



# Antarctic Research Trust

## HUMMOCK ISLAND MANAGEMENT PLAN 2021-2025

### MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK

Hummock Island is owned and managed by the Antarctic Research Trust (ART). The ART recognises the island as a unique wildlife refuge free of introduced predators and hosting a wide diversity of native plant species and habitats. The island's Management Plan is set up for an initial period of 5 years (2021-2025). Objectives and activities will be reviewed annually. The Management Plan will be reviewed in 2025. Funding for management is provided by ART.

### VISION

To sustainably manage the island for the benefit of the island's flora and fauna, habitats and visitors.

### MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES 2021-2025

1. To conserve and restore the island's wildlife and habitats.
2. To enhance and showcase the island's natural resources and landscapes.
3. To ensure the island is inspirational and attractive to visitors.
4. To facilitate environmentally sustainable use of and access to the island's scientific, educational and recreational resources.

### MANAGEMENT ACTIVITIES (how we fulfil the vision)

1. Scientific research – for the benefit of the island's wildlife, habitats and restoration
2. Habitat restoration – an annual programme of planting tussock and other native plant species
3. Visitor access – facilitate and promote environmentally sustainable visits.
4. In perpetuity protection – investigate potential processes for protecting the island in perpetuity from livestock grazing.

## KEY THREATS TO BE MANAGED

The key threats listed below are considered to be of sufficient risk to require a pro-active, responsive management policy:

1. Fire – lightning strikes, human-induced
2. Invasive species' introductions – rodents, earwigs, pathogens, seeds
3. Trampling of plants by visitors
4. Disturbance of wildlife by visitors
5. Researcher impacts
6. Marine debris
7. Oil spills – marine, research station
8. Grey water and sewage overflow from research station
9. Freshwater consumption at research station
10. Land management policy
11. Funding resources

## MANAGEMENT OF KEY THREATS

### 1. Fire

- Lightning strikes. VERY HIGH RISK in summer months. On being advised of a fire on the island, Trustees will decide whether or not to request assistance from the Falkland Islands Government Fire and Rescue Services and be prepared to pay accordingly. Realistically, it is not possible to extinguish a lightning strike fire in deep tussac peat without the use of a digger. Although pumps and hoses may be of use when a fire is close to seawater, they will not have the capacity to reach inland sites. The need to purchase a digger pump and hoses to gain firefighting autonomy will be reviewed regularly.
- Fire – smoking and open fires. LOW RISK providing visitors respect the Hummock Island Countryside Code and the rule that no smoking or open fires are permitted on the island. The Trust will ensure that this information is supplied to visitors in electronic form in advance of visits and in the form of conspicuous signage on display at the research station.
- Fire – research station *House of ART*. LOW RISK, providing visitors follow the Countryside Code and ART's rules regarding no smoking, no candles, no BBQs, no open burning. Fire extinguishers and smoke alarms are kept in the house and sheds, conspicuous signage is on display at the research station. The station's wiring, gas supply, solar panels and battery banks will be checked and maintained annually.

2. Invasive species introductions: The ART will ensure that the Hummock Island biosecurity measures for reducing the risk of introducing non-native flora and fauna are available in advance to all visitors and displayed on the signage at the research station.

- Earwigs and seeds. VERY HIGH RISK
- Pathogens: VERY HIGH RISK
- Rodents: LOW RISK

3. Trampling of plants by visitors: LOW RISK. The Trust will ensure that the Countryside Code with its guidance on minimising visitor impacts on wildlife and plants is supplied electronically to all visitors, and in the form of conspicuous signage on display at the research station.

4. Disturbance of wildlife by visitors: LOW RISK. The Trust will ensure that the Countryside Code with its guidance on minimising visitor impacts on wildlife and plants is supplied electronically to visitors in advance of visits and on the signage on display at the research station.

5. Researcher impact: MEDIUM RISK. The Trust will ensure that all researchers are supplied with the Countryside Code and that research projects obtain the approval of the Trust and are conducted under the terms and conditions of a license issued by the Falkland Islands Government.

6. Marine debris entanglement of wildlife: MEDIUM RISK. The Trust will ensure that an annual beach clean be carried out, specifically targeting fishing gear debris i.e. packing straps and nets, and that the debris is disposed of in the most appropriate and environmentally responsible way.

## 7. Oil spills

- Marine origin: LOW RISK. If large quantities of oil are found on the shoreline, report to the FIG Environmental Unit. If oiled birds are found, contact Falklands Conservation.
- Oil spill impacts on the island: VERY LOW RISK. Fuels stored on the island consist of petrol and small quantities of lubricating oils for a small generator which is rarely in use as the research station runs on solar power. Absorbent paper is available in the unlikely event of a spill.

8. Grey-water and sewage impacts from research station: LOW RISK. A septic tank collects all waste water issuing from the house. While the house is occupied, the tank is regularly checked to ensure it is functioning correctly.

9. Freshwater consumption at research station: LOW RISK of consumption exceeding the island's groundwater storage capacity. At those times when the house is occupied, the level of water in the storage tank and the flow of water in the valley will be regularly checked. Visitors will be made aware of possible water shortages and will economise on use of water.

10. Long-term land management policy: MEDIUM RISK. The Trust will explore options for setting up long-term protection processes for safe-guarding the island's natural resources from any potential future risk of over-exploitation, including that of grazing by livestock.

11. Funding: VERY LOW RISK. The Trust will ensure that the fund-raising necessary to ensure effective implementation of the management plan's policy is maintained annually for the duration of this management plan.

## **SCIENTIFIC, EDUCATIONAL AND PROMOTIONAL RESOURCES**

The ART will ensure that the following materials are available to visitors:

- Signage for display on the outside of the research station
- Visitor guidance (pdfs) for emailing/download from the website
- A book on the plants of Hummock Island (in German)
- Regular updates on the ART website
- Articles for local media (e.g. radio station FIRS, Penguin News)
- Annual submission of research metadata to SAERI
- Hummock Island chapter in 3<sup>rd</sup> edition of *A Visitors Guide to the Falkland Islands*

## **VISITOR POLICY**

1. The Trust welcomes all visitors to enjoy open access to all parts of the island. No limit on the number of visitors per day or year.
2. Visitors will be supplied with educational and environmental guidance materials which include:
  - Conspicuous signage at the house (ART Welcome and contact details, Biosecurity Measures, Countryside Code, Fire Warning).
  - Visitor guidance (pdf) in advance of intended visits (including ART Welcome and contact details, Biosecurity Measures, Countryside Code, Fire Warning).
3. No shooting.
4. No open fires, BBQs, burning of rubbish.
5. Smoking permitted only at the designated smoking area at the house.
6. All rubbish to be removed from the island.
7. Vehicles not allowed on the island apart from ATV and trailer on the marked track between the sand beach and the house, and in the case of medical, firefighting and other emergencies.
8. Overnight stays are by prior arrangement with ART only.
9. Commercial visits (for profit): By prior arrangement with ART (landing fees may apply).
10. Non-commercial visits (not for profit): Prior arrangement with the ART would be appreciated, as well as hearing from visitors following a landing, particularly if there is anything out of the ordinary to report.

## 11. Researchers

- Proposed research activities will be reviewed and approved by ART Trustees before requesting a research license from the FIG Environment Committee.
- Project metadata submitted to ART and FIG's Information Management System (IMS) within 12 months of fieldwork.
- Researcher activities are bound by the Countryside Code and Biosecurity Measures, unless otherwise stipulated in the FIG research permit.

## 12. Overnight stays

- Newcomers to be accompanied by a designated 'warden' for a certain time period, as assigned by the ART trustees based on the relevant experience of the visitors.
- All visitors to familiarise themselves with the 'House of Art' Handbook, Countryside Code and Biosecurity Measures.

## CONTACT DETAILS AND USEFUL PHONE NUMBERS

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999

King Edward Memorial Hospital in Stanley:

28000

Falkland Islands Government Fire and Rescue Service:

27333

Falkland Islands Government Environmental Unit:

28427

Falkland Islands Government Air Service:

27219

Falklands Conservation:

22247