

Grey Oliver [1992?]
CALM

PROPOSAL FOR CAT ERADICATION PROGRAMME

MONTE BELLO ISLANDS

The proposed programme consists of two parts - an initial heavy knockdown, to be followed by a sustained programme managed by resident rangers during their winter occupancy periods.

Baits are to be the main agency in achieving eradication, but will be supplemented with trapping and shooting.

The initial knockdown programme should follow the successful completion of the rat eradication, and after the completion of the turtle nesting season, thus eliminating potentially significant alternate food sources. A date of May 10 - 24 in 1993 is proposed.

Follow up programmes can occur between April and October during the four 2 week blocks when rangers will be residence.

Preliminary details of the proposed programmes follow:

PROGRAMME A: INITIAL KNOCKDOWN

BAITING COMPONENT

100gm fresh fish baits injected with 6mg 1080 and coated with cod liver oil or fishoilene are to be placed at 100m intervals along selected bait trails. Baits are to be placed under bushes or partially covered in sand so as not to be visible to raptors, and are to be removed, disposed of and replaced with fresh baits every second day for 10 days.

Radiation hazard areas are to be baited by helicopter three times within a 10 day period. Baits are not to be recovered.

BAIT TRAILS (as per figure 1)

Hermite Island	approx. 40 km (x 5)
Trimouille Island	approx. 30 km (x 5)
Radiation risk area (Trimouille)	approx. 10 km (x 3)
Bluebell Island	approx. 5 km (x 5)

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Total 85 km
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Weight of fresh fish required 405 kg.

TRAPPING COMPONENT

Traps are to be used in areas where baits would pose an unacceptable risk to *Hydromys chrysogaster*, primarily mangroves and adjacent beach areas.

Six areas of mangal on Hermite Island will be trapped using vertical closing cat traps baited with fish and a cod liver or fishoilene attractant. Scent trails leading to traps will be created with the attractant, and along with baits, refreshed every 2nd day during the programme.

Traps required = 50.

SHOOTING COMPONENT

A rotational nightly shooting programme will occur on Hermite and Bluebell Islands. Approximately 200 ha will be covered per night by a team of 2 (one spotlihter, one shooter) using a shotgun.

PROGRAMME B: FOLLOW UP

This programme will be repeated 4 times during the winter periods of occupation by rangers (subject to the success of programme A).

BAITING COMPONENT

Existing bait trails to be rebaited using 6mg 1080 with 100gm fresh fish with attractant, baits at 200m spacings. Set baits to be removed after 2 days and replaced with fresh bait for a further 2 days prior to disposal.

Radiation hazard areas to be baited once by helicopter. Baits are not to be recovered. Weight of fresh fish required = 160 kg.

TRAPPING COMPONENT

As per programme A.

SHOOTING COMPONENT

As per programme A.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PRELIMINARY WORK

1. The continuing presence of cats on Bluebell Island needs to be confirmed.
2. A number of other islands, principally Alpha, North West, Campbell, Delta, South East and Ah Chong need to be examined for the presence of cat tracks.
3. Pre-baiting cat densities on Hermite, Trimouille and Bluebell islands needs to be established.
4. Pre-baiting *Hydromys chrysogaster* and raptors densities need to be established on Hermite, Trimouille and Bluebell Islands.
5. WA Health Department needs to be contacted to request approval for the use of pindone for cat control.
6. Hadson Energy needs to be contacted to seek their assistance with helicopter flying time.
7. Onslow fishermen need to be contacted regarding supply of fresh fish.

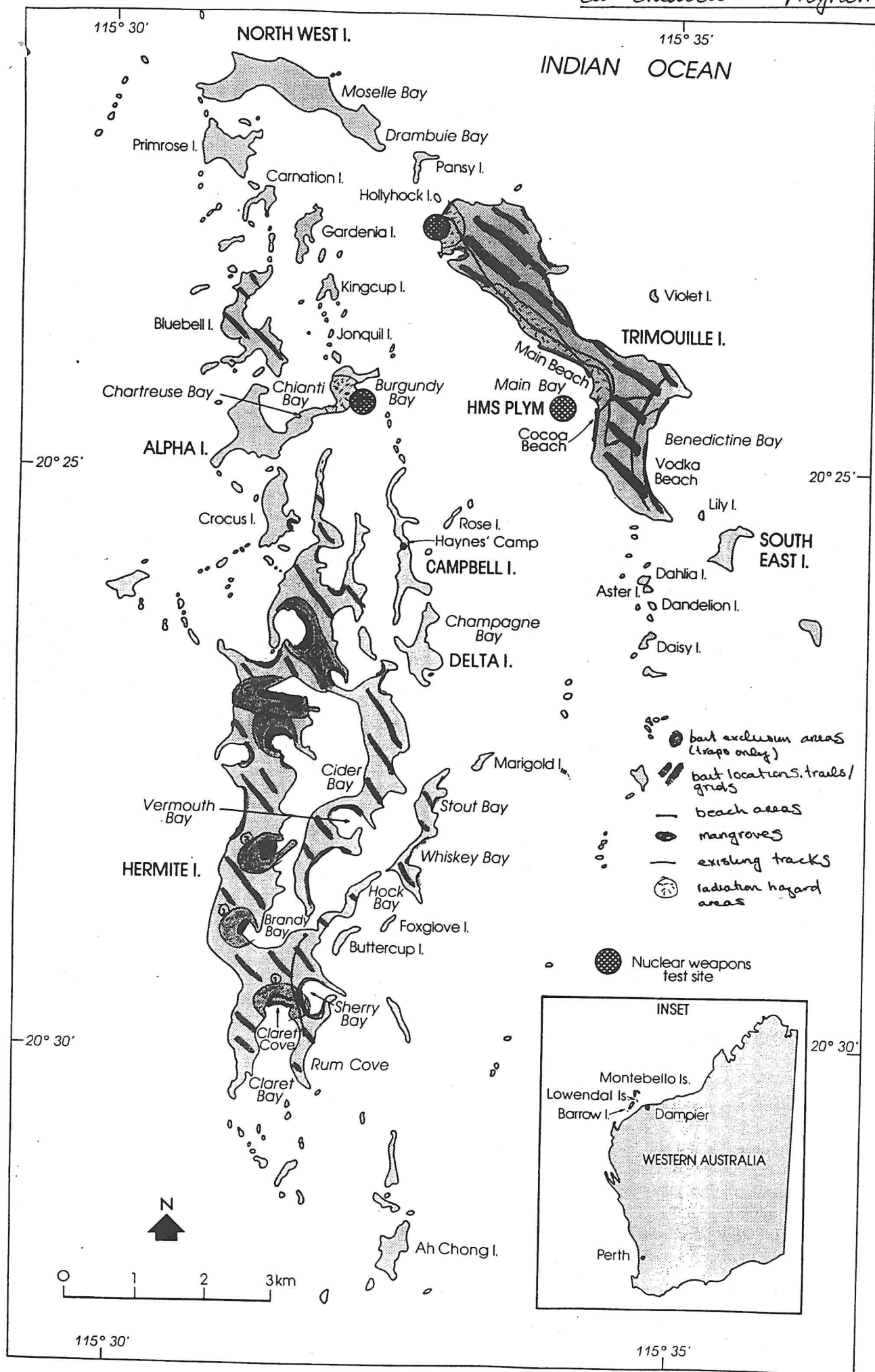


Figure 1. Location of the Montebello Islands.