



▲ Royal penguins returning to their colony in Macquarie Island, Australia

What do you think? 8,000, 80,000, or 800,000?

I think it's 8,000.

## Language Expansion: Large numbers

### Saying Large Numbers

To say large numbers in English, start at the left, and say the numbers in groups:

hundreds (100s)	524 → five hundred (and) twenty-four
thousands (1,000s)	1,250 → one thousand, two hundred (and) fifty
ten thousands (10,000s)	17,400 → seventeen thousand (and) four hundred
hundred thousands (100,000s)	432,060 → four hundred thirty-two thousand (and) sixty
millions (1,000,000s)	2,400,900 → two million, four hundred thousand (and) nine hundred

**A** Discuss these questions with a partner.

1. What are invasive species? Can you think of an example?
2. Why are invasive species a problem?

**B** Read about Macquarie Island. Guess which number is correct.

Like many places, Macquarie Island has invasive species—species of nonnative plants and animals with no local natural controls on their populations. First came the cats, which were used on ships to control rats. Then came the rabbits, which were brought by seal hunters as a source of food. The hunters came because Macquarie Island is visited by around (8,000/80,000/800,000) elephant seals each year. No hunting is allowed now, however, because the island is a wildlife sanctuary.

Macquarie Island has also been an accidental sanctuary for its invasive species. The rabbits found plenty to eat, and they ate an enormous amount of the island's plant life. In 1968, scientists wanted to decrease the rabbit population, so the European rabbit flea (which carries a virus called myxomatosis) was introduced. By the 1980s, the rabbit population had declined from (1,300/13,000/130,000) to only (2,000/20,000/200,000), and the vegetation on the island had begun to recover. But with fewer rabbits to eat, the cats began to prey on the island's sea birds, so scientists decided to kill the island's cats.

Problem solved? Unfortunately, the virus had only reduced the rabbit population, and with the cats gone, the rabbits' numbers increased again. Now that so much of the island's vegetation is gone, there have been landslides after heavy rains. One expert estimates that it will cost (\$162,000/\$1,620,000/\$16,200,000) to finally solve the invasive species problem on Macquarie Island.

**C** Take turns asking about the numbers in the article.