

Rona - an invasion of mice!

Rona experienced a mouse incursion over summer 2021-22
Detected in March this year

Before this, Rona was free of all predators (rats, stoats, mice) although has had sporadic incursions

One lone rat in 2019 – a male which we didn't catch. Not on the island any more

2020 – mouse incursion, dealt with by 2 fills of bait stations.

No mice detected between Sept 2020 and March 2022

Rona is a valuable island as it is:

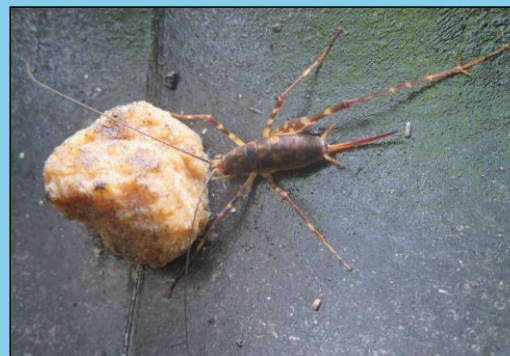
Used for kiwi creche (Haast Tokoeka)

Gecko population

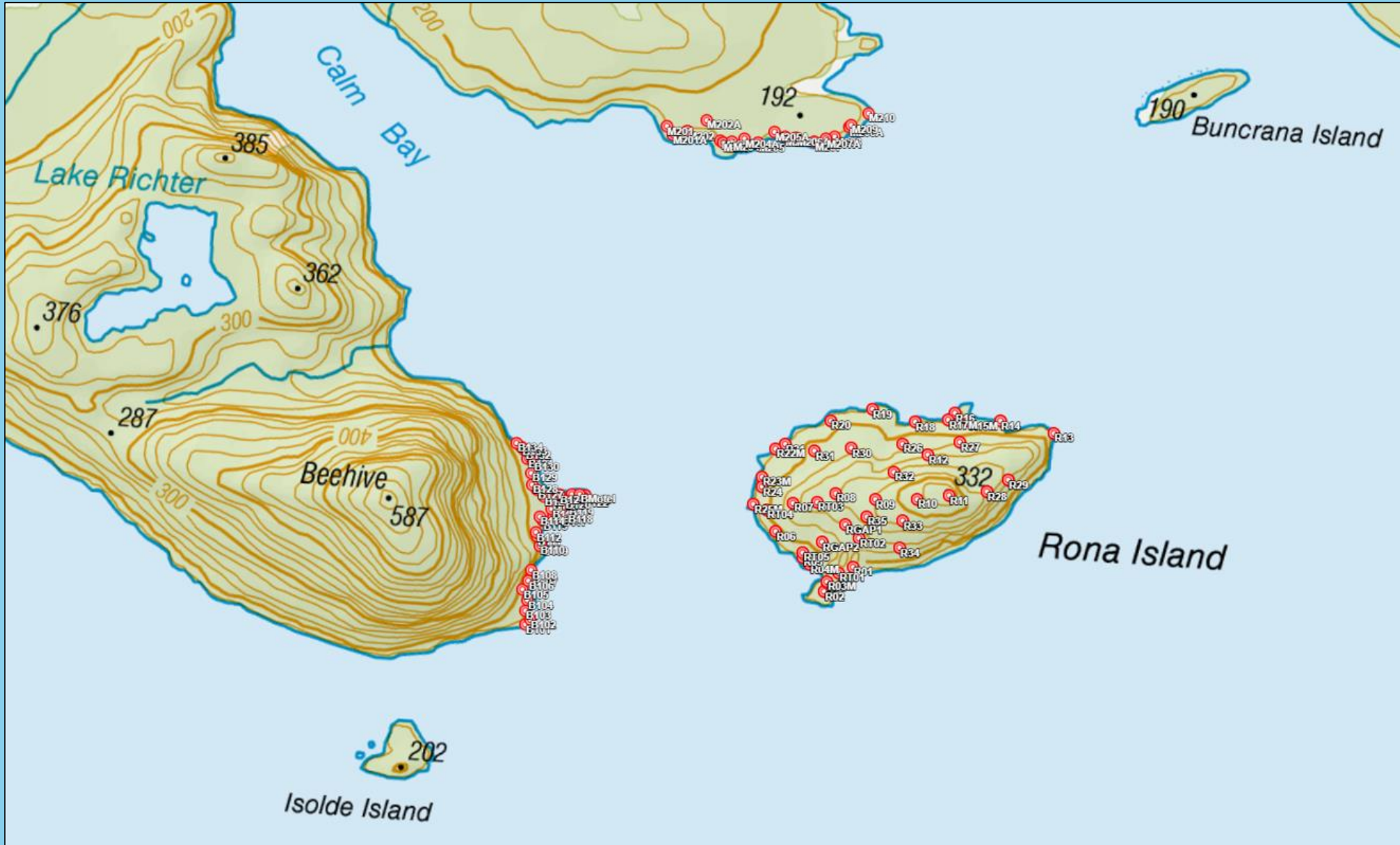
Incredible invertebrate population.

All would be affected by a resident mouse population

Very special having a completely predator-free island on Lake Manapouri



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How did it happen?

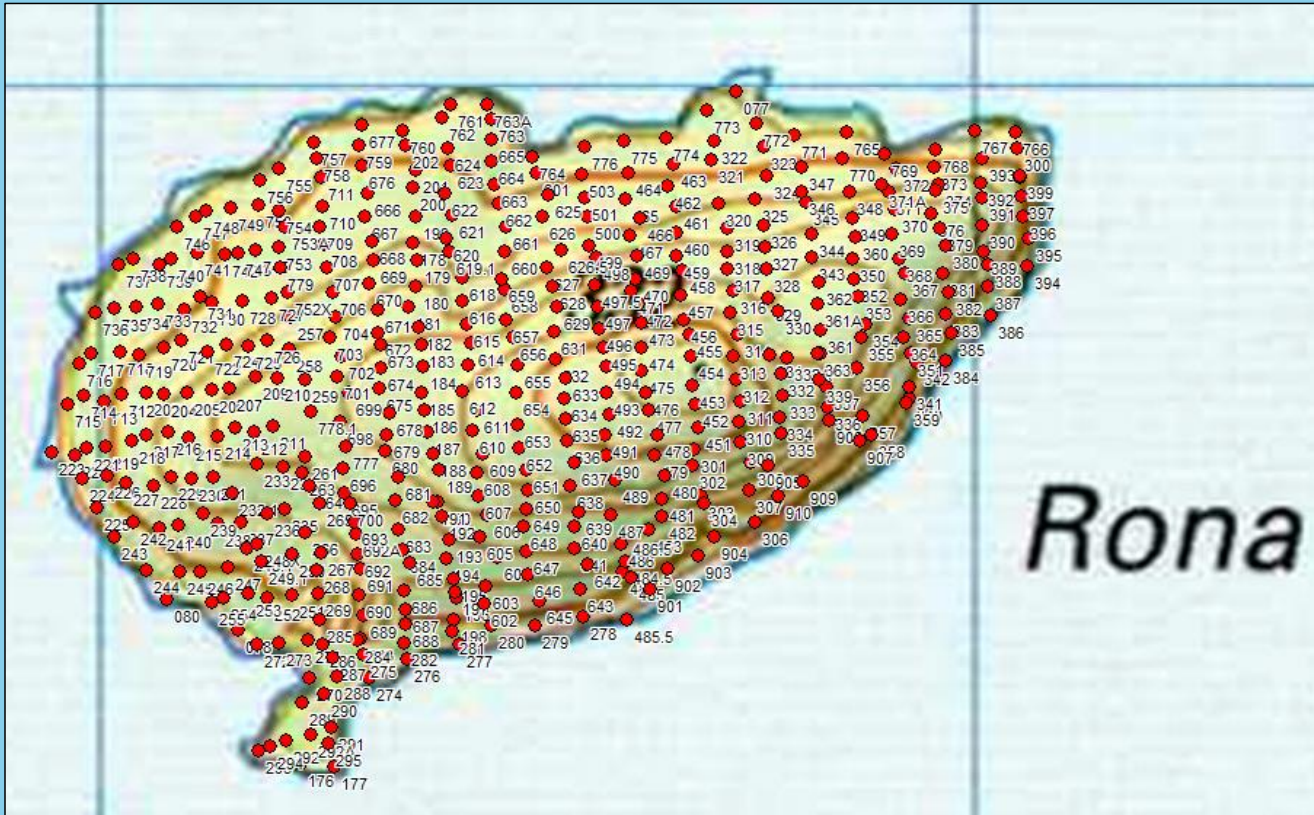
600m from mainland

Extensive trap network on mainland and Rona but not specifically for mice. Pressure on the mainland mouse population

Lake surface reached 18 degrees over summer

Ideal for swimmers
Climate change – this will happen more frequently

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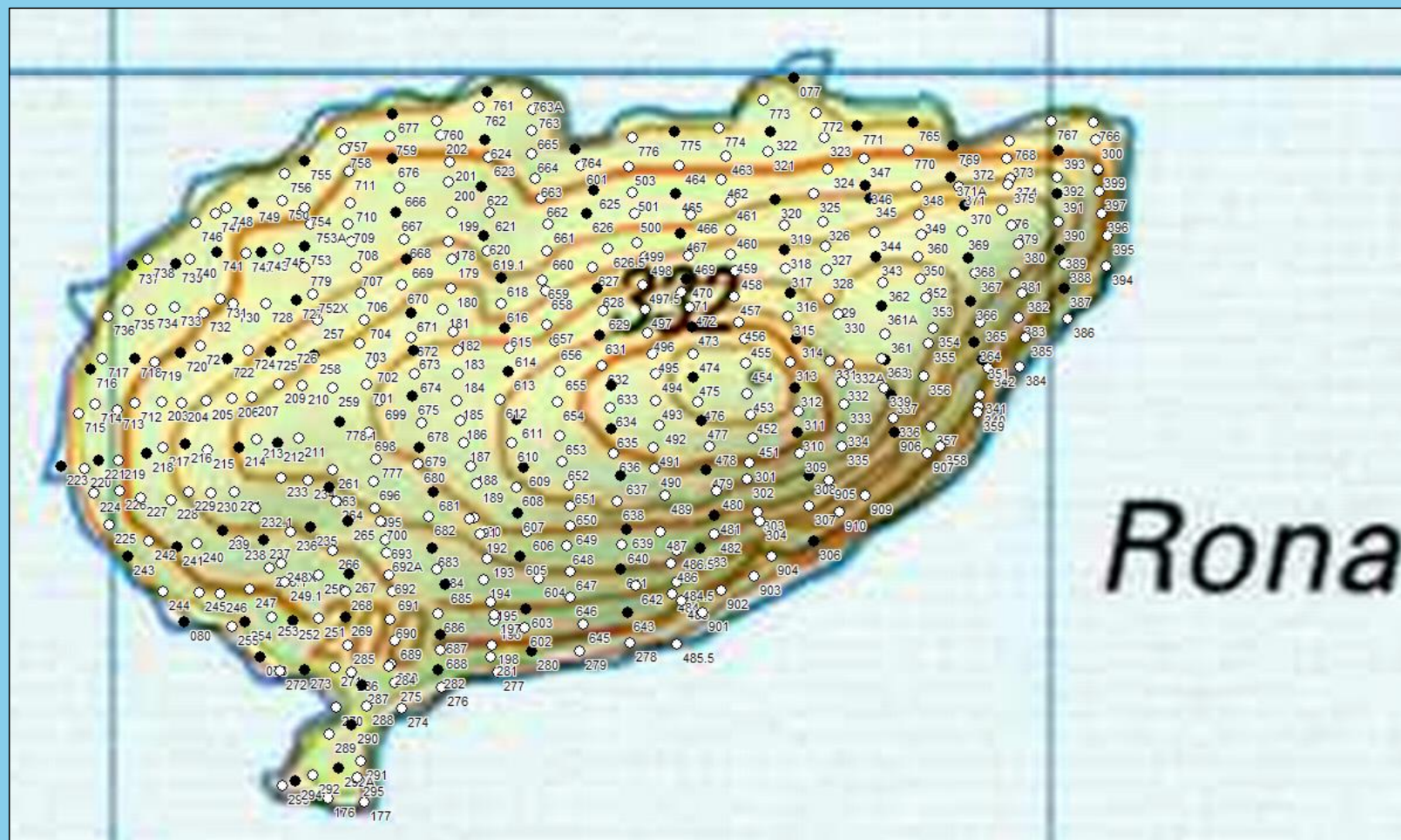
How we dealt with it.....

We have a network of 450 bait stations on Rona
At 25m x 50m grid
With advice from a TAG (DOC) it was decided to
fill bait stations with brodifacoum, and also step
up monitoring using tracking tunnels, cameras
and mouse traps.



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Tracking tunnels and cards – we now have 116 tracking tunnels on 100m x 50m grid



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9th April – 20 pellets in each bait station

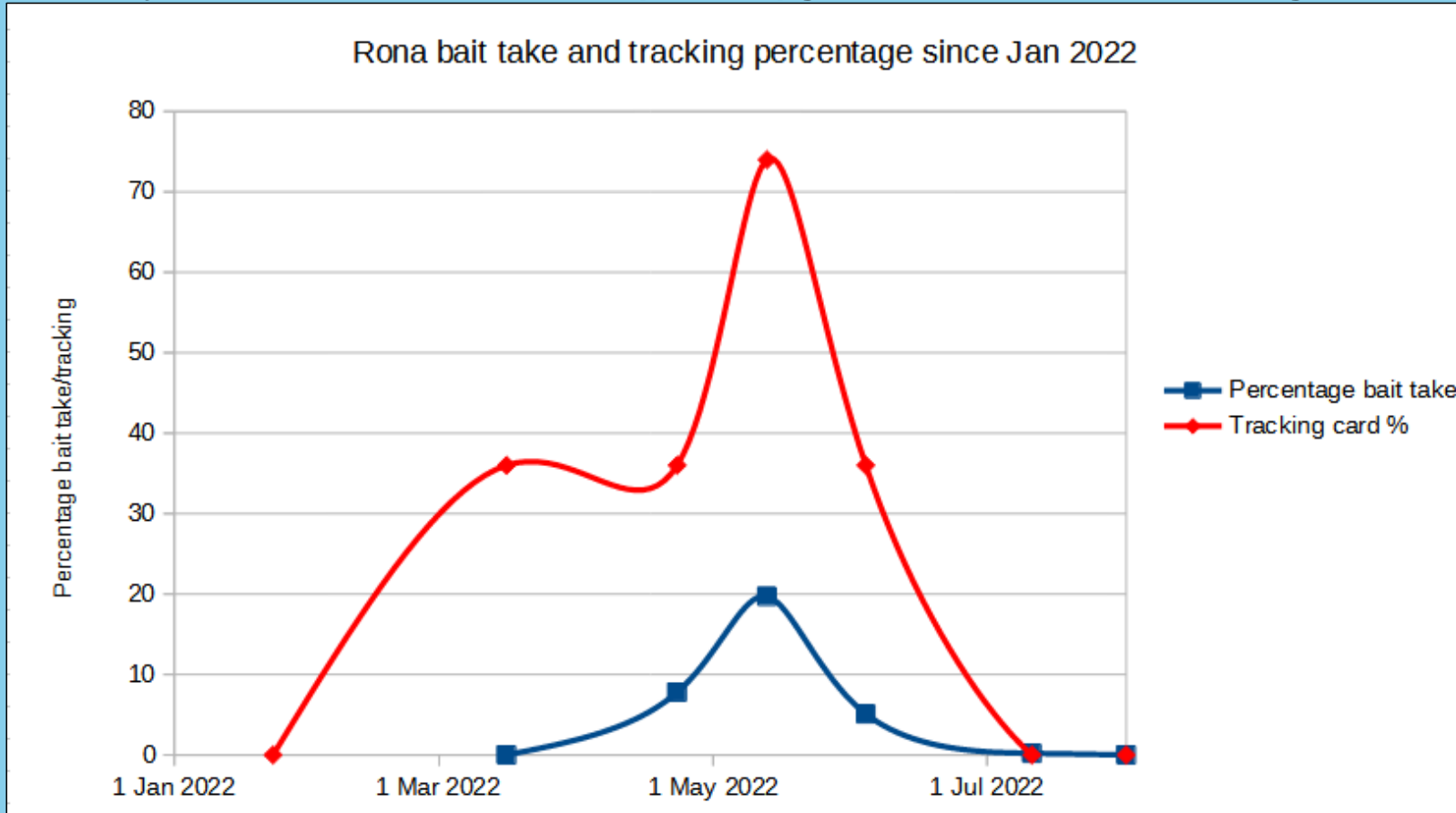
Every 2-3 weeks, we topped up bait stations and recorded bait take

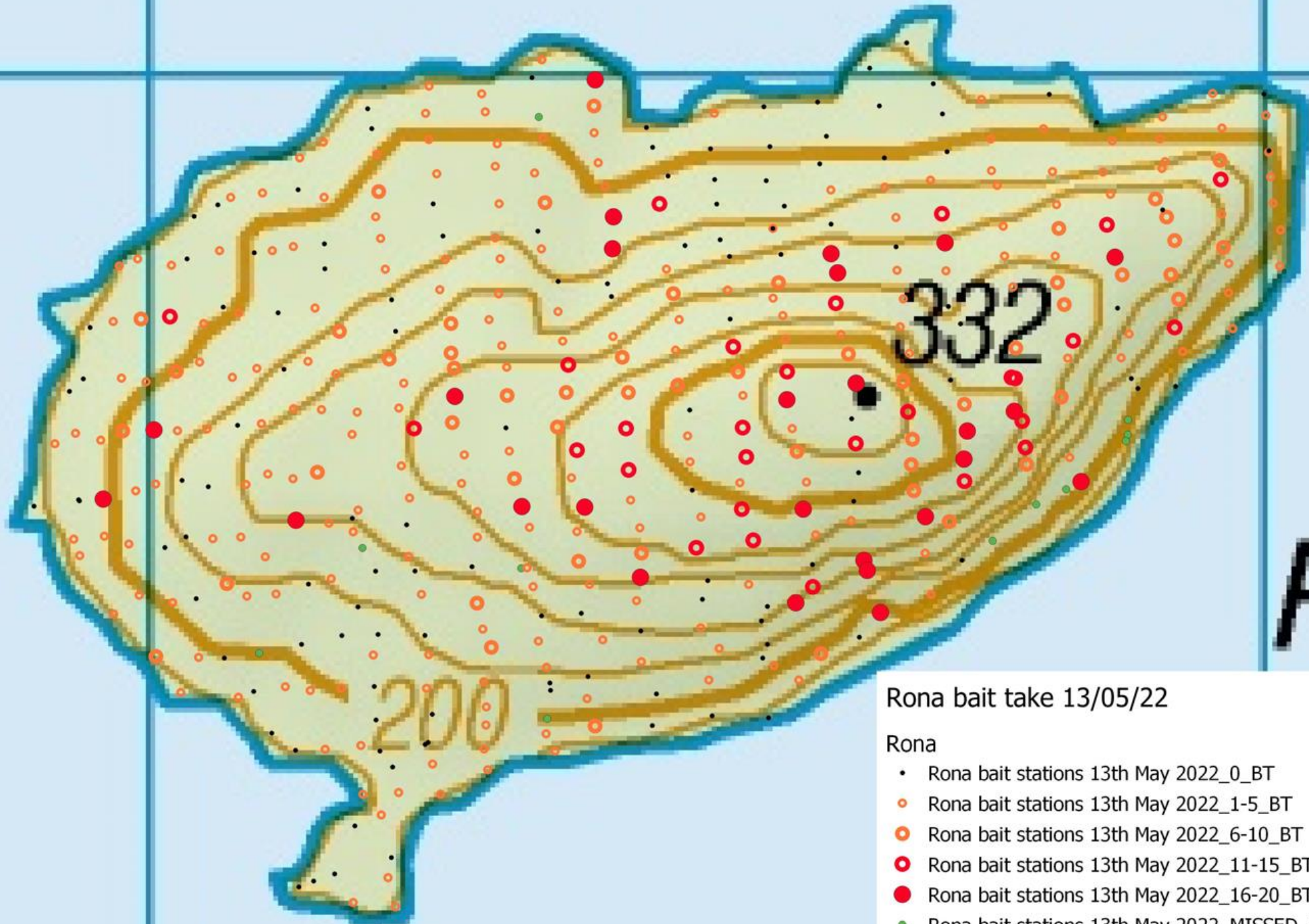
Reduced to 10 pellets in June, reduced to 5 pellets in July

Also checked existing tracking cards

Upgraded bait station and tracking card networks

14 trips were made to the island during the bait and monitoring operation, operation done by volunteers. A contractor helped to upgrade the bait station labelling.





Rona bait take 13/05/22

Rona

- Rona bait stations 13th May 2022_0_BT
- Rona bait stations 13th May 2022_1-5_BT
- Rona bait stations 13th May 2022_6-10_BT
- ◉ Rona bait stations 13th May 2022_11-15_BT
- Rona bait stations 13th May 2022_16-20_BT
- Rona bait stations 13th May 2022_MISSED_BT

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All bait was removed at the end of August. Total input to environment approx 6kg brodifacoum

We have continued monitoring using tracking tunnels, cameras, and by checking mouse traps

No mice have been detected – as of November 2022 we are mouse-free!

We are also better prepared for the next incursion.....

