterweed where you found them, or dispose of them in the rubbish.

Reptiles (frogs, turtles and lizards)

Importing reptiles could pose a serious biosecurity risk. Rainbow skinks were first recorded in Auckland during the 1960s, probably arriving accidentally in cargo from Australia. These lizards reproduce more than five times as fast as most native lizards and are now widespread over much of the North Island.

Wild turtles have become a problem in Auckland's waterways and drains. These aggressive turtles, which can be bought in pet stores, have a painful bite and are prolific breeders.

Introduced reptiles can reach high populations in a relatively short time, competing with or preying on native animals including birds and insects.

Birds

Some exotic birds such as eastern rosellas, rainbow lorikeets and magpies could become pests on the Chathams if they escape. Of equal concern are diseases these birds may carry.

Psittacine Beak and Feather Disease (or PBF for short) is a viral disease affecting parrots. The disease is especially serious for small chicks, killing many while still in the nest. Adult birds can develop feather loss, beak deformities and their immune system may fail, making them prone to other infections or predator attack.

This virus survives for a long time in the environment and is easily spread from bird to bird or by contaminated cages. PBF poses a significant threat to the native parrots of the Chathams.

Cats and dogs

Please make sure your cats and dogs are fully immunised and wormed before bringing them to the Chathams.

Farm Equipment

Farm equipment **MUST** be cleaned before delivery to Chatham Island Shipping Line Depot in NZ. Farm equipment may be subject to inspection prior to loading in NZ. Additional cleaning/treatment carried out in NZ may result in shipping delays and increased costs for the importer.

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Animal disease and risk prevention

Species	Concern	Possible consequences	Risk prevention steps
All species (and farm equipment)	General health	Introduction of disease agents and parasites.	Ensure the health status of livestock is high and livestock are in good body condition prior to shipping. Buy livestock from a trusted operator. Farm equipment should be cleaned prior to shipping.
Cattle, sheep and goats	Internal parasites	Introduction of parasites resistant to drench.	Hold imported livestock in quarantine (isolation paddocks well away from other livestock) for 24 hours. Cattle and sheep should be routinely given an appropriate quarantine drench for internal parasites. After consulting your veterinarian take care to use a product that is effective for parasites on the farm where the animals were moved from. For cattle imported from the North Island use a pour-on treatment for external parasites prior to arrival. Make sure to adhere to the producer's dosage recommendations. If parasite treatment has not been carried out pre-import, whilst not ideal, it can be done on arrival. On release from the isolation paddock, monitor new stock in separate paddocks for ten days prior to mixing with other livestock.
	External parasites	Introduction of ticks, lice and agents vectored e.g. Theileria in cattle.	
	Viral and bacterial diseases	Cattle disease e.g. Johnes disease, Bovine viral diarrhoea, Bovine Tb. Sheep disease e.g. Johnes disease, Ovine epididymitis (Brucella ovis).	
Pigs	Viral and bacterial diseases, parasites	Variety of diseases e.g. Post weaning multi-systemic wasting syndrome, Internal and external parasites.	Conduct veterinary inspection prior to shipment. Quarantine and monitor health following import. Carry out parasite treatment
Horses	Viral and bacterial diseases, parasites	For example disease from Strangles, or equine herpes virus.	Veterinary inspection prior to shipment to ensure no evidence of abscesses of the head and neck or signs of respiratory disease. Hold new horses in quarantine for ten days prior to mixing with other horses.
Dogs and cats	Viral and bacterial diseases, parasites	Dog diseases e.g. Parvovirus, Distemper, Infectious canine hepatitis. Cat diseases e.g. Feline enteritis and forms of feline respiratory disease.	Veterinary inspection, vaccination and treatment for internal (containing praziquantel for treatment of tapeworm) and external parasites prior to shipment. Please ensure all vaccinations are up to date.
Poultry and caged birds, including exotic species	Viral and bacterial diseases, parasites	Respiratory or enteric conditions e.g. caused by Paramyxoviruses or Herpesvirus; Beak and feather disease which can endanger native parrots.	Ensure high health in birds from the farm of origin and no evidence of respiratory disease or a previous drop in egg production for poultry. Hold imported birds in quarantine for ten days prior to mixing with other birds. Never release captive parrots or other exotic species into the wild.
Bees	Viral and bacterial diseases, parasites	In particular infestation with Varroa bee mite and American foulbrood.	Do not bring in queens or new bees from mainland NZ under any circumstances. Bee boxes and hive components should be purchased new to avoid contamination. Replacement queens can be sourced from local bee keepers.