



Pròiseict Mionc Nan Eilean Siar

Fiosrachadh - An Cèitean 2004



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

NAIDHEACHDAN

◆ **Fiosrachadh Ùr Air A' Ghlacadh**

Tha 23 mionc air a bhith air an glacadh bho Am Faioilleach; 4 anns na Hearradh agus 19 anns na h-Uibhistean. Tha seo a' toirt an suim uile gu 445 (202 anns na h-Uibhistean agus 243 anns na Hearradh). Tha a' ghlacadh anns na Hearradh fhathast iosal leis a' mhòr chuid de bheathaichean air an glacadh air a' chladach a deas agus a' chladach an ear agus a' mhòr chuid dhuibh fireann. Tha barrachd bheathaichean fhìreann anns an t-sluaigh a-nise. O' chionn an àm-athaisg mu dheireadh gè tà, tha tòrr bheathaichean air a bhith air an glacadh anns na h-Uibhistean.

◆ **An Dàrna Spàinn**

Anns an dàrna seachdainn den Mhàirt bha an dàrna sreth den dòigh-obrach glacaidh trom ann an Uibhist a Tuath mar a bha e anns an t-Samhainn. Thug seo a-steach 14 luchd-obrach agus 500 trapan, le dìreach fàireag fàileach na mionc air an cleachdadh airson biadhadh. Còmhla ris a' ghlacadh àbhaisteach, bha an seorsa de ghlacadh seo seasg a chur air na mionc. Bha e cuideachd airson rèidio a chur air na mionc a bha air an glacadh airson sùil a chumail orra oir dh'fhaodadh iad an toirt gu mionc bhoirean. Bha na còig bheathaichean a bha air an glacadh boireann agus tha seo a' leasachadh am fianais gu bheil a' mhòr chuid den sluaigh boireann anns na h-Uibhistean. 'S dòcha gur e aon adhbhar airson seo, gu bheil a' mhòr chuid de na bheathaichean fireann air a bhith air an glacadh mu thràth. Ach tha fianais ann gu bheil aon mhionc fireann fhàthast san sgìre. Mar seo, dh' fhaodadh duilgheadas a bhith ann oir 's urrainn dha dìreach aon dhiubh mairist còmhla ri iomadaidh bheathach bhoireann.

◆ **Rannsachadh PhD**

Tha Alice Helyar a' crìochnachadh an rannsachadh mionaideach aice air sluaigh agus modh airson pàirt den Phròiseict Mionc nan Eilean Siar. Tha i ag obair air pròiseict eadar An Tairbeart agus Losgaintir agus air Eilean Tarasaigh far am bheil na mionc air an lòrg le rèidio agus air an stiùiriche. Bidh e foilleasach bho sgrùdadh agus bho bhith a' glacadh nam mionc a bheil comharrachan ag atharrachadh a rèir àireamh sluaigh nam beathach. Bithidh barrachd lòrgadh le rèidio air a thoirt a-mach as t-earrach agus anns an sàmhraidh, agus thig feadhainn den luchd-glacaidh à Uibhist gus am faic iad ciamar a tha seo air a dheanamh airson a leudachadh an eòlas acca air gluasad na mionc.

◆ **Conaltradh**

Bha coinneamh ann an Sgoil Lianacleit anns A' Mhàirt còmhla ri buidheann ceangalaichean ionadail air deasbad a dheanamh air an dòigh as fhearr airson cumail a-mach mothachadh poblach den phròiseict. Tha plannaichean anns an àm ri teachd airson a thoirt a-steach postairean airson stàilean aig taisbeanaidhean an àiteachais, agus fiosrachadh air adhartas a' ghlacaidh air làraich-linn an iasgaich.

◆ **A' Cleachdadh Coin airson Lorg nam Mionc**

Cha robh an cù-eunaidh freagarrach gu leòr airson a' phròiseict, ach tha seorsa coin-eunaidh eader-dhealaichte air an trèanadh an dràsta anns na h-Uibhistean airson cuideachadh leis an glacadh le bhith a' lòrg làraich. Tha na coin seo mu thràth a' soirbheachadh uamhasach math. Ann am meadhan A' Ghiblein, dh' atharraich a' ghlacadh-loidhne gu a bhith a' lòrg na mionc le coin. Tha na mionc a tha air am marbhadh an dòigh seo air am marbhadh anns an dòigh àbhaisteach, iochmhòr.

CÙL-FIOSRACHAIDH

Chan eil mionc dùthchasach dha na h-Eileanan an Iar no fiù do Bhreatainn. Tha iad gu h-àraid cunnartach do dh'eòin fhiadhaidh oir 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 bhuaidh 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 dhan 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 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 Dion 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 01851 70258.

Bu chòrr dha ceasnachaidh na meadhanan a dhol gu Calum Macfarlane, SNH, air 01463 723106 (calum.macfarlane@snh.gov.uk)

Bu chòrr dha ceasnachaidh na meadhanan airson Gàidhlig a dhol gu Mairi Gillies, SNH, 01463 723134 (mairi.gillies@snh.gov.uk)



Hebridean Mink Project

Bulletin May 2004



The 'Hebridean Mink Project' 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

◆ **Trapping Update**

Since January, a further 23 mink have been caught; 4 in Harris and 20 in the Uists, bringing the total overall to 445 (202 in the Uists and 243 in Harris). Captures in Harris remain low, with sporadic individuals being caught mainly along the southern and east coast. These have mostly been male and the population continues to become more and more male biased. However, on the Uists, a large number of animals have been caught since the last reporting period.

◆ **Second Big Push**

A second 'big push' took place in North Uist during the second week in March, involving 14 trappers and 500 traps, with only mink lure as bait. In addition to general trapping, one of the purposes of the big push was to capture, sterilise and radio-track any males captured in the hope that they led to females. However, all five animals caught were female, furthering the trend of a more and more female biased population in the Uists. This is possibly because most of the more mobile males have already been caught. However, there is evidence that at least one male is still present in the area, which could cause problems as a single male can mate with several females.

◆ **PhD Study**

Alice Helyar is in her final stages of carrying out detailed population and behavioural research as part of the Hebridean Mink Project. She is carrying out a project in the area between Tarbert and Luskentyre, and on the Isle of Taransay, where the mink are being radio tracked and monitored. Concurrent scat surveys alongside the trapping will show whether territorial marking behaviour changes as the population size changes.

Further radio-tracking will be carried out this spring and summer and it is envisaged that some of the Uist trappers will come and see how this is done to broaden their experience of mink movements.

◆ **Communications**

A meeting of the local liaison group took place in Lionalclete School in March to discuss how best to maintain public awareness of the Project. Future plans include posters for stalls at agricultural shows, and updates on trapping progress on fisheries websites.

◆ **Use of Locator Dogs**

A team of spaniels are being trained in the Uists, to maximise trapping efforts by locating den sites, and are already proving to be effective. In mid April, trapping effort switched from line trapping to dog searches. Mink located in this way are killed humanely by the usual method.

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, they also having 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@csl.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)