



# THE BELL REPORT

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## Lyons outsmarts bait station bashers with PROTECTA EVO CIRCUIT

**W**eekend revelers at the boat bars and restaurants along the popular Rhone docks in Lyons, France, had taken up a new, urban sport that was frustrating the city's pest control technicians – bait station bashing.

From Thursday to Sunday morning, late-night party-goers would stomp and crush the small, black bait boxes that lined the docks.

With more than half of the 20 or so bait stations needing replacement every weekend, the antics were costing the city considerable money in lost bait stations and extra labor-hours. But, more seriously, it put children and pets at high risk to exposed rat and mouse bait.

Despite their best efforts, Claude Bontemps, manager of Lyons' Pest Control Department and the city's three pest control technicians were at a loss for a remedy. In late May, how-

ever, while attending a workshop sponsored by Edialux, Bell Laboratories' French distributor, they saw a possible solution.

Bell's southern European manager, Arnaud del Valle, was giving a presentation on Bell's Tier 1 PROTECTA EVO tamper-resistant bait stations when a man in the audience jumped on one of the EVO stations, trying unsuccessfully to crush it.

The Lyon technicians were impressed with the strength of the EVO stations, especially the PROTECTA EVO CIRCUIT which looks more like a utility box than a bait station.

"With CIRCUIT, you are not so drunk or stupid to mess with something that looks like it has electricity," del Valle noted, pointing out the station's attachable connectors.

Bontemps hoped that CIRCUIT's design

would deter potential "bashers," plus the sturdy station could be placed vertically, making it difficult to stomp on or kick. He also wanted a discreet set-up that wouldn't disrupt the beauty of the tourist environment.

"The bait stations the city was using were secured but not tamper-resistant," del Valle recalled. "Their 'black box' design was too easy to identify."

### Baiting Trials Along the Docks

On June 25, with Lyons' bar boat/restaurant area fairly quiet, Bontemps, the city technicians, del Valle and Edialux sales manager, Alexandre Maury, set up two EVO CIRCUITs along the dock and baited each with NOTRAC BLOX. For comparison, they left the bait stations the city currently used in place.

*Continued on back page*





# GWAII HAANAS

## *Night Birds Returning*

**B**ell Laboratories' pelleted conservation bait rained down on two islands off the coast of British Columbia in Western Canada in September as our northern neighbor embarked on its first aerial bait drop to eradicate invasive rats from select islands in the Gwaii Haanas National Park Reserve and Haida Heritage Site.

Known as the Galápagos of the North, the 150-plus islands in the Haida Gwaii archipelago, like the Galápagos Islands of Ecuador, are suffering from a fate all too familiar on islands around the world: unbridled rat activity which is devastating to once-thriving seabird colonies.

Rats, which arrived aboard ships traveling from Europe to western North America in the 1700's, are now, along with other invasive species, the No. 1 threat to Haida Gwaii's ecosystem. With their voracious appetites, invasive Norway and black rats devour the eggs and chicks of defenseless seabirds.

Of particular concern to Canadian conservationists is the Ancient Murrelet, a bird that makes its nests by burrowing underground, beneath the roots and moss of the old-growth forests. With half of its global population breeding only in Haida Gwaii, the Ancient Murrelet is now considered a Species-at-Risk in Canada due to rats attacking adults, chicks and eggs in its nesting burrows.



**"Bell Labs provided critical support in bait, packaging and logistics for shipping, as well as working with Parks Canada on the registration process in Canada."**

**— LAURIE WEIN**



Bell's Craig Riekens (l) got a firsthand look at the project. Read his comments at [www.belllabs.com](http://www.belllabs.com)

### **Night Birds Returning**

To restore nesting seabird habitat and the associated health of the ecosystem, Parks Canada and the Haida Nation, along with partners Coastal Conservation and California-based Island Conservation, in 2009 launched *Night Birds Returning*, a five-year, \$2.5-million program that includes eradicating non-native

rats from four ecologically and culturally sensitive islands within Gwaii Haanas.

September's aerial bait drop, the second phase of the project, aimed to eradicate rats that have overrun the 400-ha Murchison Island and 316-ha Faraday Island.

With clear skies, minimal wind, and perfect weather over subsequent days, the first aerial bait drop on September 6 and 7 covered the two islands with approximately 18 tonnes of Bell's 1/2-inch bait pellets. By mid-September with storm season approaching, the team waited as long as they could between bait drops and, on September 25, applied a second round of bait, bringing the total to 28 tonnes.

"It was good that we proceeded when we did with the second drop," noted Parks Canada project director, Laurie Wein. "A significant storm hit two days later with high winds and big seas."

Wein credits the successful operation to "two solid years of exhaustive planning, drawing on global expertise from New Zealand, the USA and Mexico.

"We conducted detailed rat eradication trials, using Bell's non-toxic bait, on similar islands the year prior to determine if the technique would work on Haida Gwaii and what an appropriate bait application rate for these islands would be," she explained.

"The project is one of a few rat eradica-





PHOTOS BY PARKS CANADA

One of a few rat eradications completed on forested islands globally, *Night Birds Returning* aims to restore the islands' ecosystems, providing safe nesting for birds, such as the Ancient Murrelet (right).



tions completed on forested islands globally."

A first for Canada, aerial eradication is a technique successfully employed on numerous islands around the world (see past Bell Report articles). With a specially equipped helicopter broadcasting pelleted bait from a spinning hopper, aerial application is a more practical approach than hand baiting islands the size of Faraday and Murchison to guarantee 100 percent kill of its estimated hundreds of thousands of rats.

However, in the ground-based Phase I of the project, begun in August 2011, Parks Canada workers hand baited two smaller islands: the isolated 10-ha island of Arichika and a 95-ha group called the Bischof Islands.



Weather conditions were ideal for the first aerial rat eradication in Canada.

Setting up a 50-meter grid of bait stations, the intrepid, mainly female crew baited and monitored stations, noting bait intake and making adjustments, and collecting dead rats. Using infrared motion camera photographs, they also checked rat acceptance of bait and, when needed, added a bit of anchovy oil to entice a reluctant eater.

## Murchison and Faraday Monitoring

Monitoring on Murchison and Faraday Islands, which started in 2009 as part of a long-term park preserve-wide monitoring program to track ecosystem health over time, will continue for several years to determine how native species are responding.

Gwaii Haanas National Park Reserve is cooperatively managed by the government of Canada and the Haida Nation, the First Nation's Peoples whose traditional territory comprises the Haida Gwaii islands.

"With invasive species the number one threat to the ecological integrity of the island ecosystem, the Haida Nation are a partner of Parks Canada in this work and are supportive of restoring these islands for their ecological values but also their cultural significance," Wein explained. "The seabirds that once nested on these islands play an important cultural role in Haida song, dance and culture."

Parks Canada and the Haida Nation celebrated their 20th anniversary of cooperative management in 2013.

"This project is one of several conservation success stories of this long-standing relationship," Wein added. ■

## Bell's new tower display connects at PestWorld 2013

**T**owering 16 feet in the air, Bell's new display was a sure draw for attendees at PestWorld 2013 in Phoenix, Ariz., on October 22-25, where this year's theme was *Making Connections/Finding Answers/Increasing Profits*.

The tall, streamlined tower, flanked by shorter corner display units, gave Bell representatives and visitors to the booth plenty of space to put the convention's theme into practice. Bell reps fielded questions about product features and uses, particularly for new products, such as FINAL Soft-Bait and PROTECTA EVO tamper-resistant bait stations.

"Everyone was excited about the new booth. We had great feedback," noted Bell's product manager, Kate Mella, who spearheaded the new look.

PestWorld 2014 will be held in Orlando, Fla., coinciding with Bell's 40th year in business.

## PestTech in the UK

Bell's international sales team also participated in PestTech in the U.K. on November 6. The largest one-day pest control exhibition in Europe, PestTech draws attendees from all over Europe and points beyond. Besides meeting and talking face-to-face with hundreds of technicians about Bell product, Bell representatives accepted a new product award for DETEX Non-Toxic Soft Bait, an award determined by readers of Pest Magazine. ■



(l to r): Bell's VP of Global Sales, Mark Westover; reps Julie McMonagle and Brady Hudson; Director of EMEA, Tino Panetta.

They also decided to test and compare bait stations and bait at three other locations with high rodent activity – a local running/walking pathway, a garbage drop-off for tourist boats, and the dock where house boats moor.

Over the next three months, city crews monitored rodent activity and bait consumption, replacing bait at needed.

### **“CIRCUIT is the Only Solution”**

When the group reconvened in mid-September, the results were telling. Along the problematic bar boats/restaurants dock, the EVO CIRCUITS were intact and undamaged, while the city’s original bait stations had been kicked in with the bait exposed.

In addition to success with the CIRCUITS, the technicians noted an increase in bait consumption with NOTRAC BLOX which led to a significant decrease in rodent activity.

“Thanks to CIRCUIT, we haven’t faced any risk for three months in the boat bar area, actually not the case with the other bait stations in this area,” said a relieved Bontemps. “CIRCUIT is the only solution to compete against damages on bait stations and risk for non-targeted species’ exposure.”

Results were similar in the other three test areas. Along the running/walking path, consumption of bait placed in LP Bait Stations near rat burrows was high early on and, by September, no rat activity was noted. Bait consumption near the tourist boat garbage area was also high. And, along the houseboat area



City of Lyons pest control technicians secured EVO CIRCUIT Bait Stations in rodent “hot spots” in the city’s popular tourist areas.

where the weighted EVO EXPRESS was placed along mouse passageways, mice consumed the NOTRAC BLOX and, once activity subsided, the group removed the bait station.

### **CIRCUIT Trials in Other Tourist Locations**

Bontemps is pleased with the outcome and eager to share his experience with other cities.

“It’s nice to know that, thanks to this pilot project with us, you are doing the same in Verona, Roma, and Madrid,” he told del Valle who is conducting similar trials in other cities interested in EVO CIRCUIT for discreet baiting in highly sensitive tourist areas.

“By investing in high quality bait stations more suited to the location, the city of Lyons now gets better results and does not have to replace bait stations every week,” del Valle noted. “In the long run, that saves the city money.” ■

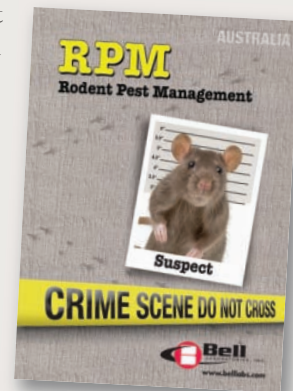
Use pesticides safely. Always read the label. Follow the Alliance Code of Practice for glue boards in the U.K.

## **Bell’s RPM Guide for Australia**

**G**ood pest control involves investigative work and, in that vein, Bell has published its new Rodent Pest Management (RPM) Guide for Australia.

The 12-page booklet covers the key principles of rodent pest management, including bait placement, bait station security, and non-toxic control.

It opens with in-depth profiles of the “usual suspects” – Norway rat, roof rat and house mouse, complete with their biology, behavior, and sensory capabilities.



The guide covers a typical inspection to determine the rodent species involved, the severity of the infestation, and high activity areas. Harborage, sanitation, and rodent proofing are addressed, along with descriptive photos and ways to correct problems.

The free booklet wraps up with helpful baiting tips, along with descriptions of Bell’s baits, traps, adhesives and bait stations, spotlighting the new time-saving EVO stations.

The RPM Guide is available through Bell’s Australian distributors and representatives. ■

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