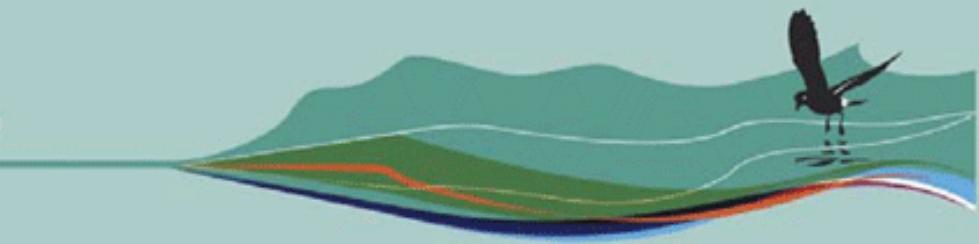




PROTECTING SEABIRDS IN THE MEDITERRANEAN: ADVANCING THE MARINE PROTECTED AREA NETWORK

INTERNATIONAL WORKSHOP

23RD - 25TH NOVEMBER 2015



Life projects as stepping stones in a contrast strategy against alien predators of seabirds in the Tuscan Archipelago (Italy)

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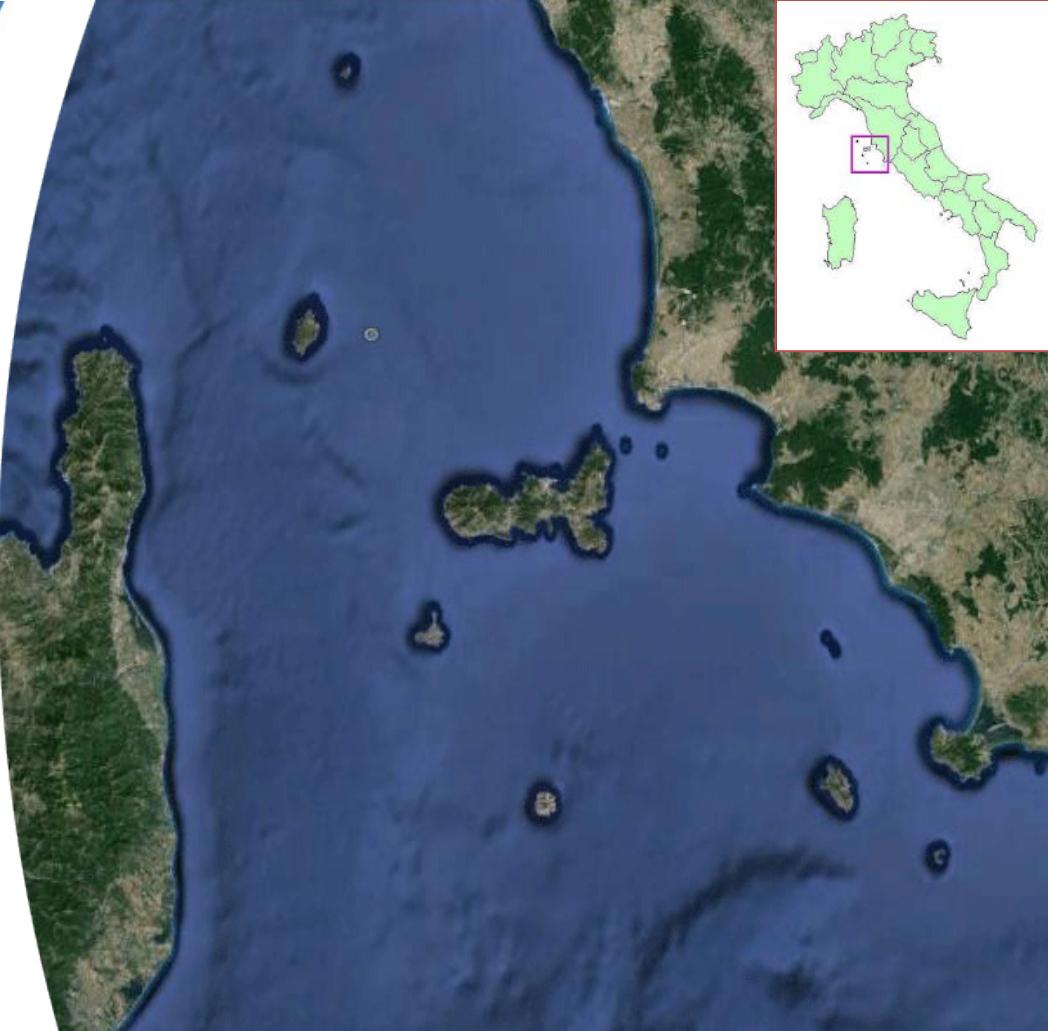
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SEVEN Islands

160 KM = distance from Gorgona to Giannutri

60 KM = distance from Montecristo to the mainland

220 KM² = The largest Island: Elba

2,25 KM² = The smallest Island: Gorgona

National Park

Nature 2000 Network

Reserve of Biosphere - UNESCO





FIVE SEABIRD SPECIES NEST IN THE TUSCAN ARCHIPELAGO

Yelkouan Shearwater (*Puffinus yelkouan*)

Scopoli's Shearwater (*Calonectris diomedea*)

Audouin's Gull (*Larus audouinii*)

Mediterranean Shag (*Phalacrocorax aristotelis desmarestii*)

Yellow-legged Gull (*Larus michahellis*)



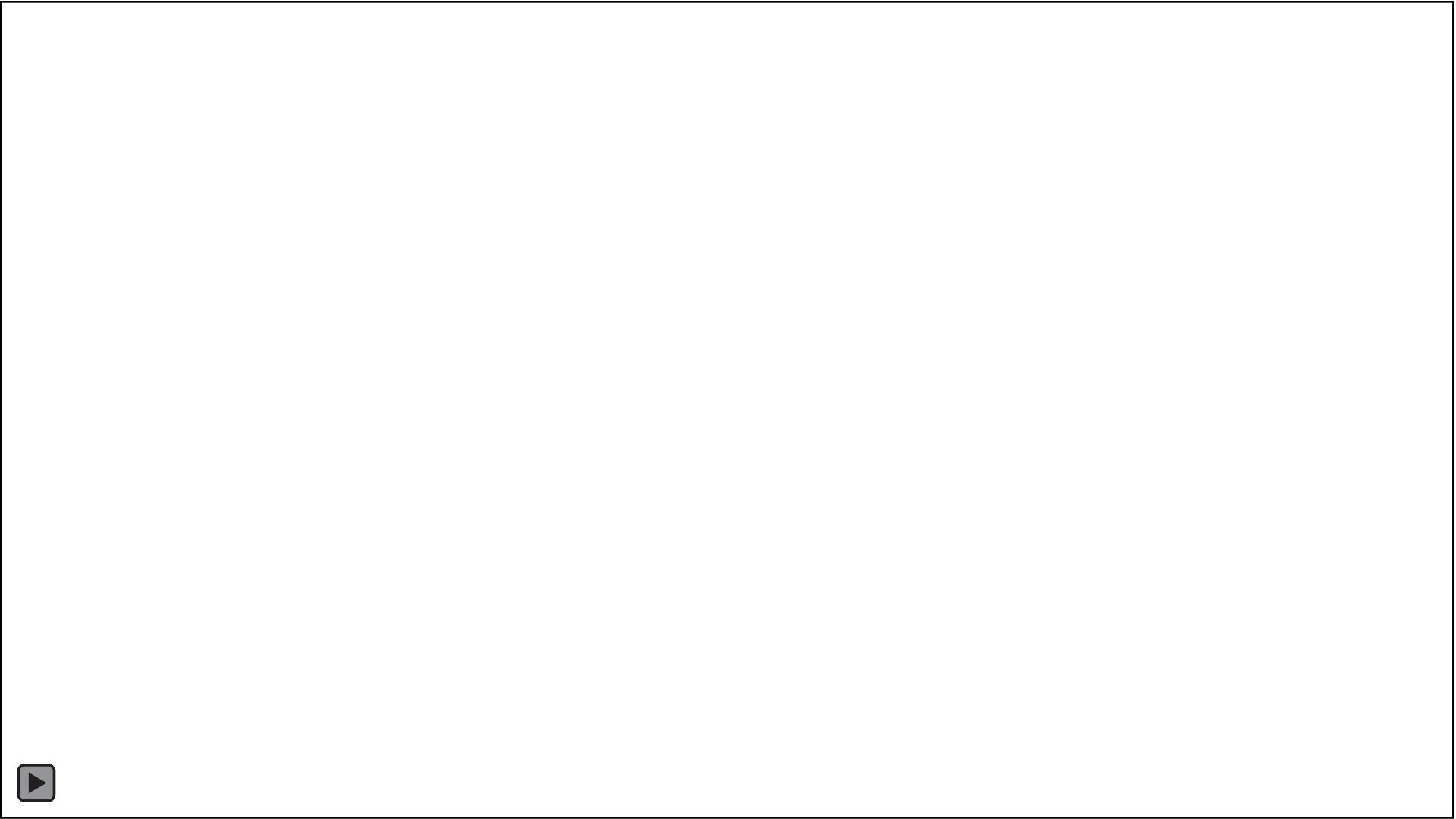
Storm Petrel (*Hydrobates pelagicus melitensis*)

3 birds were captured with mist nets on Pianosa (june 2012 and 2013)

**During the last 15 years,
Tuscan Archipelago National Park and Ispra,
with the collaboration of
the Centro Ornitologico Toscano,
carried out actions to improve
the conservation status of these seabirds**

**Main efforts were directed
to increase breeding success of
Audouin's Gull and Shearwaters.**





One of the main
problems.....





4 Life projects were carried out in Tuscan Archipelago aimed at reducing the impact of alien predators



On Pianosa feral cats are one of the problems for Audouin's Gull



Before 2000 rats were diffused on all islands and many islets

Feral cats are present in 4 of the 7 islands of the Archipelago.





In 2001 rats were eradicated from a small islet « La Scola », breeding site of Scopoli's Shearwater with an estimated 50-80 breeding pairs



Methods: hand delivery of rodenticide (brodifacoum) by bait stations

Costs: € 4.500

The first project 1998-2001



Capraia e isole minori della Toscana:
Tutela della biodiversità
Life-Natura B4-3200/97/271

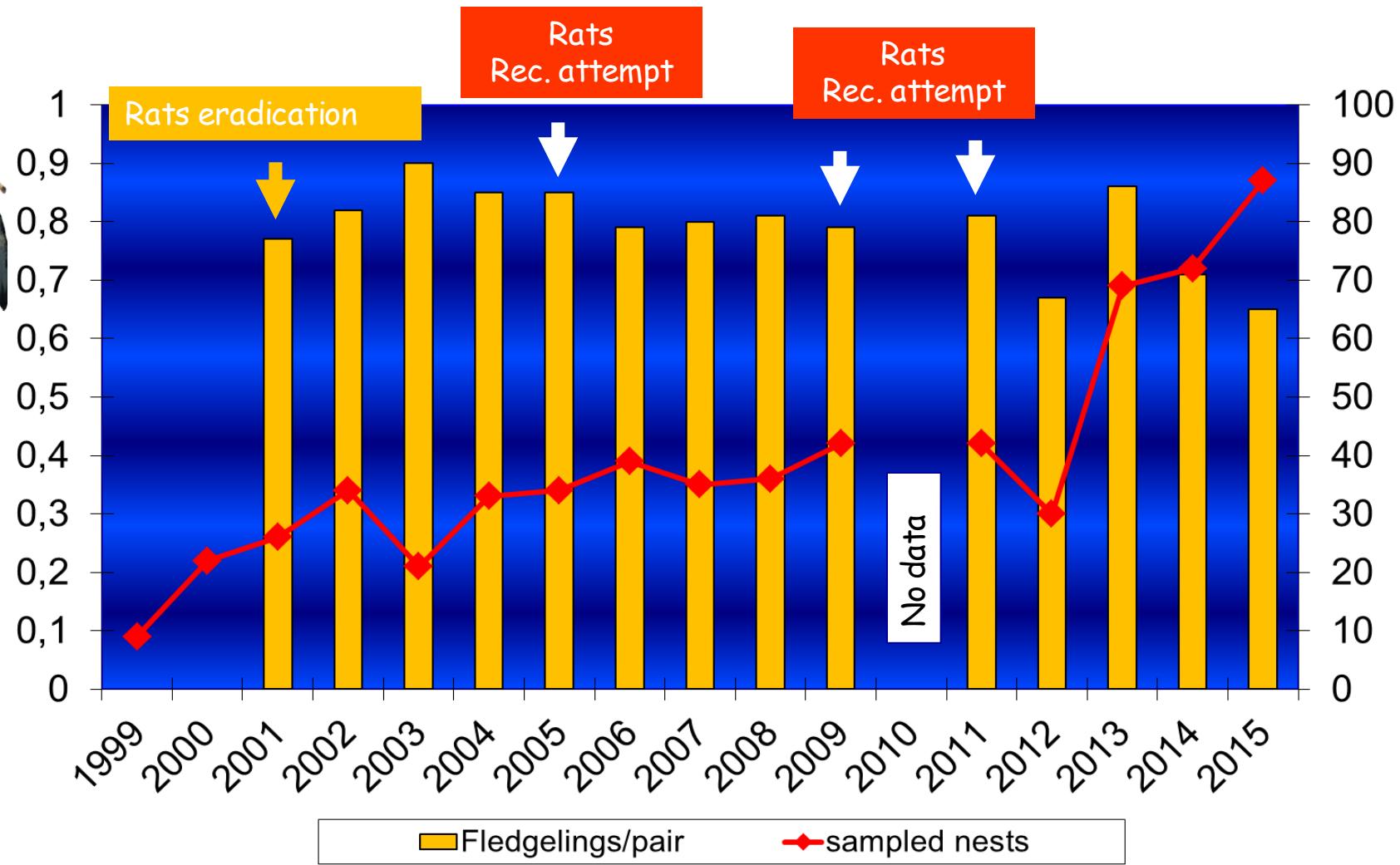
La Scola Islet - 1,5 ha



RAT FREE

Since 2001





LA SCOLA

Population 2015

150 – 250 pairs

Three-fold increase



Reproductive success

Average calculated over the last 5 years

0,74 fledged chick per pair/year



Second
project
2004 - 2007

**Isole di Toscana: nuove azioni per uccelli
marini e habitat**
LIFE04NAT/IT/000172

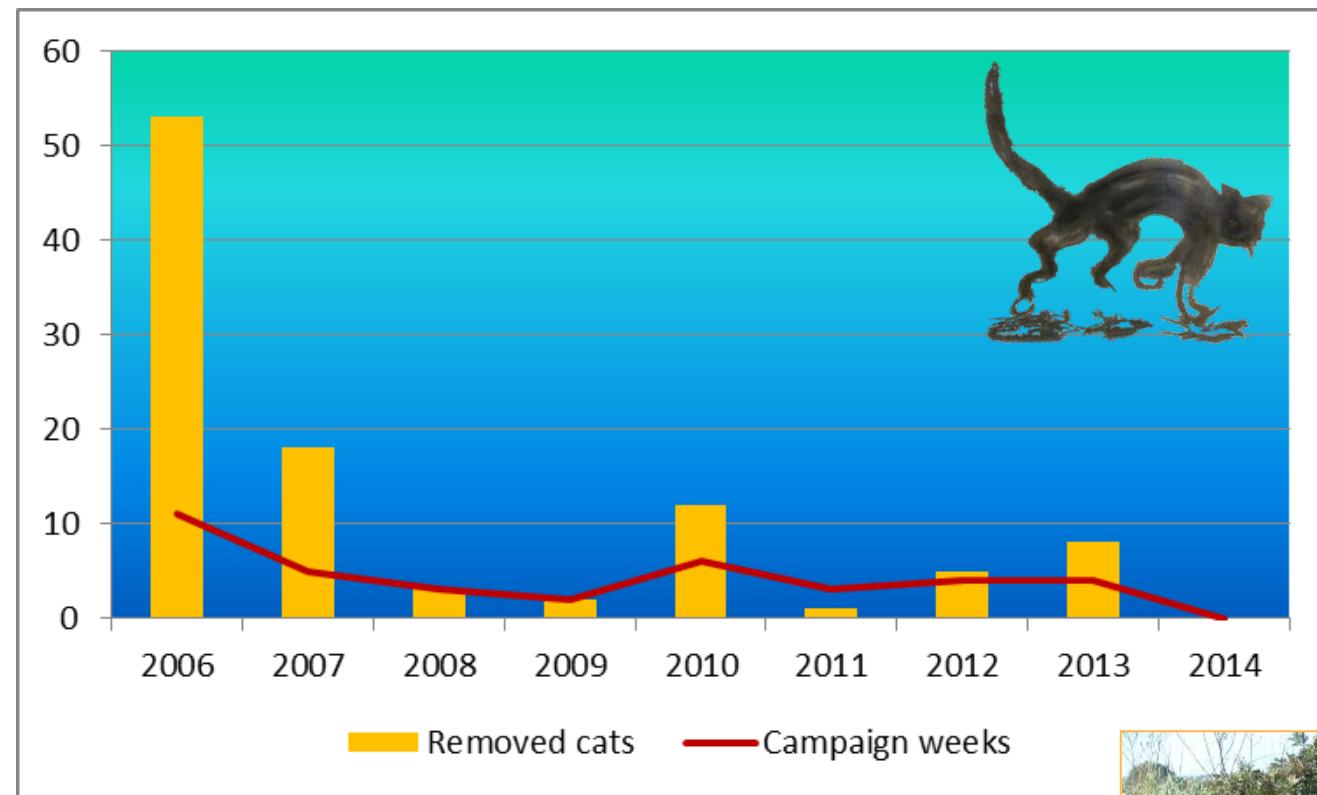


Eradication of Black rats on Giannutri

**Breeding site of Scopoli's Shearwater,
with an estimated colony of 50 – 200
pairs in 2003.**

**Methods: bait stations with rodenticide
(active constituent brodifacoum)
1 ton of baits used. Costs: € 107.800**

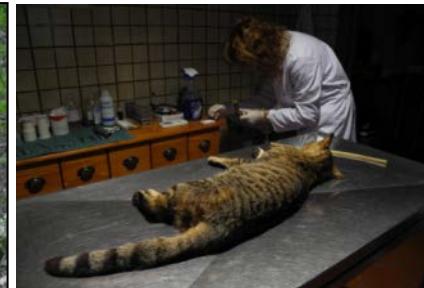




Removing feral cats on Pianosa Island (1000 ha)
(estimated population: 50 – 60 feral cats in 2005)
Method: live trapping, sterilization and traslocation to Elba Island



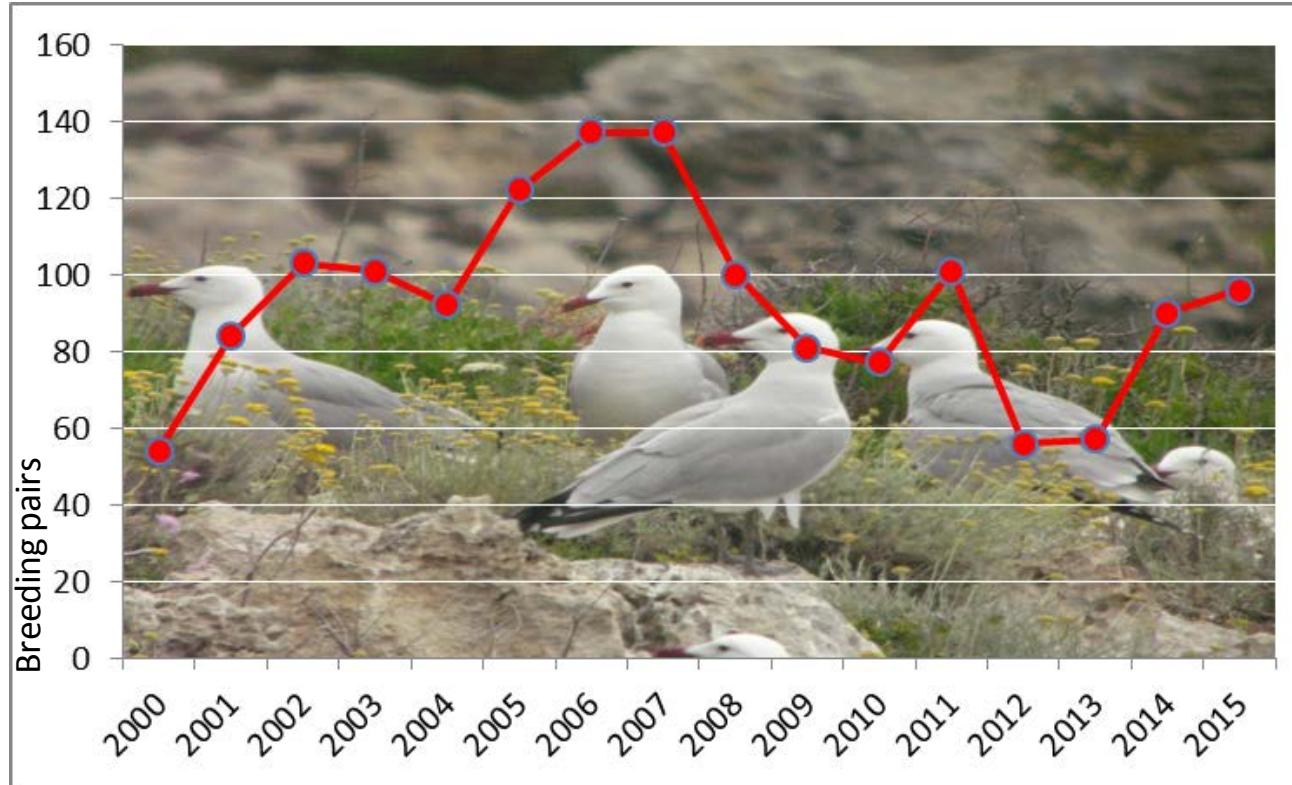
102 removed cats in 8 years
280 trapping days
Costs: 40.000 €
Presently: again at least 30 cats



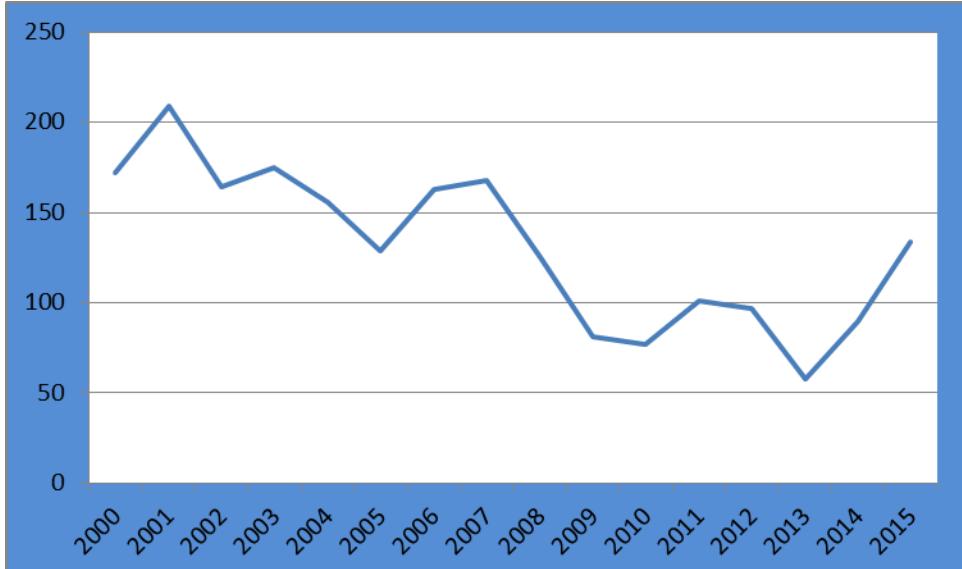


Outcomes and perspectives

Pianosa Island is the last breeding site of *Larus audouinii* in the National Park



STATUS in the Archipelago:
NOT GOOD – declining trend
(from 200 pairs to 120 pairs in
the last 15 years)





Third
project
2010 - 2014

Montecristo 2010: eradication of invasive plant and animal aliens and conservation of species/habitats in the Tuscan Archipelago
LIFE08 NAT/IT/000353



**Eradication of rats on Montecristo
Breeding site of Yelkouan Shearwater with an
estimated population of 400 – 700 pairs**

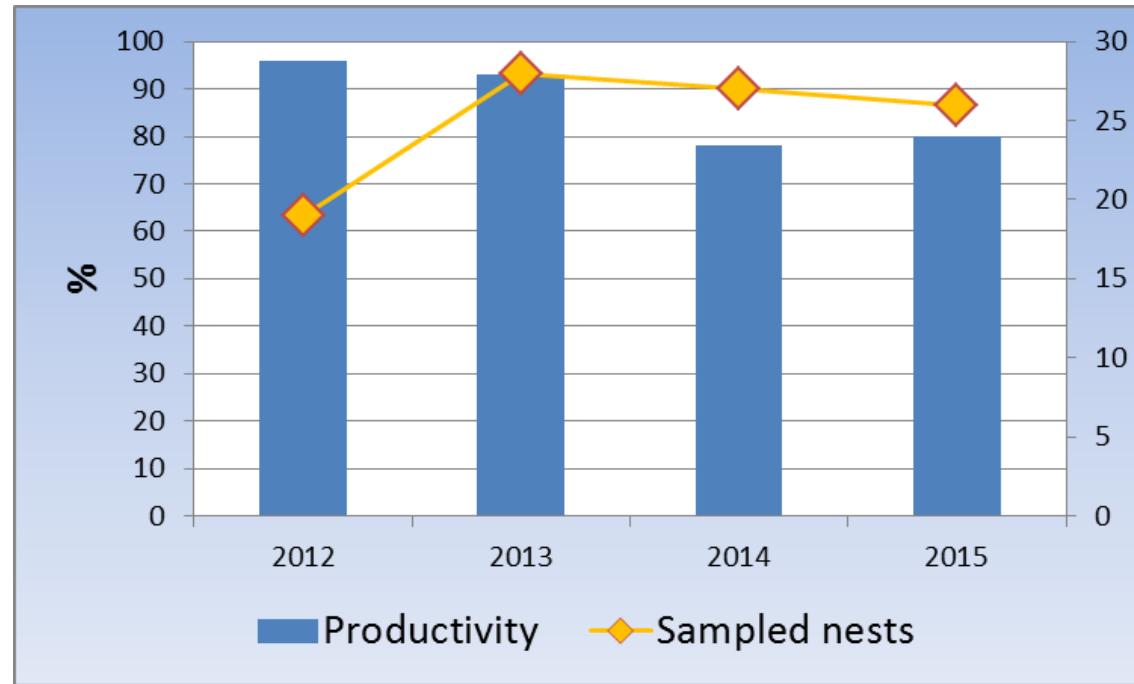
Methods: aerial broadcast by helicopter of 14 tons of pellets containing rodenticide (brodifacoum) except in a 25 ha area treated by manual delivery.

Costs: € 590.000



RAT FREE Since 2012





After 4 years from rats eradication

Productivity:
from 0 % to 87 % on average

New occupied nests found

Population is expected
to quickly increase





Fourth project (ongoing)

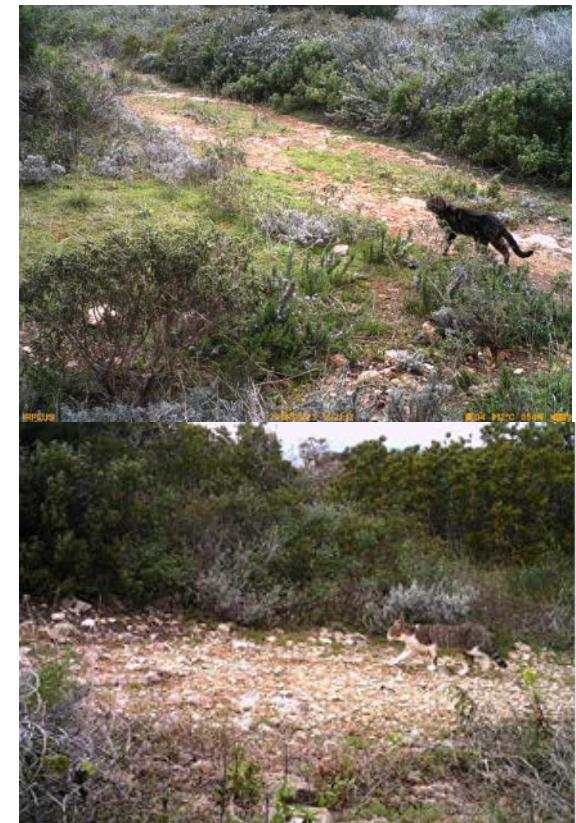


Island Conservation in Tuscany, Restoring Habitat not only for Birds
LIFE 13 NAT/IT/000471
www.restoconlife.eu



Eradication of feral cats and Black rats on Pianosa Island in the next 3 years

**Preliminary actions:
estimating cats density
by photo trapping;
planning eradication
by mean of 300 cage
traps**





Monitoring density and distribution of rats and mice (*Apodemus sylvaticus*, *Mus musculus*); assessment of genetic differences between neighbour populations



Planning eradication by bait stations containing rodenticide in order to minimize the impact on no-target species



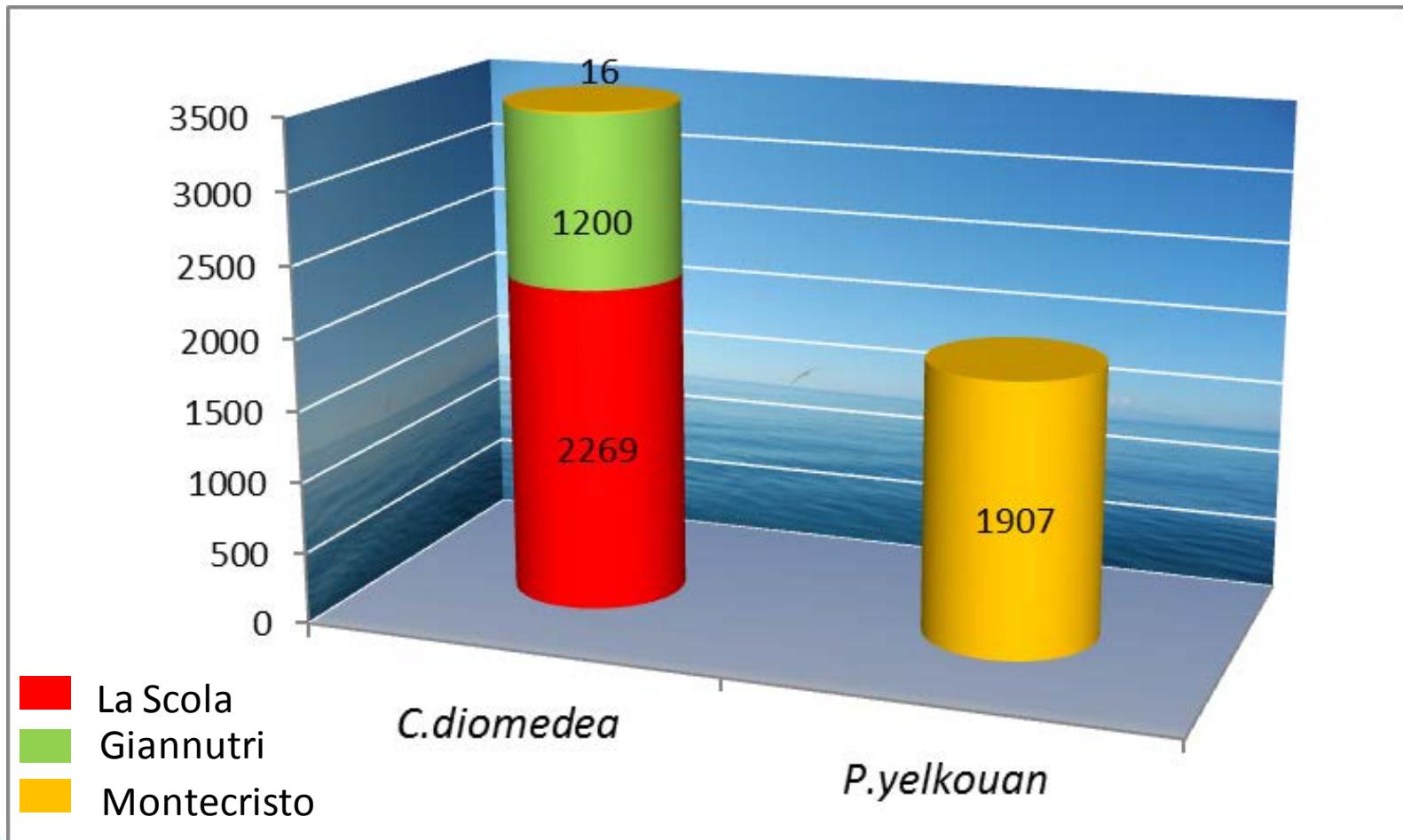


Shearwaters



BUT they will be many more
in a few years

How many Shearwaters fledged after rats eradications?
At least 5300 birds





Thanks for your attention

