

# Testing the efficacy of a floating multicapture trap for invasive Egyptian geese (*Alopochen aegyptiacus*)

## Managing Egyptian geese

- Nest control: the species is not a colonial breeder and nests often hard to reach
- Hunting: in Flanders, the species is not protected and hence no bag data is available, but bag estimates are low
- Trapping: moult captures on water are difficult due to the species' diving abilities and vigilance, clap net trapping is being tested with varying results
- Alternative trapping method: multicapture walk-in traps with decoy bird, these traps are known to work well and can be used in both a floating or non floating setup
- Due to year-round differences in territorial behavior of the species, related to timing of breeding, moulting etc., questions on timing for highest efficacy and efficiency remain



Figure 1: Setup of a floating multicapture trap with the decoy bird in the middle

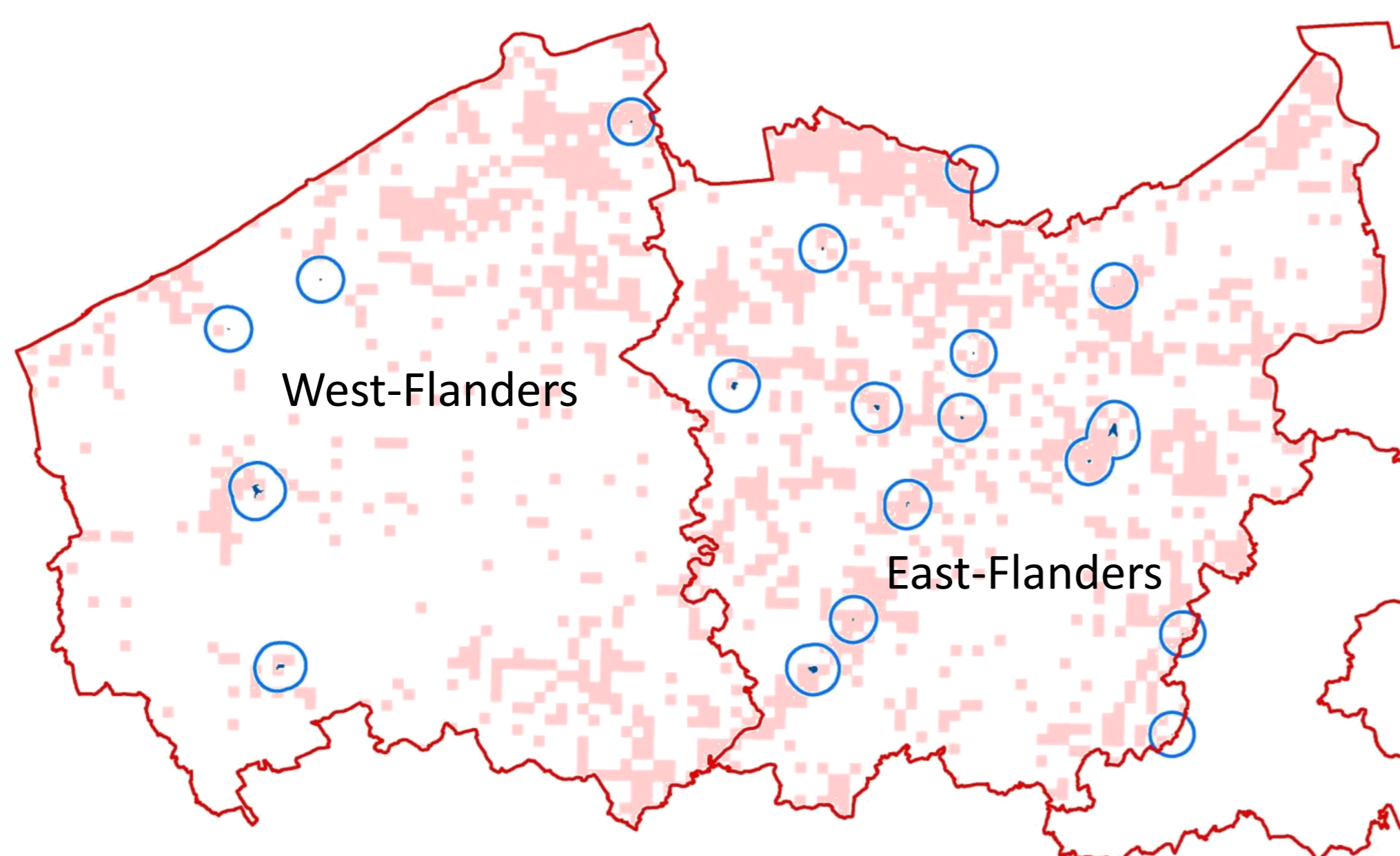


Figure 2: Selected catch sites, the pink 1x1km squares indicate Egyptian goose sightings in recent years (data: waarnemingen.be)

## Preliminary results

- Results up to August are analyzed
- The first goose is usually caught after about 2 days, regardless of the month
- There is more variation in the total number of geese caught in one week, but even the highest average (in June) is still only 1,1
- The average total number of geese caught is expected to increase in fall when Egyptian geese tend to flock

## What's next?

- Continuation of field trials until January 2014
- In depth analysis of all factors (sex, surface area and random factors) at the end of the field trials
- A second field trial in 2014 will compare the same trap in a land-based and floating setting during the months that were most successful in this field trial to determine optimal placement of this field trap
- Next to this, other capture methods will randomly be tested throughout the RINSE field trial period

## The field trial setup

- In this study we perform a year-round test with a floating trap to avoid human interference
- 19 water bodies ranging from 0,5 to 40 ha in size were selected in East- and West-Flanders
- Traps are left on location year-round; Decoy birds are placed inside during a single trapping week each month
- Per week and location, days to first catch and total number of geese caught are measured
- The use of the decoy bird per location was randomized
- The effect of pond surface area and sex of the decoy bird will be analyzed
- Pond location will be analyzed as a random variable to account for random environmental factors (such as number of geese and water bodies in the vicinity, nearby food availability and disturbance)

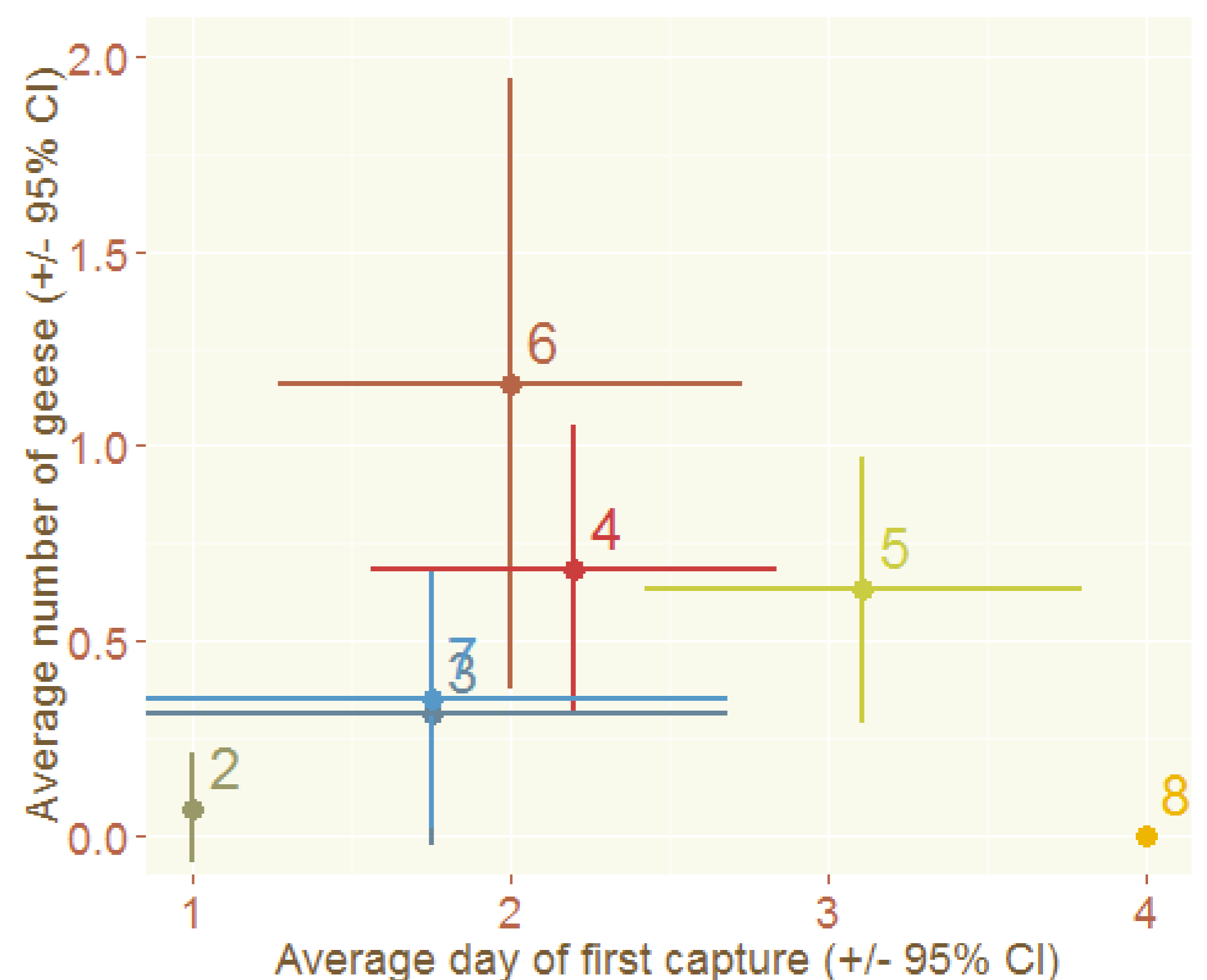


Figure 3: Catch succes during the field trial period (months represented by numbers, august 2013: preliminary data)