

2022 Annual Meeting: Priorities for AMOY Work

A summary of priority areas of focus discussed at the 2022 AMOY Working Group meeting.

Knowledge

- Range-wide census update: *Lead by Manomet, the AMOY Working Group has coordinated range-wide aerial censuses every 5 years since 2003. It's time for another one.*
 - January/February 2023 flights and coordinated ground counts to assess AMOY population and progress against population goal established in the Business Plan for the American Oystercatcher
- Standardized productivity monitoring: *Over a decade ago the AMOY Working Group developed a set of standard metrics and definitions for sites monitoring productivity. However, there was no accompanying protocol or common data format, so it is easy for variations in definitions and practices to develop. Therefore, a sub-committee partnered with the USFWS to create a protocol document and data entry template and app and began piloting it in 2022.*
 - Revise the AMOY Productivity Protocol based on input from the first pilot year
 - Recruit additional pilot sites for second year and carry out monitoring
 - Determine if a true database is needed and seek funding to support the work
- Range-wide banding: *Since the early 2000s, the AMOY Working Group has been supporting coordinated, range-wide banding of adults and chicks. In 2012, a Band Database was launched that serves as a repository of this data. This aggregated capture and resight data allows for unusually detailed knowledge of AMOY demographics and movement.*
 - Develop and put out a capture and banding guidance document
 - Support partners who wish to start banding programs at their sites
 - Continue to maintain the AMOY Band Database
- Integrated population model: *It may be possible to develop an IPM by capitalizing on the resources in the Band Database and additional data, such as productivity, that partners collect.*
 - Present a preliminary example analysis based on band sighting and productivity data from Georgia to the AMOY Working Group (Dan Gibson presentation, 2022 meeting)
 - Investigate with Dan and other academic partners what would be needed to develop a full IPM and seek funding

Habitat

- Share information about completed and in-progress projects: *Partners around the range have carried out projects to improve habitat for AMOY and other shorebirds. While no unified, multi-state habitat project is possible, the AMOY Working Group can provide a forum for connecting partners doing similar work and ensuring that lessons learned are shared widely.*
 - Creation of a habitat sub-committee within the AMOY Working Group and present information at annual meetings
 - Develop a searchable story map to share standardized information about projects
 - Encourage consideration of AMOY nesting habitat in habitat restoration/creation/enhancement projects
- Improve range-wide understanding the distribution and success of AMOY nesting in marshes: *AMOY nest in a variety of habits and have high site fidelity, but monitoring and management tends to focus on barrier island beaches. SLR and other climate impacts stand to impact low-lying marsh islands especially, and these tend to be less monitored, or not visited at all.*
 - Encourage states and sites to conduct surveys to locate pairs nesting in marshes

- Encourage productivity monitoring effort in marsh habitats

Management

Improve protection from human disturbance: *The 2022 nesting season saw several instances of deliberate nest destruction, and sources of disturbance continue to evolve, such as from photographers and drones, as people continue to visit the coast in high numbers.*

- Work within the AFSI Human Dimensions group to improve and share outreach materials and strategies
 - Contact Deb Reynolds to sign up for AFSI mailing list and to submit outreach materials (signage, flyers, etc.)
- VT-led NFWF grant to implement community-based social marketing campaigns for shorebirds (submitted, awaiting decision)
- Contribute to website focused on responsible photography and refer to it in communications products
 - Website live at <https://atlanticflywayshorebirds.org/human-disturbance/a-guide-to-ethical-photography/>

Continue and improve predation control across the range: *Predators, such as coyotes, are a significant factor in productivity at many sites. Many sites have implemented predation control programs, but still encounter problems, for example when timing of funding or capacity does not allow for appropriate action, if predators cannot be removed from the landscape, when lethal control is not possible.*

- Encourage information sharing re: successful strategies and funding by management agencies
- No multi-state grant opportunities at present