

Seabird Island News

Volume 10

July 29, 2018

Seabirds

Puffins

Our Atlantic Puffin breeding season will soon close and the research crews have been hard at work "grubbing" puffin chicks - or lifting them out of their burrows to monitor their health. The first Seal Island NWR puffin to fledge was reported July 25th!



"Grubbing" for puffins on Seal Island NWR.
Photo: Tiffany Huenefeldt

Terns

The vast majority of tern chicks have left their nests to fledge. Many of the more southern islands managed by the Seabird Restoration Program are starting to wind down operations by dismantling blinds and packing equipment. Unfortunately, most islands reported a lack of suitable fish and infrequent chick feedings. Early hatched chicks are on the wing, but chicks hatched later in the summer are losing weight and many have died. More than a full week of fog and drizzle, combined with a drop in food have taken a toll on tern chicks. Happily, many federally endangered Roseate Tern fledglings are flying and have been seen moving from hatch islands to other Maine tern nesting islands.

Other Birds

In other bird news, the first Black Guillemot chicks of the season have fledged. Our Explore.org Black



A Black Guillemot near fledging size.
Photo: Steve Kress

Guillemot star, "Gillie," received ample feedings of rock gunnells and has gained all of her juvenile feathers. She may soon leave her nest for the ocean! Meanwhile, island numbers of migratory shorebirds and warblers are starting to build.

Island Life

This week's weather has challenged both birds AND researchers, with a combination of hot temperatures, heavy rain, dense fog, and high seas. Many of our teams spent time inside, reviewing the data collected and entering it into databases. Where chicks have fledged, our researchers are now focusing on the important task of maintaining seabird nesting habitat on the island by removing immense amounts of invasive, non-native vegetation, ensuring the birds will have a suitable place to nest next year.



Peruvian flag brownie in honor of Peru Independence Day on July 28th, celebrated by the Egg Rock team where Lyanne Ampuero Merino, one of the Herz International Seabird Interns is working.