



Monomoy National Wildlife Refuge

July 1st – July 17th, 2016 [Issue 2]

Photo Credit: Peter Paton

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Photo of the Week



Photo Credit: USFWS/Peter Paton

A Message from Monomoy

Fledging shorebird chicks are the prime sight to see during the month of July! However, with a great shorebird population comes great responsibility. Since the last update, refuge staff has been very busy monitoring, mass banding, and surveying these birds.

On top of Common Tern chicks fledging in one of the largest colonies on the eastern coast, Piping Plover, American Oystercatcher, and Roseate Tern chicks are fledging as well. Being in a critical time like this, it is necessary to be extra cautious of activity within and surrounding the nesting shorebird zones!

2016 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	Sanderling
Laughing gull	Dunlin
Bonaparte's gull	White-winged scoter
Great egret	Common eider
Snowy egret	Black duck
Killdeer	Horned lark
Willet	Saltmarsh sparrow
Black-crowned night heron	Peregrine falcon
Barn swallow	Northern Harrier
Least sandpiper	Red-winged blackbird
Ruddy Turnstone	American crow
Common Loon	Osprey
Red-tailed Hawk	Gray Catbird

Bird Activity

Piping Plovers (PIPL)

On South Monomoy Island, of the 43 active pairs, 15 pairs have fledged 29 chicks. There are 14 pairs with 29 chicks that will fledge in late July or early August. There are still 5 nests with a total of 10 eggs that are set to hatch this week. Three pairs lost their broods, 2 to Laughing Gulls and 1 to unknown causes. Six pairs lost their nests to predation or unknown causes and failed to have a successful re-nest.

The 2 PIPL nest on North Monomoy have hatched and staff have been unable to locate those broods this week. They will continue to be monitored.

The one pair of PIPL on Minimoy has successfully hatched 4 chicks and staff will continue to monitor that brood.

American Oystercatchers (AMOY)

On South Monomoy Island one new nest was found this week bringing the total number of pairs to 9. Of these 9 pairs, 4 have fledged 8 chicks and there are 3 pairs that have 4 unfledged chicks between them. Two pairs have lost their nest and have not re-nested.

On North Monomoy Island of the 5 active pairs, 1 pair has fledged 1 chick while 2 pairs have 4 unfledged chicks between them. Two pairs of AMOYs have lost their nest and failed to re-nest.

On Minimoy all three pairs have fledged a total of 9 chicks! There are no remaining broods or nest to monitor.

Common Terns (COTE)

Approximately 580 chicks have been banded inside productivity plots and will continue to be monitored throughout the nesting season. With the season starting to wind down, staff are now monitoring 18 plots with 18 chicks being removed due to all the chicks fledging within those plots. Staff performs feeding and kleptoparasitism stints daily within the colony.

The tern colony is regularly monitored for tern mortality and especially for fledglings demonstrating symptoms of salmonellosis. The salmonella bacterium is often naturally present at low levels in seabirds and outbreaks commonly manifest in large colonies of nesting terns and gulls. Symptoms

of salmonella have been documented in the colony this year in several fledglings.

To date, five fledglings have been sent to the National Wildlife Health Center in Madison, WI and thus far, results suggest salmonellosis. We will be receiving final results soon. In the meantime, work in the colony is limited to activities that are necessary for data collection and activities deemed stressful that involve long periods of disturbance have been eliminated from daily work. Annual mass banding was halted around 867 to minimize such stress within the colony. Staff is taking extra precautions to avoid spreading the bacterium from dead to live birds and to protect themselves.

Roseate Terns (ROST)

As of July 17th, 12 ROST chicks have fledged from 7 nests, though refuge staff is expecting more in the coming weeks. There are still 3 active nests remaining and 3 nests have failed. No new nests have been found.

Black Skimmers (BSLK)

No new information to report. BLSK have not been sighted on the refuge.

Least Terns (LETE)

Least terns have been spotted on South Monomoy between plover beach and the Lighthouse on the east side of South Monomoy Island and have also been scraping on Minimoy Island! Least tern census was performed on South Monomoy Island and Minimoy Island between June 16th and 20th though numbers have yet to be compiled.

Laughing Gulls (LAGU)

No new information to report.

Northeastern Beach Tiger Beetle (NBTB)

This past week, one of our volunteers conducted the first NBTB survey, finding 2,349 adult NBTB. In the upcoming week, refuge staff plan to conduct a range survey on 7/21.

Roseate habitat restoration Project

Monomoy's dedication to create suitable habitat for the endangered roseate tern was accomplished through last years efforts.

A habitat restoration controlled burn was conducted last year in order to make the

habitat more suitable for Common and Roseate terns. The project proved successful as the main colony's nesting area has expanded. Staff continue to monitor the roseate tern habitat area by taking photo to document growth of plantings and long term success of the project.

Nanotag Project

No new information to report.

Exclosure Study

No new information to report.

Horseshoe Crab (HSC)

No new information to report.

Salt Marsh Integrity

No new information to report.

BREAKing News and Accessibility

Over the winter, the break continued to follow a similar pattern as in 2014 and 2015. Sand from outside of the cut continues to push into the southway, creating new shoals for boat operators to navigate. Access to the southern half of the southway is similar to 2015 where it is navigable 3 hours before and 2 hours after high tide. The current navigable channel is complex to describe however the Chatham Harbormaster has marked the northern portion of the break with a series of red bouys. This channel is accessible off of H bouy on the eastern end of the Morris Island Channel. The southern portion of the break is unmarked but staff have currently been using a small channel off the north tip of South Beach. In addition to tide restrictions, northward and eastward winds causing large waves to roll into the shoals can make the break impassable. We expect weather and tides to continue to play an important role in accessibility of the northern portion of South Monomoy Island this year and are embracing the logistical conundrum as best possible.

Visitor Services

The camera that was set up in the colony to broadcast live footage of nesting common terns back to the visitor center is now down for the season. A lot of great footage was broadcasted back the visitor center during the time it was running and was a huge success. Some minor glitches will be ironed

out over the winter and we are looking forward to it's return next season.

The Friends of Monomoy hosted their second talk this summer on 7/13 titled "Conservation: White Sharks in the North Atlantic". It was considered a success with over 80 members of the public showing up.

The second edition of Exposure To NatureDay will be held on 7/24. This event is purposed to bring people of all ages from around the area to enjoy the great wildlife and environment the refuge has to offer. The event consists of a wildlife presentation, an interpretive trail walk, an interactive game, and a fun craft station.

Current & Upcoming Events

2016 JULY						
SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
					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						

2016 AUGUST						
SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
	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			

Exposure to Nature Day

July 24th

Shorebird trapping

July 30th-August

6th, August 26th-

September 1st

