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## Above- and below-ground impacts of introduced predators in seabird-dominated island ecosystems.

Fukami T, Wardle DA, Bellingham PJ, Mulder CP, Towns DR, Yeates GW, Bonner KI, Durrett MS, Grant-Hoffman MN, Williamson WM

*Ecol Lett* 2006 Dec **9**(12):1299-307 [[abstract on PubMed](#)] [[citations on Google Scholar](#)]

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#### Oswald Schmitz

Yale University, United States of America  
Ecology

New Finding

Tech Advance

**This study offers one of the best integrative perspectives on ecosystem function yet. It single-handedly links three major topics in ecosystem science: trophic cascades, above- and below-ground processes, and external nutrient subsidies.**

This experimental system is comprised of rat-free and rat-invaded oceanic islands. Loss of seabirds due to predation on rat-invaded islands leads to a loss of an important nutrient subsidy derived from the birds' oceanic food sources, thereby lowering soil fertility and changing plant species composition relative to rat-free islands. This in turn precipitates changes in below-ground biota, which feed-back to influence above-ground processes. The study gives key insight into the way the loss or gain of a single predator species can have wholesale impacts on ecosystem function.

**Competing interests:** None declared

Evaluated 8 Jan 2007

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