

Updates From Tuckernuck

August 2 - August 16, 2026

Maria Pisciotta, Coastal Steward

The shorebird season is coming closer to an end as some birds begin their migration, while others make a rest stop here as part of theirs. Many birds are also losing their breeding plumage through molting, most of the time making them less distinctive. There is still plenty to see as migration continues and new arrivals pass through.



Molting Goldfinches competing for food at my bird feeder



Piping Plover pair out at high tide

There haven't been as many Piping Plovers running around, but there are still some juveniles that haven't left yet. The whole family doesn't migrate together, the female will usually head south first, followed by the males and juveniles. They will all eventually head south for warmer weather, to places such as the Bahamas or Caribbean islands.

The Oystercatcher chick from Bigelow's that hatched most recently is still running around, but has a little more time before he's ready to fly. The other Oystercatchers that hatched this summer are still hanging around before they begin migrating this month, practicing flying and foraging. They are mostly eating marine bivalves, such as clams and mussels. This takes some practice, as the young have to learn how to open shells from their parents, a technique that takes several weeks to master.

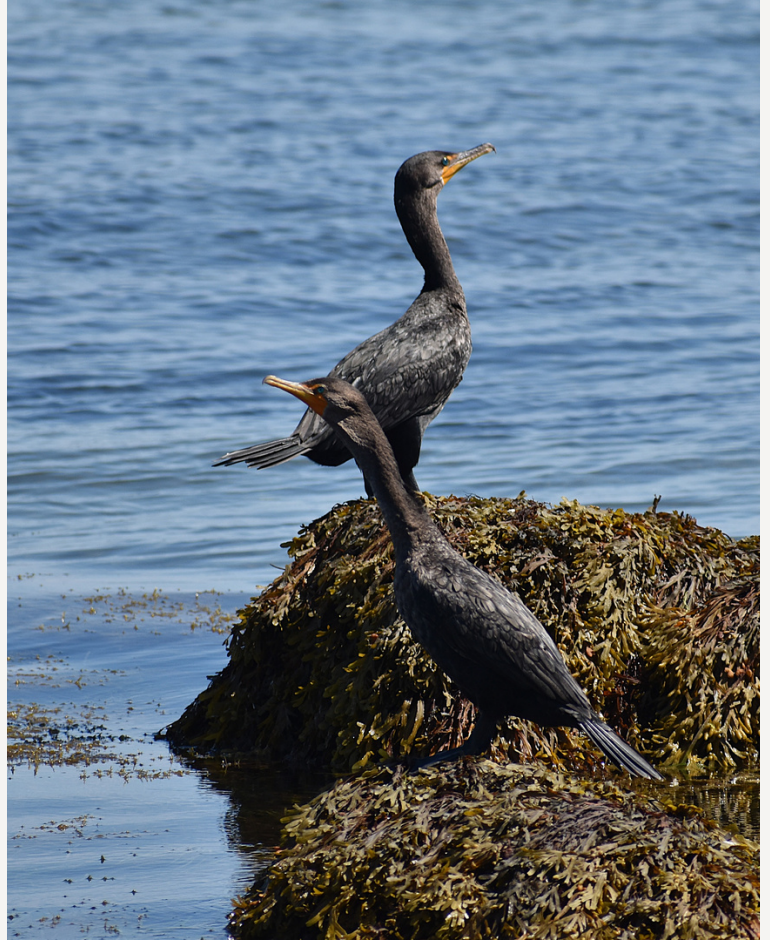


Oystercatcher fledgling with lunch

I've been seeing more and more birds around the island, with some new ones showing up on their migration journey, such as White-rumped Sandpipers, Greater and Lesser Yellowlegs, Hudsonian Whimbrels, Short-billed Dowitchers, and even a couple of Long-billed Dowitchers, among many others. It can be difficult to tell some of the smaller shorebirds apart, but I've been getting a lot of practice.



Spotted Sandpiper



Double-crested Cormorants



Ruddy Turnstones



White-rumped Sandpiper