



2022 Nantucket Barn Owl Nest Box Program - Fall Survey Results

October 8, 2022

Hi Friends of Nantucket Barn Owls!

The Maria Mitchell Association's 2022 Fall Nantucket Barn Owl Nest Box Survey took place from Tuesday to Friday, September 27th to 30th. Volunteers Kim & Tom Griswold and Mitch Blake and I checked 64 nest boxes, installed 2 new nest boxes and selected a location for one more. With such a tight schedule, we are sorry if we missed some of you along the way!

Of the 64 nest boxes checked, 44 were active or had signs of activity this fall, 12 had young and/or eggs, and we found 31 young, of which we banded 28.

This was a particularly interesting year for the owls. We suspect that many fledged young before the Spring Survey in May, which is very unusual as we normally find eggs and half-grown owlets too young to fledge at that time. And it appears that there was a very productive summer nesting, with young fledging before we conducted the Fall Survey. And for the first time ever, we documented that one nest box had a third nesting this year. Because we likely missed so many young owls, we cannot say for sure if it was a good nesting season or not, but from more circumstantial evidence, it looks like they had a very good nesting year.

Important: If you want to increase the chance of your nest box being occupied, please follow these tips as closely as you can:

1. **Do not** use any kind of rodenticide poisons on your property and encourage neighbors not to use them. You can use live or snap traps to eliminate local rodents.
2. **Do not** disturb your nest box during daylight hours. If you go near, touch, or shake a nest box, the resident adult owl may flush. If eggs and/or tiny young are present in the nest box, they could be chilled and die without their parent's protection. Or the flushed adult could be attacked by crows. Crows can kill Barn Owls directly.
3. **Do** leave an area of at least 10 feet radius from your nest box unmowed or otherwise undisturbed for most of the year. If you have to mow or clear around a nest box, do it after sunset when the crows have gone to roost, and the parents can return to the nest box soon thereafter in the dark.
4. **You can** watch your nest box after sunset and just before full darkness from 100 feet or more away to see them come and go. This is particularly rewarding when the young leave the nest box while learning to fly and to be fed by their parents.

2023 Barn Owl Nest Box Survey Dates – Mark Your Calendars:

- Spring Survey – May 23 to 28
- Early Summer Survey – June 26 to 30
- Fall Survey – September 25 to 30

Thanks again for your support of the Maria Mitchell Association Nantucket Barn Owl Nest Box Program! Hope to see you in 2023!

Happy Owling!

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Below is a summary of what we found during the 2022 Fall Survey:

Maria Mitchell Association Barn Owl Nest Box Program Report Summary

Barn Owl Survey - September 27 to 30, 2022

Boxes located east of Town

Box #	Box Owner - Location	Adults	Eggs	# of Young	# of Young Banded	Nest Box Notes
5W	Squam	0	0	0	0	Recent activity
5E	Squam	0	0	0	0	Recent activity
97	Squam	0	0	0	0	NA
44	Quidnet	0	0	0	0	Heavy usage
47	Quidnet	1♀	6	0	0	Female flushed
30	Quidnet	1♀	6	0	0	Female, new band 1947-52176, 2nd brood likely fledged, 3rd nesting this year!
41	Quidnet	0	0	0	0	NA
85	Quidnet	0	0	0	0	NA
79	Pocomo	0	0	0	0	NA
91	Pocomo	0	0	0	0	Moderate usage
11	Medouie Creek	1♂	0	0	0	Male previously banded
80	Medouie Creek	0	0	0	0	NA
52S	Polpis	0	0	0	0	Some activity
52N	Polpis	0	0	0	0	Heavy usage
39	Polpis	0	0	0	0	Heavy usage

90	Polpis	0	0	0	0	Heavy usage
76	Polpis	1♂	0	0	0	Male previously banded
14	Polpis	0	0	0	0	Some activity
101	Polpis	0	0	0	0	New Sept 2022
96	Polpis	0	0	0	0	Heavy usage
72	Polpis	0	0	0	0	NA
86N	Quaise	0	0	0	0	NA
87S	Quaise	0	0	0	0	Squirrels
74E	Quaise	0	0	0	0	Recent activity
75W	Quaise	0	0	0	0	Recent activity
95	Shawkemo	0	0	0	0	NA
102	Shimmo	0	0	0	0	New Sept 2022
20E	Abrams Point	0	0	0	0	Heavy usage
21W	Abrams Point	0	0	0	0	3 nearly fledged young dead below nest
18 Old	Shimmo	0	0	0	0	NA
40	Shimmo	0	0	0	0	Squirrels & evidence of recent activity
19 Pond	Shimmo	0	0	0	0	Squirrel nest
57	Shimmo	1♀	6	0	0	Female previously banded
61	Shimmo	0	0	0	0	NA
68	Shimmo	0	0	0	0	NA
83	Shimmo	0	0	0	0	NA
93	Monomoy	1♂	0	4	3	Male new band 1947-52180, young 10 to 17 days old
94	Monomoy	0	0	0	0	Recent activity
66	Monomoy	0	0	0	0	NA
78	Monomoy	0	0	0	0	NA
58	Madequesham	0	0	0	0	Heavy usage
59	Madequesham	0	0	0	0	Heavy usage
63	Madequesham	0	0	4	4	Young 45 to 50 days old
60	Tom Nevers	0	0	0	0	Squirrels
62	Tom Nevers	0	0	0	0	Squirrels
70	Tom Nevers	0	0	0	0	NA

Boxes located in Town, south or west of Town

Box #	Box Owner - Location	Adult	Eggs	# of Young	# of Young	Nest Box
					Banded	Notes
82	Town	0	0	0	0	NA
67	Town	0	0	1	1	Young 60 days old, other young may have fledged already
38	Town	0	0	7	7	Young 50 to 60 days old
98	Town	0	0	0	0	NA
100	Town	0	0	0	0	Heavy usage
77	Dionis	0	0	0	0	Heavy usage, young may have fledged already
27	Dionis	0	0	0	0	Heavy usage, young may have fledged already
28	Dionis	1♀	7	1	0	Female not disturbed, young 1 day old
64	Dionis	0	0	0	0	Heavy usage
35	Madaket	0	0	2	2	Young 50+ days old, possibly other young have fledged
53	Madaket	0	0	0	0	No recent activity
34	Madaket	0	0	0	0	Heavy usage
49	Madaket	0	0	5	5	Young 30 to 40 days old
99	Miacomet	0	0	0	0	Heavy usage
73	Miacomet	0	0	0	0	NA but owls seen sitting on box recently
89	Cisco	0	0	4	4	Young 40 to 50 days old
81	Town	0	0	3	2	2 young 50+ days old, 1 fledged
84	Surfside	0	0	0	0	NA
88N	Surfside	0	0	0	0	Squirrels
88S	Surfside	0	0	0	0	Heavy usage
	Total	3♂, 4♀	25	31	28	

NA = Not Active

Previously Banded Adults captured 23 to 26 May 2022

Box #	Box Owner - Location	Adults	Band No.	Date Banded	Age When Banded	Box Owner Where Banded
76	Polpis	1 ♂	1947-52120	5/28/2021	Nestling	57-Shimmo
57	Shimmo	1 ♀	1947-40036	5/23/2018	Adult	57-Shimmo
11	Medouie Creek	1 ♂	1947-20483	6/28/2016	Nestling	27-Dionis

	East	West	Total
Total Number of Nest Boxes	44	20	64
Active (at least some activity)	25	15	44
Boxes with Young and/or Eggs	5	7	12
Number of Young	8	23	31