

Monomoy National Wildlife Refuge

June 22 – June 28, 2014 [Issue 7]

Photo Credit: USFWS/Yianni Laskaris

Inside This Issue

- 1 Message from Monomoy
- 1 2014 Field Season Update
- 1 Bird Sightings
- 2 Bird Activity
- 2 Predator Removal and Invasive Species Control
- 3 Roseate Habitat Restoration
- 3 iPlover
- 3 Salt Marsh Integrity
- 3 Horseshoe Crab Tagging

Photo of the Week



Photo Credit: USFWS/Tanya Lama

A Message from Monomoy

The visitor center grows ever busier, as July 4th creeps around the corner! Guided tours have become a highly requested activity as visitors from east and west seek to discover the beauty of Monomoy. Our visitor services program has been working alongside Ryan Brigdan, of Phillips Academy Andover to provide an inside look at our seasonal biological staff and programs, to share with the Friends of Monomoy and the greater community!

Our biological programs continue to progress at full steam, with plover and oystercatcher chicks at the brink of fledging. Not quite as far along are the hordes of ruffled COTE chicks scuttling about; quite an intriguing sight!

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	Red Knot
American bittern	Seaside sparrow
White-rumped sandpiper	Northern gannet
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	Eastern kingbird
Glossy Ibis	Willow flycatcher
Black scoter	Barn swallow

Bird Activity

Piping Plovers (PIPL)

The Refuge's only banded plover GF/C/C:Y/W returned again for another season, with his first nest found on 6/22. 40 active PIPL pairs and 5 new nests were documented on the refuge at the end of the week. This concludes 16 active nests on South Monomoy, 1 active nest on Minimoy, and 1 nest on North Monomoy Island. Two nests hatched this week, bringing the total number of broods to 19, and a combined 36 chicks between them! One nest failed on Minimoy 6/22 due to overwash. No nests failed on SMNY this week due to predation, but staff noted 2 nests partially predated by COGR. Staff will continue to monitor nests and chicks. Additionally, a PIPL chick was found dead on 6/27. Though the cause of death was unknown, coyote tracks were documented nearby.

American Oystercatchers (AMOY)

A total of 11 nests have hatched to date on the Refuge, with 2 nests currently being incubated, and 8 chicks documented. Three nests on South Monomoy Island have hatched, for a total of 5 chicks seen this week between 3 broods. Four broods are believed to be on North Monomoy Island based on evidence and parental behavior, though only two chicks have been seen. Additionally, one renest lost an egg to unknown causes on 6/24.

Minomoy was checked once this week on 6/22, where 4 active broods are now suspected. 3 chicks were seen on this date. Of the two remaining nests, one continues to be incubated while the second was found to have failed to unknown causes.

Common Terns (COTE)

Tern census numbers are in, drum roll please! Staff calculated **8526 pairs** in the colony with 22 nests found on North Monomoy. This is a 1000 pair jump from the 7526 pairs counted last year. Census numbers were adjusted using Lincoln Index (LI), a calculation that takes into consideration nests missed on census date. There were 2 lines that walked through the colony on 2 separate days. Since each line walked a different part of the colony, a LI had to be calculated for each line. Because tern census was conducted 2 weeks prior to the end of census on June 20th, numbers had to be adjusted further to account for nests yet to be laid. In order to do this, additional nests laid in productivity plots after the census dates were extrapolated to the rest of the colony.

In other news, the first COTE chick to reach the 15 day mark was recorded on 6/26. Feeding stints were initiated on 6/27, allowing staff to identify, and measure the relative proportions of fish species provided to chicks. Feeding stints will occur daily as time allows.

Roseate Terns (ROST)

As of June 28th, 3 of 8 ROST nests have hatched, with 3 ROST chicks hatching this past week for a total of 5 chicks between 3 broods. ROST chicks continue to be banded with blue PFR bands. Three adult ROST were trapped on 6/24 and 3 adults were trapped and banded on 6/28. 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)

Four BLSK have been seen loafing on the west side of North Monomoy on 6/22. Staff has been closely monitoring to see if the BLSK remain and nest.

Least Terns (LETE)

A least tern chick was found dead from unknown causes on June 27th at Lighthouse Beach. Coyote tracks were seen in the area but it remains unclear if the coyote is the culprit for the LETE death.

Laughing Gulls (LAGU)

Census revealed 983 LAGUs in the tern colony. This is only a slight increase from the 974 nests counted last year.

Roseate habitat restoration Project

Photo plots were taken again this week, though no significant differences were noted with regards to goldenrod growth.

iPlover

Staff has recorded 27 plover nests with iPlover to date, with 16 nest entries taken this week.

Salt Marsh Integrity

Work on the SMI project continues, with nekton sampling preparations in full gear. The sampling windows have been organized for the last two weeks of July and first week of August. Materials have also been ordered for throw trap, ditch net, and dip net fabrication.

Regarding water level monitoring, a second levellogger was installed at Hospital Pond on 6/22. Additional levellogger housings are planned to be installed on Minimoy and North Monomoy Islands.

Horseshoe Crab Tagging

This week marked the end of the last HSC window for re-sighting and tagging. Staff tagged 75 crabs at the north end of South Monomoy on June 26th. On June 25th, the Refuge had 2 volunteers come out and re-sight crabs.

Northeast beach tiger beetles

Initial surveys to determine if Northeast beach tiger beetles (NBTB) have begun emerging to mate will occur between 6/30 and 7/3.

Current & Upcoming Events

HSC Resighting Surveys	June 29
Preliminary NBTB Surveys	June 30-July 3
Nekton Sampling Window	July 21-Aug 8

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