

# Monomoy National Wildlife Refuge

June 29 – July 5, 2014 [Issue 8]

Photo Credit: USFWS/Yianni Laskaris

## A Message from Monomoy

**\*HURRICANE ARTHUR WARNING – PRE-HURRICANE NUMBERS TO REPORT\***

Independence Day wasn't quite what staff expected in the wake of a tropical storm bearing down on the refuge. The beginning of the week was busy in preparation of Arthur's arrival. With plover chicks fledging and ROST chicks hatching, the very first AMOY chick to hatch on South Monomoy received its bands [YE(OP)] as camp closed on July 2<sup>nd</sup>.

The visitor center is predicted to be bustling with visitors following the success of their first themed week and heading into their second week; marine mammals. So if you have time in your busy schedules, come on down to learn about the multitude of marine mammals that call Cape Cod their home!

## 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  
Great black-backed gull  
Herring gull  
Ring-billed gull  
Glaucous gull  
Iceland gull  
Laughing gull  
Bonaparte's gull  
Willet  
Greater yellowlegs  
Lesser yellowlegs  
Black-crowned night heron  
Yellow-crowned night heron  
Tricolored heron  
Green heron  
American bittern  
White-rumped sandpiper  
Least sandpiper  
Short-billed dowitcher  
Black tern  
Spotted sandpiper  
Whimbrel  
Razorbill  
Mississippi kite  
Glossy ibis  
Black scoter

Black-bellied plover  
Semipalmated plover  
Semipalmated sandpiper  
Sanderling  
Dunlin  
Snowy owl  
Great egret  
White-throated sparrow  
Turkey vulture  
Peregrine falcon  
Red-winged blackbird  
Common grackle  
Ruddy turnstone  
Wilson's plover  
Red Knot  
Seaside sparrow  
Northern gannet  
Common loon  
Common eider  
American black duck  
Magnolia warbler  
Cedar waxwing  
Brant goose  
Eastern kingbird  
Willow flycatcher  
Barn swallow

## 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/Kim Spiller

## **Bird Activity**

### Piping Plovers (PIPL)

Data this week only represents PIPL observations dating before the July 4<sup>th</sup> tropical storm.

Currently there are currently 21 active broods, 5 fledged chicks, and 10 active nests documented on the refuge. Between these active broods are a total of 46 chicks, many of which are due to fledge in the coming week! Included in this count are the broods on Minomoy and North Monomoy Island, which have 3 chicks and 1 chick, respectively. No new nests were found this week, though more may be found due to weather preventing staff from being on island. Three nests were lost due to possible COGR predation, with tracks and broken eggshells found near depredated nests. More information will be provided as it becomes available.

### American Oystercatchers (AMOY)

A total of 11 nests have hatched to date on the Refuge, with 3 nests currently being incubated, and 6 chicks documented. There are currently 3 broods on SMNY and 2 chicks distributed between 2. The third pair is believed to have a brood based on parental behavior. The same is true for the 4 broods on NMNY where 2 chicks have been seen between 2 broods this week. Additionally, one re-nest was found on 6/29 bringing the total number of incubated nests on NMNY to 2.

Minomoy was checked once this week on 6/30, where 4 active broods are suspected. Two chicks were seen on this date. One nest continues to be incubated and is expected to hatch next week. One egg was found to be missing on 6/30.

On 2 July the first chick of the season from nest 1A on SMNY was banded by staff. Keep a lookout for YE(OP) and please report if seen!

### Common Terns (COTE)

The colony has been dealing with high predator activity and noted 2 great black-backed gulls, a northern harrier, and a black-crowned night heron in the colony on 6/30. Productivity will reveal how damaging the storm was next week.

Feeding stints were initiated on 6/27, allowing staff to identify, and measure the relative proportions of fish species provided to chicks. Staff has noticed blue fish, herring, pollock,

and butterfish being fed to chicks, although squid has been seen scattered in the colony. The majority of chick diet consists of sand lance. Feeding stints will occur daily as time allows.

### Roseate Terns (ROST)

6 of 8 ROST nests have hatched to date, with 6 ROST chicks hatching this past week for a total of 11 chicks (2 of which are hybrids!) between 6 broods. Nine ROST chicks have received PFR bands and 3 chicks are now over 15 days old. Day stints will continue, in hopes of locating additional nesting ROST pairs.

### Black Skimmers (BLSK)

Two pairs of BLSK continue to roam around the refuge, being seen multiple times in and near the tern colony this week. Staff has been closely monitoring to see if the BLSK remain and nest.

### Least Terns (LETE)

No new information to report.

### Laughing Gulls (LAGU)

No new information to report.

## **Roseate habitat restoration Project**

No new information to report.

## **iPlover**

Staff has recorded 38 plover nests with iPlover to date, with 11 nest entries taken this week.

## **Salt Marsh Integrity**

Nekton sampling preparations continue this week, with plans to mark each nekton sampling station, starting with North Monomoy sites on June 6<sup>th</sup>. Water level data continues to be collected at the Morris Island and Hospital Pond units. Throw trap, ditch net, and dip net fabrication are also planned for this week.

## **Northeast beach tiger beetles**

Surveys for Northeast beach tiger beetles (NBTB) are planned to occur this week, weather permitting, on July 10<sup>th</sup>.

## Visitor Services

Our visitor services staff have successfully launched their first themed week, focusing on marine invertebrates. Activities included bringing children down to refuge mudflats on an invert scavenger hunt! Marine mammal week is planned for this week, with interactive exhibits on whale song and marine mammal length quizzes.

## Current & Upcoming Events

<b>HSC Resighting Surveys</b>	<b>June 29</b>
<b>Bio Discussion: AMOYs</b>	<b>July 8</b>
<b>NBTB Surveys</b>	<b>July 10</b>
<b>ROST Staging Training</b>	<b>July 14</b>
<b>SMI: Nekton Sampling Window</b>	<b>July 21-Aug 8</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