

Seabird Island News

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Seabirds

The 2019 field season across our Islands has officially ended! Researchers from all seven Project Puffin islands are flocking back to base to compile data and share highlights. About 75 seabird biologists and volunteers across Maine participated in the annual Gulf of Maine Seabird Working Group (GOMSWG) conference at Hog Island. They presented the highlights of the summer and gave preliminary research reports about tracking seabirds, ecology and monitoring methods.

Puffins

Early looks at GOMSWG data show an excellent year for Atlantic Puffins, with 188 confirmed nesting pairs on Eastern Egg Rock, a record-high from last year's 178 pairs! Seal Island NWR has also reported a healthy population of 573 pairs, up from 565 in 2018.

Terns

Eastern Egg Rock's Common Tern count for 2019 shows a steady number from last year, with 1067 nests. While terns are now slowly leaving the islands, a large number remain to finish chick rearing and the start of the fall migration.

Other Bird News

- The Eastern Egg Rock Brant remains on the island, joined by more than a hundred Ruddy Turnstones.
- Fall migrants are starting to share the Gulf of Maine, with Bonaparte's Gulls and Ring-Billed Gulls mingling in coastal brackish water.



The "Eastern Egg Rock Brant"

- Black Guillemot fledglings have started to fledge. Good luck Guillies!



The Matinicus Rock team hamming it up before departure.

Island Life

Researchers had a busy week closing up the islands, with some groups having to travel back and forth to fully close down due to inclement weather.

While many puffins have departed for their post-summer migration, our boat tours continue to encounter an exciting variety of wildlife. Massive bluefin tuna, ocean sunfish, harbor seals, and the occasional whale have been making regular appearances around Eastern Egg Rock.

Congresswoman Chellie Pingree also visited Eastern Egg Rock, the first congressperson ever to visit the island. For more about her visit read the [Bangor Daily News article](#).