American Oystercatchers in Virginia

2006 summary

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The Nature Conservancy
SAVING THE LAST GREAT PLACES ON EARTH

VIRGINIA
Department of Game & Inland Fisheries

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2006 summary

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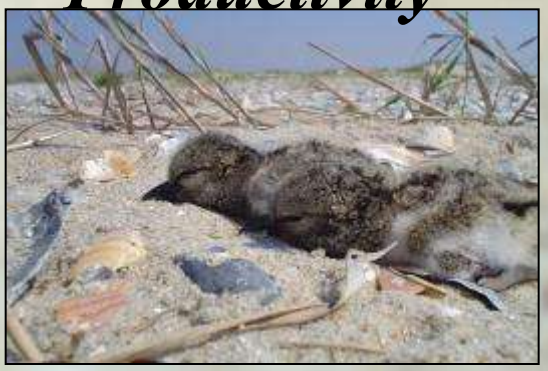
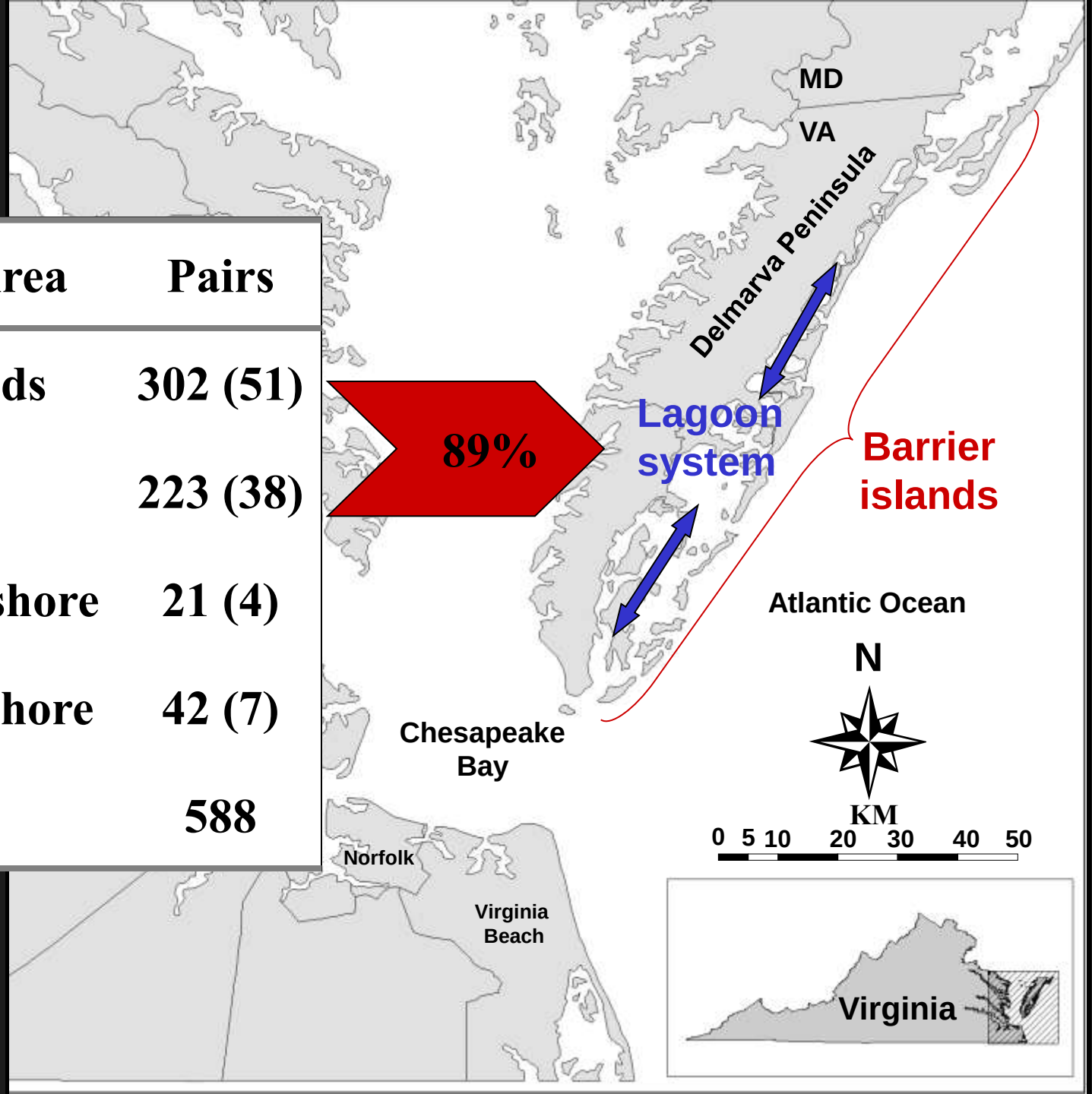
Productivity



Annual Survey

Banding

Geographic Area	Pairs
Barrier islands	302 (51)
Lagoon	223 (38)
Bay – western shore	21 (4)
Bay – eastern shore	42 (7)
State total	588

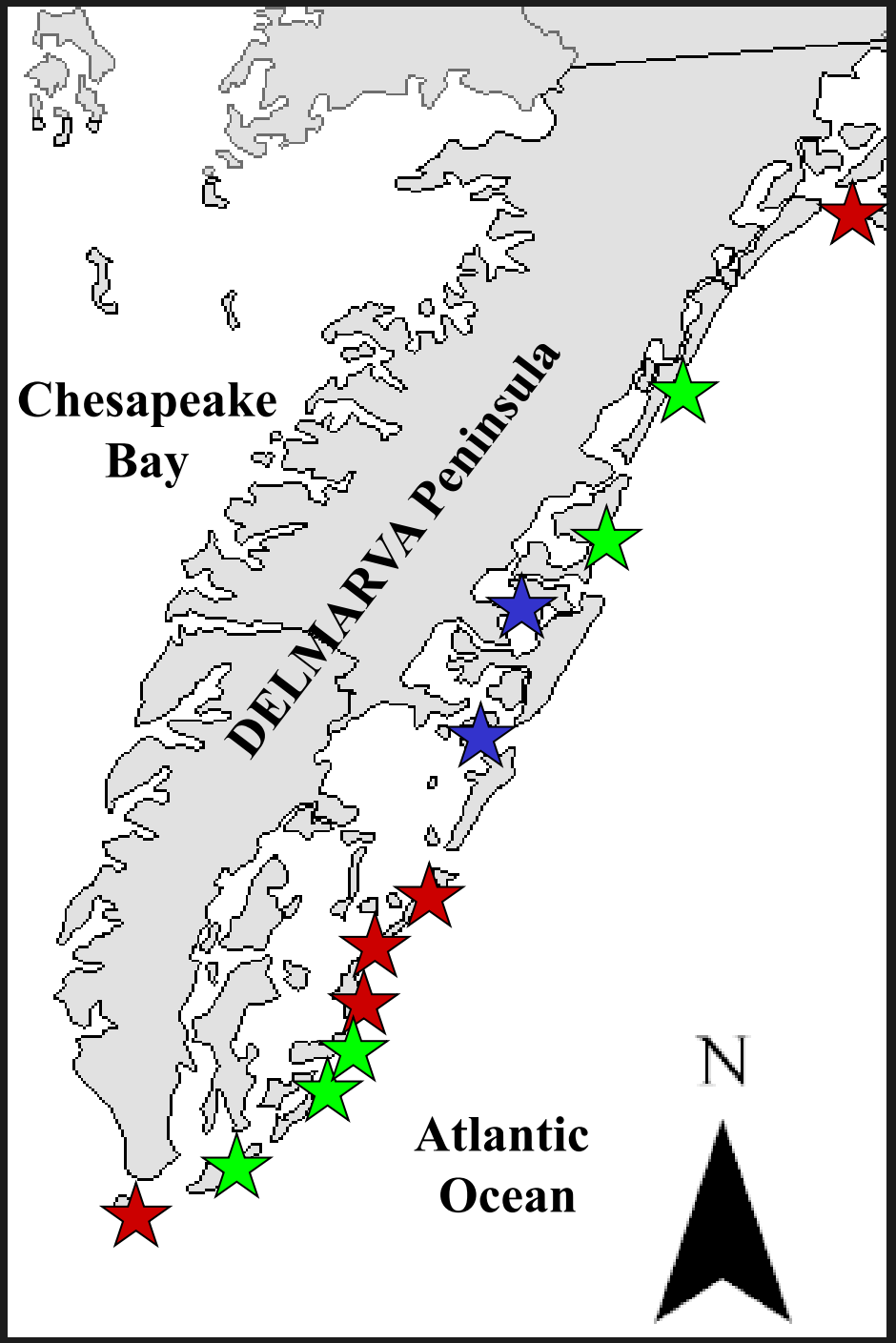


Wilke et al. 2005

Virginia Eastern Shore: Conservation Ownership and Easements
Conservation Lands
TNC Preserve
Other TNC Ownership
TNC Conservation Easement
The Conservation Fund
Ducks Unlimited Easement
VA Eastern Shore Land Trust Easement
Chesapeake Bay Foundation Easement
VOF Easement
Federal Land
State Land
Ag/Forestal District
Indicates Project In Progress
Other Features
State/County Boundary
Major Road
Other Road
Water
MAP AREA
The Nature Conservancy
SAVING THE LAST GREAT PLACES ON EARTH
While every effort has been made to ensure that this map and the data from which it is derived are accurate and reliable within limits of the current state of the art, TNC cannot assume liability for any damages caused by inaccuracies in the map or supporting data. TNC makes no warranty, express or implied, nor does the fact of distribution constitute such a warranty.
Data sources: TNC, VMRC, VA-DCR, VA-DGIF, Ducks Unlimited, The Conservation Fund, ESRI
Produced by TNC-VA May, 2005 (C. Bruce)

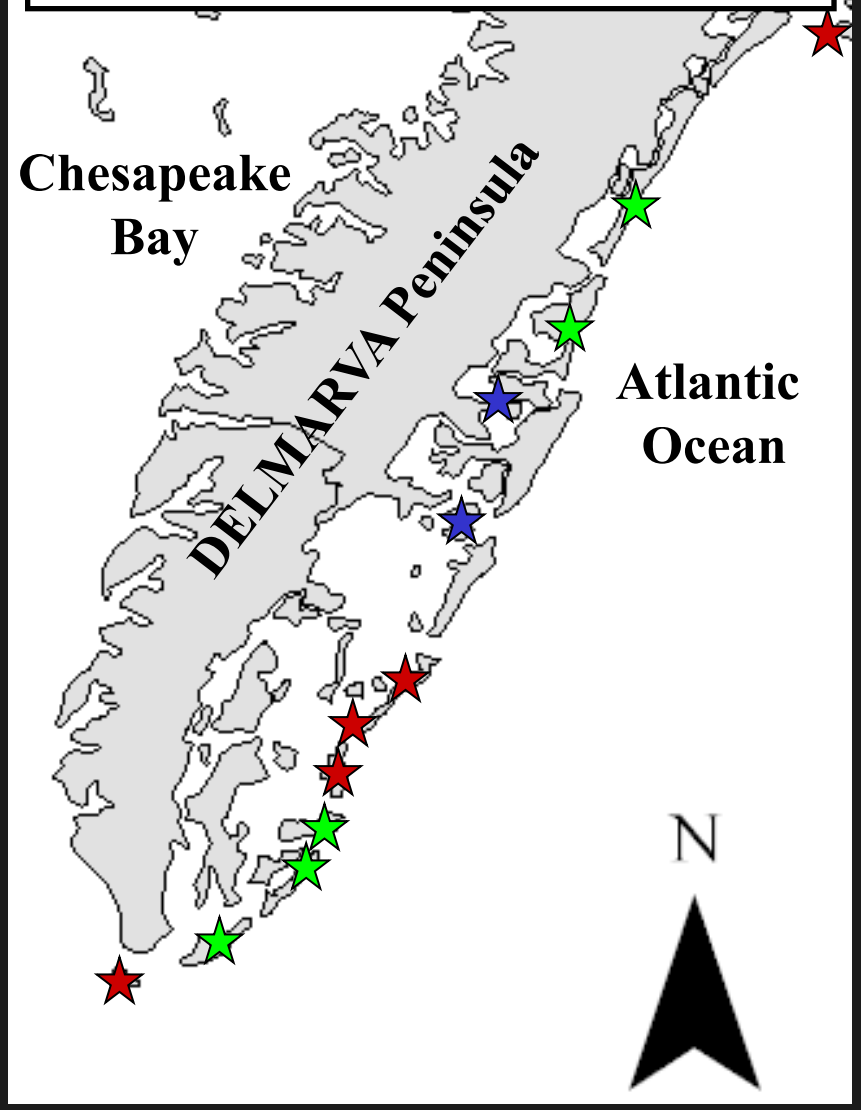
Productivity

- **Monitoring since 2002**
- **Measure of success for predator removal program**
  - **Removals since 1998**
- **Lagoon system**



- **Begin nest searches mid-April**
- **Visit each site once/week**
- **Monitor attempts until failed or fledged**

2006 AMOY Productivity Virginia

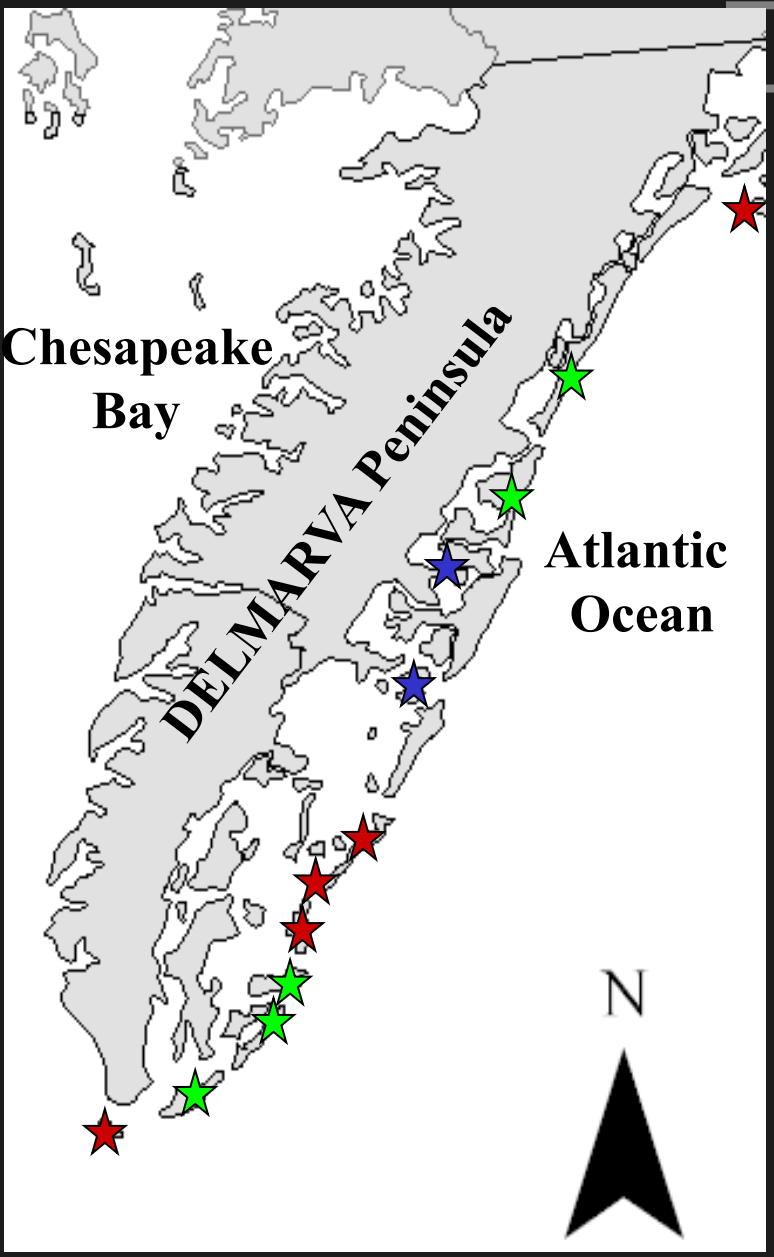


Site	No. pairs	No. yng fledged	Prod. Est.
Metompkin	92		0.79
Cedar	63		0.60
Wachapreague	32	16	0.50
Chimney Pole	31	21	0.68
Cobb	10		0.80
Little Cobb	6		0.00
Wreck	33		0.70
Ship Shoal	22		0.77
Myrtle	9		0.00
Smith	13		0.08
Fisherman[1]	42		0.31

[1] P. Denmon, USFWS

Productivity – 2006

Total no. pairs monitored (60%)	353
Total no. yng fledged	210
Prod. Est. range	0.00-0.80
Overall Prod. Est.	0.59
Islands only (82%)	0.60
Marsh only (28%)	0.59



Site	’02	’03	’04	’05	’06
Metompkin	0.88 (65)	1.05 (71)	1.18 (81)	1.14 (74)	0.79 (92)
Cedar	-	-	-	1.07 (30)	0.60 (63)
Wachapreague	-	0.02 (223)	0.85 (47)	0.09 (33)	0.50 (32)
Chimney Pole	-	-	-	-	0.68 (31)
Cobb	-	-	-	-	0.80 (10)
Little Cobb	-	-	-	0.86 (7)	0.00 (6)
Wreck	-	1.26 (23)	0.79 (25)	0.86 (31)	0.70 (33)
Ship Shoal	-	-	-	1.11 (18)	0.77 (22)
Myrtle	-	-	-	0.17 (12)	0.00 (9)
Smith	-	-	-	-	0.08 (13)
Fisherman[1]	0.41 (41)	0.21 (48)	0.10 (50)	0.13 (47)	0.31 (42)

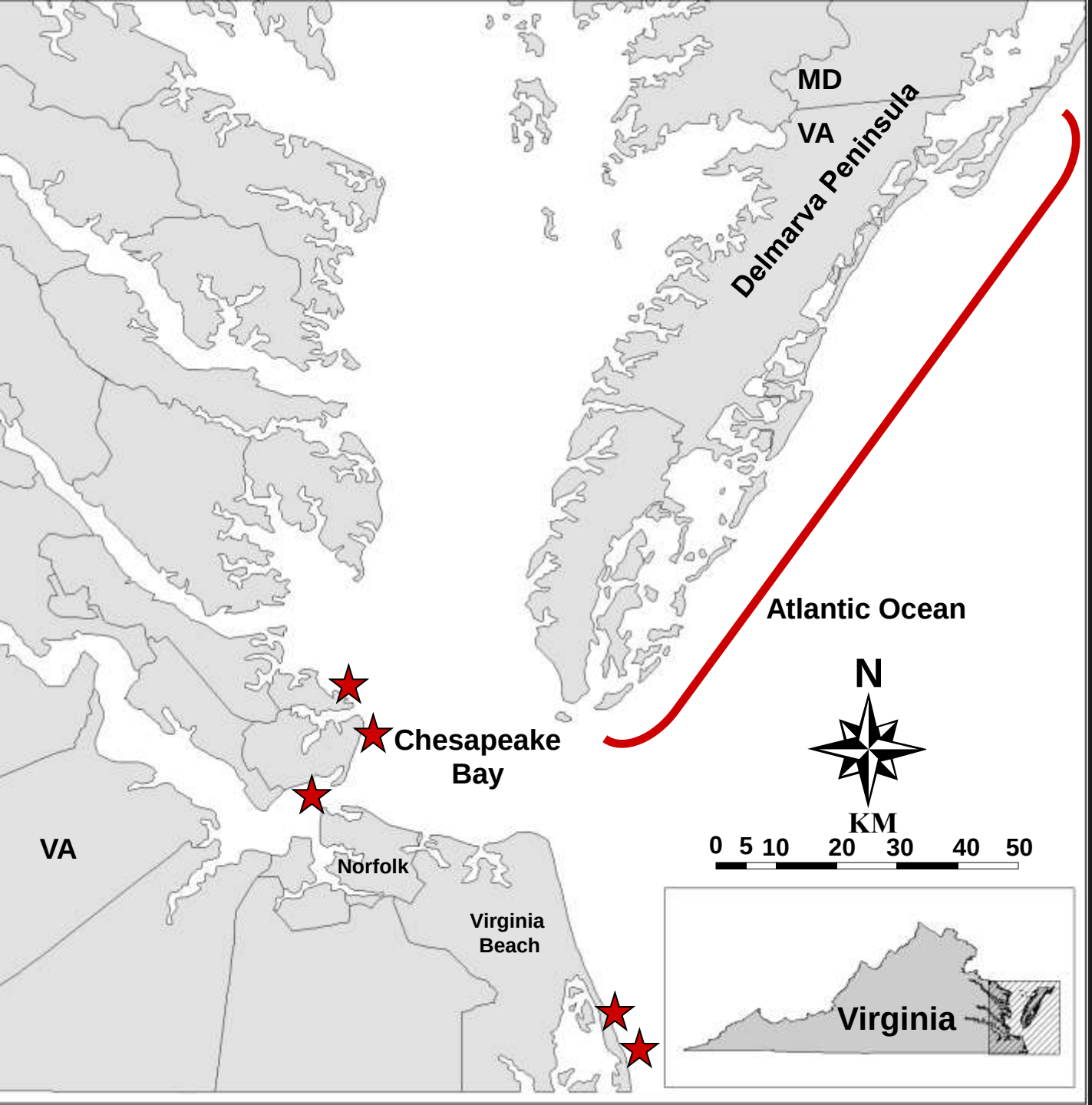
[1] P. Denmon, USFWS – 2004-2006

Productivity - future

- **Continue annual monitoring efforts to build long-term database**
  - **2 additional years of SWG funding**
- **Evaluate the Virginia population in context with other geographic areas**
- **Chesapeake Bay shorelines**

Annual Breeding Surveys

- **Annual survey of the Virginia coast**
- **Conducted in conjunction with PIPL/WIPL survey**
- **1-9 June**
- **Locations of pairs and single adults recorded**

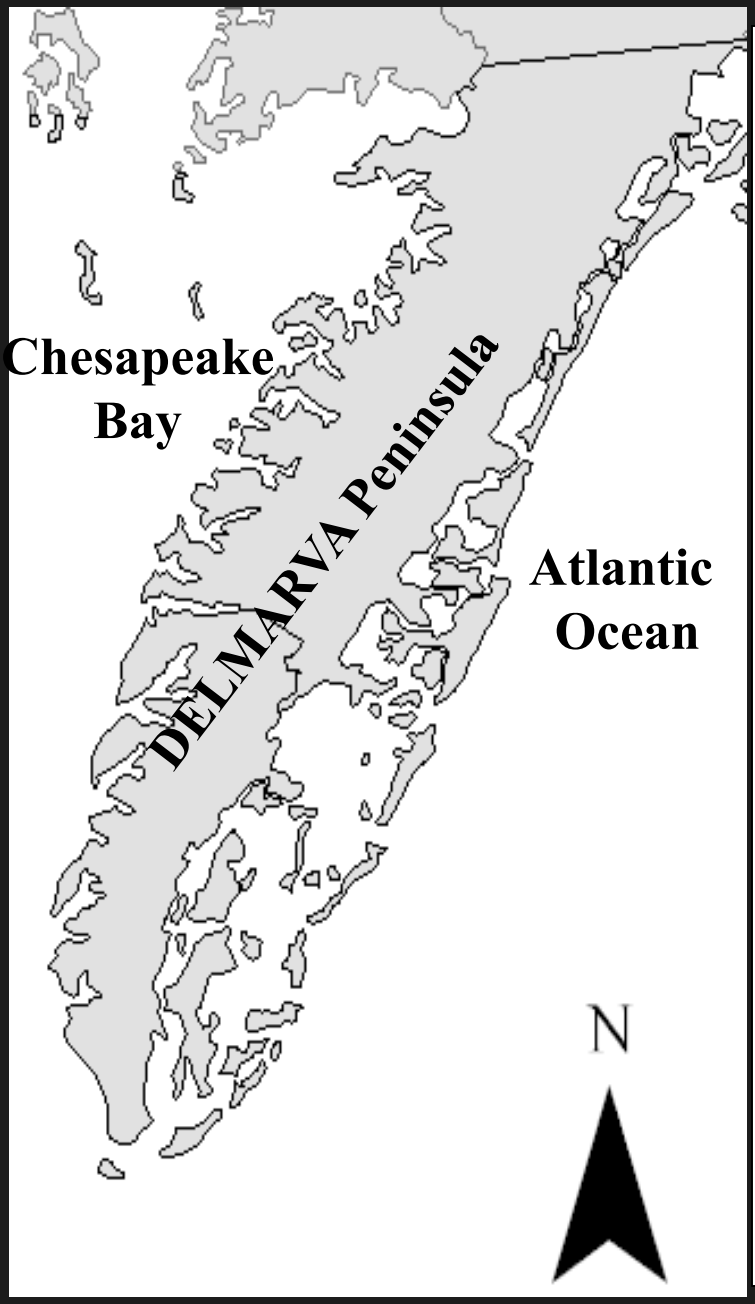


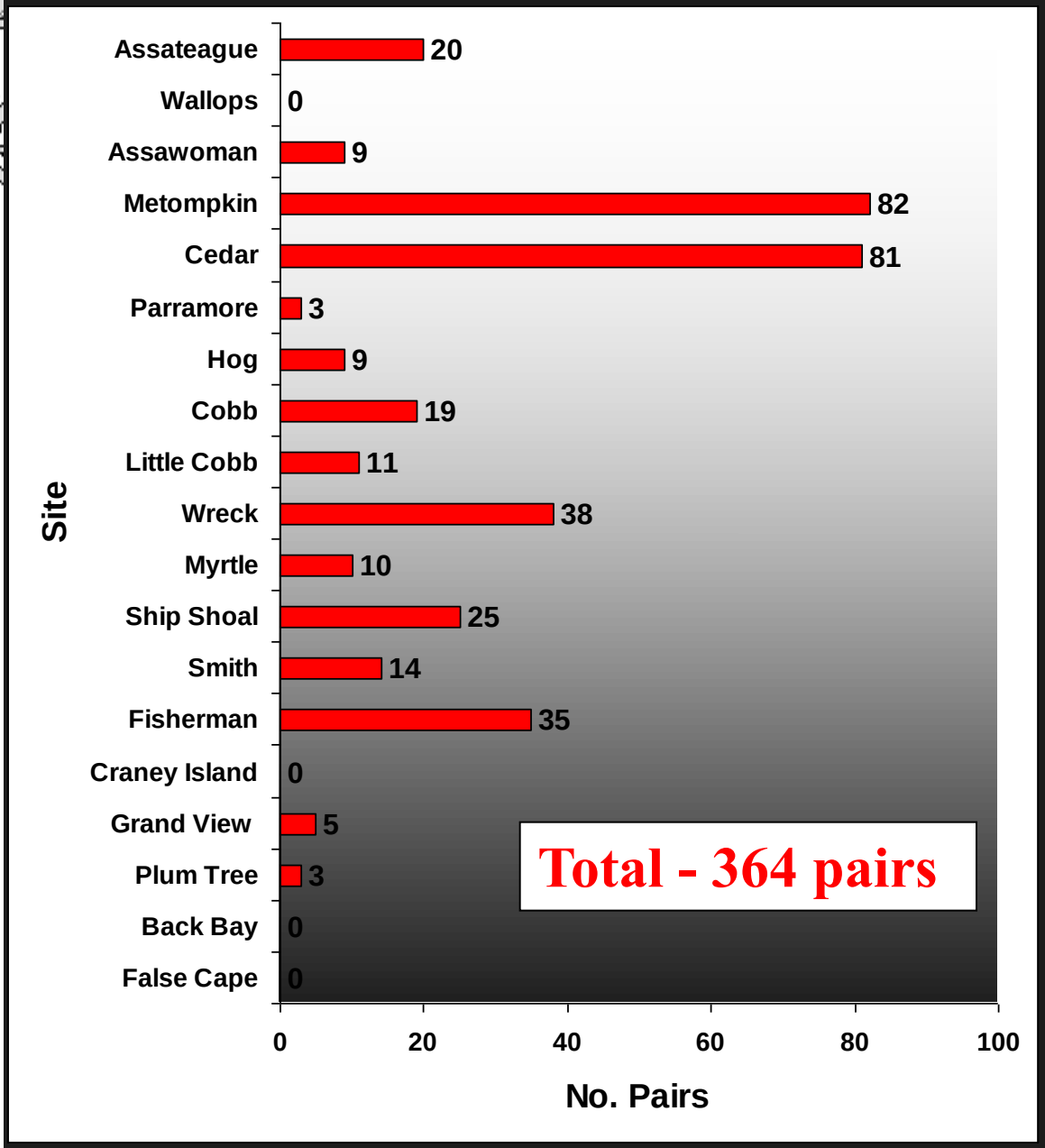
14 barrier beaches

3 bay sites

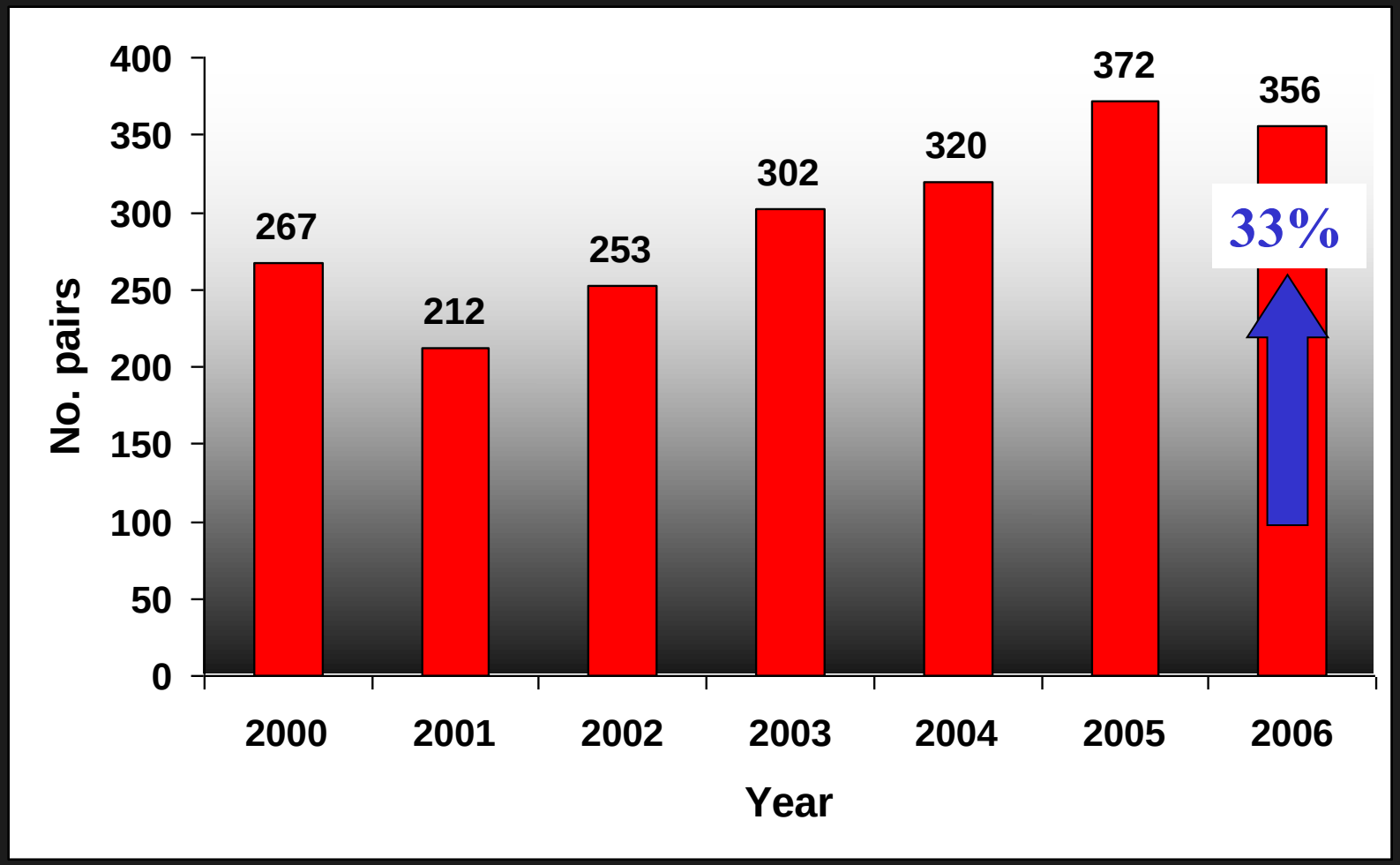
2 ocean beaches

No. of American Oystercatcher pairs on the Virginia coast, 2006





No. of American Oystercatcher pairs on the Virginia barrier islands, 2000* - 2006



*2000 results from Terwilliger, K. and R.R. Cross. 2000. Virginia coast American Oystercatcher survey 2000. Final Report submitted to The Nature Conservancy, Virginia Coast Reserve.

Patrick Leary

Surveys – future

- **Continue annual surveys in conjunction with plover survey**
- **Repeat statewide survey every 5 years**

Banding – 2006

SITE	CHICKS
Barrier islands	68
Lagoon	17
Bayside marshes	4
TOTAL	89

Banding – 2006

Banding – future

- Continue annual banding efforts for adults and chicks
- Continue winter resighting surveys to examine post-breeding movement patterns, roost site selection and site fidelity
- Investigate juvenile dispersal and survival
- Continue resighting efforts during annual breeding surveys to examine natal site fidelity and age at first breeding

Other research interests

- **Foraging and growth studies during both breeding and wintering seasons**
- **Interaction with aquaculture and shellfish restoration activities**
- **Breeding biology of bayside birds**
- **Occurrence of birds in bay tributary areas**

Acknowledgements

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