



REPORT

Action A4.1 of the project Ilhas Barreira

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COFINANCIAMENTO



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PARCEIROS



Deliverable of the Action A4 of the Project LIFE Ilhas Barreira. Little Tern nest predation rate and breeding success

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Citações

Pereira, J.M., Nascimento, T., Ramos, J.A., Oliveira, N., Portela, D; Veríssimo, S., Cerveira, L., Andrade, J., Paiva, V.H. 2022. Little Tern nest predation rate and breeding success. Sociedade Portuguesa para o Estudo das Aves, Lisboa (report not published).

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1.1 Little Tern nest predation rate

We recorded 6193 hours from camera traps positioned in 40 little tern (*Sternula albifrons*) nests during June 2021-2022 at Praia de Faro and Fuseta Island. Major causes for the low hatching success at Praia de Faro seemed to be related with predation by cats (N=28 nests: 80%) and dogs (N=6 nests: 17.1%) (Fig. 1). At Fuseta Island, footprints of Eurasian Thick-knee (*Burhinus oediconemus*) were also found near 4 nests of little terns (66.7%), suggesting clutch predation by the species.

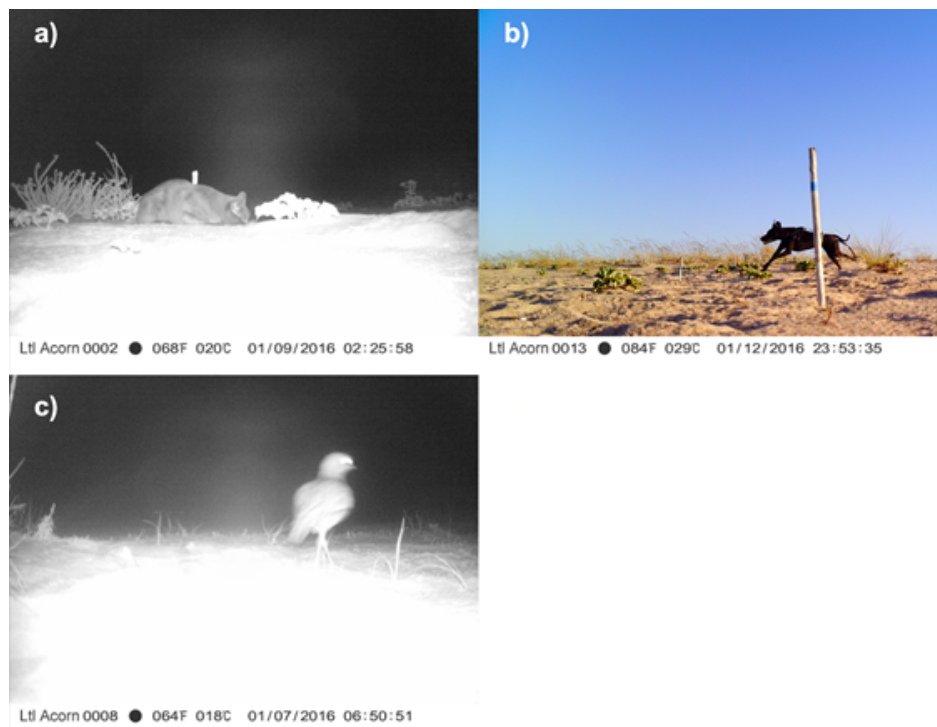


Figure 1 - Example of images captured from photo-camera traps in 2021 and showing the presence of a) cats, b) dogs and c) Eurasian Thick-knee (*Burhinus oediconemus*) near the nests of little Tern (*Sternula albifrons*) at Praia de Faro.

1.2 Little Tern breeding success

Overall, we monitored 180 nests from little terns at Praia de Faro (N= 80) and at Fuseta Island (N= 100) during May and June 2021-2022. In both years, hatching success, i.e. number of hatched eggs / total number of eggs laid, of Little terns was always comparatively higher at Fuseta Island (85% in 2021 and 70% in 2022; Fig. 2) than at Praia de Faro (12.5% in 2021 and 53.2% in 2022; Fig. 2). Although the hatching success of little terns from Fuseta Island was high in both years (on average 77.5%), the hatching success for the species at Praia de Faro (and where the predation risk was higher in 2021) varied considerable between years with an increase of 28% between years. Awareness signs and fences likely had an Effect in reducing clutch predation at Praia de Faro, Fuseta and Culatra Islands, , which was also followed by a population growth of approximately 40% from 2021 to 2022 (Fig. 3).

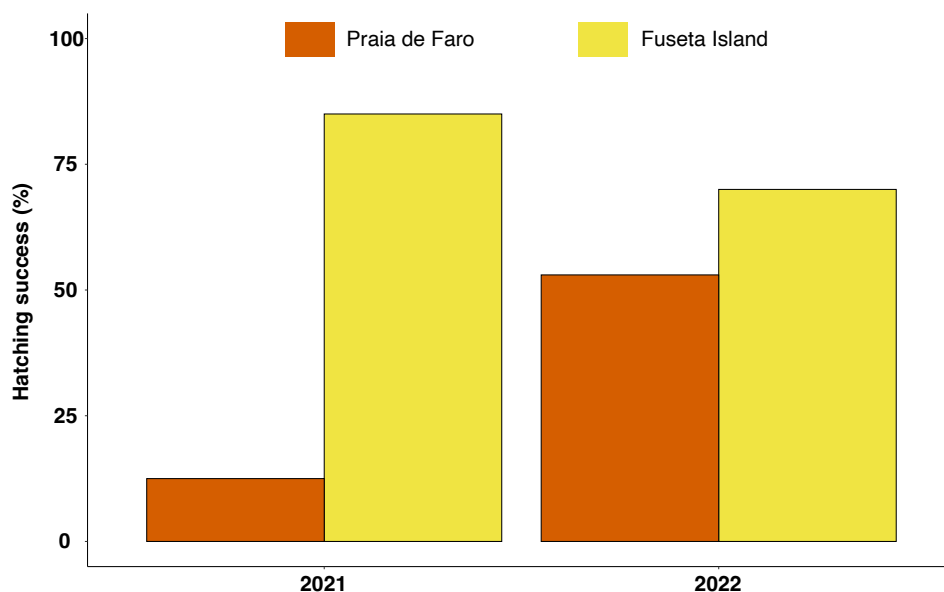


Figure 2 – Hatching success (number of hatched eggs / total number of eggs laid) of little terns (*Sternula albifrons*) breeding at Praia de Faro (orange) and Fuseta Island (yellow) in June 2021-2022.

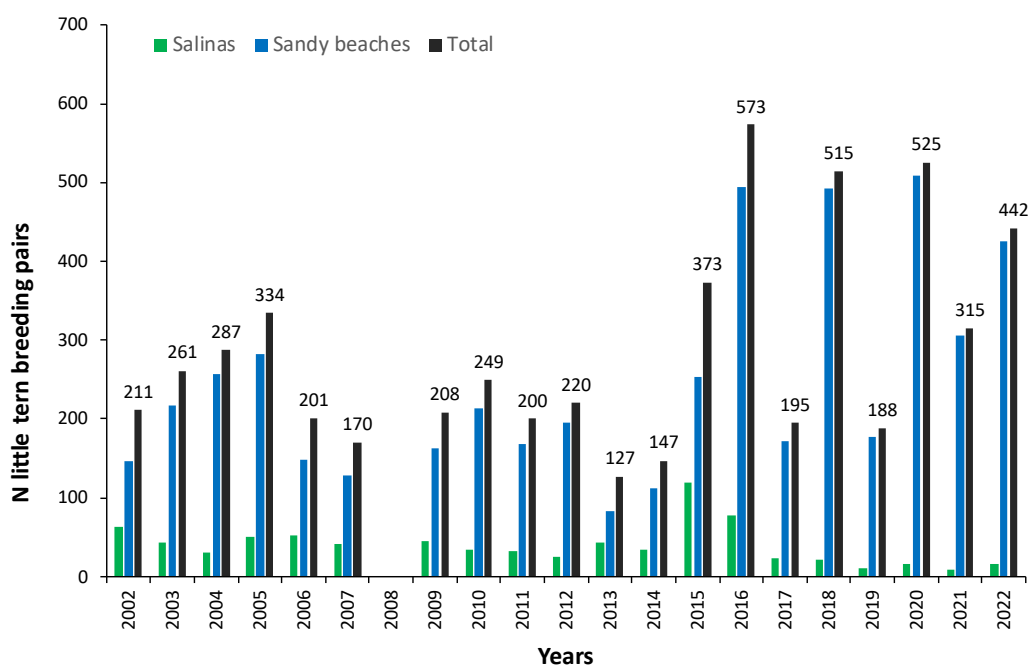


Figure 3 – Number of little tern (*Sternula albifrons*) breeding pairs counted at salinas (green), sandy beaches (blue) and total (i.e. sum of breeding pairs from salinas and sandy beaches; black) between 2002 and 2022.