

## **Killing rats could save coral reefs** 消灭老鼠可以保护珊瑚礁

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饱受非议的老鼠不是一种能让人们联想起珊瑚礁的生物。但在热带岛屿上研究珊瑚礁的科学家们称，这类动物直接威胁到珊瑚礁周围生态系统的生存。

On the tropical Chagos Islands in the Indian Ocean, this is the sound of rat-free **territory** – **teeming** with birdlife. The remote **archipelago** of 60 islands is now a natural laboratory.

在印度洋上的热带岛屿查戈斯群岛上，鸟叫声遍布这个无鼠地带。这个拥有 60 个岛屿的偏远群岛现在是一个天然的实验室。

While some islands are rat-free, others that were visited historically by ships are now home to the **invasive rodents**. And rats, scientists found, dramatically reduce the health of a coral reef surrounding an **infested** island.

虽然有些岛屿上没有老鼠，但历史上有船只造访过的岛屿现在都已成为这类入侵啮齿动物的家园。科学家们发现，在大批老鼠出没的岛屿周围，其珊瑚礁的健康状况急剧下降。

By killing seabirds, the rats **deprive** a reef of nutrient-rich seabird droppings that naturally **fertilise** it. The researchers working on the archipelago found that rat-free islands' reefs were much healthier, with more and significantly larger fish.

通过捕杀海鸟，老鼠剥夺了珊瑚礁依靠营养丰富的海鸟粪便作为肥料使其生长的自由。在这个群岛上工作的研究人员发现，没有老鼠的岛屿周围的珊瑚礁要健康得多，鱼的数量也多，而且体积也明显更大。

With coral reefs under threat from climate change, the scientists are now **advocating** rat **eradication** on islands around the world to protect some of the most **diverse** ecosystems in the ocean.

由于珊瑚礁受到气候变化的威胁，所以科学家们现提倡在世界各地的岛屿上消灭老鼠，以保护海洋中最多样化的生态系统。

## 1. 词汇表

<b>territory</b>	区域，活动范围
<b>teeming</b>	充满...的
<b>archipelago</b>	群岛
<b>invasive</b>	入侵的
<b>rodents</b>	啮齿动物
<b>infested</b>	(老鼠) 大批出没的
<b>deprive</b>	剥夺
<b>fertilise</b>	施肥
<b>advocating</b>	提倡，拥护
<b>eradication</b>	消灭，根除
<b>diverse</b>	多种多样的

## 2. 阅读理解：请在读完上文后，回答下列问题。（答案见下页）

1. Why have some islands become infested with rats and others not?
2. True or false? *It's the droppings from rats that damage the coral reefs.*
3. What have researchers found that leads to larger fish in the sea around some islands?
4. Why do researchers think coral reefs should be protected?

### 3. 答案

1. Why have some islands become infested with rats and others not?

**In the past, ships that visited certain islands, brought rats with them which stayed on the island and started to breed.**

2. True or false? *It's the droppings from rats that damage the coral reefs.*

**False. The problem has nothing to do with rats' droppings. The coral reefs need nutrient-rich seabird droppings that naturally fertilise it but this is reduced if the rats kill the seabirds.**

3. What have researchers found that leads to larger fish in the sea around some islands?

**The researchers working on the archipelago found that rat-free islands reefs were much healthier, with more and significantly larger fish.**

4. Why do researchers think coral reefs should be protected?

**They think that coral reefs are under threat from climate change and need protecting.**