

Maine Coastal Nesting Islands

Gulf of Maine Coastal Program



Seabird survey



Flag Island, Casco Bay

Maine's coastal islands provide a rich tapestry of habitats harboring a unique assemblage of wildlife. Maine islands represent the only breeding sites in the United States for Atlantic puffins and razorbills. With the possible exception of a few islands south of the state, Maine islands provide black guillemots, Leach's storm petrels and common eiders their southernmost breeding territories. Some islands support rare birds such as bald eagles, peregrine falcons and roseate terns. Many islands and their associated mudflats are used for feeding and resting by Atlantic brant and large numbers of migrating waterfowl and shorebirds. Islands also provide important habitat for neotropical migratory birds.

Today, as development spreads along the eastern seaboard, islands are becoming more important than ever for supporting bird populations, but islands are also attracting increased attention from potential human users. Disturbances associated with second home developments and subdivisions, timber harvesting, recreational use and aquaculture ventures are increasing, and sometimes threaten critical island habitat.

In the early to mid-1990s, federal, state and local conservation partners worked together to update information on nationally significant coastal nesting islands. Gulf of Maine Coastal Program biologists analyzed existing data on nesting seabirds, wading birds and bald eagles for Maine's 3,500 coastal islands and ledges, ultimately identifying 377 nationally significant islands, based on the diversity and/or abundance of nesting birds. About half of the islands are owned by conservation organizations, but the remaining half do not enjoy any form of permanent protection. In addition, only 11 of the 377 islands enjoy active management programs designed to restore and maintain the natural diversity of island-nesting birds.

The island database, maintained and updated by Gulf of Maine Coastal Program, became a springboard and key information source for conservation partners engaged in habitat protection and restoration discussions with willing island landowners. In the last dozen years, with nearly \$5 million in federal funds and nearly \$2.5 million in state and privately raised funds, 58 important nesting islands have been acquired and permanently protected by conservation organizations, including U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Maine Dept. of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife and coastal land trusts. Gulf of Maine Coastal Program is often actively involved in coordinating with conservation partners and in writing federal grants to support nesting island acquisition projects. *See reverse for list of recently protected islands and sample map identifying nesting islands along a section of the Maine coast.*

For further information, please contact:

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To protect island nesting birds, active management work is frequently needed. Seabird restoration projects, coordinated through the Gulf of Maine Seabird Working Group and supported by Maine Coastal Islands National Wildlife Refuge, Maine Dept. of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife, National Audubon Society and many other partners, play a vital role in restoring and maintaining a diverse assemblage of seabirds on a dozen important Maine coastal islands owned by state and federal agencies and other conservation groups. Gulf of Maine Coastal Program helps locate funding to support restoration efforts, participates in annual nesting surveys, provides logistical support to supply and manage field camps on offshore islands in southern Maine, and offers GIS and mapping expertise to help manage island vegetation for the benefit of a diverse assemblage of nesting seabirds.

For more information on coastal nesting islands, go to:

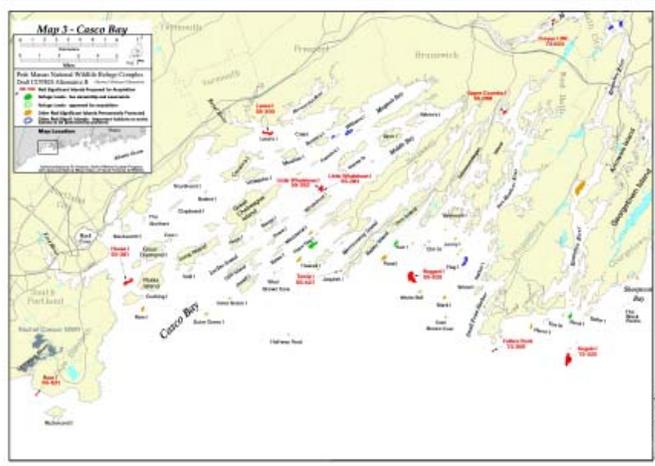
http://www.fws.gov/northeast/gulfofmaine/projects/seabird_nesting.htm



Coastal Maine islands permanently protected since 1994

Outer White Island, offshore from South Bristol
Little Thrumcap Island, offshore from South Bristol
Roberts Islands, offshore from Vinalhaven (two islands)
Metinic Island, Matinicus Isle
Halifax Island, Jonesport
Eastern Brothers, Jonesport
Ship Island, Blue Hill Bay
Trumpet Island, Blue Hill Bay
Eastern Barge Island, Blue Hill Bay
Western Barge Island, Blue Hill Bay
Bar Island, Blue Hill Bay
Lee Island, Lower Kennebec River
Hog Island, Machias Bay
Lower Mark Island, offshore from Boothbay Harbor
Browney Island, Beals
Sally Island, Steuben
Abbott Island, Pleasant Bay
St. John's Island, offshore from Swans Island
Lines Island, Merryeeting Bay
Upper Flag Island, Casco Bay
Inner White Island, offshore from South Bristol
Burnt Island, offshore from North Haven
Eagle Island, offshore from North Haven
Big Hen Island, offshore from Vinalhaven
Ram Island, offshore from Isle au Haut
Inner Sand Island, Pleasant Bay
Outer Heron Island, offshore from Boothbay Harbor
Two Bush Island, Matinicus Isle
Libby Island, Machiasport
Matinicus Rock, Matinicus Isle
Egg Rock, Frenchman Bay
Jordan's Delight, Harrington
Polypod Island, offshore from Deer Island
Schopee Island, offshore from Roque Bluffs
Little Marshall Island, offshore from Swans Island
Crane Island, Friendship
Flag Island, Casco Bay
Upper Goose Island, Casco Bay
Smuttnose Island, Brooklin
South Twinnie Island, Mount Desert Narrows
Duck Island, Isle of Shoals
Hart Island, St. George
Little Spoon Island, offshore from Isle au Haut
Pettingill Island, Casco Bay
Crowley Island, Pleasant Bay
Bowline Head Island, Pleasant Bay
Kemps Folly Island, Pleasant Bay
Drisko Island, Pleasant Bay
Thomas Island, Mount Desert Narrows
Mustard Island, Androscoggin River
Pinkham Island, Pleasant Bay
Strout Island, Pleasant Bay
Partridge Island, Pleasant Bay
Little Nash Island, Pleasant Bay
The Ladle, Pleasant Bay
Flat Island, Pleasant Bay
North Twinnie Island, Mount Desert Narrows
Ragged Island, Casco Bay (pending)

Nationally significant nesting islands in Casco Bay



Guillemots

Coastal Maine nesting islands with restoration programs

Petit Manan Island, ME Coastal Islands NWR
Ship Island, ME Coastal Islands NWR
Trumpet Island, ME Coastal Islands NWR
Matinicus Rock, ME Coastal Islands NWR
Seal Island NWR, ME Coastal Islands NWR
Pond Island, ME Coastal Islands NWR
Metinic Island, ME Coastal Islands NWR
Little Thrumcap, ME Coastal Islands NWR
Eastern Egg Rock, Muscongus Bay
Jenny Island, Casco Bay
Stratton Island, Casco Bay
Outer Green Island, Casco Bay

Remember that seabird islands are closed to the public during the nesting season, April 1 - August 31, to minimize disturbance to the birds.

For additional information on the nationally significant nesting islands, see:
http://www.fws.gov/northeast/gulfofmaine/projects/seabird_nesting.htm