



(PHOTO: USFWS) Through July 12th, 2019

MONOMOY NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE



BI-WEEKLY
NEWSLETTER
VOLUME THREE
2019

THIS ISSUE'S SPOTLIGHT: BEACH CLEAN UP VOLUNTEERS



C.BRADLEY//USFWS
VOLUNTEERS FOR BEACH CLEAN-UP

This issue's shoutout goes to the volunteers who helped out during our July 1st beach clean up! The group of 10 did a fantastic job carrying large amounts of debris off of South Monomoy Island and back to the mainland.

SUMMER HEATS UP THE REFUGE

We've seen a good number of hot and sunny days lately, bringing many visitors to the refuge. It's a great time to enjoy the outdoors by taking a walk along our trail, birding or fishing. Remember we are a pack in- pack out facility; leave only footprints, take only photographs.



CLEANING UP SOUTH MONOMOY

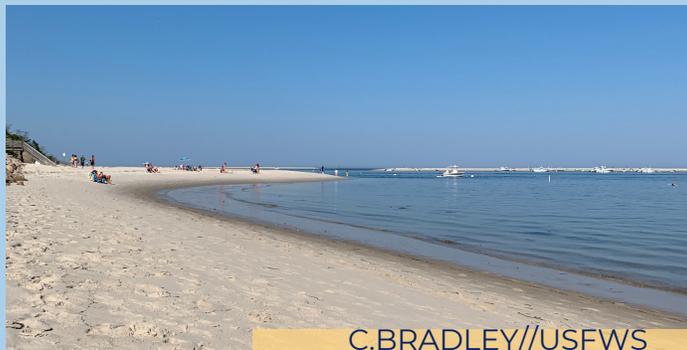


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TRASH COLLECTED DURING THE CLEAN UP ALONG WITH VOLUNTEERS

On July 1st refuge staff, volunteers, U.S. Coast Guard, and the Friends of Monomoy covered over 6 miles of South Monomoy Island to remove washed-up trash. In addition to derelict fishing gear, the most common encounters were balloons and plastic water bottles. We even removed a large inflatable kayak from the dunes! As you visit the beach this summer, and while making purchase decisions in general, please be mindful that plastics often enter our waterways and pose ever-increasing threats to wildlife and people. When you have a choice, choose a plastic alternative!

SAFETY AT THE REFUGE

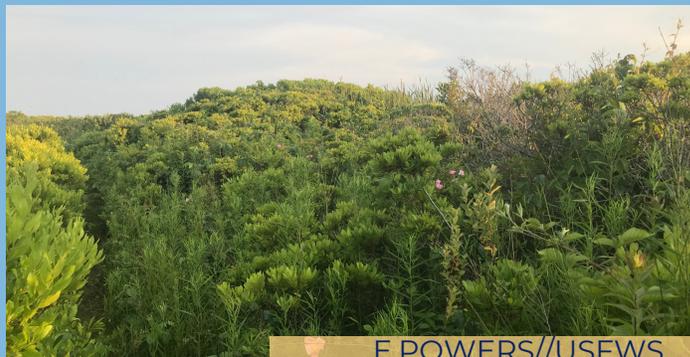


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BEACH ALONG MORRIS ISLAND

As the Monomoy remains a popular destination, we ask visitors to become familiar with refuge rules and regulations. Seals may be cute, but for your safety and theirs, please stay at least 150 feet away from them in the land and water. Always boat responsibly and follow maritime laws and regulations, while paying close attention to your surroundings. When best safety practices are not followed, wildlife and people can pay the price. For a full list of regulations please visit the refuge's website or stop by our visitor center.

LEAVE NO TRACE



E.POWERS//USFWS

PLANT LIFE ON NORTH MONOMOY

Monomoy is a pack it in, pack it out refuge, so any trash you bring in with you must be removed. Otherwise, it may end up along the trails, on the beach, and ultimately in our waters. As a wildlife refuge, part of our mission is to conserve, protect, and enhance wildlife habitat. You can support this mission by taking part in beach cleanups, and by picking up any trash you may encounter here or elsewhere. Take care of our lands and waters by leaving no trace!

GULLS, TERNS, AND AMPHIBIANS OH MY!

Monomoy isn't just home to shorebirds, seabirds, and seals; there are numerous amphibians and reptiles on the islands and in the surrounding waters. Fowler's toad, American toad, eastern ribbon snake, and common garter snake are all regular occurrences, while the Eastern hognose snake is present but seldom seen. Five species of sea turtle occur off the coast: green, hawksbill, Kemp's ridley, leatherback, and loggerhead sea turtles have all been during the warmer months. Monomoy is a diverse place!



A.ADAMS//USFWS

TOAD BURIED IN THE SAND

HANGIN' AROUND WITH THE CRABS



C.BRADLEY//USFWS

TWO HORSESHOE CRABS

Horseshoe crabs are one the oldest species we have on the refuge, dating back some 445 million years -- older even than the dinosaurs! They are not true crabs, and are more closely related to spiders and other arachnids. If handling these living fossils to, say, record a tag number, be sure to pick them up gently by the sides of their hard shell, never picking them up by the tail, as this can harm them. They're protected from all harvest throughout refuge lands and waters as their eggs are a critical food resource for numerous species from migratory and resident shorebirds to fish, insects, and many others. The horseshoe crab: a true keystone species.

PLOVERS WINDING DOWN

Six pairs of plovers have fledged eleven chicks so far. Ten more chicks from an additional five pairs are expected to fledge any day now. Six nests are late bloomers with eggs that are still being incubated. As the chicks leave the nest, the season begins to wind down for our biological staff. There has been no renesting activity for several weeks as the adults are running out of time in the season. This season has been particularly tough for piping plovers with many challenges from overwashing of nests and predation from gulls and grackles.



E.POWERS// USFWS

PLOVER CHICKS IN NEST

UPCOMING EVENTS

Guided Walks

Guided walks are still continuing throughout the summer. More walks will be available upon request Thursdays through Mondays from 10am-3pm. These tours are dependent on volunteer availability. The visitor center is more than happy to answer any questions you may have!

Fridays & Sundays
10:30am and 2:30 pm
Saturdays at 10:30am
Leaving from Visitor Center

Meet Our New Staff!!



Cory Shannon is our new full-time refuge maintenance worker. He is originally from Virginia and previously worked at the Cape Cod National Seashore. In addition to maintaining grounds and facilities, Cory will provide boat support to staff and researchers to island field camps. Welcome to the Monomoy team, Cory!

THANK YOU!



Friends of Monomoy

We'd like to thank the Friends of Monomoy for their continued work at the refuge. The smiling faces you'll see in the visitor center are often volunteers from our friends group!

MORE FROM THE FIELD

WHOSE TRACKS ARE THOSE?

We have another uncommon guest to the islands this season! Our field biologists observed deer tracks on South Monomoy last week. While there is no land path to the island, deer and coyote in particular routinely swim to and from.



A.ADAMS//USFWS
DEER TRACKS ON SOUTH MONOMOY

LENDING A HELPING HAND



L.REIN//USFWS
A SEAL HAULED OUT ON MONOMOY

We are sadly seeing more reports of seals that are injured either from propeller strikes or fishing gear entanglement. We work with the International Fund for Animal Welfare (IFAW) to rescue and treat seals affected by human interactions in addition to conducting research. They've been involved in proactive response on the offshore islands this week to respond to seals that need help before they've been called in and have been issued a special use permit to operate on the Monomoy Islands.

THE REFUGE IN BLOOM

South Monomoy is home to many plant species, some of which which are quite peculiar. Sundew is a carnivorous plant on the island that is quite breathtaking! The "dew" is actually a sticky fluid that traps insects so that the leaves can wrap around them to consume them.



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CARNIVOROUS ROUND-LEAVED SUNDEW



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