

Regional guide to some of the invasive non-native species on the Caribbean UK Overseas Territories

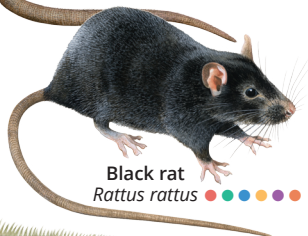
Casuarina
equisetifolia



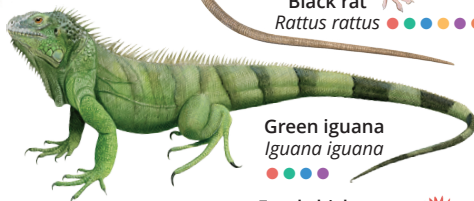
Norwegian (Brown) rat
Rattus norvegicus



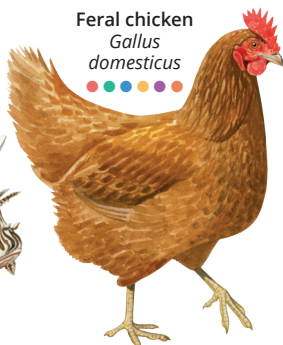
Black rat
Rattus rattus



Green iguana
Iguana iguana



Feral chicken
Gallus domesticus



Giant
African
land snail
*Lissachatina
fulica*



Lionfish
Pterois volitans



Where found: ● Anguilla ● British Virgin Islands ● Cayman islands
● Montserrat ● Turks and Caicos ● Bermuda

Green iguana (*Iguana iguana*). This introduced reptile can hybridize with native iguanas and outcompete them. It has cost over USD\$10M to manage this species in the Cayman Islands to date, with no end in sight.

Black rat (*Rattus rattus*) and **Norwegian (Brown) rat** (*Rattus norvegicus*). Rats carry pathogens that are a cause of human disease, impact agriculture, and threaten native biodiversity through predation, such as their decimation of regional seabird populations. They have been successfully eradicated from some islands, with far-reaching benefits for people and nature.

Casuarina equisetifolia. This invasive tree produces large quantities of winged seeds that can spread over long distances allowing it to colonize new areas and outcompete other plants, including natives. It has been introduced to many regions around the world as a wind break and for landscaping. Its roots can penetrate limestone rock and stone walls destabilizing them.

Giant African land snail (*Lissachatina fulica*). This snail is a serious agricultural pest that consumes over 500 species of plants and can transmit pathogens that cause human and plant diseases.

Feral chicken (*Gallus domesticus*). These common backyard birds can wreak havoc when they become feral. They damage crops and habitats, compete with native species, and are a source of noise pollution. Some islands have extremely high numbers – on Bermuda there are tens of thousands.

Lionfish (*Pterois volitans*). Lionfish have venomous spines and can sting humans. They are apex predators and feed on small crustaceans and fish. Lionfish have very few predators within their introduced ranges.

Fact file

Invasive non-native species are species that are introduced, by human activities, into regions where they would not naturally occur and establish, spread and have a negative impact on biodiversity, local ecosystems and species. There are more than 1000 non-native species across the Caribbean UKOTs. Islands, and particularly remote islands, are more susceptible to impacts from invasive non-native species, which are implicated in 60% of all global extinctions. Endemic island species are particularly threatened.

Invasive non-native species can be introduced intentionally (the pet trade, introduction for landscaping and garden plants) or unintentionally (by hitch-hiking in containers with imported cargo or alongside tourists). The rate of establishment and spread, and the impact of invasive non-native species on islands, are expected to increase with climate change.

We can all help minimize the risk posed by invasive non-native species by adopting straightforward biosecurity practices, such as following the Be Plant Wise campaign, using the Check, Clean, Dry method, and avoiding the release of pets into the wild.



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