

# Monomoy National Wildlife Refuge

June 15 – June 21, 2014 [Issue 6]

Photo Credit: USFWS/Claire Revekant

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## Photo of the Week



Photo Credit: USFWS/Tanya Lama

## A Message from Monomoy

If you thought last week was productive, wait until you here about this week. The close of the tern A-census window has marked many firsts for the refuge, as chicks continue to hatch on the islands. On 6/16, the first least tern chick was found during census and two days later on 6/18, the colony hatched its first roseate chick of the season. And that's not all! On 6/19, common tern chicks were seen on North Monomoy adjacent to 2 pairs of black skimmers who seem to be sticking around for a while.

The Refuge is in full blossom and staff couldn't be more thrilled with all the recent excitement. Read on for more news and don't forget to look at our updated bird sighting list!

## 2014 Field Season Update

This is a weekly synopsis of biological activities on South Monomoy, North Monomoy, and Minimoy Islands. Information within this report is subject to change. For up to date information, please contact Refuge Staff.

## Bird Sightings

Double-crested cormorant	Black-bellied plover
Great black-backed gull	Semipalmated plover
Herring gull	Semipalmated sandpiper
Ring-billed gull	Sanderling
Glaucous gull	Dunlin
Iceland gull	Snowy owl
Laughing gull	Great egret
Bonaparte's gull	White-throated sparrow
Willet	Turkey vulture
Greater yellowlegs	Peregrine falcon
Lesser yellowlegs	Red-winged blackbird
Black-crowned night heron	Common grackle
Yellow-crowned night heron	Ruddy turnstone
Tricolored heron	Wilson's plover
Green heron (6/16)	Red Knot
American bittern	Seaside sparrow
White-rumped sandpiper	Northern gannet (6/21)
Least sandpiper	Common loon
Short-billed dowitcher	Common eider
Black tern	American black duck
Spotted sandpiper	Magnolia warbler
Whimbrel	Cedar waxwing
Razorbill	Brant goose
Mississippi kite (6/15)	Eastern kingbird
Glossy Ibis (6/19)	Willow flycatcher
Black scoter (6/21)	Barn swallow

## **Bird Activity**

### Piping Plovers (PIPL)

44 active PIPL pairs were documented on the refuge at the end of the week, with 11 active nests on South Monomoy, 2 active nests on Minimoy, and 1 nest on North Monomoy Island. Nest hatching continued this week with 5 nests hatching, bringing the total number of broods to 17, and a combined 38 chicks between them! Four PIPL nests were lost this week, one to grackle predation, one to possible coyote predation, one was washed out, and one lost to unknown causes due to weather washing away any potential evidence. Non-lethal predator management techniques continue to be implemented to protect nests, with six predator exclosures erected on South Monomoy as of June 7<sup>th</sup>.

### American Oystercatchers (AMOY)

A total of 12 nests have hatched to date on the Refuge, with 2 nests currently being incubated, and 9 chicks documented. All 4 nests on South Monomoy Island hatched, for a total of 5 chicks seen this week between 4 broods. Four nests hatched on North Monomoy Island based on evidence and parental behavior, though only one chick has been seen lately. One nest was lost to unknown causes. A remaining 1 nest continues to be incubated. Minimoy was not visited this week due to scheduling conflicts. Nests and chicks will continue to be monitored.

### Common Terns (COTE)

The colony has been booming with chicks after the first common tern chick hatched on June 11<sup>th</sup>. On June 15<sup>th</sup>, staff switched to checking A and B productivity plots to accommodate the increase in chicks. Additionally, trapping of 71 banded birds in the colony rendered 3 birds banded in Argentina and 23 birds banded on Monomoy. Staff has noticed a return in many 1<sup>st</sup> year terns and have observed a NOHA flying over the colony. Predation within the colony will continue to be monitored.

Tern census numbers are in the process of being adjusted using the Lincoln Index, and may factor in changes within productivity plots between the census date and June 20<sup>th</sup>. More detailed information will be provided once it becomes available. Tern census was performed on North Monomoy Island on Sunday, June 8<sup>th</sup>, with 22 nests found along the west side, north of the corridor. On June 19<sup>th</sup>, North Monomoy hatched 3 chicks with more on the way.

### Roseate Terns (ROST)

The first ROST chick hatched on 6/18 with a current total of 3 chicks between 2 broods. On June 20<sup>th</sup>, two chicks were fitted with PFR bands, blue bands with white characters. These bands are designated for Monomoy and will provide insight on ROST survival and movement. Day stints will continue, in hopes of locating additional nesting ROST pairs.

### Black Skimmers (BLSK)

Five BLSK have been seen loafing on the west side of North Monomoy on 6/18. Staff has been closely monitoring to see if the BLSK remain and nest.

### Least Terns (LETE)

Least tern census occurred on 6/16 and 6/18 along west beach, the south tip, and east beach. Final numbers conclude 376 nests and 48 chicks! This is an increase from the 261 nests discovered last year.

### Laughing Gulls (LAGU)

Census numbers will follow shortly.

## **Roseate habitat restoration Project**

No new information to report.

## **iPlover**

After previous complications inhibited use of the iPlover app, staff has been playing catchup with uploading nest sites. Twelve more nests have been uploaded recently and the app is now working properly.

## **Salt Marsh Integrity**

On 6/17, staff attended a SMI training session at Parker River National Wildlife Refuge to learn how to sample nekton, establish marker horizons, and measure SETs. This informational was also joined by 3 other refuges, including Rachel Carson, Rhode Island complex, and Stewart B. McKinney.

Back at the refuge, glueing mesh to the level logger housings proved successful in inhibiting sediment from entering. Therefore, the barometer and water level logger were re-installed on North Monomoy and Morris Island, respectively. Another water level logger is planned to be installed at Hospital Pond on South Monomoy next week.

### Horseshoe Crab Tagging

Next week will mark the end of the last HSC window for re-sighting and tagging. Staff plans to tag another 75 crabs on June 27<sup>th</sup> and re-sight June 25<sup>th</sup> & 26<sup>th</sup>.

### Current & Upcoming Events

<b>SMI Training</b>	<b>June 17</b>
<b>Least Tern Census</b>	<b>June 16,18</b>
<b>Last Day of Tern Census</b>	<b>June 20</b>
<b>Horseshoe Crab Re-sighting</b>	<b>June 25-26</b>
<b>Horseshoe Crab Tagging</b>	<b>June 27</b>

JUNE 2014						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
25	26	27	28	29	30	31
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	1	2	3	4	5