

**INVENTORY OF TERNS, LAUGHING GULLS, AND BLACK SKIMMERS  
NESTING IN MASSACHUSETTS IN 2005**



Black Skimmer, Minimoy Island, MA.

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## Abstract

Cooperators in Massachusetts surveyed 124 coastal sites in 2005 for the presence of breeding Roseate Terns (*Sterna dougallii*), Common Terns (*Sterna hirundo*), Arctic Terns (*Sterna paradisaea*), Least Terns (*Sterna antillarum*), Laughing Gulls (*Larus atricilla*), and Black Skimmers (*Rhynchops niger*). Seventy-nine sites were occupied by nesting birds of one or more of these species. Common Terns decreased 5.6% to 15,447 pairs. Numbers of Roseate Terns (1,503 pairs; -1.4% from 2004), Least Terns (2,657 pairs; -1.3%), Laughing Gulls (1,312 pairs; -0.8%), Arctic Terns (6 vs. 6 pairs) and Black Skimmers (5 vs. 6 pairs) were similar to 2004.

## Introduction

Terns, Laughing Gulls, and Black Skimmers in Massachusetts are protected and monitored by an extensive network of cooperators throughout the state. These cooperators provide census data and other reproductive information to the Massachusetts Division of Fisheries and Wildlife (MDFW). This allows wildlife managers to determine abundance and status of, and threats to, these species.

This report summarizes data on distribution, abundance, and productivity of terns, Laughing Gulls, and Black Skimmers in Massachusetts during the 2005 nesting season.

## Methods

**Sites surveyed:** Cooperators are asked to survey all sites at which terns, Laughing Gulls, and Black Skimmers have been known to nest. Any new nesting sites are reported.

**Timing of Census:** Depending upon the species, either one or two censuses are conducted. The “A-count” (or “peak season” count) is conducted between 5 and 20 June. Laughing Gulls, Black Skimmers, and all tern species are censused during the A-count. For Roseate and Common Terns, the count is ideally conducted as closely as possible to the first hatch. Laughing Gull and Black Skimmer counts are timed to be coincident with Common Tern counts, and Arctic Tern counts with counts of any sympatric nesting seabird species. Least Tern colonies ideally are visited multiple times during the A-count window, and maximum estimates are reported. The “B-count” (or “post-peak” count) is conducted after 20 June. For Roseate Terns, the B-count is timed 25 days after the A-count. For Arctic Terns and Black Skimmers, which nest in very low numbers in the state, any additional pairs that appear after 20 June are reported. A B-count for Least Terns is not necessary unless there is a significant change in numbers from the A-count, or a site that was not used during the A-period window was used after 20 June. Because Least Terns frequently shift among sites in response to disturbance, B-counts do not contribute to the overall census numbers (to avoid double-counting the same birds); however, the B-count does document use of the site. B-counts are not required for Common Terns or Laughing Gulls.

**Survey Method:** Observers are asked to classify their survey method as one of the following: Nest Count, Partial/Extrapolated Nest Count, or Adult Count. All counts are expressed as “number of pairs”. Nests must contain at least one egg to be counted, unless it is obvious that chicks have already hatched; empty scrapes and abandoned nests are not counted. Adults are only counted if it appears that they are nesting at a site; birds that are not suspected to be nesting at a site (*e.g.*, resting or feeding birds) are not counted as nesting pairs. The number of breeding adults present (*i.e.*, in the nesting area, not loafing on the shoreline) is multiplied by a correction factor of 0.8 to arrive at the number of pairs.

**Survey Quality and Productivity Estimate:** Observers are asked to rate the quality of their survey as Low Confidence, Reasonable Confidence, or High Confidence. Observers also provide a qualitative assessment of productivity: none, poor, fair to good, or excellent. In a few cases, typically for Roseate and Common Terns at large colonies where detailed monitoring occurs, quantitative estimates of productivity (*e.g.*, fledglings/nest) are provided.

**Reporting:** Observers completed a standard “Massachusetts Tern Census Form”. This form requests the following information for each site surveyed: observer name and affiliation, contact information, ownership of site, dates of A- and B-counts, number of pairs observed, survey method, quality of survey, qualitative productivity estimates, dates of first eggs laid and first hatched, and evidence of predation, overwash, or disturbance.

**Quality Control:** All census forms are reviewed by MDFW, and observers are contacted to obtain missing data and clarify ambiguities.

## Results and Discussion

In all, 124 sites were surveyed for nesting terns, Laughing Gulls, and Black Skimmers in 2005, and 79 sites were occupied by nesting birds of one or more of these species. Results for each site are summarized in Table 1.

**Roseate Tern:** Roseate Tern numbers were essentially the same as last year, 1,503 pairs (vs. 1,524 pairs in 2004; -1.4%). While stable in Massachusetts this year, numbers continued to decline for the Northeast U.S. population as a whole. In 2005, 3,110 pairs (a preliminary estimate) nested compared to 3,457 in 2004. The U.S. population peaked in 2000 at 4,310 pairs (2,124 in Massachusetts).

Roseates nested at the usual five sites. The largest colony was at Ram I., Mattapoissett (724 pairs vs. 936 in 2004). Little nesting occurred in the B-period, probably due to depredations by a Great Horned Owl. Despite this, productivity was good (0.93 fledglings/pair). Bird I., Marion was the second-largest site (680 vs. 554); substantial numbers of Roseates nested in the B-period. Productivity was 0.95 fledglings/pair. Good numbers of Roseates (76 vs. 9; 0.79 fledglings/pair) nested on Penikese I., Gosnold this year. Preliminary results indicate that most of these birds came from Bird I. This may have been due to poor feeding conditions in upper Buzzards Bay during a very stormy May. Roseate nesting was delayed substantially by storms at the three Buzzards Bay nesting sites.

The Minimoy I., Chatham colony again held most of the Roseates on Cape Cod (22 pairs vs. 24), and productivity was roughly 0.73 to 1.23 fledglings/nest. Like last year, just one pair nested at S. Monomoy I., Chatham; it did not fledge any chicks.

More Roseates than usual seemed to venture out to investigate other potential nesting sites. Places with “attached” Roseate pairs for which no nests were found were: Smith Point, Nantucket (19 pairs); Muskeget I., Nantucket (2); Dead Neck-Sampson’s I., Barnstable (1); and Gray’s Beach, Yarmouth (1). Some of this interest, again, may have been caused by especially poor feeding conditions in the vicinity of the usual nesting sites early in the season.

Since 1985, Roseate numbers in the state have fluctuated between 1,344 and 2,124 pairs, averaging 1,618 pairs during this time period (Fig. 1).

**Common Tern:** Common Terns nested at 34 sites in Massachusetts in 2005. Numbers declined slightly (-5.6%) to 15,447 pairs (vs. 16,372 in 2004). As usual, the S. Monomoy I. colony far surpassed any other in size (8,834 pairs vs. 8,864 in 2004); numbers have leveled off over the past few years. Productivity was very good (1.41 fledglings/nest). Nearby Minimoy I. lost some pairs this year (913 vs. 1,432); productivity was fair to good.

Numbers were strong at the three major Buzzards Bay colonies, but productivity was poor at the two largest. Ram I. had 2,278 pairs (vs. 2,938 in 2004, which was the highest ever reported); productivity was 0.54 fledglings/pair. The 1,857 pairs at Bird I. (vs. 1,761) produced an average of 0.68 fledglings/pair. The Penikese colony continued to grow, with 758 pairs counted (vs. 631). Productivity was very good (1.36 fledglings/pair).

Two other Common Tern colonies numbered more than 100 pairs: Gray's Beach (156 pairs vs. 72 in 2004; poor productivity) and Haystack Point, Edgartown (260 vs. 338; poor or no productivity). Hog I. Pier (Spinnaker I.), Boston (which had 280 pairs in 2003) was not surveyed for the second year in a row.

Since 1985, Common Tern numbers have risen fairly steadily in Massachusetts, from 7,548 to 16,372 pairs (mean, 11,413 pairs) (Fig. 2).

**Least Tern:** Nesting Least Terns were distributed at 60 sites in the state in 2005. Numbers were stable at 2,657 pairs (vs. 2,691 in 2004). Several fairly large colonies occurred this year. The largest was at Sandy Neck, Barnstable (393 vs. 156; good to fair productivity). Additional colonies with at least 100 pairs were: Smith Point, Nantucket (360 vs. 819; poor); Allen's Pond, Dartmouth (277 vs. 107; good to fair); Great Point, Nantucket (276 vs. 24; zero); Nauset-Eastham (Coast Guard Beach) (260 B-period vs. 73; fair to good); Dead Neck-Sampson I. (203 B-period vs. 139; excellent); Little Beach, Edgartown (168 B-period vs. 0; zero); and Duxbury Beach, Duxbury (100 B-period vs. 44; poor). Many of the above-mentioned colonies numbered fewer than 100 pairs last year, demonstrating that the relative importance of particular Least Tern nesting sites is always in flux. The largest Least Tern site in the state last year was at Smith Point.

Least Tern numbers in Massachusetts increased from 1985 to 2001, declined from 2001 to 2003, and have been relatively constant since then. Since 1985, numbers have ranged from 2,109 to 3,420 pairs with mean of 2,711 pairs (Fig. 1).

**Arctic Tern:** As in 2004, six pairs of Arctic Terns nested in Massachusetts in 2005, at the same three sites as last year: Plymouth Beach (4 pairs vs. 4 in 2004), Nauset-Eastham (1 vs. 1) and Penikese I. (1 vs. 1). None of these pairs produced any fledglings. Arctics are barely hanging on here at the southern edge of their breeding distribution. Since 1985, numbers have ranged from 3 to 29 pairs (mean, 11 pairs) (Fig. 3).

**Black Skimmer:** Five pairs of Black Skimmers nested at two Massachusetts sites this year. Minimoy I. had five pairs (vs. 6 in 2004; productivity was 0.40 fledglings/nest). There was a late-nesting pair at S. Monomoy I., but this was suspected to be a re-nesting pair from Minimoy.

Black Skimmers, at the northern end of their breeding range here, have persisted in very low numbers (range, 0 to 7 pairs; mean, 4) over the past 20 years (Fig. 3).

**Laughing Gull:** Laughing Gulls nested only at S. Monomoy I. in 2005. Numbers were essentially the same as last year (1312 vs. 1322 pairs), and productivity was poor. From 1985 to present, Laughing Gulls have averaged 1014 pairs, bouncing around between 542 and 1,356 pairs (Fig. 4).

### **Acknowledgements**

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**Table 1.** Numbers of pairs and productivity of terns, Laughing Gulls, and Black Skimmers nesting in Massachusetts in 2004. All sites were censused unless noted. Data in parentheses refer to B-period counts. Data in brackets were collected prior to the A-period census window.

COLONY NAME, TOWN	Roseate Tern			Common Tern			Arctic Tern			Least Tern			Black Skimmer			Laughing Gull			Censusing Agency <sup>c</sup>
	No. pairs	M <sup>a</sup>	P <sup>b</sup>	No. pairs	M	P	No. pairs	M	P	No. pairs	M	P	No. pairs	M	P	No. pairs	M	P	
<b>NORTH SHORE</b>																			
Blackwater River Group, Salisbury	0			0			0			0			0			0			ECGA
Woodbridge I., Newburyport	0			80	A	-	0			0			0			0			USFWS
Chaces I., Newbury	0			0			0			0			0			0			USFWS
Plum I. River Group, Newbury (marshes-incl. Pine I., Little Pine I. and Jericho Creek)	0			0			0			0			0			0			USFWS
Parker River Group (marshes)	0			21	A	-	0			0			0			0			USFWS
Plum I. Beach, Newbury-Rowley-Ipswich	0			0			0			36	A	-	0			0			USFWS
Rowley Salt Marshes	0			6	A	-	0			0			0			0			ECGA
Roger I., Ipswich	0			0			0			0			0			0			ECGA
Bagwell I., Ipswich	0			9	A	-	0			0			0			0			ECGA
Lords I., Ipswich	0			24	A	-	0			0			0			0			ECGA
Ipswich Salt Marshes	0			11	A	-	0			0			0			0			ECGA
Crane Beach, Ipswich	0			1	N	0	0			62 (76)	A	1	0			0			TTOR
Tinker's I., Marblehead	no data																		
Saugus River (Gen. Edwards) Bridge, Lynn-Revere	0			38	A	-	0			0			0			0			Zendeh
Snake I., Winthrop	0			28 (32)	A (A)	-	0			0 (4)	(A)	-	0			0			NPS, URI, Corona, Zendeh

COLONY NAME, TOWN	Roseate Tern			Common Tern			Arctic Tern			Least Tern			Black Skimmer			Laughing Gull			Censusing Agency <sup>c</sup>
	No. pairs	M <sup>a</sup>	P <sup>b</sup>	No. pairs	M	P	No. pairs	M	P	No. pairs	M	P	No. pairs	M	P	No. pairs	M	P	
Mystic River, Everett/Boston	0			1	A	-	0			0			0			0			Zendeh
Belle Isle Marsh, Boston	0			0			0			0			0			0			Zendeh
Logan Airport, Boston	0			0			0			0			0			0			Smith
Central Square Piers, East Boston	0			24	A	-	0			0			0			0			Zendeh
Rainsford I., Boston	0			0			0			63	N	-	0			0			NPS, URI
Lovell I., Boston	0			0			0			46	N	-	0			0			NPS, URI
Hog I. Pier ("Spinnaker I."), Hull	no data																		
<b>SOUTH SHORE</b>																			
North R. Mouth (Third and Fourth Cliffs), Scituate	0			2	N	0	0			65	N	0	0			0			MAS
Duxbury Beach, Duxbury	0			0			0			33 (100)	N (N/A)	1	0			0			MAS
Duxbury Bay (Duxbury Bay Maritime School floating dock)	0			1	N	2	0			0			0			0			MAS
Plymouth Beach, Plymouth	0			13	N	0	4	A/N	0	8	N	0	0			0			Plymouth
Ellisville Harbor, Plymouth	0			0			0			15 (4)	N (N)	0	0			0			MAS
Sagamore Beach, Bourne and Sandwich	0			0			0			0			0			0			MAS
Scusset Beach, Sandwich	0			0			0			0			0			0			MAS
<b>UPPER CAPE</b>																			
Menauhant, Falmouth	0			0			0			0			0			0			WBNERR, MAS
Washburn I., Falmouth	0			0			0			1 (3)	N (N)	0	0			0			MDCR, WBNERR

COLONY NAME, TOWN	Roseate Tern			Common Tern			Arctic Tern			Least Tern			Black Skimmer			Laughing Gull			Censusing Agency <sup>c</sup>
	No. pairs	M <sup>a</sup>	P <sup>b</sup>	No. pairs	M	P	No. pairs	M	P	No. pairs	M	P	No. pairs	M	P	No. pairs	M	P	
South Cape Beach-Waquoit, Mashpee	0			0			0			1 (2)	N (N)	1	0			0			MDCR, WBNERR
Popponeset Spit, Mashpee	0			0			0			3	N	0	0			0			MAS
Town Neck Beach, Sandwich	0			0			0			9	N	0	0			0			MAS
Springhill Beach, Sandwich	0			0			0			30 (29)	N (A)	1	0			0			MAS
Scorton (Neck) Creek, Sandwich	0			0			0			30 (4)	N (A)	1	0			0			MAS
Sandy Neck, Barnstable	0			3	N	1	0			393	N	2	0			0			Barnstable
Dead Neck-Sampson I., Barnstable	1 <sup>d</sup>	A	0	15	N	1	0			153 (203)	N (E)	3	0			0			MAS
Craigville-Long Beach, Barnstable	0			1	N	0	0			2 (4)	N	0	0			0			MAS
Squaw I., Barnstable	0			0			0			0			0			0			MAS
Dunbar Point (Kalmus Park), Barnstable	0			0			0			70 (32)	A (A)	0	0			0			MAS
Gray's Beach, Yarmouth	1 <sup>d</sup>	A	-	156	N	1	0			98 (70)	N (A)	1-2	0			0			MAS
Great I., Yarmouth	0			0			0			0			0			0			MAS
West Dennis Beach, Dennis	0			0			0			89	N	1	0			0			MAS
<b>LOWER CAPE</b>																			
Ridgevale Beach, Chatham	0			0			0			1 (15)	N (N)	2	0			0			MAS
Harding's Beach and Point, Chatham	0			0			0			0			0			0			MAS
Monomoy-South, Chatham	1 (0)	N	0	8834	N	1.41 fl./nest	0			93 (39)	N (N)	1	0 (1 <sup>e</sup> )	(N)	0	1312	N	1	USFWS
Minimoy, Chatham	22 (1)	N (N)	0.73 - 1.23 fl./nest	913	N	2	0			0			5	N	0.40 fl./nest	0			USFWS

COLONY NAME, TOWN	Roseate Tern			Common Tern			Arctic Tern			Least Tern			Black Skimmer			Laughing Gull			Censusing Agency <sup>c</sup>
	No. pairs	M <sup>a</sup>	P <sup>b</sup>	No. pairs	M	P	No. pairs	M	P	No. pairs	M	P	No. pairs	M	P	No. pairs	M	P	
Monomoy-North, Chatham	0			8	N	0	0			0			0			0			USFWS
South Beach Island, Chatham	0			0			0			4	N	0	0			0			MAS, MDFW
Nauset (North) Beach, Chatham	0			0			0			0			0			0			Chatham
Tern I., Chatham	0			0			0			0			0			0			MAS
Nauset (North) Beach, Orleans (Chatham line north to Nauset Harbor Inlet)	0			0			0			10	A	1	0			0			Orleans
Nauset-New Island, Orleans	0			6	N	-	0			0			0			0			NPS
S. Sunken Meadow, Eastham	0			0			0			0 (6)	(N)	2	0			0			MAS
Nauset-Eastham ("Coast Guard Beach" & "Plover I.")	0			0			1	N	0	77 (260)	A (A)	2	0			0			NPS
Great I.-Jeremy Pt., Wellfleet	0			0			0			19 (60)	A (A)	0	0			0			NPS
Marconi Beach, Wellfleet	0			0			0			0			0			0			NPS
Marconi Station/LeCount Hollow, Wellfleet	0			0			0			19 (19)	A (A)	0	0			0			NPS
Cahoon Hollow, Wellfleet	0			0			0			5 (21)	A (A)	0	0			0			NPS
Pamet Harbor Bar, Truro	0			0			0			64 (17)	N (N)	2	0			0			MAS
Beach Point/Pilgrim Beach, Truro	0			0			0			0			0			0			MAS
Ballston Beach, Truro	0			0			0			0			0			0			NPS
High Head, Truro	0			0			0			0			0			0			NPS
Head of the Meadow, Truro	0			0			0			1 (4)	N (N)	2	0			0			NPS
Wood End-Long Point Area, Provincetown	0			0			0			32 (13)	A (N)	0	0			0			NPS

COLONY NAME, TOWN	Roseate Tern			Common Tern			Arctic Tern			Least Tern			Black Skimmer			Laughing Gull			Censusing Agency <sup>c</sup>
	No. pairs	M <sup>a</sup>	P <sup>b</sup>	No. pairs	M	P	No. pairs	M	P	No. pairs	M	P	No. pairs	M	P	No. pairs	M	P	
Race Point Light Area, Provincetown	0			0 (1)	(N)	0	0			3 (8)	N (N)	1	0			0			NPS
Race Point CG Station, Provincetown	0			0			0			0 (3)	(N)	-	0			0			NPS
Mission Bell, Provincetown	0			0			0			13 (0)	N	0	0			0			NPS
Tasha's Area, Provincetown	0			0			0			0 (6)	(A/N)	0	0			0			NPS
<b>BUZZARDS BAY</b>																			
Bird I., Marion	680 (182)	N (N)	0.95 fl./pr.	1857	N	0.68 fl./pr.	0			0			0			0			MDFW
Strawberry Pt., Mattapoisett	no data																		
Ram I., Mattapoisett	724 (20)	N (N)	0.93 fl./pr.	2278	N	0.54 fl./pr.	0			0			0			0			MDFW
So. Shore Marshes WMA, Little Bay, Fairhaven	0			0			0			13	A	-	0			0			MDFW
Fish I., Fairhaven	0			0			0			0			0			0			MDFW
West I., Fairhaven	0			0			0			0			0			0			LCES
Long I., Fairhaven	no data																		
Winsegansett Hts., Fairhaven	0			0			0			0 (1)	(N)	2	0			0			LCES
Round Hill Beach, Dartmouth	0			0			0			1	N	0	0			0			MAS
Salter's Pt. and Pd., Dartmouth	0			0			0			0			0			0			MAS
Demarest Lloyd State Park, Dartmouth	0			0			0			0			0			0			LCES
Barney's Joy-Allen's Pd.-Little Beach, Dartmouth	0			8	N	-	0			277	N	2	0			0			MAS
Gooseberry Neck, Westport	0			0			0			0			0			0			LCES

COLONY NAME, TOWN	Roseate Tern			Common Tern			Arctic Tern			Least Tern			Black Skimmer			Laughing Gull			Censusing Agency <sup>c</sup>
	No. pairs	M <sup>a</sup>	P <sup>b</sup>	No. pairs	M	P	No. pairs	M	P	No. pairs	M	P	No. pairs	M	P	No. pairs	M	P	
Horseneck Beach, Westport	0			0			0			0			0			0			MAS, LCES
Speaking Rock, Westport	0			11	A	-	0			0			0			0			Cole, MAS
Jug Rock, Westport	0			0			0			0			0			0			Cole, MAS
Cockeast Pd.-Acoaxet, Westport	0			0			0			0			0			0			TNCRI
Richmond Pd., Westport	0			0			0			0			0			0			TNCRI
Bay Point, S. Swansea	0			0			0			0			0			0			Waring
Pasque I., Gosnold	0			0			0			12	A	-	0			0			MDFW, Hatch
Nashawena I., Gosnold	0			0			0			8 <sup>f</sup>			0			0			MDFW, Hatch
Penikese I., Gosnold	76 (8)	N (N)	0.79 fl./pr.	758 (975)	N (N)	1.36 fl./pr.	2 <sup>g</sup>	N	0	0			0			0			MDFW
Cuttyhunk I., Gosnold	no data																		
<b>MARTHA'S VINEYARD</b>																			
Eastville Beach, Oak Bluffs	0			0			0			18	N	1	0			0			MAS
Harthaven Beach, Oak Bluffs	0			0			0			0			0			0			MAS
Sylvia State Beach, Oak Bluffs	0			0			0			8 (14)	N (N)	2	0			0			MAS
Sarson I., Sengekontacket Pd., Oak Bluffs	0			0			0			0			0			0			MAS
Haystack Pt., Sengekontacket Pd., Edgartown	0			260	A	0-1	0			0			0			0			MAS
Little Beach, Edgartown	0			0			0			0 (168)	N	0	0			0			MAS
Cape Poge Elbow, Edgartown	0			0			0			0			0			0			TTOR

COLONY NAME, TOWN	Roseate Tern			Common Tern			Arctic Tern			Least Tern			Black Skimmer			Laughing Gull			Censusing Agency <sup>c</sup>
	No. pairs	M <sup>a</sup>	P <sup>b</sup>	No. pairs	M	P	No. pairs	M	P	No. pairs	M	P	No. pairs	M	P	No. pairs	M	P	
Little Neck, Edgartown	0			0			0			0			0			0			TTOR
East Beach-Dike Bridge, Edgartown	0			0			0			0			0			0			TTOR
Poucha Pond, Edgartown	0			0			0			24 (17)	N (N)	0	0			0			TTOR
Wasque, Edgartown	0			0			0			0			0			0			TTOR
Norton Beach ("Katama"), Edgartown	0			0			0			0 (16)	(N)	1	0			0			MAS
Edgartown Great Pd., Edgartown	0			0			0			0			0			0			MVLBC, MAS
Oyster Pd., Edgartown	0			0			0			0			0			0			MAS
Watcha Pd., West Tisbury	no data																		
Quansoo Area (Long Pt. Wildlife Refuge, Tisbury Great Pond, W. Tisbury & Black Point Pond, Chilmark)	0			6 (0)	A	0	0			6 (17)	A (N)	0	0			0			MAS, MVLBC, TTOR
Lamberts Cove- James Pd., W. Tisbury	0			0			0			0			0			0			MAS
Chilmark Pd., Chilmark	0			0			0			0			0			0			MAS, MVLBC
Stonewall Beach, Chilmark	0			0			0			7	E	0	0			0			MAS
Long Beach, Aquinnah & Squibnocket Beach, Chilmark	0			0			0			6	N	0	0			0			MAS
Nomans Land, Chilmark	0			2	C <sup>h</sup>	2	0			0			0			0			USFWS
Lobsterville (incl. "Dogfish Bar"), Aquinnah	0			0			0			9	N	1	0			0			MAS
Menemsha Pd., Aquinnah-Chilmark (encompasses Edys	0			0			0			0			0			0			MAS

COLONY NAME, TOWN	Roseate Tern			Common Tern			Arctic Tern			Least Tern			Black Skimmer			Laughing Gull			Censusing Agency <sup>c</sup>
	No. pairs	M <sup>a</sup>	P <sup>b</sup>	No. pairs	M	P	No. pairs	M	P	No. pairs	M	P	No. pairs	M	P	No. pairs	M	P	
I., Chilmark)																			
Tashmoo, Tisbury	0			0			0			7	N	0	0			0			MAS
Mink Meadows, Tisbury	0			0			0			12	N	3	0			0			MAS
<b>NANTUCKET</b>																			
Great Point (including "The Galls"), Nantucket	0			1	N	0	0			276	N	0	0			0			TTOR
Coskata-Coatue, Nantucket	0			0			0			0			0			0			NCF, TTOR
Squam Head & Pond, Nantucket	0			0			0			0			0			0			NCF
Quidnet (including Sesachacha Pd.), Nantucket	0			0			0			7 (40)	N (E)	3	0			0			MAS
Quaise, Nantucket	0			0			0			0			0			0			NCF
Siasconset (Sankaty-Low Beach), Nantucket	0			0			0			57 (21)	N (N)	1	0			0			NMCRD
Tom Nevers Head, Nantucket	no data																		
Surfside, Nantucket	0			0			0			0			0			0			NMCRD
Cisco Beach- Hummock Pond, Nantucket	0			0			0			0			0			0			NCF
Esther I.-Smith Pt., Nantucket	19 <sup>d</sup> (6 <sup>d</sup> )	A (A)	0	66	A	1	0			360	A	1	0			0			NMCRD
Eel Point, Nantucket	0			0			0			0 (26)	N	2	0			0			NCF
Tuckernuck I., Nantucket	0			0			0			0			0			0			TLT, Veit
Muskeget I., Nantucket	2 <sup>d</sup>			5	N	0	0			1	N (A)	0	0			0			Veit

COLONY NAME, TOWN	Roseate Tern			Common Tern			Arctic Tern			Least Tern			Black Skimmer			Laughing Gull			Censusing Agency <sup>c</sup>
	No. pairs	M <sup>a</sup>	P <sup>b</sup>	No. pairs	M	P	No. pairs	M	P	No. pairs	M	P	No. pairs	M	P	No. pairs	M	P	
<b>TOTAL 2005 NESTING PAIRS</b>	<b>1,503</b>			<b>15,447</b>			<b>6</b>			<b>2,657</b>			<b>5</b>			<b>1,312</b>			
TOTAL 2004 NESTING PAIRS	1,524			16,372			6			2,691			6			1,322			
PERCENT CHANGE FROM 2004	-1.4			-5.6			0.0			-1.3			-16.7			-0.8			

<sup>a</sup> Method: A = adult count; E = partial/extrapolated count; N = nest count. See text of “Methods” for more details.

<sup>b</sup> Productivity: 0 = none; 1 = poor; 2 = fair to good; 3 = excellent. Quantitative estimates are given as fledglings/nest or fledglings/pair.

<sup>c</sup> In addition to the names of towns, counties, and individuals, the following abbreviations are used: MDCR=Massachusetts Department of Conservation & Recreation; MDFW=Massachusetts Division of Fisheries & Wildlife; ECGA=Essex County Greenbelt Association; LCES=Lloyd Center for Environmental Studies; MAS=Massachusetts Audubon Society-Coastal Waterbird Program; MVLBC=Martha’s Vineyard Land Bank Commission; NCF=Nantucket Conservation Foundation; NMCRD=Town of Nantucket Marine and Coastal Resources Department; NPS=National Park Service; TNCRI=The Nature Conservancy - Rhode Island; TLT=Tuckernuck Land Trust, TTOR=The Trustees of Reservations; URI=University of Rhode Island; USFWS=US Fish & Wildlife Service; WBNERR=Waquoit Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve.

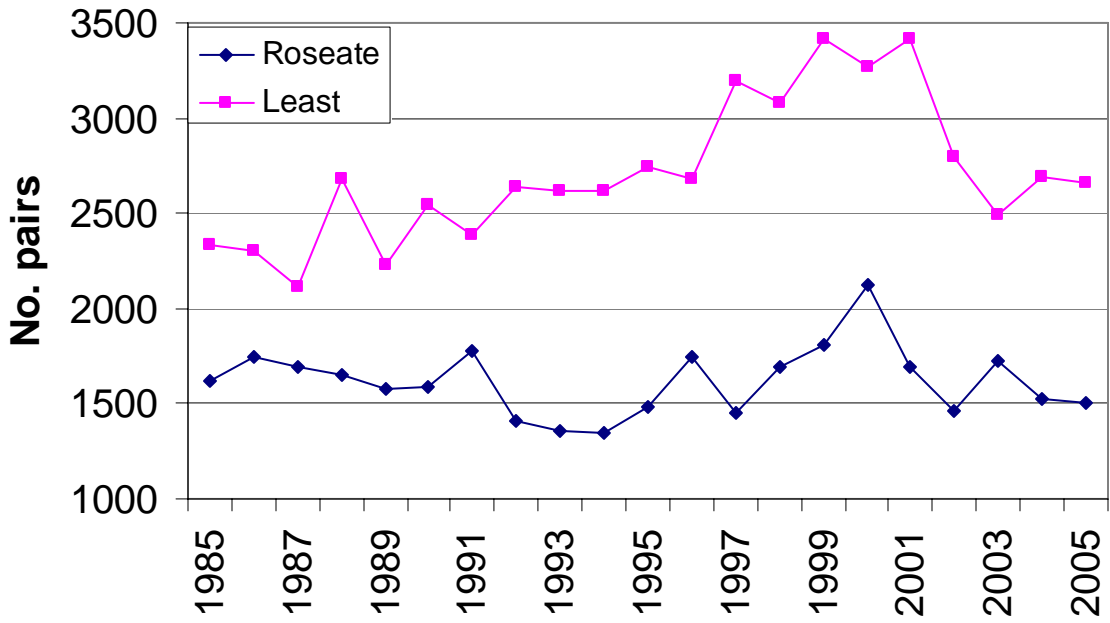
<sup>d</sup> Pair(s) were attached to the site but no nests were found. Pair(s) not included in state total.

<sup>e</sup> The Black Skimmer was probably a re-nest of a pair from Minimoy. It is not included in the state total.

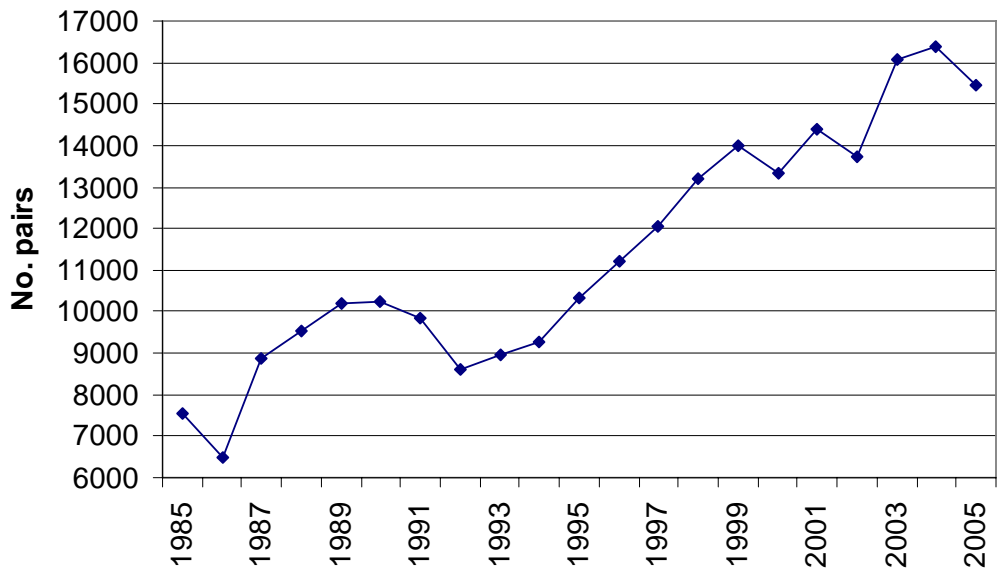
<sup>f</sup> Incomplete information. Fox Pt. and Quick's Hole not surveyed.

<sup>g</sup> Only one pair of Arctic Terns nested. As has been the case for the past few years, an additional male was present throughout the season. This year it sometimes was accompanied by a (presumed) female in sub-adult or winter plumage. Only one pair is included in state total.

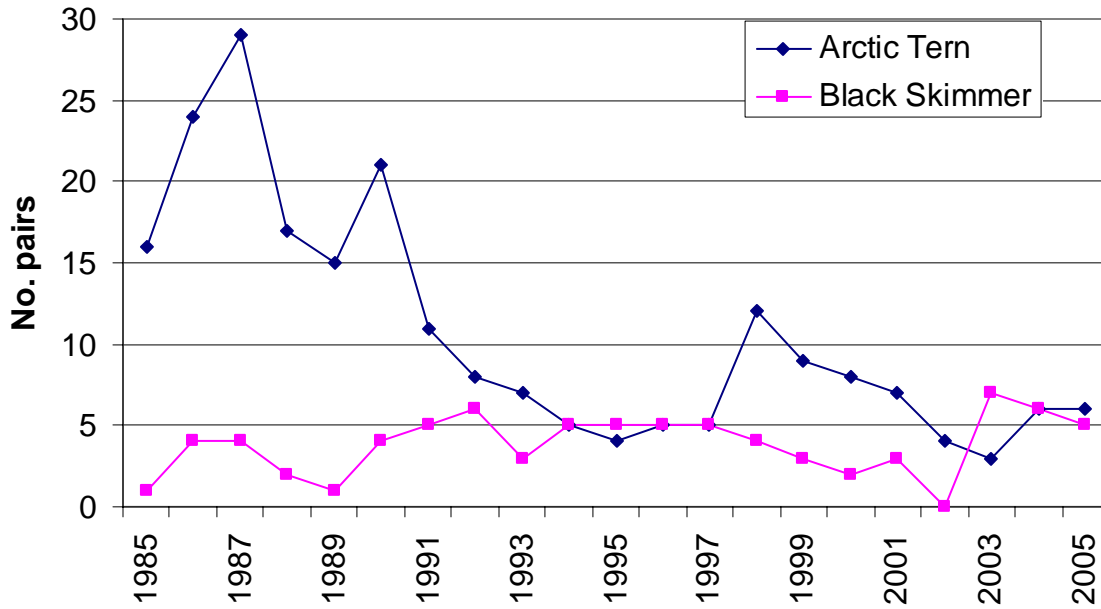
<sup>h</sup> The number of pairs was estimated based on the number of chicks seen.



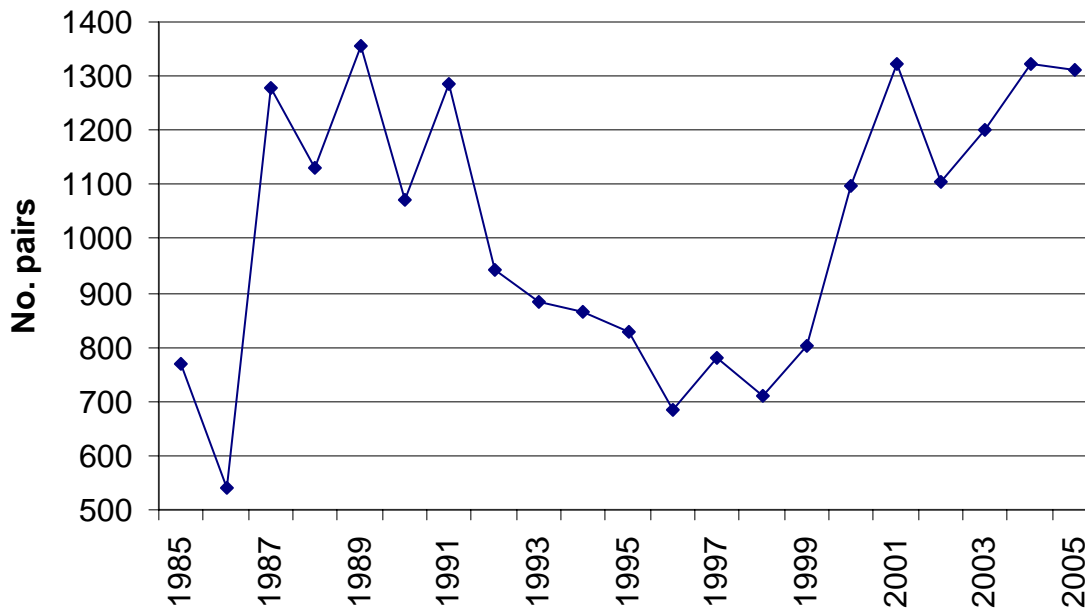
**Figure 1. Numbers of nesting Roseate and Least Terns in Massachusetts, 1985-2005.**



**Figure 2. Numbers of nesting Common Terns in Massachusetts, 1985-2005.**



**Figure 3. Numbers of nesting Arctic Terns and Black Skimmers in Massachusetts, 1985-2005.**



**Figure 4. Numbers of nesting Laughing Gulls in Massachusetts, 1985-2005.**