

Monomoy National Wildlife Refuge

May 24 – May 30, 2015 [Issue 3]

Photo Credit: USFWS/Rob Finer

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Photo of the Week



Photo Credit: USFWS/Claire Revekant

A Message from Monomoy

A bout of high winds and fog may have slowed staff down in the beginning of the week, but they were sure not down for the count! Camp was closed the night of 5/25 and re-opened the morning of 5/28. During this time, PIPL and AMOY nest checking was limited as Monomoy was forced to wait out the finicky Cape Cod weather. Once the winds died down, staff wasted no time nanotagging 12 PIPLs on South Beach and South Monomoy Island, starting productivity and stints in the tern colony, and continuing AMOY census on the Refuge.

After noting hundreds of breeding horseshoe crabs on the Refuge, Monomoy is gearing up for a round of HSC tagging on South Monomoy and North Monomoy Island next week. And with a high count of over 8000 pairs of terns, staff is anticipating another fruitful census in a couple weeks!

2015 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	Sanderling
Great black-backed gull	Dunlin
Herring gull	White-winged scoter
Ring-billed gull	Black Scoter
Iceland gull	Common eider
Laughing gull	Red-breasted merganser
Bonaparte's gull	Blue-winged teal
Great egret	American black duck
Snowy egret	Northern Gannet (5/4)
Killdeer	Horned lark
Willet	Saltmarsh sparrow
Great yellowlegs	Magnolia warbler
Black-crowned night heron	American goldfinch
Whimbrel	Gray catbird
Barn swallow	Song Sparrow (5/30)
Tree swallow	Turkey vulture
Least sandpiper	Peregrine falcon
Ruddy turnstone	Bald eagle
Killdeer	Northern Harrier
Black-bellied plover	Osprey
Semipalmated plover	Red-winged blackbird
Semipalmated sandpiper	

Bird Activity

Piping Plovers (PIPL)

Seven new nests were located this week, for a total of 35 active PIPL nests on the Refuge. On 5/29, Monomoy welcomed its first 2 chicks at Plover Beach! No PIPL nests have been lost to date, although one nest experienced partial egg loss to unknown cause on 5/30. Staff notes continued incubation of the 1 egg nest by the parents.

PIPLs have been seen feeding on Minimoy and North Monomoy Island. No new scraping or territorial behavioral cues have been noted by staff.

Non-lethal predator management techniques (plover exclosures) have not been implemented at this time. Staff will erect exclosures once predation becomes an issue.

American Oystercatchers (AMOY)

AMOY census continues as staff documents new pairs and nests on the Refuge. One new nest was found on North Monomoy Island and Minimoy on 25 May. A total of 6 nests on South Monomoy, 4 nests on North Monomoy, and 5 nests on Minimoy have been located, for an updated total of 15 nests on the Refuge. The first nest is expected to hatch 6/2 on South Monomoy Island.

On 5/22, North Monomoy Island was visited by AMOY YE(AA5) with a triangle band orientation. This bird was banded in 2013 as a chick on Nantucket and was seen with an unbanded adult!

Common Terns (COTE)

Due to high winds, camp was closed the night of 5/25 and re-opened the morning of 5/28. Regardless, staff was able to finish erecting 35 productivity plots on 5/29 and start productivity on 5/30. Staff was also busy assembling 3 blinds around the colony and starting kleptoparasitism stints on 5/30. The blinds will be used to conduct stints without causing stress in the colony.

Black-crowned night heron (BCNH) predation pressures continue in the colony this week. On 28 May, staff noted COTES chasing 2 BCNH from the beach. On 5/30, 2 eggs were found predated by BCNH in the colony.

High count for this week is ~8500-9000 pairs!

Roseate Terns (ROST)

The first ROST nest was found by the north sound system on 5/25! Staff continued to locate 5 more nests, for a total of 6 nests spread throughout the colony near the sound systems and north wash. Day stints started on 5/30 in hopes of locating more pairs and nests, as the second sound system was setup in the colony on 5/29. Staff will continue to monitor the colony and camp for ROST presence.

And more good news! The colony staff re-sighted a ROST with PFR F09 this week. ROST F09 was first documented nesting on the Refuge in 2011. Staff has noted additional ROSTs with PFRs in the colony and hope to re-sight their bands as day stints continue.

Least Terns (LETE)

LETES have been seen scraping on South Monomoy and Minimoy Islands. On 5/24 the first LETE nest was found on South Monomoy Island at the south end. Nests continue to be located at the old Powder Hole Inlet, south tip, Plover Beach, and northeast beach. On 25 May, staff found LETE nests on Minimoy.

Laughing Gulls (LAGU)

No new information to report.

Roseate habitat restoration Project

New new information to report.

Nanotag Project

Monomoy was excited to hit the ground running with the nanotag project this week. On 5/29, Mass Audubon and Refuge staff assisted in trapping and tagging 12 PIPLs; 3 on South Beach and 9 from the Refuge. Due to hatching events, staff was unable to trap more nests within the 1km criteria of the radio tower installed at Hospital Pond. With 13 more PIPLs to go before reaching the target goal of 25, the Refuge plans to trap more PIPLs on South Beach and Monomoy in the coming weeks.

And that's not all! Trapping events ended in staff nanotagging the only banded PIPL nesting on the Refuge. The banded individual was first documented nesting on South Monomoy Island in 2012 and was banded in Florida. See "Photo of Week" for reference.

Exclosure Study

No new information to report. Staff continues to collect necessary data for the study.

Salt Marsh Integrity

No new information to report.

Current & Upcoming Events

- AMOY Census Window** **May 22-31**
- Plover Census Window** **June 1-9**
- Shorebird Survey Window 3** **May 14-29**
- Plover Trapping Window** **May 24-26**
- COTE/ROST Census** **June 9-10**
- HSC Tagging** **June 2, 3, 16, 17
& July 2**

May 2015

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					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
31						