

# Biosecurity for Scotland's seabird islands



**RSPB Scotland Senior Seabird Recovery Officer Laura Bambini**  
**SISI Project Conference, Aviemore, 6 September 2023**





# **What this is about**

- **Why biosecurity matters for seabirds**
- **Biosecurity on Scotland's seabird islands: past, present and future...**





# **Why biosecurity matters for seabirds**

**Scotland's islands are home to globally significant populations of seabirds – and they are in trouble.**

**Scotland's seabird indicator populations have declined by 49% between 1986 and 2019.**



# **Why biosecurity matters for seabirds**

**These declines are driven by climate change and declines in food supply, by-catch in fisheries, and invasive non-native predators.**





# **Why biosecurity matters for seabirds**







# Why biosecurity matters for seabirds

## Invasive Non-Native Mammalian Predators

All may predate on seabirds, their chicks, and their eggs.



Feral Cats



Rats



Mice



Mink



Hedgehogs



Stoats

Burrow-nesting seabirds are especially vulnerable to them.





# Why biosecurity matters for seabirds

## Lundy seabird population triples in 15 years following eradication of rats

'In spring the island comes alive at night with the sound of these amazing birds,' said Lundy warden Dean Jones

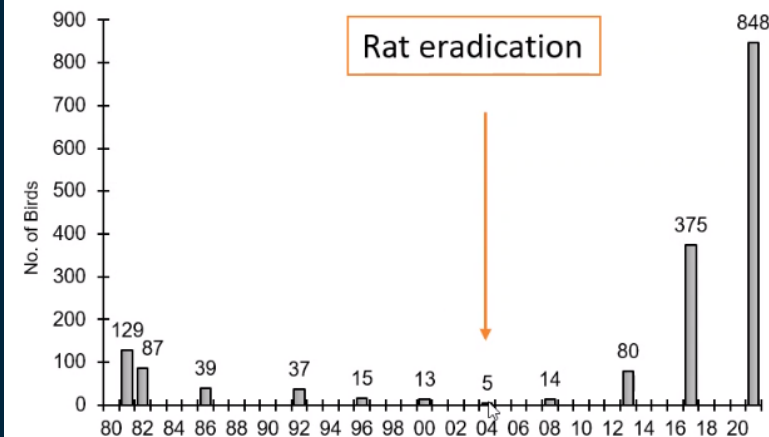
Phoebe Weston Science Correspondent | Tuesday 28 May 2019 00:31 | comments



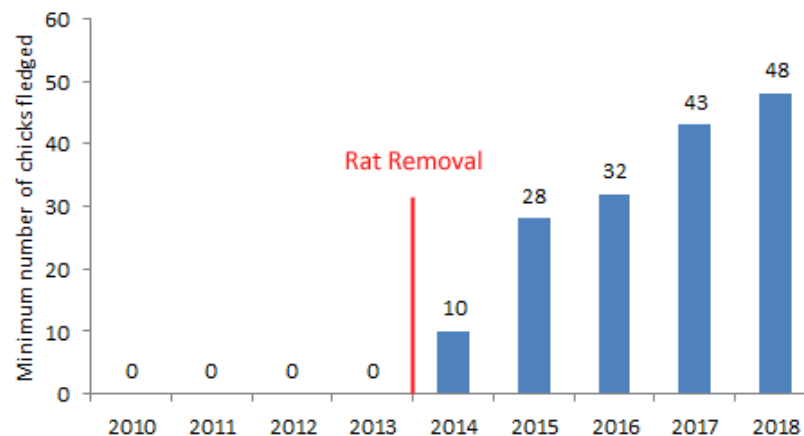
INDEPENDENT



## Puffin population change 1981-2021



## Manx shearwater breeding success St Agnes & Gugh







# Biosecurity can safeguard seabirds



## Prevention

Putting barriers in place to stop predators reaching islands.



## Surveillance

Tools to let us quickly detect if a predator has made it to an island.



## Incursion Response

Rapidly responding to ensure the predator can't breed and spread.



# SAVE OUR SEABIRDS FROM INVASIVE PREDATORS





PROTECTING SEABIRDS  
FROM INVASIVE PREDATORS



**Cyfoeth Naturiol Cymru**  
**Natural Resources Wales**

**AWAWARENESS  
LEADS TO  
ACTION**







- ✓ **CHECK YOUR BOAT**
- ✓ **CHECK YOUR CARGO**
- ✓ **CHECK YOUR BAGGAGE**





# BIOSECURITY PLANNING



# BIOSECURITY IMPLEMENTATION





# BIOSECURITY **VOLUNTEERS**

- **Local to the island(s) or hub**
- **Contacted at short notice**
- **Trained to carry out an incursion response**
- **Certified in rodenticide use**
- **Key to biosecurity success**





# BIOSECURITY DOGS

- **Active detection tool**
- **Used in routine surveillance, checks on high-risk cargo etc.**
- **Vital asset in an incursion response**
- **Great for advocacy!**



# A BRIGHTER FUTURE FOR SEABIRDS:



CONCLUSION:  
**95%**  
**GLOBALLY  
IMPORTANT  
AND THREATENED  
SEABIRDS ARE  
NOW BETTER  
PROTECTED IN  
THE UK.**

**95%**





# Biosecurity for Scotland



- **Continuing in the footsteps of Biosecurity for LIFE in Scotland**
- **Funded until March 2026**





# Biosecurity for Scotland

- **Improving prevention along incursion pathways**
- **Developing automated early-detection systems**
- **Strengthening rapid incursion response capacity**

# Thank You!

[laura.bambini@rspb.org.uk](mailto:laura.bambini@rspb.org.uk)

<http://biosecurityforlife.org.uk>



@biosecuritylife

