

**“La gestione di specie e habitat per riqualificare i sistemi insulari”**  
**“Management of species and habitats for the restoration of island ecosystems”**  
Portoferraio, 10 - 12 dicembre 2019 / 10 - 12 December 2019

## Pianosa: eradication of rats in the final stages



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# Black Rat eradication: why?

Positive effect on many local species and insular ecosystem



Main target (flag) species: Scopoli's shearwater (*Calonectris diomedea*), breeding on Pianosa with only 34–50 cpp, but:

## **La Scola (250 m from Pianosa)**



**150-200 breeding pairs**

**Black rat eradicated in 2001, then 3 incursions**

**Observed exchange of individuals between La Scola and Pianosa: eradication on Pianosa will protect 180-250 pairs**



**Montecristo, the largest Mediterranean *rat-free* island, hosts the main Tuscan colony of Yelkouan shearwater (*Puffinus yelkouan*), formerly breeding on Pianosa: re-colonization is expected**



Approx. 1000 ha

# Pianosa: features, constraints

## Features

1040 ha, flat (< 30 m asl), good road network, inhabited (30 detainees, 2 wardens)

Small town, prison settlements, tourists in summer months

Several species at risk of direct poisoning, including Brown hare

>> *bait-stations*



# Main risks

## Main risks/challenges

Resident/wintering raptors (diurnal and nocturnal), some pets

Largest attempt of Black rat eradication with ground-based baiting  
→ uncertainties

Orchards, domestic animals, garbage:  
extra-food availability.

Reduction of major extra-resources,  
additional baiting

House mouse: not a realistic eradication  
target. Bait consumption and (main  
problem) uncertain detection of rat  
traces



# Preliminary activities

**Standardized trapping (5 sessions)**

**Genetic analysis**

**Test on bait palatability**

**Local authority and community involvement (detainees recruited in fieldwork)**



**Operational Plan drafting**

**Start in mid-winter**

**First 3 distributions with bromadiolone (instead of brodifacoum) in the town-prison settlement areas (lower risk for domestic animals)**

**4750 bait-stations**





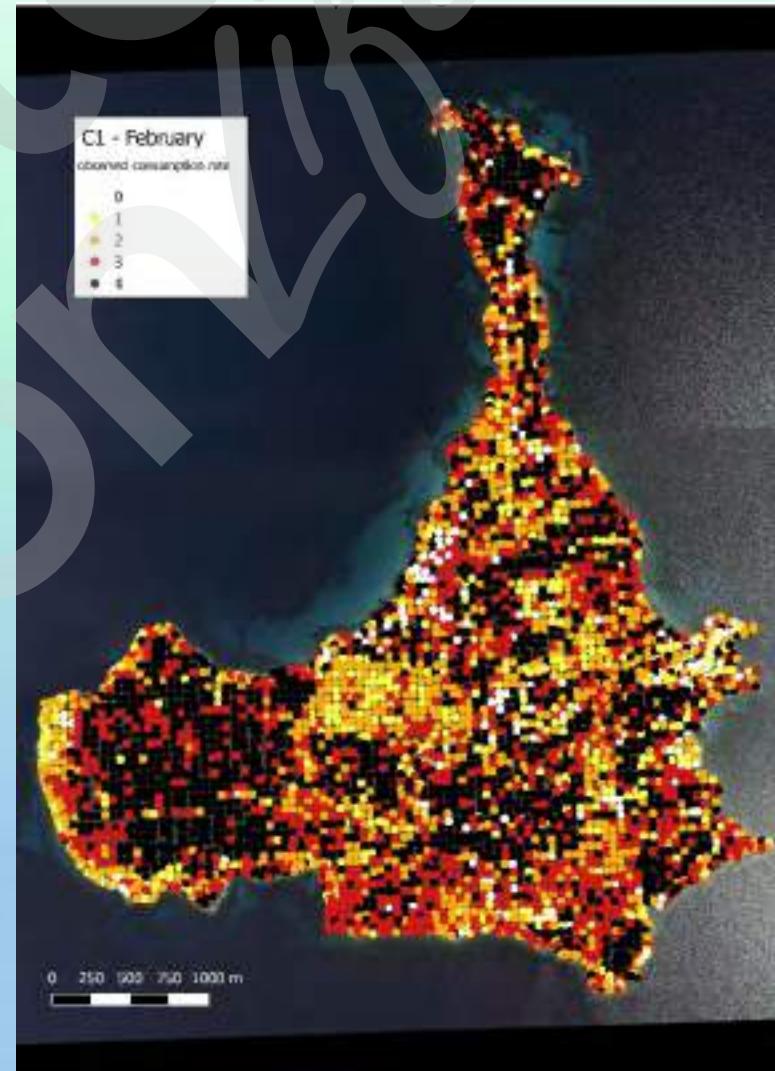
# Methods and results: PIANOSA

Jan-May 2017

4750 bait-stations (50 m-grid, doubled in critical areas), 5 distributions

bait-stations removed October 2017

c. 2200 kg of bait (c. 750 consumed)



# Methods and results: PIANOSA



1 sign of rat in May, no one later, removed most of the bait-stations in October 2017

# December 2017

ISPRA Technicians found rat signs and captured 2 individuals



# January 2018

## A rapid response attempt failed



# February 2018

- rat signs in 16 bait stations and 7 rats trapped
- Most of the scats were small (young individuals)





House mouse



200 ha pine woods?



Inhabited/cultivated areas?

December 2018

- 18 months
- additional baiting in areas whit rats after 2-3 controls
- More skilled fieldworkers
- ~~200 bait stations over trees (in areas with rat signs)~~

### Risultato finale

Erogatori presenti in precedenza  
Erogatori aggiunti

- Bait and bait-stations as in first phase



### Legenda

Controllo Gennaio 2019

- SI
- DUBBIO



### Legenda

Controllo Aprile

- SI
- DUBBIO



Island conservation in  
Tuscany, restoring habitat  
not only for birds  
[www.restoconlife.eu](http://www.restoconlife.eu)  
[info@restoconlife.eu](mailto:info@restoconlife.eu)



# Positioning of additional bait-stations in the areas with rat signs



Collaboration with the team of LIFE PonDerat

Controllo Novembre 2019

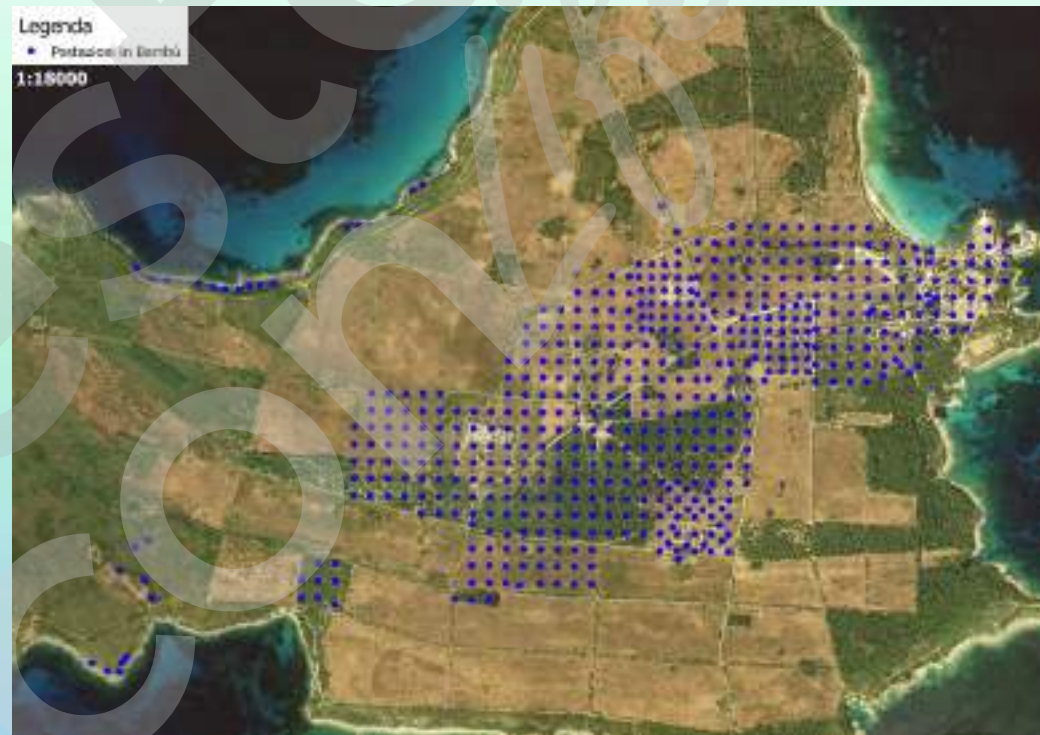
Tracce Ratto  
● Probabile  
● Dubbio



Only few uncertain rat (mice?) signs from June 2019,  
always in the central part of the island



Last week!



500 bamboo home-made bait stations,  
with also a different bait  
(LIFE PonDerat©)



Thanks for your attention