

I don't want this back

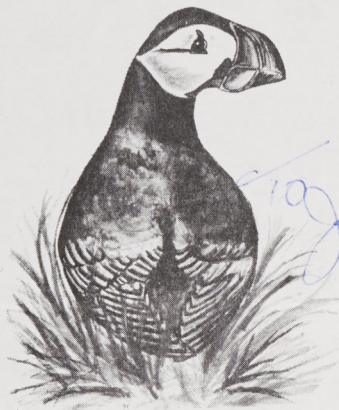
Stephen Kress

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John Porter
3 September, 1977

*I thought you'd
be interested in
this. Olga & I were involved
in a small way when this
program first started -
Bob Chase*

Enclosed you will find this summer's puffin project summary report. While preparing this I found myself reflecting that it was eight summers ago that I began thinking about re-establishing puffins in Muscongus Bay. Since that time I have enjoyed sharing the Egg Rock experience with many people and to me that has been one of the most rewarding facets of the project.

The appearance of returning puffins this summer confirmed my belief that we can assist declining wildlife species if we are willing to make the necessary commitments of time, energy and resources. It is sobering, however, to consider the ease with which wildlife populations can be eliminated and to contrast this to the long-term commitments and great effort associated with restoring animals to vacant habitat.

The puffin project is funded by grants from National Audubon Society and gifts from supporting individuals and groups. Private contributions have always been an important part of the funding. Your support in continuing this work will be greatly appreciated.

Contributions to the puffin project are tax deductible and should be mailed directly to me at the Cornell address above. Checks should be made payable to National Audubon Society and designated to the puffin project. Contributors donating \$25. or more will be placed on the mailing list to receive all future progress reports and will receive a signed and mounted 8"x10" color photograph of an adult puffin.

I look forward to sharing the latest news from Egg Rock with you in the future.

Sincerely,

Report on the Re-establishment of the Atlantic Puffin
to its Former Breeding Site on Eastern Egg Rock

Stephen Kress
September, 1977

Puffins Return

On June 12, 1977 a transplanted puffin returned to Eastern Egg Rock. Banded with a white leg band on its left leg and a metal band on its right leg, it was the first transplanted puffin to return to this outer island in Muscongus Bay, Maine. Puffins have not bred on Eastern Egg Rock since 1895 when the original population was extirpated due to excessive hunting for food and feathers.

The white leg band identified the bird as one of 91 chicks transplanted to Eastern Egg Rock in 1975 from large colonies on Great Island in Witless Bay, Newfoundland. Now two years old and in full breeding colors the bird returned to the Eastern Egg Rock release site. Though puffins do not usually breed until they are at least five years old, the return of this bird and the subsequent sighting of puffins on 19 other occasions at Eastern Egg Rock this summer provide real encouragement that puffins may someday recolonize this former breeding site.

The puffins which visited Eastern Egg Rock this summer stayed in the immediate vicinity of the island for periods up to two days. While at the island they repeatedly circled the perimeter of the island, swam in the water only yards from the shore and on seven occasions landed atop large boulders on the island. Five of these landings occurred among groups of standing wooden puffin decoys which had earlier been secured in conspicuous places. On two occasions puffins appeared two at a time and on one of these occasions a banded puffin was observed in company with an unbanded bird. Only white leg bands were observed (two year old birds), though it is possible that some of the birds which were not observed at close range did have blue leg bands (three year old birds).

Another Transplant

The transplant program continued during the summer of 1977 with an additional transplant of 100 puffin chicks from Great Island to Eastern Egg Rock. These birds were collected on July 11 when they were approximately ten days old and were reared in sod burrows following similar procedures as in previous years. These procedures led to the successful fledging of 99 of the 100 chicks. Between 1974-1977, the puffin re-establishment program has resulted in the release of 342 puffins: 54 in 1974, 91 in 1975, 98 in 1976 and 99 in 1977 with a total fledging rate of 98%.