Piping Plover Nesting Results in New Jersey:2025

Prepared by
Emily Heiser and Christina "Kashi" Davis
New Jersey DEP Fish and Wildlife
Endangered and Nongame Species Program

Photo by Matt Reitinger

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS:

Seventy-six (76) pairs of Piping Plovers nested in New Jersey in 2025, a 15% decline in population size compared to 2024 (89 pairs), and the lowest recorded pair number in the state since intensive monitoring began in 1987. The pair number is well-below both the statewide long-term average (115 pairs) and the state's peak population of 144 pairs in 2003. Productivity in 2025 (0.84 fledglings/pair) was higher than the last two years (0.54 fledglings/pair in 2024 and 0.53 fledglings/pair in 2023) but is still well-below the federal recovery goal (1.50 fledglings/pair).

The total number of adults recorded for the entire nesting season (170 adults) was higher than the total number of adults recorded during the date-restricted Atlantic Coast census survey conducted June 1-9 (159 adults). The final number of pairs for the season (76 pairs) was higher than the pair number tallied during the date-restricted census period (64 pairs) which is typically the case. Twenty unpaired adults were recorded this season. While this number is considered high when comparing it to long-term trends in the state, it has become the norm in the last several years to see a higher number of unpaired adults. It is possible some of these birds bred undetected but considering the high level of monitoring in the state at sites where these birds were observed, it is not believed to be the case for the majority of unpaired adults.

The Holgate unit of E.B. Forsythe National Wildlife Refuge remained the stronghold of the state's population with the largest percentage of pairs (41 pairs or 54%). This region (regions defined on Table 1) also includes the Little Beach unit of E.B. Forsythe National Wildlife Refuge and the state's North Brigantine Natural Area. This region has remained fairly stable over the last decade with some fluctuations in the overall population but the bulk of the pairs in this region have almost entirely shifted to the Holgate unit. The northern Monmouth County region experienced a 40% decline in population size compared to 2024 (9 pairs in 2025 vs. 15 pairs in 2024). This region accounted for 12% of the state's population and has declined 86% over the last decade. The central Ocean County region accounted for 17% of the state's population (13 pairs). Cape May County accounted for 17% of the statewide population (13 pairs).

Looking at individual sites across the state, the most significant declines were in Monmouth County. Gateway National Recreational Area's Sandy Hook unit (Sandy Hook) observed its lowest pair number (9 pairs in 2025) since intensive monitoring began in 1987 (10 pairs in 1987 and a peak of 53 in 2015). The sites that have played the most crucial roles at Sandy Hook for Piping Plover conservation over the last two decades have been Coast Guard Beach, North Beach, North Gunnison, South Gunnison, and Critical Beach. This was the first year since 1987 that no birds nested at Coast Guard Beach, and troublesome declines continued at these other individual

sites within the park. Outside of Sandy Hook, this is the first time since 1996 that Piping Plovers have been absent on northern Monmouth County beaches.

An increase in pairs was noted at Island Beach State Park (2 in 2024, 4 in 2025). Barnegat Light saw a slight increase in pair numbers (7 pairs in 2024, 8 pairs in 2025). Holgate continued its decline in pairs after peaking in 2023 with 53 pairs (48 in 2024, 40 in 2025) and Little Beach saw a small increase (0 in 2024, 1 in 2025). In Cape May County, Peck's Beach (inclusive of all Ocean City sites and Corson's Inlet State Park) saw a slight decrease in pair numbers (6 pairs in 2024, 5 pairs in 2025). Both Stone Harbor Point (3 pairs) and North Wildwood (2 pairs) were active this season, marking the first time since 2015 that Hereford Inlet had nesting activity on both sides of the inlet. A decrease in pairs (4 in 2024, 3 in 2025) was noted at Cape May National Wildlife Refuge (now inclusive of both Coast Guard – LSU and Cape May NWR's 2 Mile Beach Unit due to a January 2025 land transfer).

Pairs nested at 18 sites statewide in 2025 with five sites gained and six sites lost from 2024. The most notable losses occurred within Sandy Hook with a total of four sites lost including Coast Guard Beach and North Gunnison, both of which have played a pivotal role at the park since intensive monitoring began in 1987. New Jersey DEP Fish and Wildlife (NJFW) monitored ten active nesting sites (55% of the sites statewide), accounting for 24 nesting pairs (32% of the nesting pairs statewide). NJFW also regularly monitored 18 other potential breeding sites with historic nesting records and/or highly suitable habitat; however, none of those sites yielded nests. The majority of pairs remained on federal property (53 pairs or 70% of the statewide total) but the total number of pairs occupying federal properties declined 20% compared to 2024 (66 pairs). While new state and municipal sites have been occupied at low rates, the majority of the pairs lost from federal sites are not being observed elsewhere, indicating a true population decline versus dispersal within the state.

Statewide pair-nest success (the percentage of pairs that successfully hatched at least one nest) was low this year (59%). This was below the state's long-term average (68%) but slightly higher than 2024 (55%). However, pair-nest success was significantly higher in 2025 in northern Monmouth County (78% in 2025 vs. 40% in 2024) and higher than the long-term average for this region (72%). Pair-nest success was also high (85%) in central Ocean County with successes at Island Beach State Park and Barnegat Light. Holgate's pair-nest success (45%) was low for the second consecutive season (46% in 2024) and below the average for this region (59%). Cape May County saw a slight decline in pair-nest success in 2025 (69% in 2024, 62% in 2025).

The cause of nest failure was determined in 88 of the 104 failed nesting attempts statewide. Predation was the leading cause of nest failure (68 or 66%), as is typically the case. Of those predated nests, 53% were lost to mammals and three-quarters were lost to red fox (27 or 75%). The remainder of mammalian predated nests were lost to mink (6 or 17%) and undetermined mammal species (3 or 8%). Avian predators accounted for 7% (5) of predated nests and ghost crabs accounted for an additional 7% (5) of lost nests. The remainder of predated nests were lost to undetermined predators (22 or 33%). Nest abandonment accounted for 2% (2) of nest losses, which is low for the state. Flooding accounted for 17% (18) of lost nests in 2025. The remaining causes of nest failure could not be determined (16 or 15%) due to lack of evidence but are suspected to largely be related to predators.

The statewide fledgling rate was 0.84 fledglings/pair. Productivity was below the range-wide threshold for population maintenance (1.245 fledglings/pair) and the range-wide productivity goal (1.50 fledglings/pair) established in the USFWS Recovery Plan for Atlantic Coast Piping Plovers. The statewide productivity rate fell below the long-term state average (1.01 fledglings/pair 1987-2025). NJFW-monitored sites recorded 1.42 fledglings/pair which was well-above the NJFW-monitored sites long-term average of 0.95 fledglings/pair.

Comparing rates across individual sites and regions, productivity varied considerably. Fledge rates in northern Monmouth County, now consisting solely of Sandy Hook sites, were high in 2025 (1.78 fledglings/pair). Sandy Hook's fledge rate was the second highest recorded since intensive monitoring began in 1987. The central

Ocean County region produced the highest productivity rate in the state for the second consecutive year (2.00 fledglings/pair). Sites in this region (Island Beach State Park and Barnegat Light) produced the most fledglings in the state (26 fledglings, 40% of all fledglings in 2025). The most concerning productivity rate in the state was at Holgate (0.28 fledglings/pair in 2025), especially because of how many pairs nested there and its impact on the overall productivity rate for the state. This is well below the long-term average for Holgate (0.94 fledglings/pair) and part of a continual decline in productivity at this site over the last three years. Cape May County productivity increased again in 2025 (0.46 fledglings/pair in 2024, 0.67 fledglings/pair in 2025).

DISCUSSION

New Jersey's statewide Piping Plover breeding population plummeted to a record low of 76 pairs in 2025, as viewed over the period since federal and state listing. While previous lows (96 in 2018, 89 in 2024) have been within range of historic norms (97 pairs in 1987, 93 pairs in 1998), the 2025 pair number is a substantial decline into unchartered territory.

The most significant declines in the state were observed at Sandy Hook and Holgate. All other regions in the state gained small numbers of pairs but failed to make up for losses at these traditionally high recruitment sites. This failure signals a problem within federal sites that have long maintained the highest pair numbers and significantly contributed to high productivity. For many years, managers have cautioned about the issues with high concentrations of birds within a small number of sites and that impact was apparent this year. The habitat within state and municipal sites are ill-equipped to handle the dispersal of a high number of birds from these sites considering management fragmentation and habitat alteration. While the pair losses at Sandy Hook and low productivity at Holgate have been devasting to a population already in peril, they are unsurprising considering the trend of low productivity over the last several years from both sites. In order for a healthy population of Piping Plovers to thrive in New Jersey, all sites must recruit pairs, maintain habitat, and produce fledglings.

When looking at statewide pair distribution over the last decade, Monmouth County has declined 86% in pair number and 2025 marked the first year since 1996 that Piping Plovers were not observed nesting at any site outside of Sandy Hook in the county. Sites in this region are pair starved with little-to-no feeder population present now that Sandy Hook has plummeted. Mark-recapture studies of Piping Plovers in New York have occurred over the last decade but few of these marked birds have been observed nesting in New Jersey. This indicates that while New York breeding sites are proximally close to the northern New Jersey population, these birds are not robustly dispersing to New Jersey to backfill losses in that portion of the state. In addition to lacking a true feeder population, some of the habitat in this area has suffered immensely from erosion and sites that once were able to host significant pair numbers (Sea Bright hosted 10 pairs 2017-2019) are no longer suitable enough to support breeding birds.

In terms of habitat suitability, Holgate was once considered premiere nesting habitat in New Jersey after Superstorm Sandy overwashed a significant portion of the unmodified inlet system in 2012. While managers were aware that this was a temporary habitat modification as coastal systems are inherently dynamic in nature, the overwash recruited a historic number of pairs to this area when it peaked with (53 pairs) in 2023 and consistently produced high counts of fledglings. The overwash habitat has gradually become less suitable due to sand accretion and habitat succession towards a more vegetated landscape, reducing the amount of open shelly habitat for the birds to nest in and reducing accessibility to the all-important low energy backshore foraging habitat. In addition to this general loss of habitat, these changes also brought more predation issues to the landscape with birds funneled into smaller, more linear sections of the beach where they are easily found by predators.

Sandy Hook and Holgate represented 65% of the statewide population in 2025. These two federal sites have the ability to manage and create areas that are free from human disturbance which is critical to a thriving population

in New Jersey (Stantial 2020) as recreation at most other sites in the state is considerably higher. Management considerations such as habitat alteration and intensive predator mitigation at both Sandy Hook and Holgate should be heavily considered as these sites play perhaps the most crucial role in New Jersey for Piping Plover conservation. As pairs decline in both areas, with seemingly no dispersal to other sites, managers are concerned about the status of this species in the future.

State and municipal sites continued to struggle with similar issues such as habitat loss, continuing predator impacts, and high rates of human disturbance. Habitat loss is difficult to address at municipal sites with coastal development and recreation at the forefront of economic drivers. There is evidence to suggest that managers can create beneficial habitat using the model of success that the Barnegat Light Restoration Area has proven since its creation in 2019. For six out of the last seven years, productivity at the Restoration Area has been above the federal recovery goal (1.50 fledglings/pair) with an average of 2.00 fledglings/pair. Of the 90 recorded brood observations within the Restoration Area, 91% of the time chicks were found utilizing the disturbance free alternative foraging habitat. Providing chicks with areas to feed and rest with little-to-no threat from human disturbance should be a priority for managers in New Jersey. Open space public lands such as Stone Harbor Point, Corson's Inlet State Park, North Brigantine Natural Area and Island Beach State Park should strongly consider management actions such as habitat alteration and additional human disturbance management to provide pairs with a reprieve from intense recreational pressure.

While flooding remains a serious threat with sea-level rise increasing, predation has remained the leading cause of nest failure for Piping Plovers in the state for over a decade. This threat can be partially mitigated with the use of predator exclosures but these increase the risk of adult mortality to one or both adults (Stantial 2020, Heiser and Davis 2024). The tenuous relationship between exclosures and adult mortality is of high concern as the survival of site fidelic adult birds has greater beneficial population implications than newly fledged chicks that have a lower chance of surviving their first year and returning to breed (Cohen et. al 2016). In 2024, NJFW tested a variety of exclosure modifications. The design that showed the most promise was a triangular shaped exclosure with "wings" that extend beyond the three corners and bird spikes along the top. The idea of the triangle with wings was to provide birds with a faster escape route while also making it more challenging for the predator (primarily red fox) to take the adults as they circle the exclosure. The spikes prevent avian predators (like owls and falcons) from being able to perch on the exclosure and take adults as they exit. In 2025, NJFW continued experimenting with the triangle design and 14 nests were exclosed utilizing this style exclosure. They were 100% successful in hatching chicks and there was a 0% abandonment rate (the abandonment rates noted elsewhere in this report were from unexclosed nests). Of the 14 pairs that hatched chicks, 13 broods fledged 27 chicks (42% of the total statewide fledglings).

New Jersey Fish and Wildlife continued to trial other non-lethal means of predation management, including the use of foxlights and fladry. Foxlights are a nocturnal predator deterrent that flash a random series of bright lights throughout the night with the intention of hazing mammalian predators away from nests. The lights were placed in close proximity to Piping Plover nests at two sites. Two successful hazing events of red fox were captured on game cameras. Fladry was also deployed at multiple sites again in 2025. Notably, one array of fladry was placed around a large Least Tern colony that had one Piping Plover nest. The colony was successful and the plover nest hatched. While these sample sizes are low, managers across the state must consider exploring novel techniques to protect nests from the ongoing threat of predation. Predator populations in the coastal system are dynamic and change from year-to-year. With low predictability as to what the issues may be for that season, managers must remain flexible and adapt to addressing these issues with novel techniques. There is no one-size-fits-all solution for predation management and combining standard practices with new techniques will expand the tools available to managers across the landscape.

Chick mortality remains difficult to address as scant evidence is typically left behind. Predation is likely the leading cause of chick mortality but exposure and starvation/reduced rates of weight gain due to the lack of accessible foraging habitats is also a problem in the state. Various methodologies like habitat restoration, enacting regulations to close foraging areas to human recreation, and food supplementation practices should be thoroughly investigated. While these can be difficult strategies for managers to implement in terms of cost, economic drivers, public access, and potential implications of supplementation, the current status of the population warrants more aggressive management if the population of Piping Plovers is to rebound in New Jersey.

CONCLUSION

Across the range, Piping Plovers face increasing rates of habitat loss, predation pressure, and human disturbance. While the New England Recovery Unit thrives, the Southern Recovery Unit (particularly Maryland, Virginia, and North Carolina) is following a worrisome downward trend. New York and New Jersey comprise the mid-Atlantic Recovery Unit that acts as a link between the north and the south. New York trends are following a similar upward trajectory as New England, but New Jersey is following a concerning plummet similar to the Southern Recovery Unit. New Jersey must make decisive management decisions for this species and partners must work together for recovery to remain a viable goal. Habitat restoration and enhancements like those at Barnegat Light must become more common across the state. Novel predation management techniques that show promise, such as fladry and exclosure modifications, must continue to be explored. Causes of chick mortality and ways to address them must become a researched-based focus at all sites. Compared to many endangered species, the needs of Piping Plover are largely understood, positioning it well for increased management efforts and managers should use this knowledge to their advantage. Recovery appears to be a distant goal, but NJFW remains committed to working with partners on the state, federal, non-profit, and academic levels to promote a healthy population of Piping Plovers.

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Table 1. Number of Piping Plover pairs at New Jersey nesting sites: 2015-2025

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Sandy Hook NRA	51	40	38	41	40	37	33	34	14	9
Coast Guard	5	3	3	3	2	2	1	2	1	0
North Beach	14	13	11	10	11	11	10	13	3	4
North Beach Recreational	1	1	1	3	2	1	0	4	3	2
North Gunnison	8	6	6	8	8	10	7	6	2	0
South Gunnison	7	5	3	3	4	4	4	3	1	1
D-Lot	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
E-Lot	0	0	0	1[1]	0	0	0	1	0	0
Visitor Center	1	0	0	1[1]	0	0	0	0	0	0
Critical Zone	6	5	6	6	6	3	5	4	1	0
Hidden Beach	4	3	3	1	0	1	1	0	0	1
B-Lot	0	0	0	1[1]	0	0	0	0	0	0
Fee Beach	4	3	3	5[1]	4	3	3	0	2	0
South Fee Beach	1	1	2	1	3	2	1	1	1	1
Sea Bright - North	6	10	10	10	6	7[1]	1	2	0	0
Monmouth Beach - North[2]	5	3	3	4[1]	2	5[1]	3	2	1	0
Monmouth Beach - South	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Seven Presidents Park	1	1	0	2[1]	0	0	0	0	0	0
Long Branch	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
Deal	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
Region 2 subtotal	**63**	**54**	**52**	**56**	**48**	**48**	**39**	**38**	**15**	**9**
Belmar – Shark River Inlet	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Sea Girt – Wreck Pond	0	0	0	1[1]	0	1	1	0	0	0
Sea Girt – NGTC	0	0	0	2[1]	1	1	1	0	0	0
Mantoloking	0	0	0	0	0	1[1]	0	0	0	0
Seaside Park	0	0	0	0	0	2[1]	1	1	1	1
Island Beach SP NNA	0	0	4	4	4	2	3	1	2	2
Island Beach SP SNA	1	1	0	1[1]	0	0	0	1	0	2
Barnegat Light – Restoration Area	1	2	2	1	2	5	5	6	5	6
Barnegat Light—Front Beach	2	3	1	2	0	1	2	2	2	2
Loveladies	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Region 3 subtotal	**4**	**6**	**8**	**11**	**7**	**12**	**13**	**11**	**10**	**13**
Long Beach Township	0	1[1]	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1[1]
EB Forsythe NWR	37	37	31	40	39	59	54	54	48	41
Holgate	25	22[1]	18	29[1]	29	46	48	53	48	40[1]
Little Beach	12	15	13	12[1]	10	13[1]	6	1	0	1
Horseshoe Island	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	0
North Brigantine NA	5	4	2	2	2	3[1]	1	1	0	0
Region 4 subtotal	**42**	**41**	**33**	**42**	**41**	**61**	**55**	**55**	**51**	**41**
Seaview Harbor Marina	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Malibu WMA	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	0	0
Ocean City – North	0	0	0	0	2	3[1]	4	3	2	2
Ocean City - Center	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	1	0
Region 5 subtotal	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**2**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**3**	**2**
Corson's Inlet SP	0	0	0	2	2	3[1]	3	3	3	3
Strathmere NA	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0
Strathmere (Upper Twp.)	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
Avalon - Dunes	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Region 6 subtotal	**1**	**1**	**0**	**2**	**2**	**4**	**4**	**3**	**3**	**3**
Stone Harbor Point	5	3	3	3	2	6	2	3	3	3
N. Wildwood - Hereford	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
Two Mile Beach	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	2	4	3
Cape May NWR	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	3	3
Coast Guard – LSU[3]	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	1	-
Coast Guard - TRACEN	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
Region 7 subtotal	**5**	**3**	**3**	**3**	**3**	**8**	**2**	**5**	**7**	**8**
Total Pairs	**115**	**105**	**96**	**114**	**103**	**137**	**118**	**118**	**89**	**76**
Pairs at NJFW sites	**27**	**29**	**27**	**33**	**24**	**41**	**31**	**28**	**23**	**24**

[1] The same pair nested at two nearby sites. Therefore "subtotals" and "totals" are less than sum of individual sites.
[2] This site includes Sea Bright – South and Monmouth Beach – North
[3] Coast Guard – LSU was transferred to Cape May National Wildlife Refuge in January 2025; henceforth, nesting pairs at this site are counted in Cape May NWR totals

Table 2. New Jersey Piping Plover window census results: June 1-9, 2025

	State Census Count			Final Season Count		
	# Pairs	# Unpaired Adults[1]	# Total Adults	# Pairs	# Unpaired Adults[1]	# Total Adults
Sandy Hook Coast Guard	0	1	1	0	1	1
Sandy Hook North Beach	4	1	9	4	1	9
Sandy Hook North Beach Recreational	2	1	5	2	1	5
Sandy Hook North Gunnison	0	0	0	0	0	0
Sandy Hook Gunnison Recreational	0	0	0	0	0	0
Sandy Hook South Gunnison	1	0	2	1	0	2
Sandy Hook E-Lot	0	0	0	0	0	0
Sandy Hook Visitor Center	0	0	0	0	0	0
Sandy Hook D-Lot	0	0	0	0	0	0
Sandy Hook Critical Zone	0	0	0	0	0	0
Sandy Hook Hidden Beach	1	0	2	1	0	2
Sandy Hook B-Lot	0	0	0	0	0	0
Sandy Hook Fee Beach	0	0	0	0	0	0
Sandy Hook South Fee Beach	0	0	0	1	0	2
Sea Bright North	0	0	0	0	0	0
Monmouth Beach North[2]	0	1	1	0	1	1
Monmouth Beach South	0	0	0	0	0	0
Seven Presidents Park	0	0	0	0	0	0
Long Branch	0	0	0	0	0	0
Deal	0	0	0	0	0	0
Region 2 subtotal	**8**	**4**	**20**	**9**	**4**	**22**
Avon-by-the-Sea	0	0	0	0	0	0
Belmar - Shark River Inlet	0	0	0	0	0	0
Sea Girt - Wreck Pond	0	0	0	0	0	0
Sea Girt - NGTC	0	0	0	0	0	0
Mantoloking	0	0	0	0	0	0
Seaside Park	1	0	2	1	1	3[1]
Island Beach SP – Northern NA	2	3	7	2	4	8[1]
Island Beach SP – Southern NA	2	0	4	2	1	5
Barnegat Light – Restoration Are	6	2	14	6	1	13
Barnegat Light – Front Beach	2	0	4	2	1	5
Loveladies	0	0	0	0	0	0
Region 3 subtotal	**13**	**5**	**31**	**13**	**8**	**32**
Long Beach Township - Holgate	1[1]	0	2[1]	1[1]	0	2[1]
Holgate	35[1]	7	77[1]	40[1]	1	81[1]
Little Beach	0	0	0	1	0	2
Horseshoe Island	0	3	3	0	3	3
North Brigantine NA	0	0	0	0	0	0
Region 4 subtotal	**35**	**10**	**80**	**41**	**4**	**86**
Brigantine Beach	0	0	0	0	0	0
Brigantine - Inlet (Cove)	0	0	0	0	0	0
Seaview Harbor Marina	0	0	0	0	0	0
Malibu WMA	0	0	0	0	0	0
Ocean City - North	1	2	4	2	0	4
Ocean City - Center	0	0	0	0	0	0
Region 5 subtotal	**1**	**2**	**4**	**2**	**0**	**4**
Corson's Inlet SP	3	2	8	3	3	9
Strathmere Natural Area	0	0	0	0	0	0
Strathmere (Upper Twp.)	0	0	0	0	0	0
Whale Beach	0	0	0	0	0	0
Townsend's Inlet	0	0	0	0	0	0
Sea Isle	0	0	0	0	0	0
Avalon - North	0	0	0	0	0	0
Avalon - Dunes	0	0	0	0	0	0
Stone Harbor - Oceanfront	0	0	0	0	0	0
Region 6 subtotal	**3**	**2**	**8**	**3**	**3**	**9**
Stone Harbor Point	1	3	5	3	1	7
N. Wildwood - Hereford Inlet	0	4	4	2	0	4
2-Mile Beach – USFWS	3	0	6	3	0	6
2-Mile Beach – LSU[3]	-	-	-	-	-	-
Coast Guard - TRACEN	0	1	1	0	1	1
Cape May City	0	0	0	0	0	0
Cape May Meadows - TNC	0	0	0	0	0	0
Cape May Meadows - CMPSP	0	0	0	0	0	0
Cape May Point Borough	0	0	0	0	0	0
Region 7 subtotal	**4**	**8**	**16**	**8**	**1**	**17**
Total	**64**	**31**	**159**	**76**	**20**	**170**

[1]This site includes Sea Bright – South and Monmouth Beach – North

[2]Adults nested at same site with different mates during season or same adults bred at different sites; Therefore "subtotals" and "totals" may be less than the sum of individual sites.

[3]Coast Guard – LSU was transferred to Cape May National Wildlife Refuge in January 2025; henceforth, nesting pairs at this site are counted in Cape May NWR totals

Table 3. New Jersey Piping Plover nesting summary by sites: 2025

		Pairs	**Chicks**	**Pair**	**Fledge**	**SP Fledge**
SITE	**Pairs**	**Hatched**	**Fledged**	**Success**	**Rate**	**Rate**
Sandy Hook NRA	9	7	16	0.78	1.78	2.29
North Beach	*4*	*4*	*11*	1.00	2.75	2.75
North Beach Recreational	*2*	*2*	*4*	1.00	2.00	2.00
South Gunnison	*1*	*0*	*0*	0.00	0.00	0.00
Hidden Beach	*1*	*1*	*1*	1.00	1.00	1.00
South Fee Beach	*1*	*0*	*0*	0.00	0.00	1.00
Region 2 Subtotal	**9**	**7**	**16**	**0.78**	**1.78**	**2.29**
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
Region 3 Subtotal	**13**	**11**	**26**	**0.85**	**2.00**	**2.36**
Long Beach Township - Holgate	1[1]	1	3	1.00	3.00	3.00
E.B. Forsythe NWR - *Holgate*	40[1]	18	11	0.45	0.28	0.61
E.B. Forsythe NWR - *Little Beach*	1	0	0	0.00	0.00	0.00
Region 4 Subtotal	**41**	**19**	**14**	**0.46**	**0.34**	**0.74**
Ocean City - North	2	1	1	0.50	0.50	1.00
Region 5 Subtotal	**2**	**1**	**1**	**0.50**	**0.50**	**1.00**
Corson's Inlet SP	3	3	3	1.00	1.00	1.00
Region 6 Subtotal	**3**	**3**	**3**	**1.00**	**1.00**	**1.00**
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[2]	3	3	3	1.00	1.00	1.00
Region 7 Subtotal	**8**	**4**	**4**	**0.50**	**0.50**	**1.00**
NJFW sites TOTAL	**24**	**17**	**34**	**0.71**	**1.42**	**2.00**
All NJ sites TOTAL	**76**	**45**	**64**	**0.59**	**0.84**	**1.42**
# Active Sites	**18**					

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.

[1]Adults nested at same site with different mates during season or same adults bred at different sites; Therefore "subtotals" and "totals" may be less than the sum of individual sites.
[2] Coast Guard – LSU was transferred to Cape May National Wildlife Refuge in January 2025; henceforth, nesting pairs at this site are counted in Cape May NWR totals

Table 4. New Jersey Piping Plover nesting summary: 1987-2025

Average 1987-2025						
Federal/State/Municipal/Private						
		Pairs	Chicks	Pair	Fledge	S.P. Fledge
Site	Pairs	Hatch	Fledge	Success	Rate	Rate
Sandy Hook Coast Guard	4.62	3.46	6.51	0.73	1.34	1.71
Sandy Hook North Beach	10.10	7.56	13.49	0.75	1.36	1.83
Sandy Hook North Beach Recreational	1.80	1.20	1.50	0.73	0.90	1.05
Sandy Hook North Gunnison	5.79	4.42	6.85	0.70	1.06	1.35
Sandy Hook South Gunnison	4.18	2.94	4.62	0.67	1.02	1.35
Sandy Hook - E-Lot	0.29	0.14	0.14	0.20	0.20	0.20
Sandy Hook Visitor's Center	0.20	0.10	0.00	0.17	0.00	0.00
Sandy Hook D-Lot	0.20	0.10	0.20	0.20	0.40	0.40
Sandy Hook Skeleton Hill Island	0.10	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Sandy Hook Critical Zone	3.97	2.91	3.45	0.68	0.84	1.13
Sandy Hook Hidden Beach	2.83	1.87	3.77	0.59	1.09	1.54
Sandy Hook - B-Lot	0.14	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Sandy Hook Fee Beach	3.75	2.57	3.96	0.61	0.97	1.28
Sandy Hook South Fee Beach	1.26	0.95	1.95	0.80	1.62	1.86
Sea Bright North	4.81	3.15	6.15	0.49	0.98	1.49
Monmouth Beach North	2.44	1.70	2.89	0.72	1.17	1.46
Monmouth Beach South	0.33	0.33	1.00	0.50	1.50	1.33
Seven Presidents Park	1.10	0.86	1.57	0.59	1.11	1.14
Long Branch	0.20	0.10	0.10	0.20	0.20	0.20
Deal	0.13	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Region 2 Subtotal	38.28	27.79	47.18	0.72	1.24	1.73
Belmar - Shark River Inlet	0.30	0.10	0.20	0.14	0.29	0.29
Sea Girt - Wreck Pond	0.60	0.40	0.67	0.40	0.90	0.90
Sea Girt - NGTC	0.64	0.55	0.73	0.50	0.88	0.38
Mantoloking	3.10	2.55	5.00	0.56	0.97	1.09
Seaside Park	0.67	0.44	1.22	0.60	1.80	1.80
Island Beach SP - Northern Natural Area	2.08	1.82	2.09	0.78	0.83	0.83
Island Beach SP - Southern Natural Area	0.60	0.30	0.70	0.36	0.71	1.00
Island Beach SP - Dike	0.58	0.17	0.25	0.12	0.17	0.43
Barnegat Light - Inlet & Restoration Areas	2.68	1.74	3.47	0.66	1.41	1.71
Barnegat Light - Front Beach	1.60	1.40	1.70	0.89	1.11	1.28
Highbar	0.44	0.44	0.69	0.64	1.00	1.00
Loveladies	5.31	3.85	6.51	0.65	1.17	1.59
Region 3 Subtotal	10.11	8.22	14.44	0.84	1.42	1.70
Long Beach Township	11.21	7.77	11.26	0.62	0.98	1.46
Holgate	18.41	10.55	16.47	0.59	0.94	1.61
Little Beach	7.20	5.10	6.40	0.41	0.52	0.62
Horseshoe Island	6.50	4.12	7.81	0.62	1.15	1.37
North Brigantine Natural Area	25.69	15.87	25.13	0.59	0.93	1.42
Region 4 Subtotal	25.55	16.20	22.50	0.60	0.75	1.06
Brigantine Beach	0.94	0.72	1.28	0.56	1.18	1.33
Brigantine - Inlet (Cove)	0.27	0.09	0.27	0.08	0.25	0.50
Longport Sodbanks	0.36	0.36	0.43	0.56	0.67	0.67
Malibu Wildlife Management Area	0.45	0.45	0.55	0.71	0.86	0.86
Seaview Harbor Marina	2.08	1.44	2.00	0.56	0.67	0.92
Ocean City - North	4.12	2.65	2.04	0.64	0.46	0.72
Ocean City - Center	6.69	4.59	4.85	0.65	0.69	0.86
Region 5 Subtotal	3.19	2.19	2.16	0.70	0.88	0.93
Corson's Inlet State Park	2.00	1.70	1.80	0.88	0.81	1.02
Corson's Sodbank	0.50	0.31	0.56	0.41	0.77	0.82
Strathmere NA	2.07	1.26	0.96	0.59	0.46	0.61
Strathmere	3.82	2.64	2.82	0.46	0.46	0.71
Whale Beach	2.15	1.35	2.45	0.49	0.97	1.43
Sea Isle City - North	1.53	1.05	0.84	0.42	0.36	0.47
Sea Isle City - South	1.18	1.00	1.18	0.65	0.76	0.86
Townsend's Inlet	1.35	1.22	1.57	0.74	0.92	0.95
Avalon - North	3.15	1.95	2.15	0.55	0.72	0.95
Avalon - Dunes	12.18	8.31	9.31	0.62	0.73	0.99
Region 6 Subtotal	6.48	3.22	2.89	0.60	0.54	0.84
Stone Harbor Point	2.33	1.00	0.67	0.40	0.39	0.60
Champagne Island	1.22	0.78	0.52	0.42	0.26	0.28
N. Wildwood - Hereford Inlet	1.53	1.00	0.35	0.46	0.14	0.19
N. Wildwood - Oceanfront	0.10	0.10	0.00	0.20	0.00	0.00
Wildwood Crest	0.10	0.10	0.00	0.20	0.00	0.00
USFWS - Cape May National Wildlife Refuge	1.29	0.79	0.63	0.52	0.43	0.53
Coast Guard - LSU	2.39	1.64	2.00	0.65	0.78	1.02
Coast Guard - TRACEN	0.63	0.53	0.63	0.46	0.38	0.38
Cape May	3.82	3.26	3.58	0.71	0.83	0.99
Cape May Meadows	3.03	2.56	2.72	0.72	0.81	0.86
The Nature Conservancy	1.32	1.11	1.32	0.57	0.66	0.69
Cape May Point SP	0.10	0.10	0.00	0.20	0.00	0.00
Higbee/Magnesite	0.18	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Cape May Ferry	12.10	8.05	7.97	0.57	0.57	0.79
Region 7 Subtotal	4.67	2.56	1.44	0.53	0.30	0.57
Total NJFW only	47.49	31.82	43.13	0.67	0.95	1.38
Total State	114.95	78.18	114.95	0.68	1.01	1.45

Figure 1. New Jersey Piping Plover population and productivity: 1987-2025

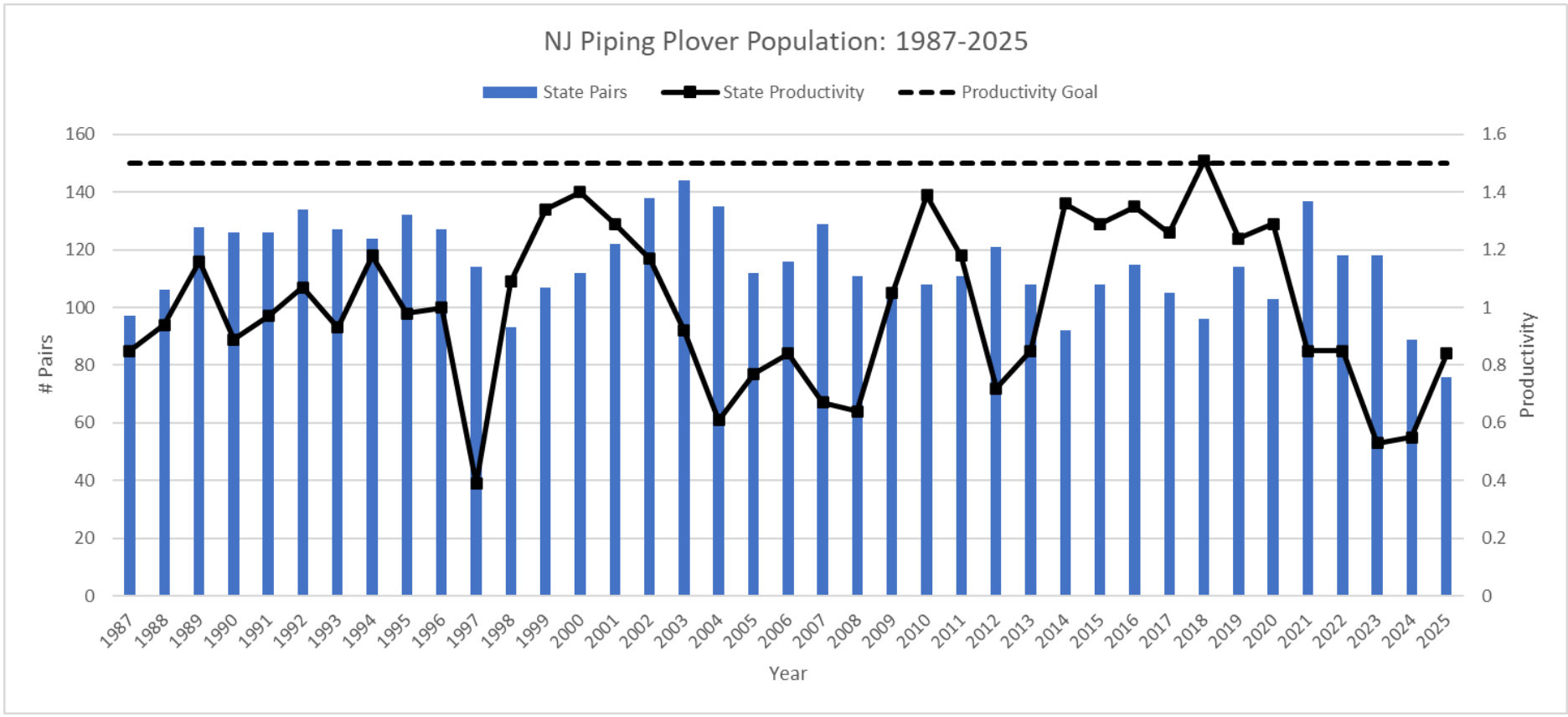

Figure 2. Causes of Piping Plover nest failure in New Jersey, all sites: 2025