



Pròiseict Mionc Nan Eilean Siar

Fiosrachadh – An Gearran 2005



Tha e mar amas aig 'Pròiseict Mionc nan Eilean Siar' am beathach gallda, am mionc Aimearaigeach a sgrìobh bho na h-Uibhistean agus àireamhan a' bheathach a lughdachadh anns na Hearadh. A' beachdachadh air glèidhteachais nàdair, tha am pròiseict, a tha a-nise anns an treas bliadhna, a' gabhail àite airson àireamhan eòin de bhrìgh eadar-nàiseanta a dhìon.

NAIDHEACHDAN

◆ **Fiosrachadh**

Tha e coltach gun coilean Pròiseict Mionc nan Eilean Siar sgrìobh nam mionc bho Uibhist a Tuath agus Beinn a Bhaoghla ris an uair agus air taobh a-staigh a' bhuidsead. Tha nam mionc a tha air fhàgail air na h-Uibhistean a nise nas sgaibte. Tha barrachd bheathaichean boirean ann, an taca ri beathaichean fireann far an robh a mhòr chuid dhaibhsan air an glacadh. Tha barrachd bheathaichean boirean a nise air an glacadh le bhith a' cleachdadh dòighean èifeachdach airson garaidhean nam mionc a lorg. Tha e coltach gum bi a h-uile mionc sna h-Eileanan an Iar air an sgrìobh ro deireadh a' phròiseict. Aig a' cheart àm tha an lùghdachadh (as dèidh a' ghlacaidh teann a' phròiseict ann an taobh deas na Hearadh) soirbheachail ann a bhith a' cur casg air na mionc a' tighinn a nuas bhon an taobh a tuath.

◆ **Rannsachadh PhD**

Thathar a' cleachdadh fiosrachaidh air an cruinneachadh mar phàirt de'n rannsachadh PhD airson cuideam a chuir air cèarnaidhean air stòr-dàta GIS far am faighear garaidhean brìodachaidh. Bidh am fiosrachadh seo an uairsin air a chleachdadh airson cuideachadh a thaobh cleachdadh choin.

◆ **"Sàthadh Mòr" eile**

Tha e air a phlanadh gum bi glacadh cudromach gu bhith ann rè na dàirean anns an t-earrach nuair a tha na beathaichean a' gluasad nas trice. Cruthaichidh seo obair dha ochdnar luchd-obrach sealaich a bhios a' cumail sùil air na trapan anns na h-Uibhistean bho thaobh a deas nan eilean gu taobh a tuath nan eilean.

◆ **A' Sgaoileadh na Teachdaireachd**

The Pròiseict Mionc nan Eilean Siar fhathast a' tarraing ùidh bho iomadh cearnaidh agus tha sinn a' leantainn oirne fiosrachadh a thoirt seachd cho mòr sa 's urrainn dhuinn. Choinnich Comataidh Ceangal Ionadail ann an Loch nam Madadh anns an Dùbhlachd far an d'fhuair iad cunntas as ùr air adhartas na pròiseict. Fhuair Comann na Mamalan òraid bho mhanaidsear a' phròiseict, Sugoto Roy, aig coinneamh ann an Sutha Lunainn anns An t-Samhainn. Chaidh cuireadh gu Dr Roy airson paipear a chuir ri cheile a' dhèanas dealbh air na h-innealan eadar-dhealaichte agus na difir ìrean, mar phàirt de phròiseict rannsachadh air mamalan. Còmhla ri seo, anns an àm ri teachd, ni e òraid aig coinneamh comhairle na coimhearsnachd anns na h-Uibhistean.

◆ **Obair san àm ri teachd**

Feumaidh tòrr rudan a bhith air ullachadh airson am 'blitz' anns a' Mhàirt agus a' Ghiblean, mar àite-fuirich, cosnadh luchd-obrach agus innealan, le cuideam air Uibhist a Deas, a' cur trapan ann an àite sam bi far nach eil trap. Thèid cunntas as ùr a dhèanamh air na stòr-dàta agus innsidh seo dhuinn dè cho èifeachdach sa tha a' phròiseict air a bhith. Anns an seo cuideachd, bidh fiosrachadh air ciamar a dh'atharraicheas co-mheas nan gnè agus bidh seo air a ghabhail a-steach dhan na modailean.

◆ **A' tòmhais a' bhuidh**

Tha planaichean air an cuir an gnìomh an dràsta airson dearbh-aithnich a dhèanamh air na buaidhean air cèarnaidhean far am bheil am bagairt air an lughdachadh no air an toirt as mu thràth. Gabhaidh seo a-steach obair sgrùdaidh air iasgach aig ìre ionadail agus a' cumail sùil air na h-eòin mar eisimpleir na stèarnain.

CÙL-FHIOSRACHAIDH

Chan eil mionc dùthchasach dha na h-Eileanan an Iar no fiù do Bhreatainn. Tha iad gu h-àraid cunnartach do dh'eòin fhiadhaich air ithidh iad uighean, iseanan agus eòin mhòra bho làraich chudthromach eòin easar-nàiseanta. Tha na h-Uibhistean nan dachaigh do chuid de na h-eòin is cudthromaiche san Roinn Eòrpa agus tha iad seo air an dìon fo Ordugh Eòin Fhiadhaich na Roinn Eòrpa le Àitean Sònraichte Dìona (SPA). Tha e mar uallach air Breatainn na làraich seo a dhìon a thaobh riaghailtean na Roinn Eòrpa. A bharrachd air glèidhteachais nàdair, tha droch bhuidh aig a' mhionc air croitearachd, iasgach, tuathanachas èisg agus turasachd. Tha suidheachadh a' mhionc na dhuilgheadas do mhòran Agus tha e mar ghnòthach dhuinn uile freagart fhaighinn air a' cheist. Gu mì-fhortanach an aon fhreagart buan a th'ann 's e am beathach a sgrìobh. Tha 'Pròiseict Mionc nan Eilean Siar' a' toirt còrr air millean trì fichead 'sa còig mìle not dè dh' airgead Eòrpach, poblach agus eile do na h-Eileanan an Iar. A sas anns a' phròiseict tha na buidhnean a leanas: Dualchas Nàdair na h-Alba, Comann Riaghail Dìon nan Eun, Riaghaltas na h-Alba, Seòmar-obrach Saidheans Meadhanach, Iomairt na Eilean Siar, agus Comhairle nan Eilean Siar. Tha airgead bho stòras airgead nàdarra Eòrpach LIFE a' toirt taic dhan phròiseict.

Airson barrachd fiosrachaidh mu Phròiseict Mionc nan Eilean Siar no ma chì sibh mionc an àite sam bith, cuir fios gu neach-stiùiridh na pròiseict Sugoto Roy air 01859 550327 (s.roy@csl.gov.uk) no gu Dualchas Nàdair na h-Alba ann an Steòrnabhagh air 0185170258.

Bu chòrr dha ceasnachaidh nam meadhanan a dhol gu Calum Macfarlane, SNH, air 01463723106 (calum.macfarlane@snh.gov.uk)

Bu chòrr dha ceasnachaidh nam meadhanan airson Gàidhlig a dhol gu Mairi Gillies, SNH, 01463723134 (mairi.gillies@snh.gov.uk)



Hebridean Mink Project

Bulletin February 2005



The Hebridean Mink Project, now in its third year, aims to eradicate the alien predator, American mink, from the Uists and to dramatically reduce their numbers in South Harris. The project is being carried out in the interests of nature conservation, namely to protect threatened bird populations of international significance.

NEWS

◆ **Eradication on track**

The complete eradication of mink from the N. Uist and Benbecula is well on track to being achieved on time and within budget. Trapping efficiency has been continually improved throughout the project and the remaining population of mink on the Uists is becoming more and more fragmented. With most of the male animals now removed, the remaining population is predominantly female. More females are now also being trapped using effective den site locating techniques, developed as part of the project. Complete eradication of the non-native predator species across these islands is now extremely likely to be achieved within the remainder of the project. Meanwhile the project's intense trapping and significant reduction of mink numbers in south Harris is successfully preventing recolonisation from the north.

◆ **PhD study**

Information gathered as part of the PhD research project is being used to highlight areas on a GIS database where den sites, in particular breeding den sites are likely to be found. This will then be used to help steer the use of dogs to locate den sites.

◆ **Another "big push"**

Another major trapping exercise is being planned to take place in the crucial mink rutting period in the spring. This will involve the employment of an additional eight local casual staff, with every trap in the Uists being checked in a sweep from south to north.

◆ **Spreading the message**

The HMP continues to attract attention and interest from various quarters and we continue to try to inform this interest as much as possible. The Local Liaison Committee received an update on progress at its meeting in Lochmaddy in December. Meanwhile the Mammal Society received a presentation from project manager, Sugoto Roy, at its November meeting at the London Zoo. And Dr Roy has since been invited to produce a paper describing 'the different stages and tools required for an eradication programme' as part of a mammal review project. In addition to this, Dr. Roy will give a talk at a community council meeting in the Uists in the near future.

◆ **Future work**

Accommodation, employment of casual staff, equipment and logistics will be prepared for the forthcoming 'blitz' in March-April thus maintaining momentum by focusing on South Uist by filling in gaps. All the databases are to be updated which will calculate how efficiency has improved. This will also hold a record of how the sex ratios have changed and these will be incorporated into models.

◆ **Measuring the effects**

Plans are underway to identify the early benefits to areas where the threat of mink has been significantly reduced or completely removed. This will include survey work on local fisheries and the monitoring of some bird species such as terns.

BACKGROUND

Mink are not native to the Western Isles or even to the UK. They pose particular threats to wild birds as they will eat eggs, chicks and adult birds from nationally important sites. The Uists include some of Europe's most important bird sites and these are afforded protection under the EC Wild Birds Directive in designated Special Protected Areas (SPA's). The UK is required by the Directive to protect the interests of SPA's. As well as posing a threat to wildlife, mink also have a damaging effect, directly or indirectly, on crofting, fish farming, tourism and fisheries. The mink situation is very much a shared problem and it is in all our interests to find a solution. Unfortunately the only permanent solution is eradication through a programme of humane lethal control.

The Hebridean Mink Project is bringing more than £1.65m of European, public and other funding to the Western Isles. Partners include Scottish Natural Heritage, the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds, The Scottish Executive, Central Science Laboratory, Western Isles Enterprise and Comhairle nan Eilean Siar (the local authority), and the Project is part funded by the EU LIFE Nature Fund.

For further information about the Hebridean Mink Project or to report mink sightings, please contact the project manager, Sugoto Roy, on 01859 550327 (s.roy@csf.gov.uk) or Scottish Natural Heritage in Stornoway on 01851 705258. Information is also posted on the Western Isles section of the SNH website at www.snh.org.uk.

Media enquiries should be directed to Calum Macfarlane, SNH, on 01463 723106 (calum.macfarlane@snh.gov.uk)

Gaelic media enquiries should be directed to Mairi Gillies, SNH, on 01463 723134 (mairi.gillies@snh.gov.uk)