

Routine surveillance methods

Preventing non-native invasive predators from reaching an island using 'preventative methods' is the ideal scenario; however, in the event that an animal does reach the island, it is very important that it be detected before a population has time to establish. Eradicating a population is difficult, expensive and may not be successful so: prevention is better than cure.

Carrying out simple routine surveillance on-island allows you to quickly detect any invasive predator that evade the barriers in place.

Surveillance methods

These surveillance methods can be used for rodents, stoats and mink (mustelids). Surveillance stations can be in permanent position and checked frequently (monthly). A map of their GPS position should be produced so new staff/volunteers can easily find them.

Risk species	Surveillance method	Frequency of check
Rodents	Surveillance stations with non-toxic flavoured wax blocks. Vary flavours and refresh every 3 months.	Monthly
	Tracking tunnels.	Monthly
	Rodent motels.	Monthly
	Visual searches - droppings, footprints, feeding sign, corpses.	During other biosecurity checks/opportunistically
	Conservation Detection Dog check of island (contact the Biosecurity for LIFE team).	Annual
Stoats and mink (mustelids)	Tracking tunnels (<i>Gotcha</i> tracking tunnels recommended for stoats, but as they are too small for mink, we recommend <i>GCWT mink rafts</i>).	Monthly
	Visual searches - droppings, footprints, feeding sign, corpses.	During other biosecurity checks and opportunistically
	Conservation Detection Dog check of island (contact the Biosecurity for LIFE team).	Annual



Map to the 100 surveillance stations on St Agnes and Gugh (Isles of Scilly) pinned to the door of the equipment shed for the volunteers who check them monthly.

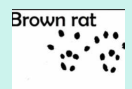
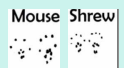
Equipment

- For flavoured wax blocks, see the ['Making wax block' resource](#). We recommend using a combination of flavours with chocolate and peanut butter being attractive flavours to rodents.
- For rodent and stoat footprint tracking tunnel equipment, [Gotcha tracking tunnels](#) are recommended
- For mink footprint tracking tunnel equipment, [GCWT Mink Rafts](#) are recommended, follow the design plan to construct.
- To reduce non-target species nibbling the wax (it is non toxic so will not harm them, but bird or insect nibbles interfere with your ability to detect rodent gnaw marks) use as many bait stations (**Protecta stations**) as you can to house these wax blocks. Also, if there are livestock in the area, use of stations will prevent them trampling the wax blocks.
- Rodent motels are empty wooden boxes which provide a warm dry place for rodents to drag nesting materials into. These can be made using marine ply.

Item
Laminated sheets showing rodent/mustelid sign
Notebooks, pens, pencils etc.
Flavoured wax blocks and wires for pegging them out.
Bait stations (e.g. <i>Protecta</i> or pipe) to house rodenticide surveillance wax blocks.
Tracking tunnels, ink pads and ink
Trail cameras
Large clear plastic boxes for storing reference and detection kit

Footprint ink tracking tunnel pack [Gotcha tracking tunnel](#)

Indicative size and form for species footprints.



Far left: Closed Bait station (e.g. *Protecta* station) which can house flavoured wax blocks (away from birds, insects etc). Left: Chocolate wax block inside *Protecta* station. Middle: Chocolate wax block on a piece of wire in the open. Right: Rodent teeth marks on a chocolate wax block. Far right: rodent motel.

If any 'sign of rodent' is found, assess whether it is 'possible' or 'probable' and decide whether an incursion response is required.

The 'Biosecurity for LIFE' team can support you. Head to the 'Need expert guidance?' section of the website biosecurityforlife.org.uk Thank you.