



Common Tern eggs at Waukegan breeding site in Lake County. May 1998. Photo by Amy Horstmann.



Two Common Tern chicks at Waukegan breeding site in Lake County. 13 July 1998. Photo by Amy Horstmann.

Appendix: A

Summary of Common Tern Nesting Occurrences in Illinois

* From a 3 June 1977 record of a phone conversation between Jim Neal and Richard Thom: In 1976, Jim Neal found two nests in the Johns-Manville tailing area north of Waukegan. Eight pair attempted to nest on the Commonwealth Edison property near there. He found the nests, but they were all destroyed during the season. Terns are nesting this year (1977) in the rolling tailing piles on the Waukegan lakefront west of the Black-crowned Night-Heron colony.

* From nest record cards for the 1980 nesting season: On 9 June, C.N. Becker reported a total of 29 Common Tern nests at Waukegan on the ash pond dike. This included 1 nest with 1 egg, 5 nests with 2 eggs, 22 nests with 3 eggs, and 1 nest with 2 eggs and 1 young. On 22 June 22, D. Johnson reported the entire colony abandoned.

* From a 6 August 1983 memo from Randy Heidorn to Mike Sweet: A July 8 survey found 32 nests with 19 chicks and 8 eggs. Two young birds were found dead. Heidorn estimated that 21-28 birds had fledged by the time of this survey.

* From a 15 August 1983 report by Mike Sweet on the 1983 nesting season based on five surveys of the Waukegan colony:

- 2 June: 24 nests, 65 eggs, 0 chicks, 0 fledglings
- 10 June: 28 nests, 70 eggs, 9 chicks, 0 fledglings
- 14 June: 32 nests, 74 eggs, 13 chicks, 0 fledglings
- 8 July: 8 eggs, 19 chicks, 21 fledglings (This appears to vary somewhat from Randy Heidorn's memo cited above.)
- 11 August: 0 nests, 0 eggs, 0 chicks, 0 fledglings

* From a 15 May 1985 report by Mike Sweet on the 1984 nesting season: He recorded three surveys of the Waukegan colony:

- 4 June: 15 nests, 39 eggs, 0 chicks, 0 fledglings, 22 adults
- 23 June: 2 nests, 2 eggs, 2 chicks, 0 fledglings, 9 adults
- 27 July: 0 nests, 0 eggs, 0 chicks, 0 fledglings, 0 adults

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the island. Moreover vegetation was growing on the outer perimeter of the fence, largely obscuring my sight lines of birds on nests. Once I climbed atop the roof of my car to try to look down into the enclosure. This seemed to raise the ire of the entire colony as, en masse, they took off and headed straight for me, screaming their high-pitched "tee-arr-r-r-" calls. I was more than a little concerned, as they are known to release feces at an attacker at the low point of these aggressive dives.

On 13 July 1998, Horstmann, I, and a ComEd employee donned hard hats and walked the peninsula to the enclosure. Ignoring the protesting and attacking adults we used the insulated gate handle and went inside. We saw six down-covered tern chicks, hiding behind vegetation or scurrying around to avoid us. Horstmann photographed several. The total number of young birds for the season, either in the enclosure or flying, turned out to be seven, seen the following week. We had confirmation of successful nesting of this Illinois endangered species.

Author's Note: *In my first survey at this site, in May of 1999, I saw approximately 24 Common Terns preening, mate-feeding, and defending territory.*

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