

American Oystercatcher 2019 State and Country Updates

New York

New York Partners

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State Work Summary

- Statewide census: The Long Island Colonial Waterbird Survey counts the number of breeding AMOY pairs on Long Island and in NYC every three years. The NYS Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) coordinates the survey and collects and summarizes survey data. Staff from over 20 organizations, municipalities, and state and federal agencies (including NYS DEC) survey ~170 sites once between May 17 and June 9 and report the number of breeding pairs at each site. AMOY were last counted statewide in 2019.
- Productivity monitoring and stewardship: Some land managers/stewardship coordinators annually count and monitor the productivity of breeding AMOY. Survey effort varies from site to site and not all sites are regularly monitored each year. The level of stewardship and other AMOY conservation measures also varies in New York; not all land managers/stewardship coordinators protect AMOY nests with symbolic fencing. The list of NY organizations/agencies/municipalities that currently steward AMOY and monitor productivity include:
 - Audubon New York annually monitors AMOY productivity at 8 sites. In 2019, 6 pairs nested at 3 active sites (Tobay Beach, Plum Point, and Half Moon Beach), fledging 0 chicks. All nests are protected with symbolic fencing and signage. As capacity and funding allows, Audubon New York also monitors AMOY productivity within a 4 mile stretch of beach at Jones Beach State Park and assists with productivity monitoring at Town of Hempstead beaches every few years.
 - New York City Audubon monitors National Parks Service property on the Rockaway Peninsula (Breezy Point, Ft. Tilden, Jacob Riis Beach). NYC Parks Wildlife Unit monitors the RBESNA (Rockaway Beach Endangered Species Nesting Area, aka Arverne by the Sea).

| | Breezy Point, Ft Tilden, Riis Beach | RBSENA |
|-------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------|
| Nesting Pairs | 36 | 36 |
| Chicks Hatched | 23 | 68 |
| Chicks Fledged | 13 | 52 |
| Apparent hatch success | 0.41 | 0.62 |
| Apparent chick survival | 0.56 | 0.76 |
| Productivity | 0.36 | 1.40 |

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- The Town of Hempstead Department of Conservation and Waterways monitors and stewards 3 miles of beach on Long Beach Island, which has the highest concentration of nesting AMOY in New York. See the Long Beach Island summary below for more info.
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Long Island Field Office monitors AMOY productivity at Atlantic Beach on Long Beach Island.
- Other partners not listed here monitor AMOY productivity at additional sites on Long Island and offshore islands.

- Banding: NYC Audubon and Town of Hempstead lead AMOY banding efforts in NY with help from partners. AMOY banding currently takes place at the following sites:
 - Town of Hempstead Beaches
 - New York City banding (Breezy Point and RBESPNA)
 - Adults: 6
 - Pre-fledged chicks: 7

Note: We do not band AMOY when Piping Plovers are nesting or fledging nearby.
- Atlantic Flyway Shorebird Disturbance surveys: The Atlantic Flyway Shorebird Disturbance Survey is led by the National Audubon Society and Virginia Tech University and is implemented by Audubon state offices, chapters, and other partners across the Flyway. Surveyors use standardized protocol to survey focal species (including AMOY), shorebird behavior, and disturbances at fixed points within a 200 m radius at sites during spring, summer, fall, and winter. The surveys are not a census; rather, they provide a snapshot of the number of shorebirds at each point at a point in time. In New York, surveys are currently being conducted at the following sites:
 - Jones Beach State Park (West End to Field 2) - Audubon New York
 - Town of Hempstead Beaches (Lido Beach Town Park to Point Lookout Town Park) - Audubon New York in partnership with the Town of Hempstead
 - New York City Audubon is conducting AFSD surveys at 10 points along the Breezy Point section of the Rockaway peninsula. These points correspond to surveys done in 2018.
- NYC Audubon and NYC Parks Wildlife Unit are analyzing data on Piping Plover reproductive success and presence of nesting American Oystercatchers, to be presented as a poster at the 43rd Annual Waterbird Society meeting next week (Nov. 7-9, 2019)

2019 Long Beach Island - American Oystercatcher Nesting Season Summary

Site Description and Summary: Long Beach Island is a barrier island along the Atlantic Ocean coast in New York. The Town of Hempstead (TOH) manages 3 miles of beach from Point Lookout to the Lido Beach Towers Condominiums, at the eastern border of the City of Long Beach. The beach is managed and maintained for nesting shorebirds, including the American Oystercatcher, Piping Plover, Least Tern, Common Tern, and Black Skimmers. Important nesting habitat is protected from recreational beach users with string flagging and informational signs about nesting shorebirds.

The number of nesting oystercatcher pairs on TOH beaches has increased over the past decade. TOH beaches are densely packed with breeding and non-breeding oystercatchers. Nests have been found just a few feet apart. Possible density dependent restraints caused some oystercatchers to nest in the parking lot in scrapes comprised of gravel and sand. Oystercatchers here have formed pairs and laid a full clutch as early as April 19th. Some unique features witnessed by oystercatchers on this site include a trio pair that has been returning for multiple years. This year, the trio made one nest with 7 eggs between the two females. In previous years the two females in the trio laid nests directly adjacent to one another. On the bayside of the barrier island, in Hempstead Bay, there are additional pairs of nesting oystercatchers in the marsh islands. No comprehensive data on nesting pairs throughout the marshes of Hempstead Bay has been collected, but has been identified as a data gap that requires more attention.

2019 Data

TOH staff are still processing data and will have accurate numbers on productivity and total number of banded birds by the end of November. Preliminary numbers are:

Number of nests: 58

Productivity: <1
of Birds Banded: >30

AMOY Nesting Pairs

