

Seabird Island News

Volume 3

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Seabirds

With the arrival of the first day of summer, tern surveys and feeding studies are keeping the island teams very busy! There have also been some exciting bird visitors spotted at the islands. Notable sightings included a Great Cormorant on Outer Green Island, a King Eider on Matinicus Rock, and a lingering group of Brant on Stratton Island, as well as a confirmed Gadwall nest.

Puffins

Puffins are continuing to hatch on Matinicus Rock, Eastern Egg Rock, and Seal Island NWR where we are all eagerly waiting for the Explore.org burrow cam egg to hatch. Perhaps by the end of this week!



SJ Kwiatkowski with Common Terns on Pond Island NWR. Photo: Siyu Wang

survived several days of intense rain and wind this week as the parents stayed tight on their nests during the wet weather.



Sue Schubel, Assistant Sanctuary Manager, gets an adorable chomp from a Great Black-backed Gull chick at Western Egg Rock. Photo: Eastern Egg Rock Instagram (@easterneggrock)

Terns

Tern chicks are hatching now at all seven of the SRP islands as the first wave of eggs reaches peak hatch. This synchronized hatch has great value to deter predators as it also coincides with greater defense from parent terns.

The very young chicks and eggs

Our team on Pond Island NWR conducted a tern survey and tallied 1,155 pairs of Common Terns, a new record high count for the island. Their first tern chick was discovered with great excitement on June 18th!

Stratton Island had an exciting find as well: their first Roseate Tern chick of the season!

Other Bird News

Eastern Egg Rock also conducted a tern census this week and found 989 Common Tern nests and 333 Laughing Gull nests.

On neighboring Western Egg Rock, our census of the Great Black-backed,

Herring, and Laughing Gulls, counted 159 active laughing gull nests, a much lower number than last year's 800 pairs. More than a thousand pairs have left Muscongus Bay, which is good news for puffins and terns as Laughing Gulls take food from parent terns and puffins. They can also eat tern eggs and chicks.

Island Life

Some islanders have decided to try out five-minute yoga to keep their minds and bodies sharp, and are also getting in touch with the island vegetation by finding new recipes for stinging nettle.



Creature comforts! A new pit toilet was installed this year at Eastern Egg Rock. A microburst destroyed the original one late last season. Photo: Don Lyons