



## Darwin Initiative Main/Post/D+ Project Half Year Report (due 31<sup>st</sup>October 2019)

**Project reference: DPLUS075**

**Project title: Securing endemic land birds and their habitats at Tristan da Cunha**

**Country(ies)/territory(ies): Tristan da Cunha**

**Lead organisation: Government of Tristan da Cunha, Conservation Department**

**Partner(s): The Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB)**

**Project leader: Trevor Glass**

**Report date and number: HYR3**

**Project website/blog/social media etc.**

### **1. Outline progress over the last 6 months (April – Sept) against the agreed baseline timetable for the project (if your project has started less than 6 months ago, please report on the period since start up to end September).**

While in the UK the conservation staff was trained in data, collecting, survey skills, management skills and a standard BTO Category C Permit Qualification was commenced but still needs more work to complete the requirements. A person from BTO taking sabbatical leave will hopefully come and work closely with the conservation team.

A GPS, mapping course was held in the RSPB by RSPB Staff for the Tristan Conservation staff it was very helpful and will help with a lot of the mapping for the project.

Spot checks have been made at Nightingale where the New Zealand flax have grown, checks have also been made up the path for brass button. Checks have been made at the landing place at Nightingale for any invasive *Sagina* carried across from Tristan. *[would be good to add in a sentence here about what the results of these checks were]*

While Trevor Glass travelled through Cape Town talking to Shipping Agents a Rodent response kit was put together and will arrive with us shortly. This will be taken to Nightingale after cargo has been unloaded from the ship.

A week was spent in Cape Town working on Biosecurity with Andy Schofield checking all food equipment etc going to Gough, a check was also made on the PWD and the helicopters, The final report will be written up when Andy gets back from Pitcairn.

A biosecurity check was also made at Tristan House in Cape Town, where Tristanians stay and where they depart from before boarding the ship. This was the first time ever but will be done regularly on all Tote Bins and packages going to Tristan and the outer islands

Drafting of a biosecurity hand book is ongoing by the conservation policy officer, with support from Jill Key at the GB Non-Native Species Secretariat. This will be a great help to tourist and local people going out to outer Islands.

Flights have been made with the Drone surveying areas for Thrushes on Tristan but with no luck seeing Thrushes (one thing we are leaning from this project is there are fewer Thrushes on Tristan than we thought)

A pair of Tristan thrushes is preparing a nest at Big Sandy Gulch. Photos will be taken of the pair and hopefully we can get close enough to put rings out but at the moment less disturbance the better.

**2a. Give details of any notable problems or unexpected developments/lessons learnt that the project has encountered over the last 6 months. Explain what impact these could have on the project and whether the changes will affect the budget and timetable of project activities.**

Because of the Hurricane on Tristan on 7/19/19 the project came to a halt to repair and reroof all the government buildings and islander's houses, clean up the island getting everything back to working order plus the roof and front was rip from the boat houses so that all had to be repaired and all boats lock down until ship arrive a couple of weeks later with equipment from Cape town.

This will not affect the budget or the timetable as everything has been sorted and the team will be ready to work on the outer islands again.

Julian Repetto has gone off to Cape town with his partner for Medical leave this means will have to draft someone else in to help out, with the project. I will draft someone in who have had experience in handling small birds and landing small crafts on boulder beaches, taking on leading the project if I am not around.

**2b. Have any of these issues been discussed with LTS International and if so, have changes been made to the original agreement?**

Discussed with LTS: No

Formal change request submitted: No

Received confirmation of change acceptance No

**3a. Do you currently expect to have any significant (e.g., more than £5,000) underspend in your budget for this year?**

Yes  No  Estimated underspend:

**3b. If yes, then you need to consider your project budget needs carefully.** Please remember that any funds agreed for this financial year are only available to the project in this financial year.

If you anticipate a significant underspend because of justifiable changes within the project, please submit a rebudget Change Request as soon as possible. There is no guarantee that Defra will agree a rebudget so please ensure you have enough time to make appropriate changes if necessary.

**4. Are there any other issues you wish to raise relating to the project or to Darwin's management, monitoring, or financial procedures?**

Because of the strong winds around Tristan there are issues with flying the drone, so little time is spent during the winter months. We will do more flying in the summer fieldwork season.

Another battery has been on ordered to get the most out of the short days in the winter months.

Because of the bad weather no time has been spend on the outer islands since leaving at the end of May and very little time has been spend on the mountain at Tristan.

**If you were asked to provide a response to this year's annual report review with your next half year report, please attach your response to this document. Additionally, if you were funded under R24 and asked to provide further information by your first half year report, please attach your response as a separate document.**