

# Biologists turn Maine island into a tern haven

*The Boston Globe*

By Jessica T. Lee, Globe Correspondent | August 6, 2004

OUTER GREEN ISLAND, Maine -- After three months spent crouching in a box, flapping her arms, and wearing a crude cardboard hat, Julie Hart is about to close the book on one of the summer's strangest scientific success stories: the creation of a safe haven for the endangered roseate tern.

For the first time in more than 90 years, roseate terns -- graceful, seagull-like birds that once nested up and down the New England coast -- have returned to this island to raise their chicks. Outer Green Island was once a vibrant colony of terns, until they were killed off for their eggs and feathers, used to decorate fashionable ladies' hats.

Hart, an Audubon-funded researcher, moved here in May and has spent the last three months frightening off seagulls, falcons, and the other predators that took over the island decades ago. She has gotten boils from poisonous plants and been pecked on the head by the terns themselves -- all to help the birds establish a hold, however tenuous, on the island. ■