



Fig. 1. Sightings of cats (*Felis domesticus*) and mice (*Mus musculus*) on Marion Island.

per cent of the cats seen were in this habitat type, mostly in the drier tussock grassland areas. The few lairs found here were always on the better drained slopes, and most of the cats disturbed in these areas ran for cover into nearby black lava humps or towards cliff edges.

The remaining observations were made along the coastal cliffs of black and grey lava (12%), on or near beaches (12%), on the bleak fjaeldmark parts of the grey lava ridges (4%) and in areas of very rugged and barren black lava flows (4%). However, no account has been

taken of the relative areas of each habitat type, or of the distance walked through each type.

Feeding habits

Preliminary data indicate that burrowing petrels (Procellariidae) form the principal component of the cats' diet. Two petrel species, the Salvin's prion *Pachyptila salvini* and the soft-plumaged petrel *Pterodroma mollis* have been identified as cat prey, but others may be taken as well. The Salvin's prion is the most numerous petrel on

maximum of between 1 000 and 2 000 animals. As in the case of the mice, a systematic trapping or transect census programme will be required to obtain a reliable estimate of population size. A detailed study of the predator-prey relationships of the cats on Marion Island is required before their impact on the birds can be assessed.

It appears that the mice are one of the major herbivores on the island, and further investigation into this aspect as well as their general ecology would be of great value.

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