Scaling down (cliffs) to scale up to the challenge: the Shiant Isles Seabird Recovery Project
LIFE13/NAT/UK/000209

Talk Structure

1. Shiant Isles
2. *Rattus rattus* eradication – set up, operation
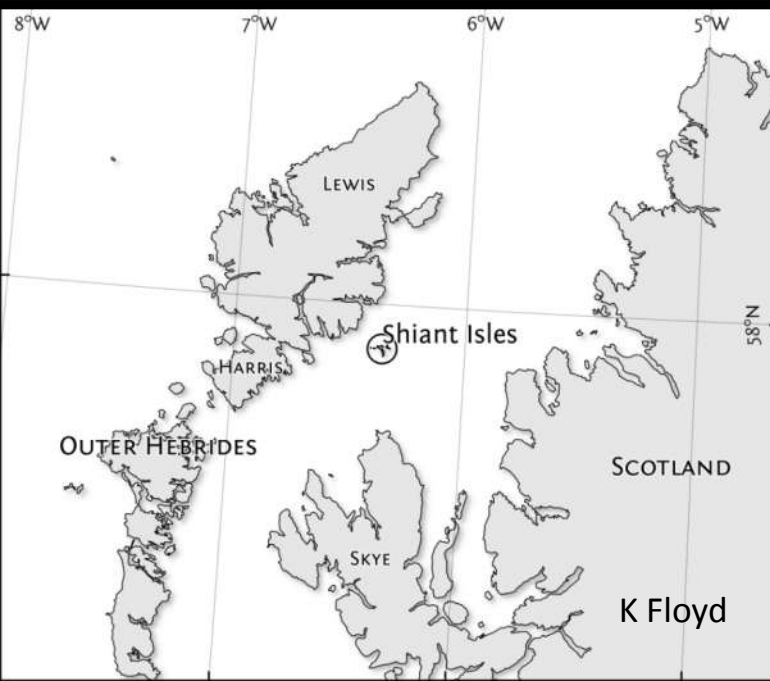3. Best practice highlights
4. Summary

J Tayton

J Tayton

Shiants Location

K Floyd

Garbh Eilean (Rough Island)

Eilean Mhuire (Mary Island)

Galtachan

Eilean an Taighe (House Island)

Image from: Historic Environment Scotland

What makes the islands special

- SPA designation for auk species
  - 63k pairs of puffins
- SSSI designation for:
  - seabird assemblage
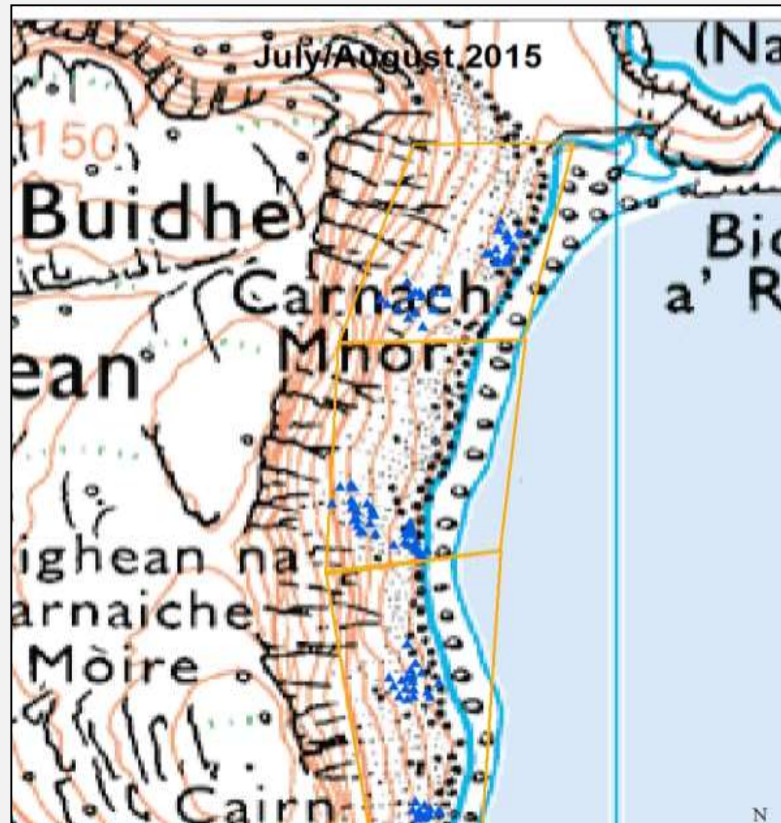 - geology

Medieval turf hut

R Reid

Eradication Preparations

- Volunteer involvement – bait stations
- Permissions, licences
- WMIL eradication pre-assessment
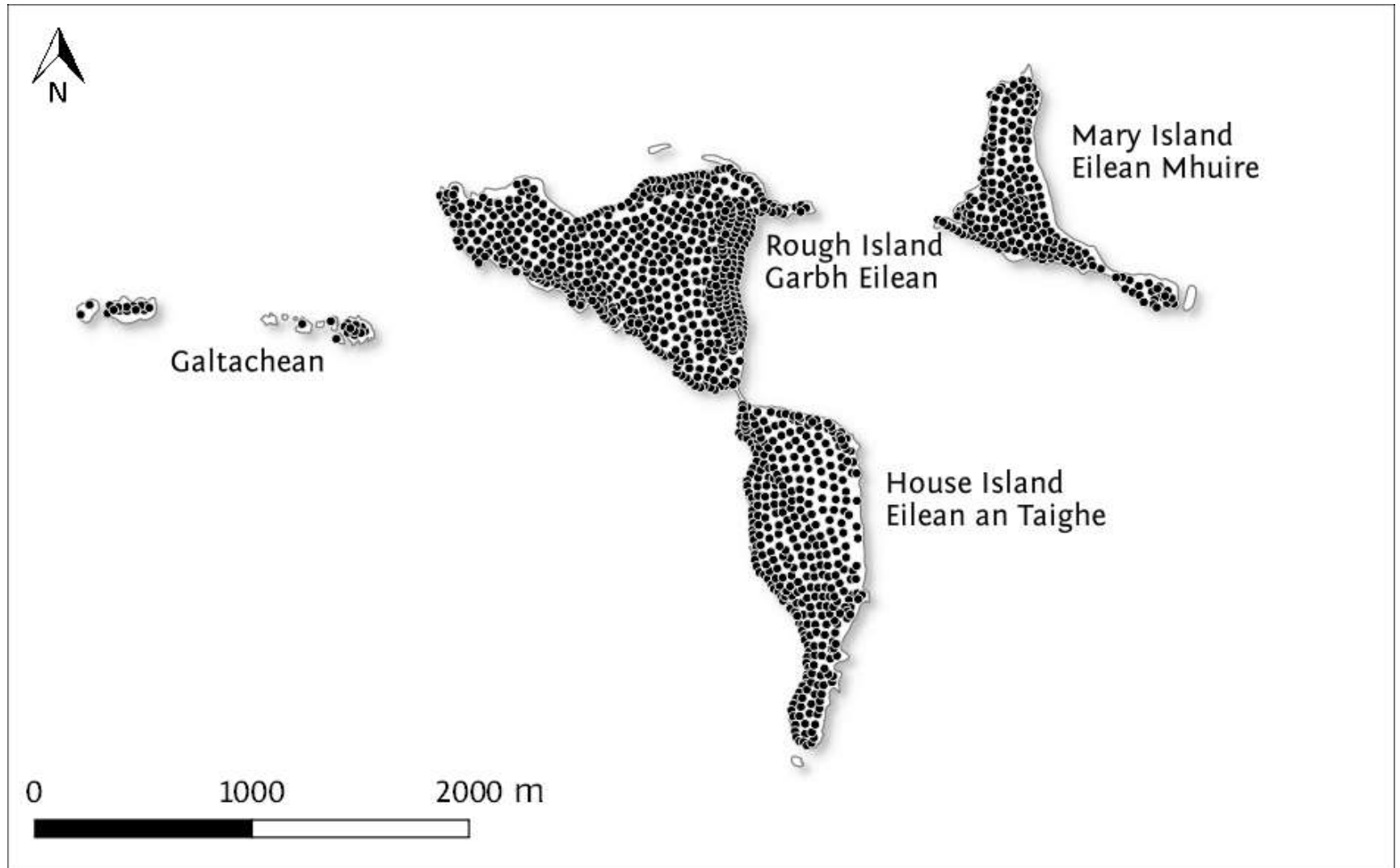- Rodenticide (bromadiolone) resistance testing

Bait stations

Site survey
Planning permission
Archaeology

Airlifting

Pre-assessment

Monitoring of target and non-target species and vegetation

Remote rope access training

Bait station grid

Galtachean

Rough Island
Garbh Eilean

Mary Island
Eilean Mhuire

House Island
Eilean an Taighe

0   1000   2000 m

Results – bait take

Bait Take (grams)
- 0
- 150
- 250
- 400
- 700

No bait take or rat sign on Galtachan

Mary Island
Eilean Mhuire

Rough Island
Garbh Eilean

Galtachan

House Island
Eilean an Taighe

0   500   1000 m
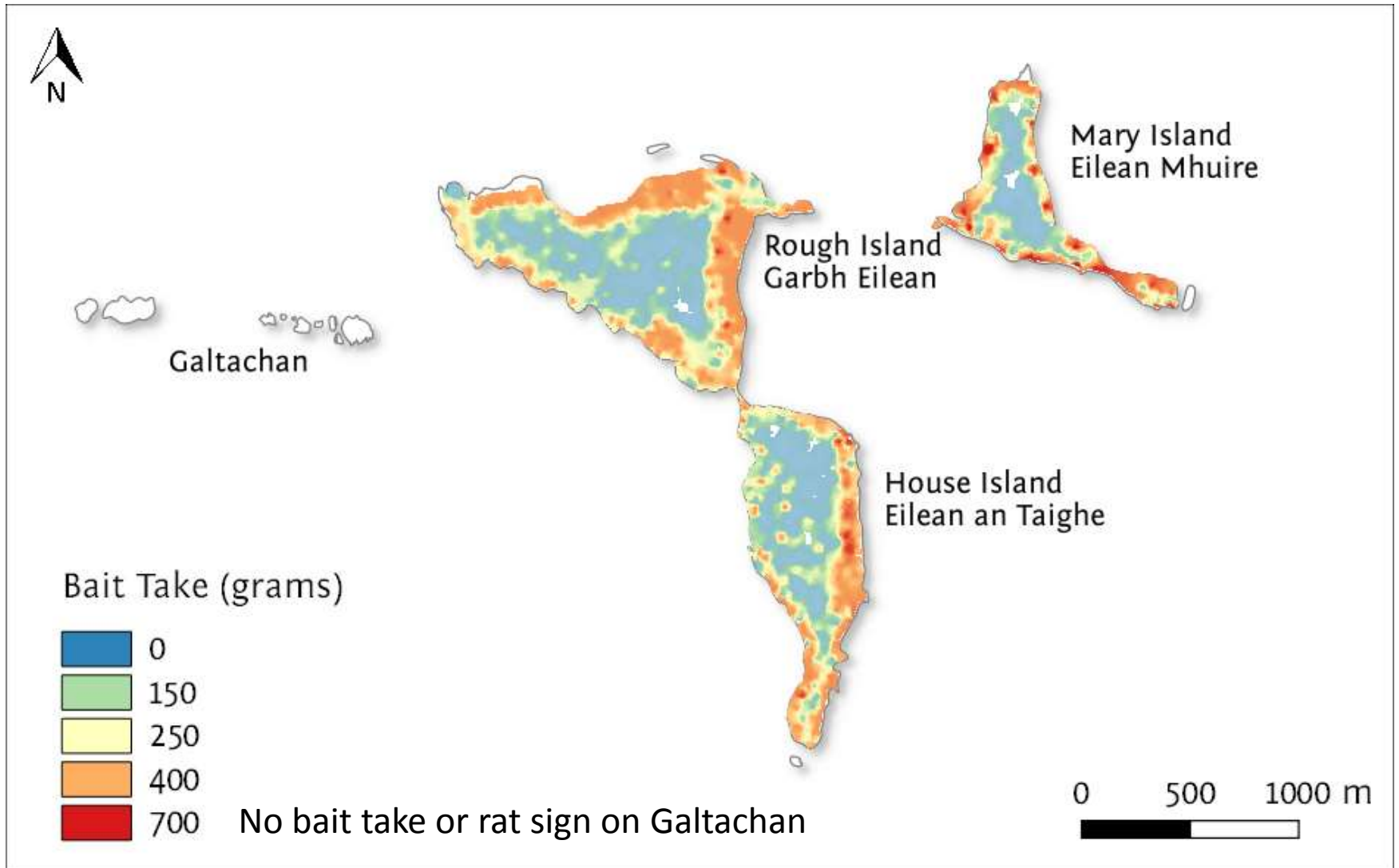
Currently: monitoring stations

Mary Island
Eilean Mhuire

Rough Island
Garbh Eilean

Galtachan

House Island
Eilean an Taighe

□ Squares - Rodent Motels
• Dots - Protecta Stations
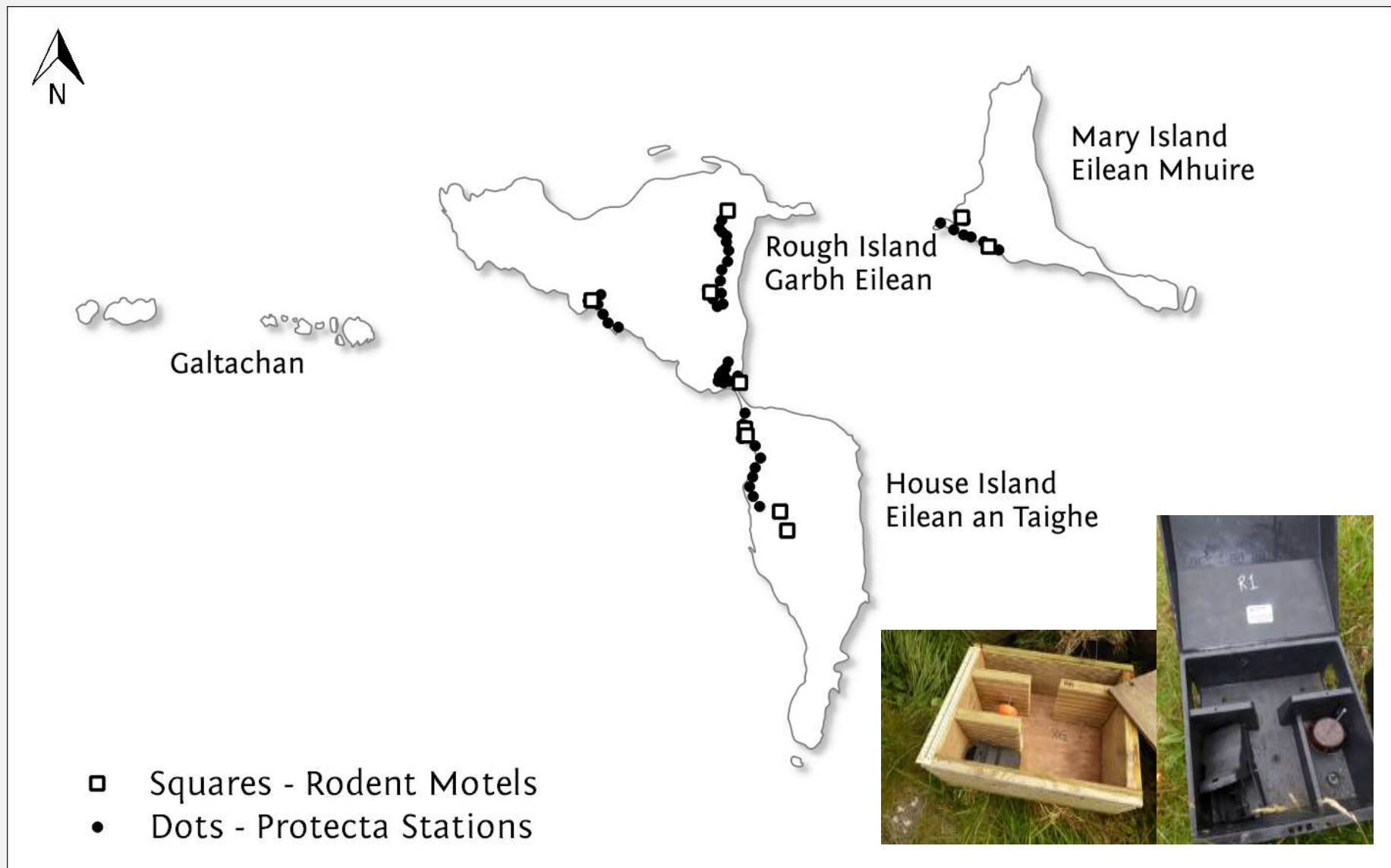
Best Practice Highlights

- Field experts WMIL contracted to lead pre-assessment and eradication

- Rodenticide resistance testing at Reading Uni

- Scrutiny by SNH: to apply rodenticide at SPA

- Rope access training, equipment and systems

Summary

- Eradication campaign appears successful
  - Declaration of rat free status March 2018 at earliest
- Best practice followed for all key elements
  - Well established methods
  - Rodenticide resistance testing
  - Safe, well equipped team
- Enhanced UK capacity for eradications

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