

# Annual Report 2022

**Friends of Maine Coastal Islands  
National Wildlife Refuge**



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2022 was a year of emerging from the pandemic. While refuge staff worked to hire research technicians and open up for the seabird nesting season, we focused on ensuring that the Rockland visitor center would be staffed and offer tourists an incredible experience. We also provided programming for those who still wanted to stay close to home, and welcomed children with some hands-on experiences. Our nature-based art gallery once again featured both emerging and professional artists. We wrote grants to ensure there were enough funds for island interns to be hired; our interpretive guide shared stories from the islands to our instagram and facebook followers; we even were able to offer our annual fundraising Seabird Cruise to Petit Manan Island again. We are grateful to those who continued to support us. Our hope for 2023 is that we can raise more funds to continue supporting the refuge as their budget shrinks. 2022 was an awesome year for the birds - visitors both in-person and virtually received quality experiences - we invested and put our funds to good use. We hope you agree! Thank you for investing in us - with your dollars and time, our partnership with Maine Coastal Islands NWR continues to thrive. Thank you for your support as we take flight again.

~ Penney Read  
FOMCI Board Chair



*Panoramic view of Petit Manan Point - photo by Craig P. Snapp*



# Island Interns

A #1 priority for Refuge staff and FOMCI is to place research technicians on the islands where seabird nesting colonies are being reestablished and sustained.

Without these college interns (a human presence), colonies can easily be abandoned in one season. We have generous donors and foundations who have helped ensure these positions are funded. In 2022, we fully supported six interns. Check out their blog posts on ["Summer with the Seabirds."](#)



*Laura Wallace on Ship Island checking a nest site while trying to ignore the territorial adult terns.*



*A common tern with a newly attached GPS Logger on Petit Manan Island.*



*Leach's storm-petrel being banded on Metinic Island.*



*Hallie Daly holds an adult Atlantic puffin. Many of the interns gain valuable skills and become superb wildlife biologists.*

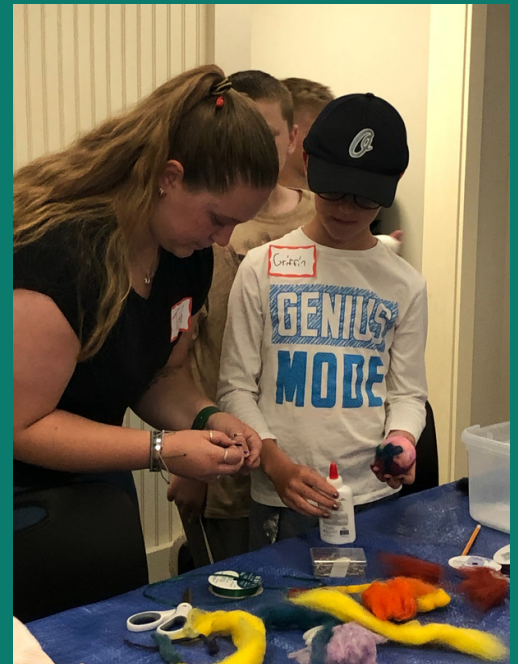


# Rockland Visitor Center

Another priority for the Refuge and FOMCI is to staff the Rockland visitor center and share the refuge story with tourists and the community. We were able to provide a half-time interpretive guide over the past year, but we only have funds enough to keep this vital position in place for one more year. We are committed to raising funds to sustain this position, so that refuge staff can focus on seabird nesting colony restoration. FOMCI provided a variety of programs for all ages, including guided bird walks, student hands-on experiences, and in-person and virtual environmental talks.



*(Above) Ann Boover, volunteer bird guide, leads a bird walk .*



*(Above) Tori Tibbetts, FOMCI Interpretive Guide, teaches students how to conduct an egg census on our replica seabird island, and helps another student make a felted egg.*



*(Left) Maine Author, Paul Doiron, gives a talk about his book, "Hatchet Island," a murder mystery that takes place on a seabird nesting island. Doiron's book is scientifically-accurate, having consulted with refuge staff.*



# Virtual Programming Experiment

You can't visit refuge islands during the nesting season, so how can we invite you into the story that unfolds each summer on the islands. Working with spotty internet, we offered our first, "Live from" the seabird islands, featuring Metinic Island and its research technicians. We had a personal tour of the island, with technicians sharing stories, demonstrating techniques, answering questions and giving us a taste for island life amidst dive-bombing terns. Check out the recording on our YouTube channel: [Live from Metinic](#). What's next? How about a 3D film that puts you in the middle of a tern colony for a brief moment! We just need an interested funder.



*Research Technician, Andres Rosales, demonstrates the "grubbing" technique in the video.*

## Maine Coastal Islands Art Gallery

We were able to reopen our gallery and once again bring in artists who are opening our eyes to the wonders of nature. We have attracted yet-to-be known artists; local artists and nationally-renowned artists. Any sales support both FOMCI and the artists. We had summer and fall shows this year, which generated much interest and sales.



*Heather Burgess shows her stained glass works at the fall art opening.*

### Some Stats

- 30 programs with 1,044 people participating in-person and virtually
- 120 different bird species sighted during Bird Time on the Coast bird walks
- 1900 visitors came to Maine Coastal Islands Visitor Center representing 43 states, 2 Canadian provinces & 4 other countries
- 35 volunteers - board members, visitor center docents, presenters and bird guides, who directly supported this refuge with 527 hours!

# Volunteers



*Volunteer, Barbara Mogel, assembles gift bags for guests attending our seabird cruise to Petit Manan Island.*

We had two dedicated volunteers who joined our team for the tourist season and worked with Tori at the visitor center - greeting visitors, updating literature, guiding students, writing proposals, conducting surveys. With their excitement and commitment, we already are seeing more interest in volunteering for 2023! We look forward to growing our volunteer team over the next year!

At the end of 2022, we welcomed Kate Doiron as a new board member and our volunteer coordinator. Kate is also one of our beloved bird walking guides.



We are rebuilding our volunteer team, and we are having fun, too! We started offering monthly game nights for volunteers featuring environmental games. Through game nights, we are getting to know each other and enjoying some friendly competition!

The FOMCI board, all volunteers, worked many hours updating finance records; writing grants; organizing fundraisers; updating policies & procedures; brainstorming ideas on ways to create more funds to support the refuge, and much more. The board welcomes you to explore options for volunteering. We would like to expand our board members to represent the entire coastline of Maine - meetings are dual platform - in-person and by zoom. Consider joining us!

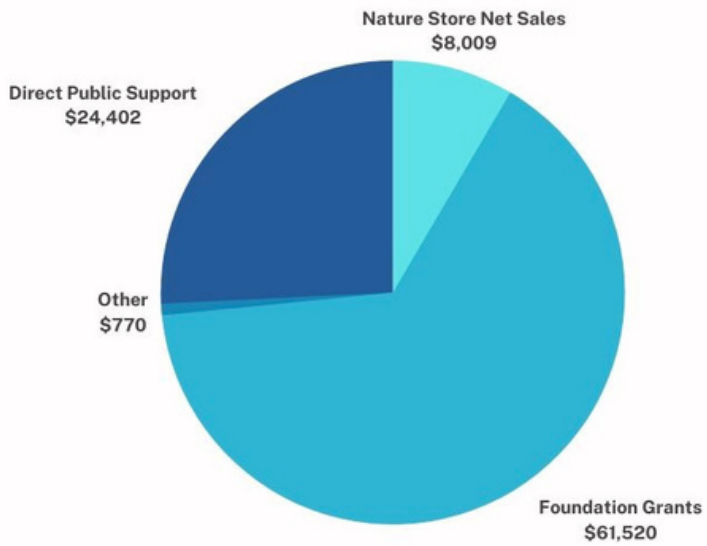


*(top) Kate Doiron shows off a puffling;  
(below) Sandi Cirillo, fiber artist shows students how to make felted eggs.*

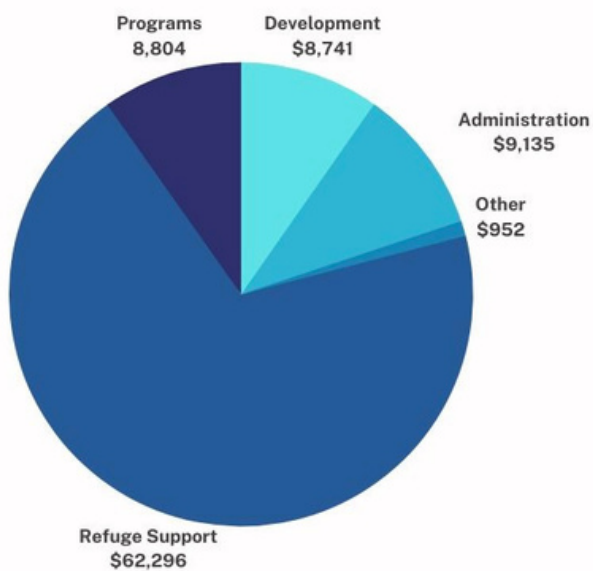


# Finances

## 2022 Income



## 2022 Expenses



*Petit Manan lighthouse*



*(Above) Board President, Penney Read sews bags for weighing chicks that were needed by research technicians.*



*(Right) Board member, Carl Solberg, sculpted this puffin - you can feed it with your \$\$ at the Rockland visitor center.*

### ***Board of Directors***

**Penney Read, President /Chair**  
**Kevin Adams, Vice Chair**  
**Theo Pratt, Treasurer**  
**Georgie Burruss, Secretary**  
**David Brakke**  
**Judy Hengerer**  
**Don Reimer**  
**Carl J. Solberg**  
**Kristen Lindquist**  
**Kate Doiron**

### ***Volunteer Support Personnel***

**Carol Adams, Nature Store Manager**  
**Jeanne Pipicello, Assistant Treasurer**

### ***Part-time Staff***

**Carney McRae Outreach Coordinator**  
**Tori Tibbetts Interpretive Guide**

**Thank you to the Maine Coast Islands National Wildlife Refuge staff who are the best partners we could have. We are dedicated to supporting the work you do not only because we want to conserve thriving seabird nesting colonies, wilderness and wild islands, but also because you are gracious, appreciative and true team players!**

