



Fenwick

Bird Nest Enhancement/Monitoring Project

August 2017 Status Report

Hello Birding Fenwickians!

The **2017 Osprey fledging season** is well under way. Some young birds have already left the nest and others have begun practice flights by exercising their wings while standing on the nest rim.

Three is a charm! The **West End Nest** has finally fledged a baby after the many toils of inexperienced young parents. Congratulations to them and all that have watched this nest with great anticipation. Similarly, the two pairs that have built on the Hastings platform and in a cedar near the Webster's, we hope will have a better 2018.

Genevieve Nuttall, Connecticut Audubon Society's Osprey Nation Manager, and I took a look at each nest yesterday. We were able to get a fledgling count as well as look for any possible nest hazards. The data appears here.

Osprey Data

| <u>Osprey Nest</u> | <u>2016 Status</u> | <u>2017 Status</u> |
|----------------------|--------------------|-----------------------------|
| West End | 0 fledged | 1 fledgling |
| Hepburn | 3 fledged | 3 fledglings/plastic litter |
| Neely | 3 fledged | 3 fledglings |
| Staniford | 1 fledged | 1 or 2 young in nest |
| Sequassen | 4 fledged | 3 fledglings |
| Hastings | 0 fledged | No eggs or young. |
| Webster I | 3 fledged | 3 fledglings |
| Webster II | X | No eggs or young. |
| Total Fledged | 14 | 13 + 2 pending |

Purple Martin Data (see next page)

Counting the martins with complete accuracy is a bit difficult without being present 24/7, but now with the end of the season in sight, the houses will be cleaned and stored while being examined to see exactly how many nests were built.

Again worth mentioning is the use of martin houses that were not used last year at **Keeney, Bulkely, Fourth Fairway, and 29 Pettipaug**. Indications are that Fenwick has a growing martin population with an increase of at least five pairs over last season.



Tending the Osprey garden.



Hepburn Nest. Note the tennis ball.



Purple Martin (female)

Nest Boxes

Tree Swallow, House Sparrow, House Wren, and Carolina Wren did well in the nest boxes, some pairs just finishing up on a second brood.

Other

Sandy Sanstrom, a couple of other **volunteers**, and I will be in the borough at the end of September to remove the martin houses for cleaning and winter storage. Monofilament fishing line continues to be the most serious nest hazard for young Osprey, putting them at risk of deadly entanglements, so we will certainly inspect and clean Osprey nests again before next season.

Birds of Note

As you likely know, a **Piping Plover** pair established a second nest on the beach after the first was washed away by a high tide. DEEP kept an eye on the nest and marked off the area. The four babies hatched but two were lost quite quickly, likely falling prey to the **Black-crowned Night-Heron** that lives along the shores of the Hepburn Pond or one of the predatory gull species. On last inspection, it looks as though only one baby has survived. It is a tough world out there with lots of struggles for these little guys.

The **shorebird southward migration** is in full flood. The Hepburn Pond at low tide and the beach east of Webster's are the best places to find Semipalmated Sandpiper, Least Sandpiper, White-rumped Sandpiper, Sanderling, and perhaps a **rarity** as they feed on the marine invertebrates of this special habitat.

Indeed a rarity was found, yesterday, **August 7**, a first year (juvenile) **Baird's Sandpiper** on the beach about 75 yards west of the breakwater. This is the time of year for this species, which at most has a few records each year in Connecticut.

Baird's is a small to medium-sized sandpiper with a short neck, a moderately long, slightly drooping bill, moderately long legs, and long wings that extend past the end of the tail of a resting bird. This species has a dark center to the rump and tail helping to separate it from White-rumped Sandpiper. It has fairly distinct chest markings and a very scaly back as a young bird, like the one found in Fenwick.

The migration of the Baird's Sandpiper is long but

| <u>Martin House</u> | <u>2016 Nests</u> | <u>2017 Max Pairs</u> |
|---------------------------|-------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. Riggio | 3 | (4 scouts?) |
| 2. Walton | 3 | 3 |
| 3. Ryder Course | 0 | 0 |
| 4. Keeney | 0 | 2 |
| 5. 34 Pettipaug | 0 | 0 |
| 6. Bulkeley | 0 | 1 |
| 7. 29 Pettipaug | X | 2 |
| 8. First Fairway | 0 | 0 |
| 9. Agawam | 0 | 0 |
| 10. Second Fairway West | 3 | 3 |
| 11. Second Fairway East | 3 | 3 |
| 12. Neely West | 3 | 2 |
| 13. Neely East | 3 | 3 |
| 14. Fourth Fairway | 0 | 1 |
| 15. Gay | 3 | 5 |
| 16. Webster | 5 | 6 |
| 17. Ninth Fairway | 0 | 0 |
| Total Nests/Pairs: | 26 | 31 |



Webster I nest and young.



The same nest, three weeks later.

rapid. After departing high-arctic breeding grounds and staging in southern Canada and the northern United States, most individuals travel 3,700 miles, or more, directly to northern South America, some going on as far as Tierra del Fuego. Many individuals complete the entire 9,300 mile journey in as few as 5 weeks.

Glossy Ibis is still being seen in the borough periodically. This long-legged wader is readily identifiable with its iridescent dark feathering and long down curved beak. They are usually found in small flocks.

A young **Red-tailed Hawk** has been using the Bulkeley martin house as a perch from which to hunt, much to the dismay of the area Northern Mockingbird and Purple Martins. No worries there, since the hawk is looking for mice and snakes.

Please feel free to email any **sightings** you think significant or would like to share.

Enjoy your wonderful bird garden!

Cheers,

Andy

Andrew Griswold

Director of EcoTravel

Connecticut Audubon Society

PO Box 903 (30 Plains Road)

Essex, CT 06426 USA

860-767-0660

agriswold@ctaudubon.org

www.ctaudubon.org



Piping Plover



Baird's Sandpiper



Glossy Ibis

Red-tailed Hawk