Fun facts about Common Terns

- If a fish drops on the ground while being offered to chicks, the adults will rinse it in the lake before offering it again.
- On average, terns spend about eight hours feeding each day.
- Male terns court their partner by bringing them gifts of fish.
- Terns will aggressively defend their breeding site, swooping down to peck at the heads of intruders.
- The average wingspan of Common Terns is 75-80 cm and their total length (including tail) is 31-35 cm.
- Common Terns lay 1-4 eggs. At Presqu'ile Provincial Park, the most common clutch size is 3 eggs.
- In 2011, band returns from research at Presqu'ile provided the first evidence of chicks reared at Presqu'ile returning to breed as adults.

To submit your completed adoption form, mail enclosed panel in a sealed envelope to:

Penn State Berks
Office of Development
P.O. Box 7009
Reading, PA 19610-6009

For more information, contact
David Delozier
dcd11@psu.edu or 610-396-6056

All donations are tax-deductable. The adoption program is run on a volunteer basis and funds will be used to support research on Common Terns and the Berks International Conservation Internship Program.

PENNSTATE Berks 1855

http://www.bk.psu.edu/

*Please note the VIP tour does not include transport to Presqu'ile Provincial Park in Brighton, Ontario.

Adopt-a-tern

Common Tern
(Sterna hirundo)

The not-so-common Common Tern

The Common Tern, sometimes called a 'Sea Swallow,' is a small waterbird that breeds throughout the northern hemisphere. In the late 19th century, large numbers of these and other waterbirds were killed for their beautiful feathers to be used in women's fashions. Since the abolishment of this plume trade, Common Tern numbers in the Great Lakes have not fully recovered due to a wide-range of conflicts.

Common Terns in the Great Lakes face:

- **Predation**
  Owls, night herons, gulls, foxes, raccoons, voles and shrews have all been known to eat eggs and chicks of Common Terns.
- **Competition**
  During the breeding season, there is fierce competition for nest sites. Larger birds such as Ring-billed Gulls often monopolize ideal locations.
- **Development**
  Natural habitat has been lost due to construction and development.
- **Weather**
  Bad weather can kill eggs and chicks. Adults may also not be able to provide sufficient food for their chicks.
- **Pollution**
  Residual levels of pesticides (such as DDT) and heavy metals have been known to have harmful effects on Common Terns. The effects of DDT are now, however, considered historical.

Losing the Common Tern

Presqu'ile Provincial Park, Ontario, is one of the last remaining natural breeding sites for Common Terns in the lower Great Lakes.

Losing the Common Tern at Presqu'ile Provincial Park would mean more than simply losing natural beauty. The Common Tern is an integral member of the Great Lakes' ecosystem whose loss would symbolize a major ecological change. The overall outcome of losing the Common Tern at the Great Lakes is unknown, so efforts are being made at Presqu'ile to curb population declines and prevent their loss.

Conservation efforts at Presqu'ile

Presqu'ile Provincial Park provides a natural refuge for a range of migrating birds and an essential nesting site for breeding waterbirds. Located on Lake Ontario, roughly 100 pairs of Common Terns come to Presqu'ile every year to breed. However, this is only a fraction of the number that originally bred here. In the last 30 years, Common Tern numbers on the Great Lakes have declined and the cause of this decline is not well understood.

Your support will help Penn State staff and student interns to continue our efforts to increase the number of breeding terns, both within the park and regionally.

- **Social Attraction**
  Helping Presqu'ile to become a more desirable breeding ground for Common Terns by creating suitable nesting areas and attracting birds to them using call playback and decoys.
- **Predation Management**
  Using camera and remote sensing technology to detect predators within the Common Tern colony. Reducing predation will secure the survival of the next generation.
- **Field Research**
  Understanding the distinctive diet, foraging habits, breeding behavior, and chick growth of Great Lakes' Common Terns will highlight the importance of these populations and inform conservation efforts.

ADOPT-a-TERN

Your generous donation funds conservation efforts for the Common Tern at Presqu'ile Provincial Park, Ontario. With every seasonal adoption, you receive a Thank You Letter, Updates at the beginning and end of the breeding season (breeding season runs May-July), an official Adoption Certificate, a Common Tern Fact Sheet, optional coloring pages, and all the benefits of your adoption category. All materials are emailed unless you specify below. Please allow 2-3 weeks for your adoption packet to arrive.

Please select any of the following to adopt:

☐ Nest ($50.00)
Sponsor a nest. Adoptions include all of the above and a photo of the nest site with nest stake number.

☐ Individual ($500.00)
Sponsor one of a limited number of banded Common Terns. Adoptions include all of the above and a photo of your bird

☐ Colony ($2,000.00)
Sponsor the entire breeding colony at Presqu'ile! The adoption includes all of the above, photos from the colony and a VIP behind-the-scenes visit to the island.*

☐ **Non-Adoption**: please accept my donation of $_____

☐ Please include FREE coloring pages ☐ Send updates via Regular Mail

☐ I want to name my nest/bird ($10.00) Name(s): _____

Adoptions received after July 30th: all materials sent in one mailing/email

NAME: _____

STREET ADDRESS: _____

CITY: _____ STATE/PROVINCE: _____

ZIP CODE: _____ COUNTRY: _____

E-MAIL ADDRESS: _____

Please indicate payment method:

☐ Check/Money Order (payable: "Pennsylvania State University", US$ only)

☐ Credit card (enclose attached form with your application **OR** pay online at "www.giveto.psu.edu": click "Give Online", click the designation list checkbox at bottom of page, select "Other-..." in pop-up menu, write "Adopt-a-tern-Berks 103d" in the "Additional Information" box (be sure to indicate email address).

Contact: dcd11@psu.edu with any questions