

# 2025 New Jersey Beach-Nesting Bird Project Report



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Endangered and Nongame Species Program**



*Piping Plovers at Long Beach Township  
Photo courtesy of Teri Bowers*

The New Jersey DEP Fish and Wildlife – Endangered and Nongame Species Program (NJFW) is responsible for the monitoring and management of beach-nesting birds on all state, county, and municipal sites and for the collation of statewide data (including federal and private properties).

This report offers a summary of nesting in 2025 for the four primary species of conservation concern that comprise this group in NJ – Piping Plover (federally threatened, state endangered), Black Skimmer (state endangered), Least Tern (state endangered) and American Oystercatcher (species of special concern).

Due to a constraint on resources, not all potential sites in the state were surveyed for all species. All known nesting sites for Piping Plover and Least Tern were monitored. All known beach-strand nesting sites for Black Skimmer were monitored but no marsh island sites were monitored (note: an aerial survey for wading birds in May did not detect any colonies). All known beach-strand nesting sites for American Oystercatcher were monitored but only a small percentage of marsh sites were monitored.

Each species has slightly different nesting phenology and habitat requirements. Some species are solitary nesters (plovers and oystercatchers) while others are colonial (terns and skimmers). These differences can lead to not only distinctive management strategies but also to vastly disparate reproductive outcomes (at a given site, one species may be successful while another may fail). It can therefore be difficult to formulate conclusions for the group, so results are presented by species.

However, there were some commonalities across species. As has been the case for many years, predation was the major factor in poor reproductive success for many nesting birds. It should be noted that direct human disturbance (nests being stepped on or run over, for example) is not and was not a primary limiting factor in nest success solely because of the intense management that partners across the state engage in to prevent these types of losses (although indirect disturbance remains a key issue, especially for chicks). 2025 did not feature any major early/mid-season storms, but flooding was more of a factor than in 2024. Tropical Storm Erin at the tail end of the season did impact the skimmer colony at Horseshoe Island to a devastating degree (hundreds of chicks were lost) but it did refresh some habitat at Stone Harbor Point.

The abundance and distribution of beach-nesting birds in NJ, with the exception of American Oystercatcher, is continuing on a path that is not compatible with recovery. Piping Plovers, Black Skimmers, and Least Terns are nesting in fewer locations and sometimes in lower numbers (this is especially pronounced in Piping Plovers, whose pair numbers have dropped 45% since 2021). The habitat at federal sites, such as Sandy Hook and Holgate, has become less suitable and this is partially responsible for fewer birds utilizing those areas. However, there are very few sites in the state that can match the federal sites when they are operating at optimal quality so there is not enough “replacement” habitat for birds to emigrate to. Turmoil at the federal level has also caused staffing reductions and changes that are concerning for continued monitoring and management at the level that has been historically possible. To stabilize these populations and reverse current trends, species managers must act decisively and aggressively, via management tools at their disposal, to ensure as many birds hatch and fledge chicks as possible.

Banding of beach-nesting bird species continued in 2025. Piping Plovers were banded from the Barnegat Light Restoration Area and other sites throughout the state. A small number of Black Skimmers were

banded by The Wetlands Institute (TWI) at Stone Harbor Point. American Oystercatchers were banded by NJFW, TWI, and the Conserve Wildlife Foundation of NJ (CWF) at a variety of sites.

Although there are many obstacles to overcome in 2025 and beyond, there were positive results that warrant being highlighted. The Barnegat Light Restoration Area continued to attract new breeding adults and was wildly successful for nesting Piping Plovers and Least Terns. The Cape May NWR and The Nature Conservancy continued to hone management strategies (such as predator aversion and exclusion techniques and habitat manipulation) to improve reproductive success. Volunteers across the state made strides in building community support for the birds. The fourth year of the five-year management rights agreement for Horseshoe Island, as granted by the Tidelands Resource Council, was a success on the human disturbance front as NJFW Bureau of Law Enforcement officers continued to lend critical support to the endeavor (details on the 2025 season at Horseshoe Island will be made available in a standalone report). NJFW continued experimenting with novel management techniques with some success, including exclosure design, aversive conditioning, and fladry.

***The NJFW wishes to express its deep gratitude to our seasonal staff and all the cooperators, interns, and volunteers that worked relentlessly to ensure that New Jersey's beach-nesting bird species remain part of our coastal landscape for as long as possible.***

*Special thanks to Brianna Magner for her help in compiling data for this report.*

*Data from partners was provided by USNPS -Gateway National Recreation Area – Sandy Hook Unit, USFWS – Edwin B. Forsythe National Wildlife Refuge & Cape May National Wildlife Refuge, the Conserve Wildlife Foundation of New Jersey, The Nature Conservancy, and The Wetlands Institute.*

*Two related reports are available for 2025; one is focused solely on Piping Plover (available November 2025) and a second on Horseshoe Island (available January 2026). Either can be requested through NJFW or located on the NJFW website.*

**Jump to:**

NJ Beach-nesting Bird Sites 2025 Map

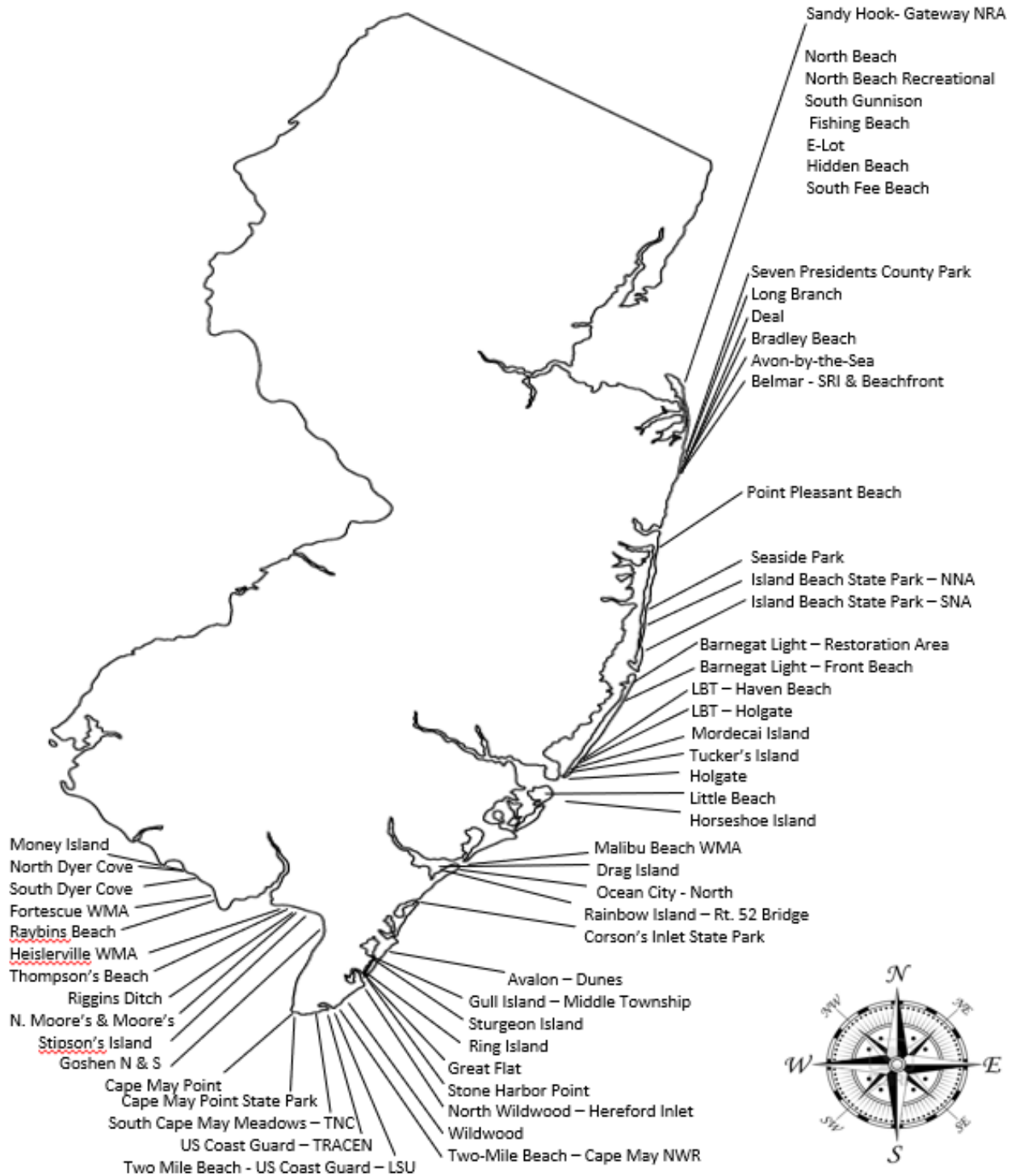
Piping Plover Nesting Summary

Black Skimmer Nesting Summary

Least Tern Nesting Summary

American Oystercatcher Nesting Summary

# New Jersey Beach-Nesting Bird Sites: 2025



*This map represents all the Atlantic Coast and Delaware Bayshore sites where breeding and breeding outcomes were documented. It does not show sites that were monitored but no active nesting detected or sites that nesting did/may have occurred but where there was no monitoring, as was largely the case for the marsh islands of the Atlantic Coast for American Oystercatcher.*

## Piping Plover Nesting Summary

- **Seventy-six (76) pairs of Piping Plovers nested in New Jersey in 2025**, a 15% decrease from 2024 and a 36% decrease from 2023 and 2022 (both years were 118) and the **lowest pair count ever recorded since 1987** (prior low was 89 pairs in 2024).
- **Pairs nested at 18 sites statewide**, a decrease from 20 in 2024 and 24 in 2023. The distribution continues to favor the federal properties (54% at EB Forsythe NWR, 12% at Gateway NRA – Sandy Hook Unit, 4% at Cape May NWR/USCG for a total of 70% of the state’s population).
- **The 76 pairs laid 150 nests. Of those nests, 45 hatched (30%), 104 failed (69%) and 1 had an unknown outcome (1%).** Of the 104 that failed, 68 were lost to predators (66% of failures), 18 to flooding (17% of failures), 2 to abandonment (2% of failures), and 16 had undetermined cause of failure (15% of failures).
- **Statewide pair-nest success** (the percentage of pairs that successfully hatch at least one nest) **increased in 2025 compared to 2024 (59% vs. 55%, respectively)** but was lower than the period since federal listing (68%).
- **The statewide productivity rate was 0.84 fledglings/pair**, rallying a bit from the lows of 2024 (0.54) and 2023 (0.53) rates. However, the productivity goal is 1.50 fledglings/pair and rates below 1.00 fledglings/pair in NJ can correlate with population decreases.
- **Fourteen (14) nests were exclosed**, or 7% of nesting attempts. **The exclosed nest hatch rate was 100%. The abandonment rate for exclosed nests was 0%.** After especially high abandonment rates in 2023 and 2022 (51% and 23% respectively, compared to previous rates of 3%-16% in 2008-2021), all species managers in NJ have continued trending towards much lower use of exclosures. Only the modified triangular exclosure was deployed this year (by NJFW and CMNWR) and for the second year, no adult mortalities were reported in association with this style.
- **The majority of plovers (68%) are still nesting on federal property.** For years, managers have expressed concern about this pattern and 2025 helps highlight the reasons. First, when one of these sites has a low reproductive year, there are not enough birds at other sites to recover the statewide productivity, even if those individuals find success. For example, in 2025 Holgate’s fledge rate was 0.28 and the state fledge rate was 0.84. If Holgate is removed from the calculation, the state fledge rate was 1.47; this difference highlights the influence an uneven distribution of birds can have on the fledge rate. Second, as pair numbers drop across the state, it is becoming clear that as pair numbers fall at federal sites, the birds are not relocating to other sites in the state (for example the declines at Sandy Hook not translating to birds moving elsewhere in Monmouth County). This emphasizes the concerns that managers have of how difficult it can be to recolonize abandoned sites, especially when a source or feeder population is not nearby and when the habitat is not as suitable or desirable (as is often the case with the federal sites versus the state/municipal ones).
- The decrease in pairs continues what was a concerning trend into something considerably more alarming. New Jersey has now experienced a pair drop of 44% in just four years with little sign of reversing. Species managers must engage in more aggressive management for this species, as current trends indicate New Jersey is on the same path as the Southern Recovery Unit, where pair numbers have been dropping precipitously. Managers must utilize all available tools to recover this population before it is too late.
- Forty-one Piping Plovers were banded in NJ in 2024 and there were 60 total banded breeding plovers documented in NJ this season. Of those, six were banded in DE and one in NY, so at least 12% of banded breeding individuals originated from outside NJ.

*Please see the standalone 2025 Piping Plover Nesting Results in NJ report for additional details.*

## New Jersey Piping Plover Nesting Summary by Site: 2025

	Pairs	Pairs Hatched	Chicks Fledged	Pair Success	Fledge Rate	SP Fledge Rate
Sandy Hook NRA	9	7	16	0.78	1.78	2.29
<i>North Beach</i>	4	4	11	1.00	2.75	2.75
<i>North Beach Recreational</i>	2	2	4	1.00	2.00	2.00
<i>South Gunnison</i>	1	0	0	0.00	0.00	0.00
<i>Hidden Beach</i>	1	1	1	1.00	1.00	1.00
<i>South Fee Beach</i>	1	0	0	0.00	0.00	1.00
<b>Region 2 Subtotal</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>0.78</b>	<b>1.78</b>	<b>2.29</b>
Seaside Park	1	0	0	0.00	0.00	0.00
Island Beach SP NNA	2	2	4	1.00	2.00	2.00
Island Beach SP SNA	2	1	4	0.50	2.00	4.00
Barnegat Light – Restoration Area	6	6	17	1.00	2.83	2.83
Barnegat Light – Front Beach	2	2	1	1.00	0.50	0.50
<b>Region 3 Subtotal</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>0.85</b>	<b>2.00</b>	<b>2.36</b>
Long Beach Township - Holgate	1 <sup>1</sup>	1	3	1.00	3.00	3.00
E.B. Forsythe NWR - <i>Holgate</i>	40 <sup>1</sup>	18	11	0.45	0.28	0.61
E.B. Forsythe NWR - <i>Little Beach</i>	1	0	0	0.00	0.00	0.00
<b>Region 4 Subtotal</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>0.46</b>	<b>0.34</b>	<b>0.74</b>
Ocean City - North	2	1	1	0.50	0.50	1.00
<b>Region 5 Subtotal</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0.50</b>	<b>0.50</b>	<b>1.00</b>
Corson’s Inlet SP	3	3	3	1.00	1.00	1.00
<b>Region 6 Subtotal</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1.00</b>	<b>1.00</b>	<b>1.00</b>
Stone Harbor Point	3	1	1	0.33	0.33	1.00
N. Wildwood - Hereford Inlet	2	0	0	0.00	0.00	0.00
Cape May NWR- <i>Two-Mile Beach Unit</i>	3	3	3	1.00	1.00	1.00
<b>Region 7 Subtotal</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>0.50</b>	<b>0.50</b>	<b>1.00</b>
<b>NJFW sites TOTAL</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>0.71</b>	<b>1.42</b>	<b>2.00</b>
<b>All NJ sites TOTAL</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>0.59</b>	<b>0.84</b>	<b>1.42</b>
<b># Active Sites</b>	<b>18</b>					

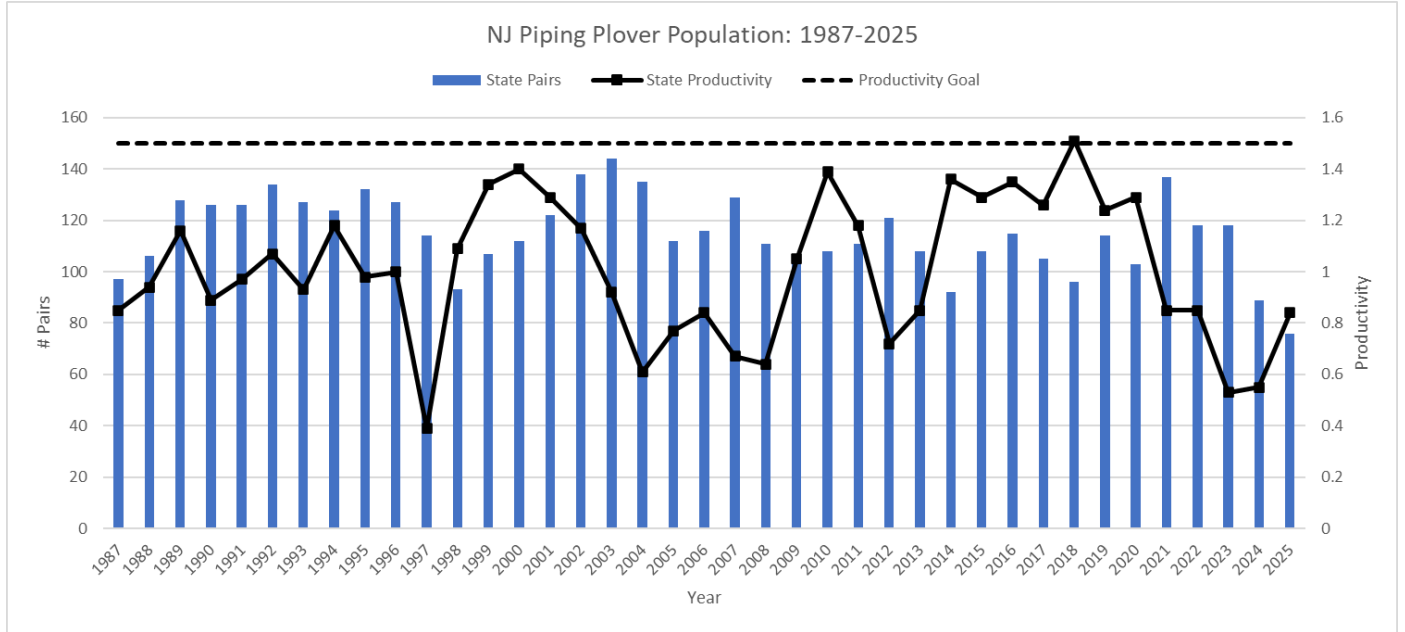
<sup>1</sup> The same pair nested at two nearby sites. Therefore “subtotals” and “totals” are less than sum of individual sites.

**Pair Success** equals the percentage of pairs that hatched young (at least one chick observed).

**Fledge Rate** equals the number of chicks fledged per pair.

**Successful Pair (SP) Fledge Rate** equals the number of chicks fledged per pair that successfully hatched young.

# New Jersey Piping Plover Population: 1987-2025



## **Black Skimmer Nesting Summary**

- Black Skimmer breeding bird counts were conducted approximately every week at active sites from arrival on breeding grounds (mid-May) until nesting ceased (August) on beaches along the entire Atlantic coast. Marsh islands were not ground surveyed this year, but an aerial survey in May did not detect any active colonies. All sites were visited 3-5x/week for management and outreach for the duration of the nesting season.
- **A total of 2,294 adults were present at active sites.** This figure is the cumulative total of site counts that occurred in the peak survey period, which took place 24-30 July. The sum of the peak adult number from each site was 2,723. The larger the difference between these two numbers, the more likely it is there was failure at any given colony and then relocation/renesting to another colony; that was the case to some degree this year, likely from adults moving between the three sites amidst colony failures.
- **A peak count of 584 incubating adult Black Skimmers were tallied** in the 19-25 June survey period. The incubation number was lower than might be expected given the number of adults present and was almost certainly lower than how many nested. As is generally the case, vegetation at Stone Harbor Point (and to a lesser degree Horseshoe Island) blocked observers from garnering the most accurate count of these ground nesters but walk-through colony counts are not considered safe or effective in NJ.
- Black skimmer statewide **productivity appeared to be low-moderate with 337 fledglings produced statewide.** This translates to 0.58 fledglings/pair if calculated on the peak incubating adult count (584). If we simply halve the peak period total adult number (1,147) and use that as pair count, the productivity is 0.29 fledglings/pair. The true rate is likely somewhere in the middle.
- **There were just three documented Black Skimmer colonies in the state in 2025, the same as 2024 and a continuation of the lowest ever recorded since records begin in 1976.** However, the overall number of skimmers in the state does not appear to be declining with the number of colonies. Similar to all the state endangered species, however, there continues to be concern about the funneling of breeding birds into fewer sites.
- TWI banded 12 juvenile skimmers in 2025. The low banding rate was the result of inclement weather during the peak banding period at Stone Harbor Point and loss of the colony at Horseshoe Island due to Tropical Storm Erin (banding does not take place at Holgate).
- For the first time, species managers have concerns that the large Royal Tern colony at Horseshoe Island is impacting the Black Skimmers nesting at this site. In 2025, the terns arrived earlier than the skimmers and appeared to have outcompeted them for the highest areas, leaving them more susceptible to flooding. The skimmers also moved around the island more often than in the past, further suggesting an inability to settle into their traditional nesting area. Thus, their nesting cycle was roughly two weeks behind those at Stone Harbor Point and Holgate. Unfortunately, this translated into many more unfledged chicks present on the island when Tropical Storm Erin struck, effectively destroying the colony (the juveniles at the other two sites were largely fledged at this point and capable of flying to higher ground in response to the flooding).
- A total of 435 skimmers have been banded in NJ since 2016 and the resight database contains nearly 4,800 records. Over the course of 2025 (to date), 97 individuals banded in NJ from 2016-2025 were resighted and reported to banders. Reports from out of state came from NC, SC, GA, MS, and FL.
- Please note that the data in the following table is presented both in terms of peak tallies of each site *and* the peak counts statewide in the week-long survey windows. It is presented by site so that the peak use of any given location can be understood. However, simply tallying these peaks can lead to double counting individuals since this species is known to use multiple sites in one year (e.g., a colony fails at one site and they re-nest at another site.) so the statewide peak window count is an effort to account for that issue and add context to the site total figures.

## New Jersey Black Skimmer Nesting Summary by Site: 2025

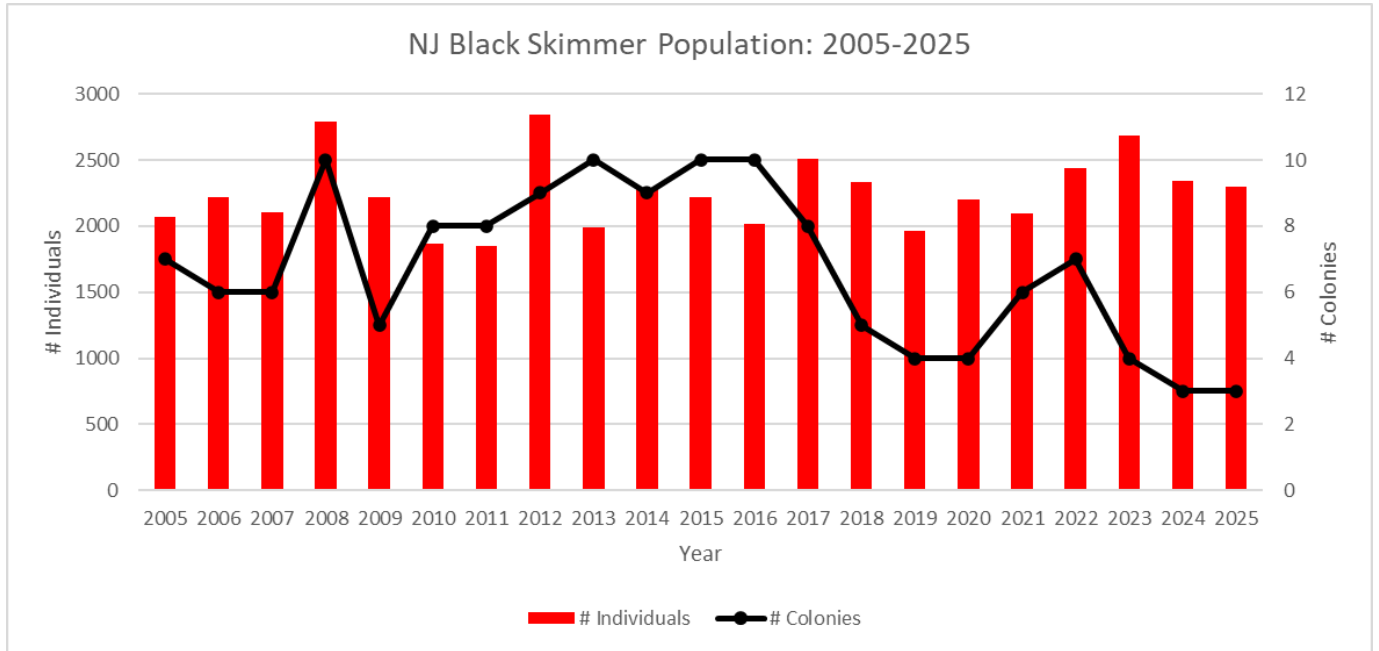
SITE	Peak Total Adult Count	Peak Incubating Adult Count	Chicks Fledged	Fledge Rate
Holgate – EB Forsythe NWR	360	150	26	0.17
Horseshoe Island <sup>1</sup>	1,231	536	20	0.04
Stone Harbor Point	1,132	453	291	0.64
<b>NJFW sites TOTAL</b>	<b>2,363</b>	<b>989</b>	<b>311</b>	<b>--</b>
<b>All NJ sites TOTAL</b>	<b>2,723</b>	<b>1,139</b>	<b>337</b>	<b>--</b>
<b>Statewide Peak Window Count</b>	<b>2,294</b>	<b>584</b>	<b>--</b>	<b>--</b>
	(7/24-7/30)	(6/19-6/25)		
<b># Active Sites</b>	<b>3</b>			

“**Fledge Rate**” equals the number of chicks fledged per incubating adult. This number should be considered an estimate as there is not a high degree of confidence in the incubating adult and fledge number as these data points are very difficult to collect. Because of this difficulty, there is no statewide fledge rate tallied here.

“**Peak Total Adult Count**” & “**Peak Incubating Adult Count**” are the highest adult counts observed at any point during the breeding season. “**Statewide Peak Window Count**” represents the highest tally for one one-week survey window. This species can exhibit a high degree of intra-year movements so both numbers are important to understand the distribution of adults and habitat use (on site and state levels) in NJ.

<sup>1</sup> This site is jointly managed by NJFW and EB Forsythe NWR/Conserve Wildlife Foundation of NJ

# New Jersey Black Skimmer Population: 2015-2025



*Note: The number of colonies only includes sites where active nesting was documented.*

## Least Tern Nesting Summary

- Least Tern breeding bird surveys were conducted every week from mid-May until the end of August at beaches along the entire Atlantic coast. Sites were visited 3-5x/week for management and outreach for the duration of the nesting season.
- **A total of 786 adults were present at active sites.** This figure is the cumulative total of site counts that occurred in the peak survey period, which took place 29 May – 4 June. The summed peak adult number from each site was 1,495. A large difference between these two numbers can suggest failure at a given site and then relocation/re nesting to another site; by and large, this appeared to be the case in 2025, as predators and flooding destroyed colonies and re nesting was common.
- **A peak count of 337 incubating adult Least Terns were observed** in the 26 June – 2 July survey period. **Productivity was moderate for Least Terns with 172 fledglings produced statewide at 0.51 fledglings/pair**, based on the peak number of incubating adults. (Unlike skimmers, Least Terns do not tend to nest in deep vegetation and there is a greater confidence in the incubating adult number). This was one of the better reproductive outcomes in recent years, which was encouraging given the majority of fledglings came from two sites with supplementary management actions (large fence and fladry).
- **The number of active Least Tern colonies (13) increased** compared to 2024 (11) but was the same as 2023 (13). The lower number of colonies (compared to historical use) is likely the new pattern for this species, at least in the short term.
- **Predators and flooding were the primary limiting factor for this species this year.** Loss by predators is especially confounding at sites like Horseshoe Island and Stone Harbor Point, where other colonial species found more success and this difference in output is still not well understood (is suspected their smaller size plays a role). However, 2025 was one of the better reproductive years the state's Least Terns have experienced in some time and may be at least partly thanks to the mammalian exclusionary tactics used at The Nature Conservancy's South Cape May Meadows and the Barnegat Light Restoration Area (wire fence and fladry, respectively).
- The relative stability of this population in NJ over the last two decades continues to be somewhat perplexing, although 2025 saw the lowest adult numbers tallied over 20 years. However, it remains to be seen if this is a temporary dip (as was the case in 2015, see graph below) or years of low reproductive success catching up to the state's population (which has been a concern of species managers). Without banding, there is limited information for species managers to base trend predictions on, and they cannot track them to determine if the population is being sustained by immigration from other states. Future banding studies and/or research on Least Tern population dynamics would be beneficial to monitoring and management. Species managers should also continue to experiment with predator exclusionary tactics/deterrents for this population, as these tools are showing some promise.
- Please note that the data in the following table is presented both in terms of peak tallies of each site *and* the peak counts statewide in the week-long survey windows. It is presented by site so that the use of any given location can be understood. However, simply tallying these peaks can lead to double counting individuals since this species is known to use multiple sites in one year (e.g. a colony fails at one site and they re-nest at another site) so the statewide peak window count is an effort to reduce that issue and add context to the site total figures. In 2025, many colonies were not successful and re nesting at different sites did appear to occur, as evidenced by the difference between the two “peak” counts.

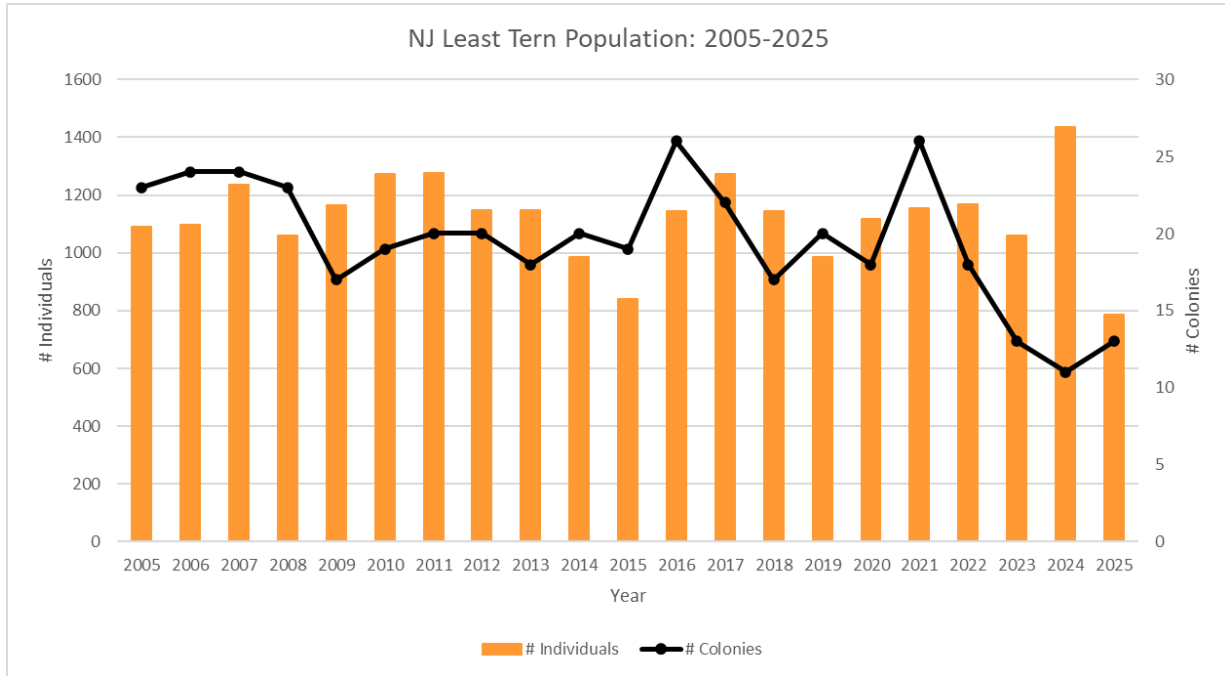
## New Jersey Least Tern Nesting Summary by Site: 2025

SITE	Site Peak Total Adult Count	Site Peak Incubating Adult Count	Chicks Fledged	Fledge Rate
Belmar – Shark River Inlet	8	3	2	0.67
Point Pleasant	12	4	0	0.00
Barnegat Light - Restoration Area	140	70	58	0.83
Barnegat Light – Front Beach	40	16	4	0.25
<i>EB Forsythe NWR</i>				
Holgate – Northern Overwash	27	18	0	0.00
Holgate – Inlet	330	180	21	0.12
Horseshoe Island <sup>1</sup>	385	60	0	0.00
Malibu Beach WMA	12	1	0	0.00
Corson’s Inlet State Park	30	17	0	0.00
Stone Harbor Point	205	91	0	0.00
North Wildwood – Hereford Inlet	15	6	2	0.33
South Cape May Meadows – TNC	289	156	85	0.54
Cape May Point State Park	2	1	0	0.00
<b>NJFW sites TOTAL</b>	<b>849</b>	<b>269</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>--</b>
<b>All NJ sites TOTAL</b>	<b>1,495</b>	<b>623</b>	<b>172</b>	<b>--</b>
<b>Statewide Peak Window Count</b>	<b>786</b>	<b>337</b>	<b>--</b>	<b>--</b>
	<b>(5/29-6/4)</b>	<b>(6/26-7/2)</b>		
<b># Active Sites</b>	<b>13</b>			

- “Fledge Rate” equals the number of chicks fledged per incubating adult. This number should be considered an estimate as there is not a high degree of confidence in the incubating adult and fledge numbers as these data points are very difficult to collect.
- “Peak Total Adult Count” & “Peak Incubating Adult Count” are the highest adult counts observed at any point during the breeding season. “Statewide Peak Window Count” represents the highest tally for one two-week survey window. This species can exhibit a high degree of intra-year movements so both numbers are important to understand the distribution of adults and habitat use (on site and state levels) in NJ.

<sup>1</sup>This site is jointly managed by NJFW and EB Forsythe NWR/Conserve Wildlife Foundation of NJ

# New Jersey Least Tern population: 2005-2025



*Note: The number of colonies only includes sites where active nesting was documented.*

## American Oystercatcher Nesting Summary

- Although American Oystercatchers are a management priority in areas of high human disturbance, resource limitations dictate that the data collected on this non-listed species is not comprehensive to the state. It is well known that many individuals nest in the Atlantic coast marsh, but the vast majority are not tracked (although the number tracked in the marsh increases each year in an effort to rectify this, and will continue to increase through an upcoming effort by TWI and CWF, as well as a continuation of their work on the Delaware Bayshore). The locations listed in the table are all monitored sites with reproductive information available and were visited between 1x/week (or less) to 5x/week.
- **For the first time, there was a decrease in the number of pairs that were monitored by NJFW and partners compared to 2024 (196 vs. 207 pairs).** As there is not yet an ability to monitor all of the pairs in the state, it is difficult to put this into context. A better index may be to look at just Atlantic coast beach-strand pairs, where a longer and more comprehensive dataset exists. In 2025, **there was a rare decrease in beach-strand pairs to 145** (155 in 2024, 146 in 2023). The nesting sites with the highest pair numbers on the beach-strand in 2025 were Holgate (48), Stone Harbor Point (21), Horseshoe Island (18), and Sandy Hook (8). The decline in the number of pairs nesting in the northern municipalities was notable, following the trend of the other species in this report.
- **There were 373 nesting attempts. Of the known 196 pairs, 64 pairs (33%) hatched at least one egg. Sixty-seven (67) nests hatched (18%), 295 (79%) nests failed, and 11 (3%) nests had an unknown outcome.** Of the 295 failed nests, 162 (55%) were lost to predators, 56 (19%) to flooding, 70 (24%) to an undetermined cause (many of these are likely predators, but there was not enough evidence to confirm), and seven (2%) to abandonment.
- The American Oystercatcher Working Group recommends a reproductive goal of 0.50 fledglings/pair. **The reproductive output of monitored pairs in 2025 was 0.36 fledglings/pair.** Some of this rate is explained by the effect of the low hatch rate (18% of nests hatched) but the state also did not see high chick survival (132 chicks hatched but only 54%, or 71 chicks, made it to fledge). Of the five sites that hosted more than five pairs, only one (Horseshoe Island) met the recovery goal of 0.50 fledglings/pair.
- NJFW, Conserve Wildlife Foundation of New Jersey and TWI banded 24 (13, 3, and 8 respectively) American Oystercatchers this season, an average number for a single year. Two transmitters were deployed by partnering agencies; results from that work are not yet available.
- Of the four species, American Oystercatchers continue to show the greatest elasticity in their nesting, utilizing natural areas of marsh islands and beaches. They also use a greater variety of atypical areas – highly groomed beaches, rooftops, and grassy strips in parking lots among them. Of the four species reported in this document, the population of this species appears to be the most secure. They have not yet started funneling into a small number of sites, but are instead relatively evenly distributed with at least some nesting throughout the state. They can vary from a highly dense population at some sites to solitary nesting at others, a strategy that appears to help balance out their prospects for success.

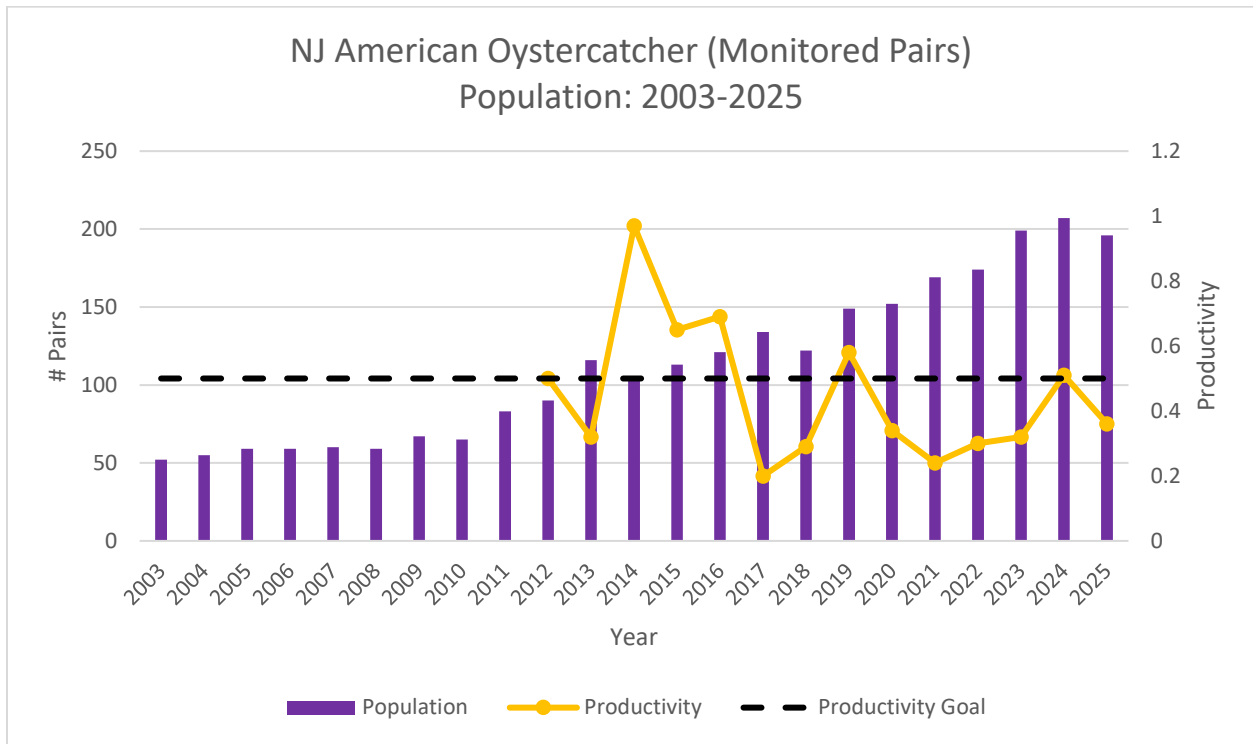
# New Jersey American Oystercatcher Nesting Summary by Site: 2025

*All Monitored Sites*

SITE	Pairs	Pairs Hatched	Chicks Fledged	Pair Success	Fledge Rate
Sandy Hook NRA	8	0	0	0.00	0.00
<i>North Beach</i>	3	0	0	0.00	0.00
<i>North Beach Rec</i>	1	0	0	0.00	0.00
<i>Critical Zone</i>	1	0	0	0.00	0.00
<i>E-Lot</i>	1	0	0	0.00	0.00
<i>Fishing Beach</i>	1	0	0	0.00	0.00
<i>Hidden Beach</i>	1	0	0	0.00	0.00
Seven President's Park	1	0	0	0.00	0.00
<b>Region 2 Subtotal</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>
Long Branch	1	1	0	1.00	0.00
Deal	1	0	0	0.00	0.00
Bradley Beach	1	0	0	0.00	0.00
Avon	1	1	0	1.00	0.00
Belmar-Shark River Inlet <sup>1</sup>	1	0	0	0.00	0.00
Belmar – Beachfront <sup>1</sup>	1	0	0	0.00	0.00
Point Pleasant	1	0	0	0.00	0.00
Island Beach SP – SNA	1	0	0	0.00	0.00
Barnegat Light – Restoration Area	5	1	2	0.20	0.40
Barnegat Light – Front Beach	1	0	0	0.00	0.00
<b>Region 3 Subtotal</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0.23</b>	<b>0.15</b>
Long Beach Township – Haven Beach	1	1	2	1.00	2.00
Long Beach Township – Holgate	1	1	1	1.00	1.00
Mordecai Island	1	0	0	0.00	0.00
Holgate	48	12	6	0.25	0.13
Tucker's Island	2	0	0	0.00	0.00
Little Beach	1	0	0	0.00	0.00
Horseshoe Island	18	8	12	0.44	0.67
<b>Region 4 Subtotal</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>0.31</b>	<b>0.29</b>
Malibu WMA	2	2	1	1.00	0.50
Ocean City – North	1	1	2	1.00	2.00
Rainbow Island – Rt. 52 Bridge	1	0	0	0.00	0.00
Drag Island	5	2	4	0.40	0.80
<b>Region 5 Subtotal</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>0.56</b>	<b>0.78</b>
Corson's Inlet State Park	2	2	3	1.00	1.50
Strathmere Natural Area	1	0	0	0.00	0.00
Avalon – Dunes	4	4	7	1.00	1.75
<b>Region 6 Subtotal</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>0.86</b>	<b>1.43</b>
Gull Island – Middle Township	12	1	0	0.08	0.00
Sturgeon Island	2	0	0	0.00	0.00
Ring Island	6	0	0	0.00	0.00
Great Flat	3	1	1	0.33	0.33
Stone Harbor Point	21	15	20	0.71	0.95
North Wildwood	6	4	2	0.67	0.33
Wildwood	2	1	2	0.50	1.00
Two-Mile Beach	7	1	0	0.14	0.00
<i>Cape May NWR</i>	3	0	0	0.00	0.00
<i>USCG LSU<sup>1</sup></i>	4	1	0	0.25	0.00
Two-Mile Landing	1	0	0	0.00	0.00
Coast Guard-TRACEN <sup>1</sup>	2	0	0	0.00	0.00
Cape May Meadows	5	4	5	0.80	1.00
<i>The Nature Conservancy</i>	4	4	5	1.00	1.25
<i>Cape May Point State Park</i>	1	0	0	0.00	0.00
Cape May Point	2	1	1	0.50	0.50
<b>Region 7 Subtotal</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>0.42</b>	<b>0.46</b>
Money Island <sup>1</sup>	1	0	0	0.00	0.00
North Dyer Cove <sup>1</sup>	1	0	0	0.00	0.00
South Dyer Cove	1	0	0	0.00	0.00
Fortescue Beach <sup>1</sup>	1	0	0	0.00	0.00
Raybins Beach <sup>1</sup>	1	0	0	0.00	0.00
Heislerville WM	1	0	0	0.00	0.00
Thompson's Beach	1	0	0	0.00	0.00
Riggins Ditch	1	0	0	0.00	0.00
North Moore's Beach	2	0	0	0.00	0.00
Moore's Beach	4	0	0	0.00	0.00
Stipson's Island	1	0	0	0.00	0.00
Goshen - North	4	0	0	0.00	0.00
Goshen - South	1	0	0	0.00	0.00
<b>Region 8 Subtotal</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>
<b>All NJ sites TOTAL</b>	<b>196</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>0.32</b>	<b>0.36</b>
<b># Active Sites</b>	<b>58</b>				

<sup>1</sup>The same pair nested at two nearby sites. Therefore "subtotals" and "totals" are less than sum of individual sites.

## New Jersey American Oystercatcher (Monitored Pairs) Population: 2003-2025



*Note: Widespread pair number data was not collected prior to 2003. Widespread productivity data was not collected prior to 2012.*