

Pacific Seabird Group



DEDICATED TO THE STUDY AND CONSERVATION OF PACIFIC SEABIRDS AND THEIR ENVIRONMENT

17 September 1983

Director of Planning
Shetland Islands Council
Victoria Buildings
Esplanade, Lerwick
Shetland, Scotland

Dear Sir:

We recently learned of a proposal to establish a mink farm on the island of Tronda that is being considered by the Shetland Islands Council. Our international organization wishes to express its concern that these introduced predators are likely to harm the internationally-recognized seabird colonies in Shetland. Seabirds have evolved to reproduce primarily in predator-free environments.

The Pacific Basin has a long and tragic history of predator introductions, both intentional and unintentional. Mongooses introduced here in Hawaii virtually wiped out all ground-nesting lowland birds, including seabirds. Foxes placed on islands in Alaska have severely damaged seabird colonies in the past fifty years. Black rats have virtually eliminated one of the largest populations of Bonin petrels in the world at Midway Island. Cats have been responsible for the elimination of seabird populations on Baker and Christmas Island near the Equator. Similar problems have occurred in New Zealand.

It is virtually impossible to eliminate animals such as mink once they are established. I am sure that you realize there is little possibility of an "escape-proof" mink farm. We urge you to consider this proposal for mink farming in this light.

Sincerely,

Craig S. Harrison

Craig S. Harrison, chairman
46-024 Puulena St. #614
Kaneohe, Hawaii 96744 USA