

TREASURE GROVE



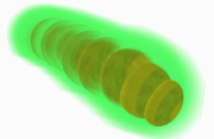
So named for purported buried treasure, The Treasure Grove population of Island mice is physically isolated from all other populations on Darlost's Island. The steep and impassible topography of Misty and Skull Mountains' north-facing facades and the wide, snowmelt fed river to the east restricts movement of Island mice into or out of this population. Despite this geographic isolation, the Treasure Grove mice are the most genetically similar to the Message In A Bottle (MIB) population on the opposite side of the mountain range, but the least genetically similar to the Realm of Spirits population just across the river to the east, which suggests that MIB mice either traveled or were introduced to the Treasure Grove.



During an expert elicitation workshop, the genetic experts agreed that the mountains and the river have always been complete barriers to movement and gene flow, physically isolating Treasure Grove from any other population. In other words, it has always been physically impossible for Island mice to travel on their own from the MIB coast, or any other population, into the Treasure Grove, whether or not they were motivated by the search for buried treasure.



A new telemetry study reveals that Jack's sparrow may be the conduit for introducing Island mice into Treasure Grove. Using glow worms affixed to MIB mice, native scientists followed mice snatched up by Jack's sparrow that were dropped unexpectedly into Treasure Grove's forested canopy. The scientists also noted that Jack's Sparrow frequently drop MIB mice into other habitats, including the top of Misty Mountain.



Treasure hunters and researchers alike have a difficult time accessing Treasure Grove, so there is very little information for this population and no mark-recapture population estimates. However, anecdotal reports from treasure seekers who brave the journey to Treasure Grove, only to always return empty handed, consistently report that there are "lots of Island mice scurrying about, digging holes as if searching for something." As a result, the population likely averages about 100 mice and is assumed to be stable.



The Tribal Council of Darlost's Island recently approved an archeological expedition and dig into Treasure Grove. Increased activity could reduce available habitats and increase noise.

| Survey Year | 2000-2015 |
|--|-----------|
| # of Individuals (anecdotal observations) | ~100 |

CLIMATE CHANGE

Treasure Grove's isolation could present issues under all emission scenarios. Additionally, experts agree that a shift of the cold winter trade winds to the southeast would increase exposure of the Treasure Grove and Realm of Spirits mice to Skull Mountain's toxic gas plume.