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Polar Bears Trap Russian Scientists in Arctic Weather Station Siege

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TASS

Meteorologists on Russia's remote Izvesti Tsik Islands have been trapped in their base for almost two weeks after being besieged by polar bears, the TASS news agency reported Tuesday.

A dozen polar bears began to stake out the weather station on Aug. 31 after eating one of the scientists' dogs, station chief Vadim Plotnikov told TASS. The five staff members are unable to leave the building, he said.

"The bears have actually been spending the night under our window since Saturday," said Plotnikov. "It's dangerous to go outside, and we've had to stop some of our work."

The team have used up all of their supplies for scaring away the bears, and only receive supplies from the mainland once a month, Plotnikov said. He said that the scientists needed

squibs — devices which cause small but harmless explosions — to convince the bears to leave.

“Delivering the squibs from the mainland will require third-party funds, but we need help,” he told TASS.

Between 5,000 and 7,000 polar bears live in Russia, mostly in the arctic regions of Franz Josef Land, Novaya Zemlya and Chukotka.
The
Izvesti Tsik Islands are found in the
southern region of the Kara Sea, on the northern coast of Siberia. Three people are attacked by polar bears every year, according to the charity
Polar Bears International.

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