



Dead Neck Sampson's Island Weekly Shorebird Report

As of 05/26/2024

Monitors: Eric Schertler, Andrew Hayden, Jamie Infanti, Rose Caplan, Mike Heine

Piping Plover Activity:

There are currently 23 PIPL pairs on the island. There are 19 nests present. 13 of these nests are incubating while 6 are actively still laying. Chicks have hatched on the island with 3 active broods. Nest 18a was lost due to coyote predation. This nest was previously incubating.

American Oystercatcher Activity:

There are still 2 AMOY pairs on the island. AMOY pair 1 has started to scrape again (following a nest loss) on the upper section of beach near their previous nest. AMOY pair 2's nest is now at 3 eggs and incubation has started. This nest is estimated to hatch around June 12, 2024.

Least Tern Activity:

Least Tern Colony 1a has been established at the eastern end of the island and is estimated to be around 35 Least Terns. Courtship behavior and scraping has been witnessed in the restoration area. There is also one Common Tern nest also within this colony area. Least Tern Colony 3a is the next colony moving to the west. There are currently 18 adults in this colony and nests have been found in the restoration areas. Least Tern Colony 2a is located farther west in another restoration area along with PIPL pair 9. Least Tern Colony 4a was the most recent colony established. This is located near the western point of the island. There are several nests. There are also many scrapes within this area. More Least Terns continue to arrive each visit to the island.

Fencing Maintenance and Activity:

We have continued to pull out fencing where necessary. We have reactively pulled out fencing along most of the ocean side, especially with the establishment of tern colonies and plovers starting to nest further out on the beach. We have also proactively started to pull out fencing as well towards the east tip. We started placing more "no dog" signs mainly along the channel side of the island as this is where we expect to most landing visitors.

Predator activity:

Still a lot of predator activity on the island. Coyote tracks are seen walking up and down oceanside beach and through several restoration areas. As previously stated, coyotes did predate one PIPL nest (18a) in a restoration area. One set of small mammal tracks was spotted in the dunes. The tracks were not well-defined and could not be concretely identified. Crow and gull activity has remained steady. Crows are often spotted flying over the island and foraging along the beach and wrack line.

Management Concerns:

Memorial Day weekend was busy on the island, but most individuals were compliant with closed areas of the island. A few boaters were uncooperative when asked to leave closed areas. Boat numbers for these were recorded by CWP rangers.