



# Waterfowl: Movement Studies

**ON THIS PAGE** [Introduction](#) | [What We Studied](#) | [What We Found: Study Highlights](#) | [Next Steps](#)

## Related Links:

[Waterfowl Program](#)

[Atlantic and Great Lakes Sea Duck Migration Study](#)

[Atlantic and Great Lakes Sea Duck Migration Study: Progress Report November 2012 \(PDF\)](#)

[Tracking Surf Scoters in the Mid-Atlantic](#)

[Sea Duck Joint Venture](#)

## GSA Contract

## RECENT BRI PUBLICATIONS

Plasma Biochemistry and Protein Electrophoresis Reference Intervals of the Common Loon (*Gavia immer*) (2020)

Assessing year-round habitat use by migratory sea ducks in a multi-species context reveals seasonal variation in habitat selection and partitioning (2020)

Annual movement patterns of American common eiders *Somateria mollissima dresseri* (2020)

## Movement Ecology and Habitat Use of White-winged Scoters and Long-tailed Ducks in Southern New England

The [Atlantic and Great Lakes Sea Duck Migration Study](#), a collaborative effort funded by the Sea Duck Joint Venture and involving various state and federal organizations, continued in 2015. From late October through early December 2015, BRI biologists teamed up with the University of Rhode Island and the Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management to capture White-winged Scoters and Long-tailed Ducks in Cape Cod Bay and Nantucket Sound. More than 330 sea ducks were captured and banded in one of the study's most successful efforts to date.

As several sea duck species are in apparent population decline, the information gathered from this project will provide valuable information to biologists and conservationists as we work to identify important aspects of sea duck ecology.

**BRI Lead Investigator:** [Lucas Savoy](#)

**Contributing BRI Staff:** [Dustin Meattey](#)



## What We Studied

We deployed 22 satellite transmitters in White-winged Scoters and another 15 in Long-tailed Ducks in order to track migratory movements and evaluate local habitat use during the wintering period in southern New England. These transmitters should continue to provide data throughout the next one to two years, allowing us to delineate important breeding, molting, and staging areas, as well as identify different migration routes and winter side fidelity.



## What We Found: Study Highlights

These birds are currently providing important movement data throughout their first wintering period. Many of the scoters have dispersed to several areas throughout southern New England, from Cape Cod Bay to Long Island, NY. One scoter in particular has been providing exciting data thus far, having flown all the way to western Lake Ontario where she has remained since shortly after her release. The Long-tailed Ducks are so far showing interesting local movements around Nantucket Island and the nearby shoals, long suspected to be important foraging areas for many sea duck species.



## Next Steps

BRI biologists will again partner with the University of Rhode Island and Rhode Island state biologists to deploy another 38 satellite transmitters in Long Island Sound during March of 2016. We will continue to monitor the movements of all birds throughout the next one to two years. In addition to tracking annual movements, these data will be utilized to examine wintering habitat use of sea ducks throughout southern New England. As offshore wind energy becomes a reality in these waters, this information will be critical to spatial planning and minimizing impacts on sea ducks and marine wildlife.

Photo Credits: Header image © Peter Paton; White-winged Scoters © Peter Paton; White-winged Scoter © Peter Paton; Long-tailed Duck © BRI-Lucas Savoy

## ABOUT BRI

### BRI IN THE NEWS

**[BRI's Research Published in the Journal Evolutionary Applications](#)**  
July 6, 2021

**[BRI Featured in Discover Magazine Online](#)**  
June 22, 2021

**[New BRI-IPEN Study Shows High Mercury Levels in Indigenous Latin American Women](#)**  
June 15, 2021

**[BRI Loon Biologist Awarded NSF Grant](#)**  
June 11, 2021

**[BRI Climate Change Program in the News](#)**  
April 21, 2021

### NEWSLETTER SIGNUP

[Click here to sign up!](#)

### ADDRESS

Biodiversity Research Institute  
276 Canco Road, Portland, ME 04103  
Phone: 207-839-7600 Fax: 207-887-7164  
Email: [bri@briloon.org](mailto:bri@briloon.org)

