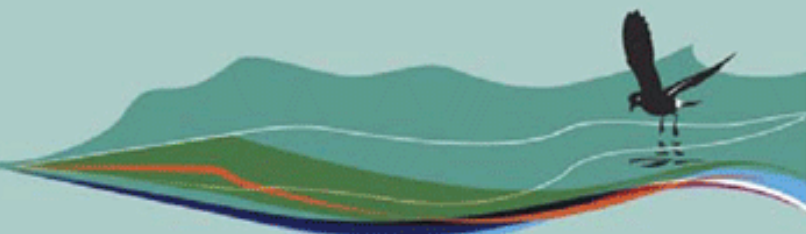




PROTECTING SEABIRDS IN THE MEDITERRANEAN: ADVANCING THE MARINE PROTECTED AREA NETWORK

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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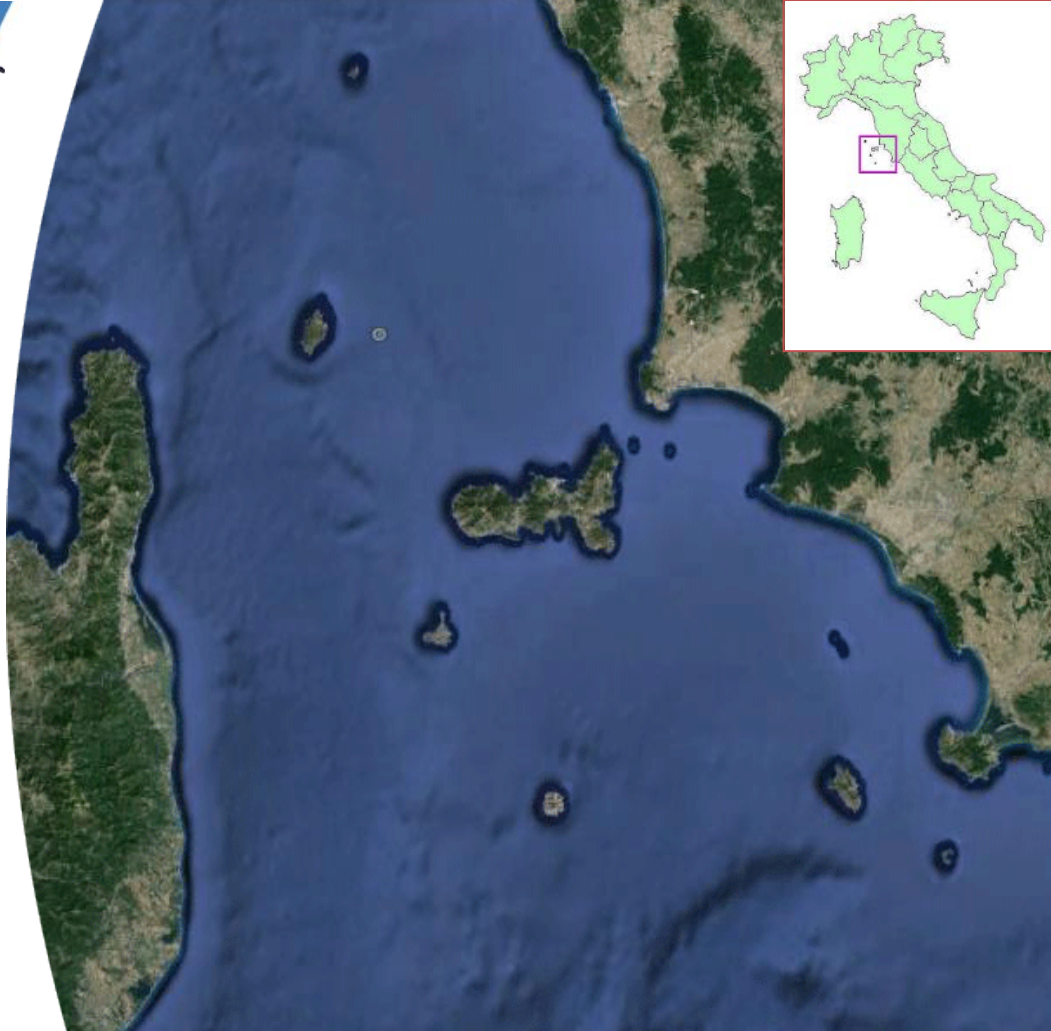
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ISPRA
Istituto Superiore per la Protezione
e la Ricerca Ambientale





National Park

Nature 2000 Network

**Reserve of Biosphere -
UNESCO**

SEVEN Islands

160 KM = distance from Gorgona to Giannutri

60 KM = distance from Montecristo to the mainland

220 KMQ = The largest Island: Elba

2,25 KMQ = The smallest Island: Gorgona



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



Before 2000 rats were diffused on all islands and many islets

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



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





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

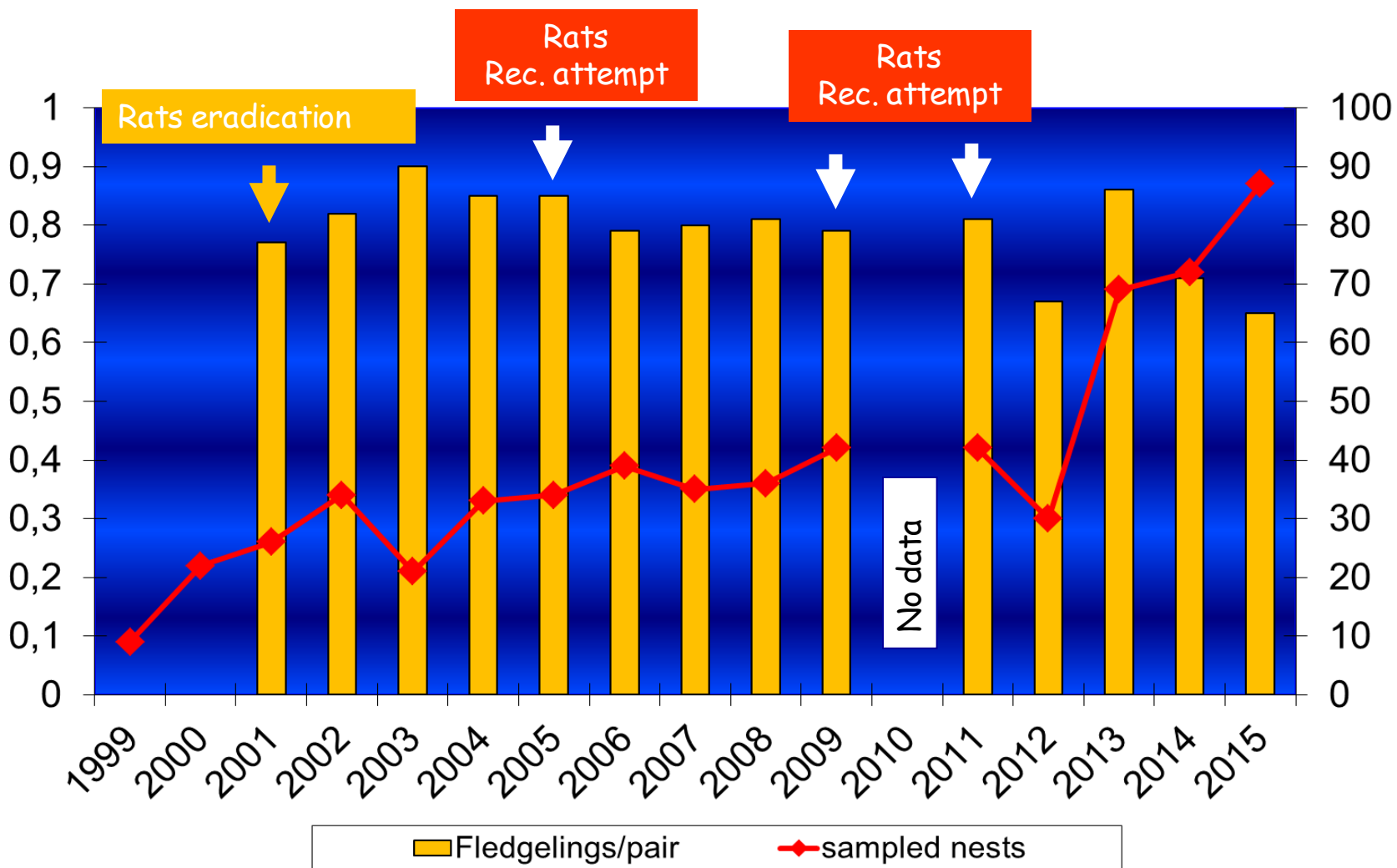
La Scola Islet - 1,5 ha



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

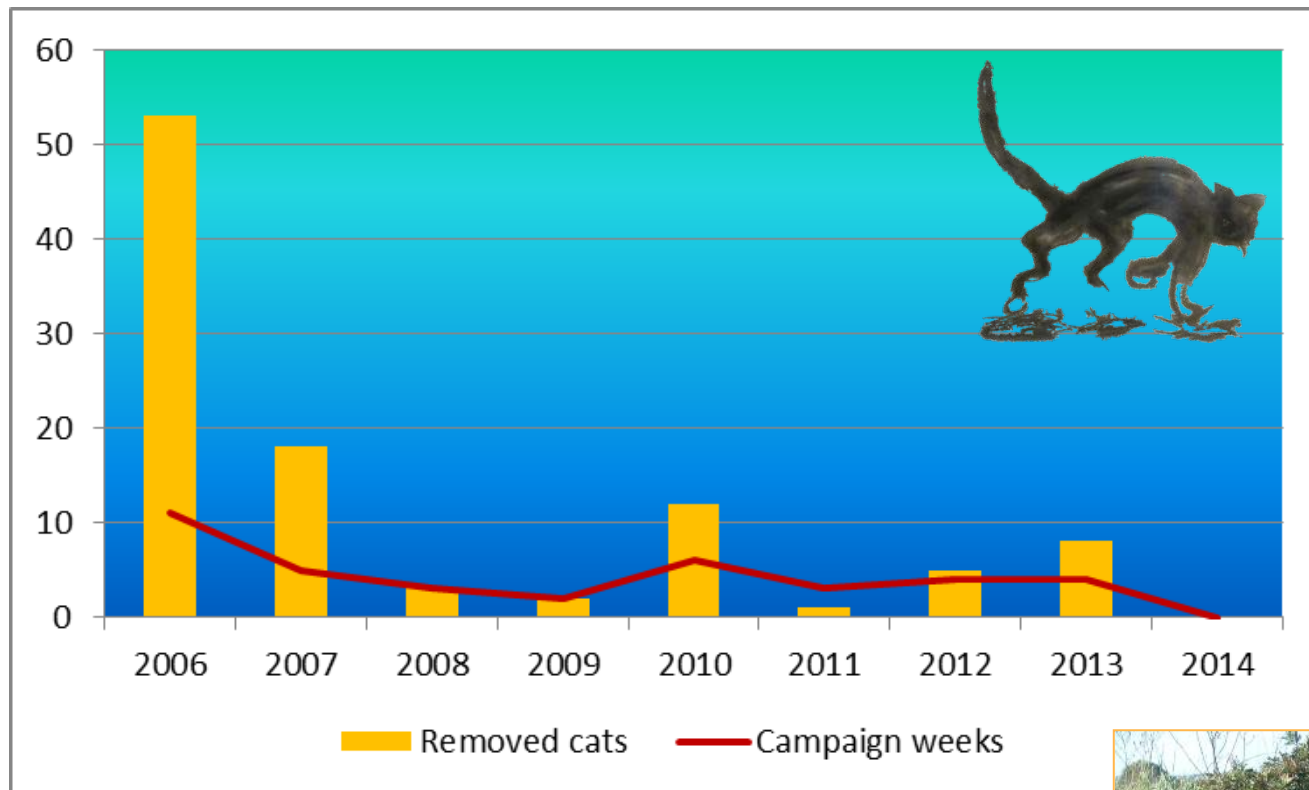


Eradication of Black rats on Giannutri

**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



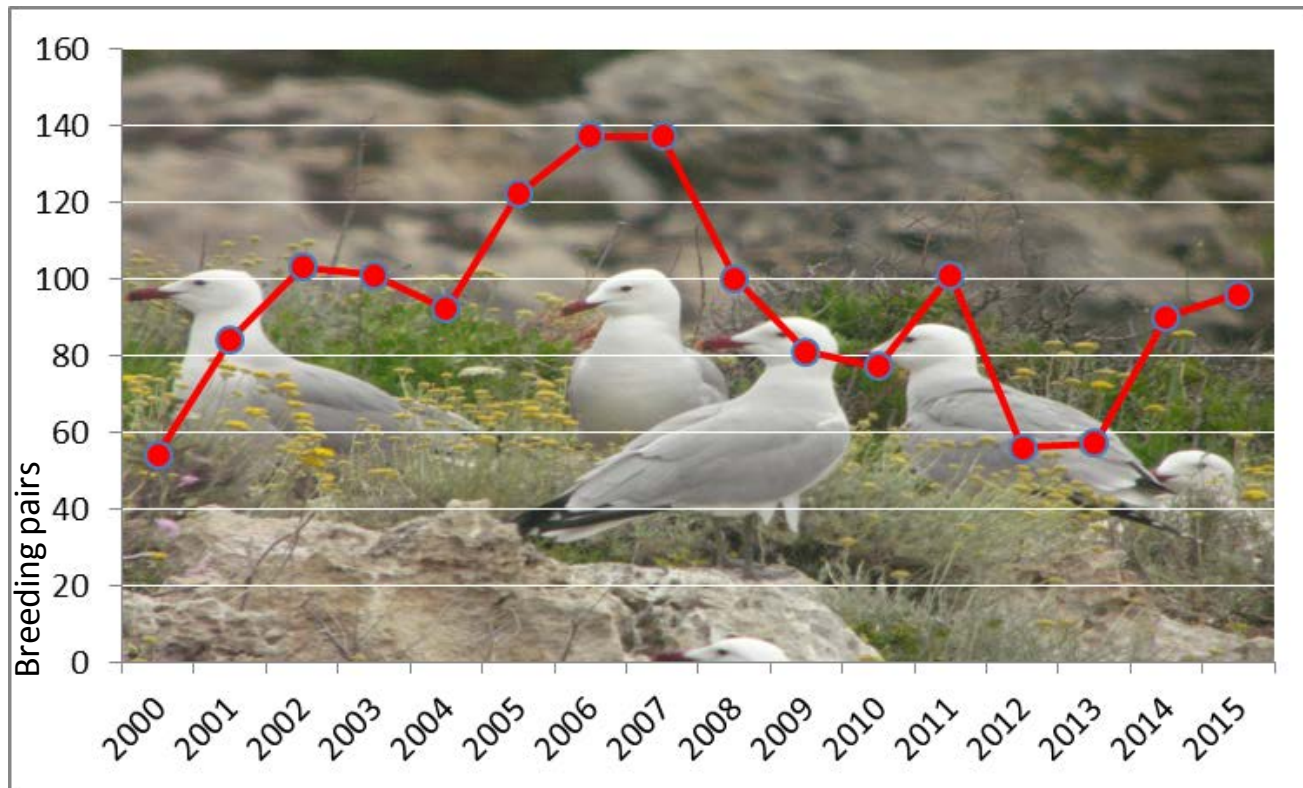
102 removed cats in 8 years
280 trapping days
Costs: 40.000 €
Presently: again at least 30 cats



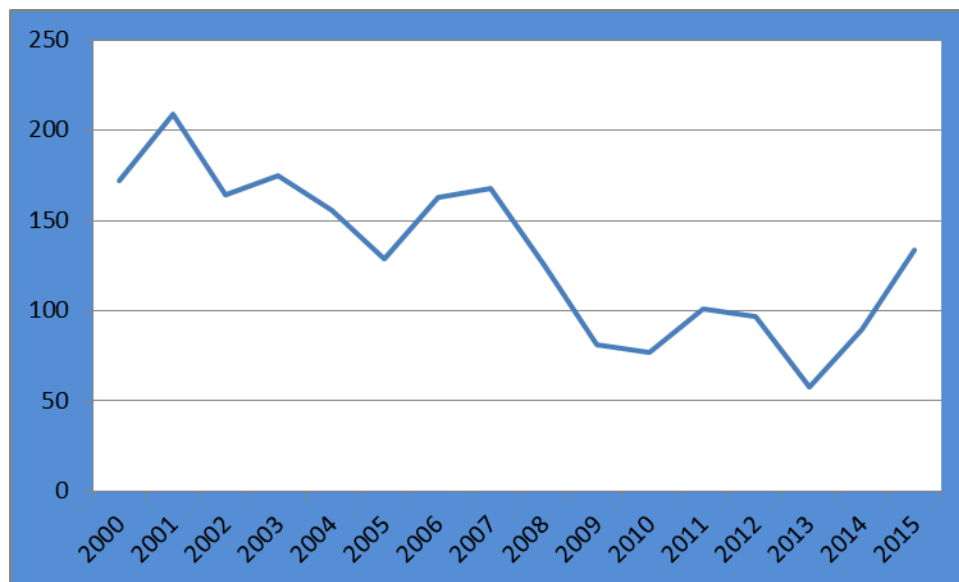


Outcomes and perspectives

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



Eradicazione di componenti
florofaunistiche aliene invasive
e tutela di habitat
nell'Arcipelago Toscano

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



Photo: M.Lischi

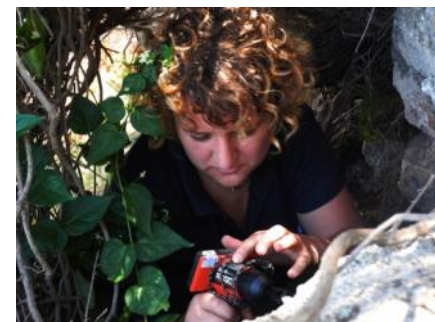
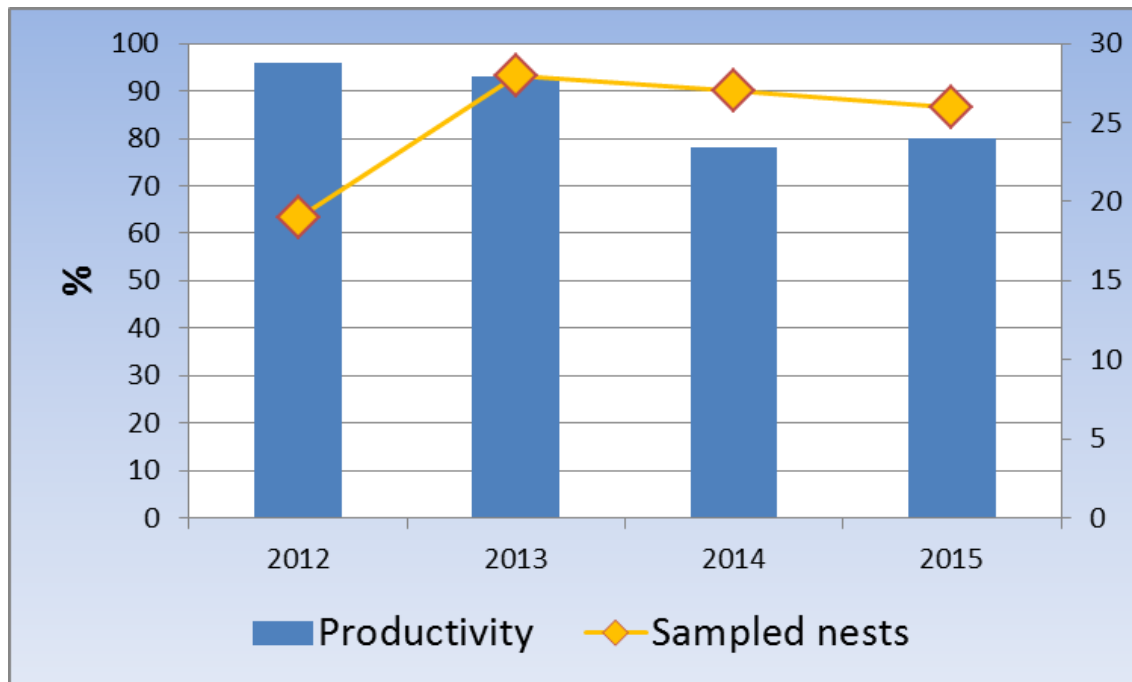
RAT FREE

Since 2012



Montecristo Island - 1080 ha





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)

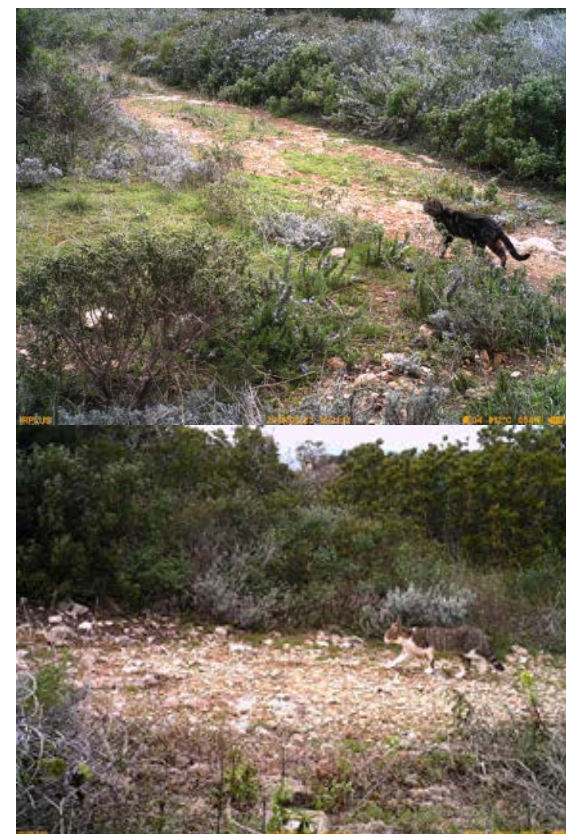


**Island Conservation in Tuscany, Restoring
Habitat not only for Birds**
LIFE 13 NAT/IT/000471
www.restoconlife.eu



**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



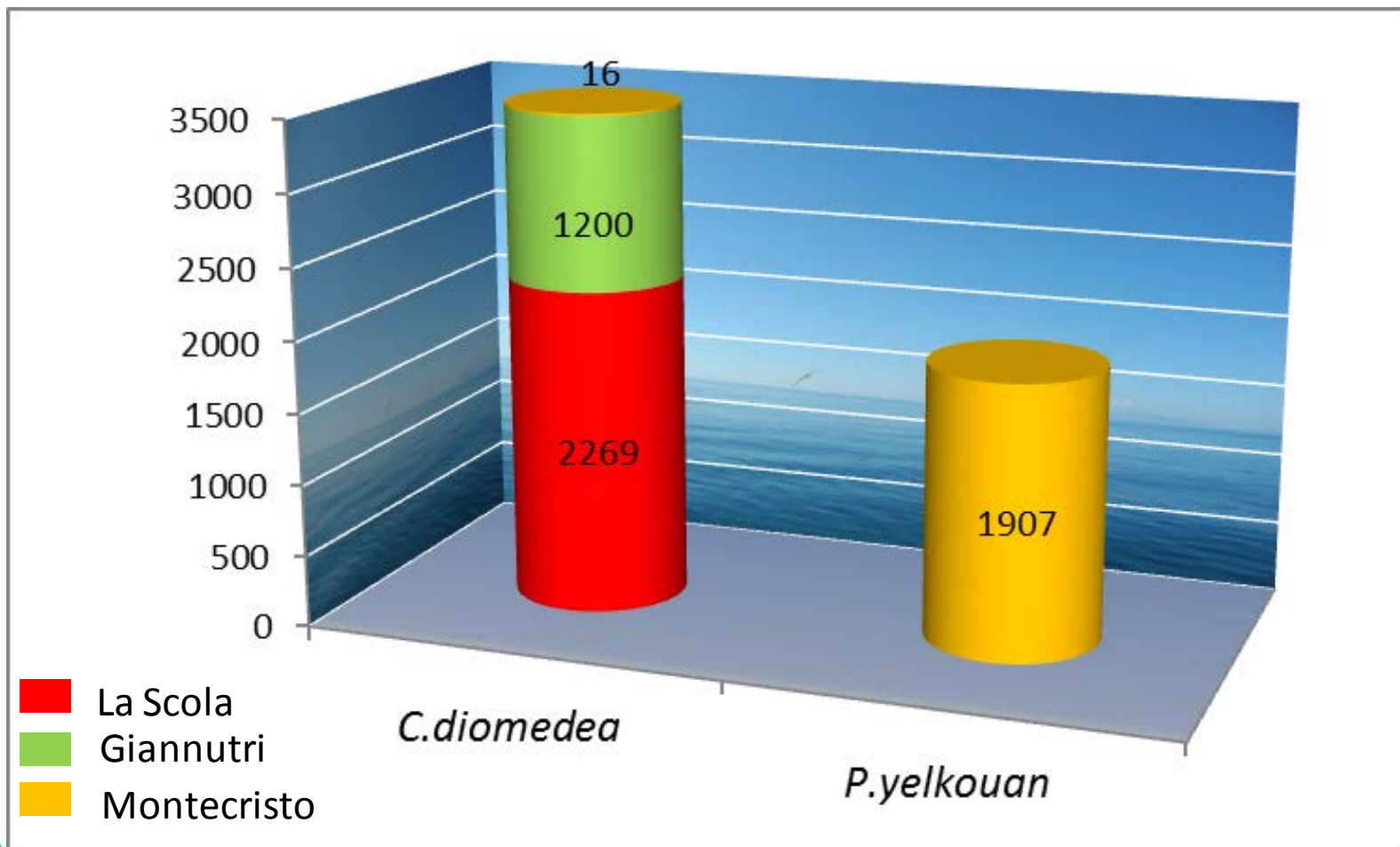


Shearwaters



**BUT they will be many more
in a few years**

**How many Shearwaters fledged after rats eratications?
At least 5300 birds**



Thanks for your attention

