

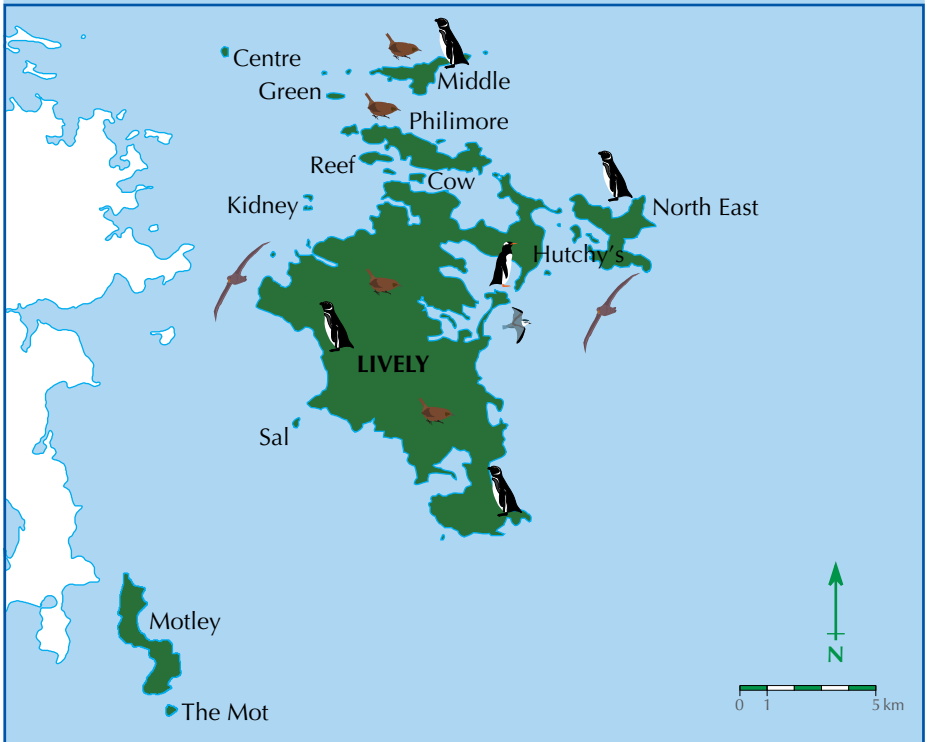
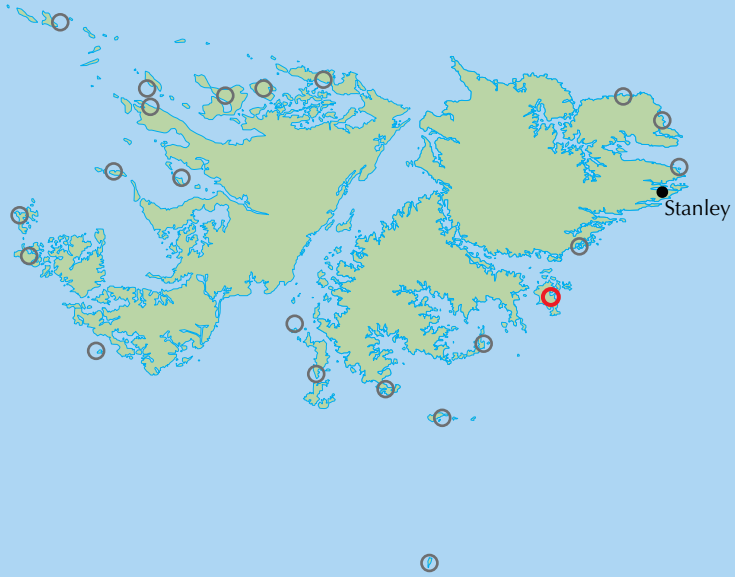
Lively Island Group

Ref number	FK10
Admin Region	Falkland Islands
Co-ordinates	52°02'S, 58°28'W
Area	Lively Island (5,585 ha), Gull (5 ha), Cow (12 ha), Irene (5 ha), Kidney Islands (2) (2 ha) and (4 ha) and several other small islets (some tied to Lively Island by sandbars), Middle Island (and five islets) (150 ha), Motley Island (330 ha), The Mot (10 ha), Centre (3 ha), Sal (8 ha), Philimore (300 ha), Philimore Chico (18 ha), Reef (35 ha), Green Island (7 ha), Stinker (<1 ha), Pete's (4 ha), Hutchy's (12 ha), North East Island* (305 ha) [* = rats present?]
Altitude	0–37 m
IBA categories	A1, A2
Status	Lively, Gull, Cow, Irene, Kidney Islands etc.: privately owned by A. Jaffray, Lively Island. Middle and islets, Motley, The Mot, Centre, Sal: private nature reserves owned by Falklands Conservation. Philimore, Philimore Chico, Reef, Green Island, Stinker, Pete's, Hutchy's: private nature reserves owned by S. Poncet, Stanley. North East Island: private nature reserve owned by S. Poncet, and I. T. Bury, Stanley.

Site description

Lively Island is gently undulating lowland with the highest point at only 37 m. The coastline is deeply indented, with extensive kelp beds. There are many streams and several ponds, the largest being Enderby Pond (about 7 ha), which has much emergent vegetation, mainly the California Club-rush *Schoenoplectus californicus*, and is an important site for waterfowl. The island has been farmed since the mid-19th century with uncontrolled grazing by cattle, sheep and horses in earlier years. Little Tussac remains and there are many large patches of eroded ground. There are long sandbars and dunes on the eastern coast, and plantations of Marram *Ammophila arenaria*.

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FK10	Lively Island Group	Breeding (pairs)	Notes
Criteria	Key species		
A1	Gentoo Penguin <i>Pygoscelis papua</i>	650	Lively Island
A1	Magellanic Penguin <i>Spheniscus magellanicus</i>	Numerous	Breeding on all islands, no counts
A1	Southern Giant Petrel <i>Macronectes giganteus</i>	40	Breeds Hutchy's off North East, count in 1996
A1, A2	Cobb's Wren <i>Troglodytes cobbi</i>	Numerous	Present on Middle, Motley, Lively and The Mot, no counts
A2	Tussacbird/Blackish Cinclodes <i>Cinclodes antarcticus</i>	Numerous	Breeding all islands, except North East where a few seen Feb 2003
A2	Ruddy-headed Goose <i>Chloephaga rubidiceps</i>		Small numbers Middle and Motley, more common on North East
A2	Canary-winged/Black-throated Finch <i>Melanodera melanodera</i>		Numerous Middle and Motley, present Lively and The Mot
A2	Falkland Steamer Duck <i>Tachyeres brachypterus</i>		Numerous, present on all coasts

Lively is the largest rat-free island in the Falklands archipelago and may be one of the largest in the world.

North East Island, lying just 350 m off the coast of Lively, was infested with rats until September 2003, when an intensive rat eradication programme was carried out. The island is divided in two by a huge sandbar, which is well vegetated with Marram. The inter-tidal area is heavily inundated by sand and, at low tide, is a favoured feeding area for migrant White-rumped Sandpipers during the southern summer. The sea may occasionally break through the bar at spring high tides, especially with a strong easterly wind.

Middle Island reaches no more than 15 m in height towards the north-eastern point and the central ridge. There is open mature Tussac along the southern and eastern coasts, while there is considerable erosion on the northern coast above the 10 m-high cliffs. The habitat is varied, with large sand beaches and some dunes on the eastern coast, lush grasslands and areas of semi-permanent water with some interesting plants.

Motley Island has low cliffs and large shelf-rock beaches on the north-eastern, south-eastern and central western coasts. It reaches an altitude of 15 m in only four places. There are mature Tussac fringes, mainly at the northern and southern points, with inland grasslands recovering from years of grazing, but there are still areas of severe erosion on the western coast. Lying just 0.5 km south of Motley Island is **The Mot**, or Little Motley as it is sometimes called. The island is dome shaped and fairly open, but mature Tussac covers approximately half of the island's surface.

Birds

See table opposite for details of key species.

Lively Island has good populations of songbirds, including Cobb's Wren and Tussacbird, in the absence of rats. About 38 species were recorded (1980s), most of which were breeding, including several hundred Imperial Shags. White-tufted/Rolland's Grebe, Black-crowned Night-heron and Black-necked Swan frequent Enderby Pond on the western Sal Point, where White-winged Coot have been seen several times. Thirty-four species were recorded on **North East Island** in February 2003, when rats were widespread; 24 species bred or probably bred, but there was a very low density of songbirds, given the abundant vegetation cover which provided suitable breeding habitat and the availability of food, especially from Wild Celery *Apium australe* and Diddle-dee *Empetrum rubrum*. Cobb's Wren was absent as a breeding species and there were only small numbers of Tussacbirds.

On **Middle Island** (1997) 35 species were recorded, of which 29 were potential breeding species. These included all nine native songbirds in good numbers. The presence of breeding diving petrels was strongly suspected but could not be confirmed. There was one colony of about 300 pairs of Imperial Shags, and Magellanic Penguins were particularly numerous and well spread. During two visits to **Motley Island** (January 1995 and January 1997) a total of 41 species was recorded, of which 35 were either breeding or probably breeding. Songbirds were plentiful, notably Cobb's Wren and Falkland Grass Wren, Falkland Thrush, Canary-winged/Black-throated Finch and Black-chinned Siskin.

Other species of interest

Southern Sea Lions can be seen hauled out on many of the islands of this group. They breed on Green (125 pups), Sal (47) and Motley (32), and there were signs of quite heavy use by Southern Sea Lions on The Mot. North East Island holds a small breeding population on the southern coast with three pups in 2003, while Southern Elephant Seals often use this island to haul out.

Though stocked with several hundred sheep until 1994, **North East Island** has a good variety of flora (65 species recorded) and is notable for its flourishing cover of Oxeye Daisies *Leucanthemum vulgare* mixed with Wild Celery *Apium australe* on coastal slopes. There is also a thriving population of the uncommon Mudwort *Limosella australis* on a rocky shelf below a 2 m cliff on the northern coast. Sixty-five plants (50 native including five endemics) have been recorded on **Middle Island**,

including the False Ladle-leaved Buttercup *Ranunculus pseudotrullifolius* (native, local and scarce), a good population of Mudwort in a shallow, semi-permanent pond and large areas of Bluegrass *Poa alopecurus* growing on sand. In another damp area with several plants of the very uncommon Falkland Rock Cress *Phlebotobium maclovianum*, the only population known in the Falklands of Fuegian Foxtail Grass *Alopecurus magellanicus* was found. Both species of endemic ragwort were found, growing in close proximity.

The vegetation of **Motley Island** is varied, with 83 plant species recorded including 56 natives. The low cliffs of the eastern coast shelter some stands of Swordgrass, and the rare Hairy Daisy *Erigeron incertus* was among four endemics found. Other interesting or rare plants included the Yellow Orchid *Gavilea littoralis* and Dusty Miller *Primula magellanica*.

Conservation issues

Agriculture on Lively Island does not appear to have a detrimental effect on the existing bird populations, although the presence of sheep prevents the recovery of Tussac. There are small islands associated with Lively that warrant further investigation, including Seal, Philimore, Hutchy's, Philimore Chico, Cow, Irene, Reef and several unnamed islands.

Both **Middle** and **Motley Islands** were used for many years by the Falkland Islands Company for fattening mutton sheep en route to Stanley. Middle Island



has not carried stock since 1988 and Motley was last stocked in 1992. They were bought by Falklands Conservation in 1994. Surprisingly, they appear to be free of rats or mice and all nine species of native songbirds are breeding on both islands. The substantial proportion of introduced plant species (about 25%) is typical of offshore islands with a long history of grazing.

In contrast, **The Mot** has not apparently been grazed, but during a brief visit in November 1998, charred sides of Tussac bogs showed that some Tussac had been burnt several years earlier. Tussacbird and Cobb's Wren were seen, again indicating an absence of introduced predators. The rat-free status of Lively Island was threatened by the proximity of rat-infested North East Island (just 300m offshore) until the eradication programme by Falklands Conservation in 2003. All visitors should be informed about the dangers of accidentally introducing alien species to the islands. Fire is also a possible threat and it is important that the Falkland Islands Countryside Code (see Appendix 1) is followed.

References

Poncet (1994), Thompson (2003), Woods RW and Woods NC (1997), Woods, Poncet and Dunn (2003).

Looking west over Middle Island, part of the Lively Island IBA STEPHEN SPRING

