

# Unusual study of the Isle of May

**Scientists have been studying mice on one of Scotland's most important seabird islands.**

The Isle of May in the outer Firth of Forth is best known for its puffins and other seabirds, but is also home to thousands of house mice.

Researchers from the universities of Edinburgh and Manchester are studying the rodents due to a whipworm parasite they carry in their gut.

The parasite, called *Trichuris*, cannot infect birds or humans. The research aims to find out if the mice's susceptibility to the parasite can be reduced and gut health improved by improving the quality of their diet, with possible lessons for human infections.

David Steel, NatureScot's reserve manager on the island, said: "The mice are spread across the whole island, living in rocky cracks, their own burrows and potentially sharing burrows with underground nesting birds such as puffins and storm petrels as well as rabbits."

There is a blog on the island's website dedicated to the mouse research. [Read more here.](#)



Photo by Monique Laats on [Pexels.com](https://www.pexels.com)