



The Black and Brown Rats are considered to be one of the most serious threats to biodiversity in Galapagos. They were initially introduced in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries by accident! The likely culprits are the pirates and whalers who visited the Galapagos Islands around this time. The rodents now feed on the eggs and hatchlings of many birds and reptiles, causing several species (such as the green turtle) to become endangered.

In the late 1980s the first attempt at rat eradication failed and over the next twenty years, rat numbers increased on Pinzón Island dramatically. A widely executed and funded project was finally undertaken in 2012. This involved the dropping of nearly forty tons of poisoned rat bait all over the island via helicopter. Early indications suggest that this approach has been fairly successful but will need ongoing work to ensure the rats are completely eradicated.