One good tern deserves another
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The Brothers Islands Wildlife Management Area, located in Lower West Pubnico, is currently home to 38 pairs of the endangered Roseate Tern, over 70\% of Canada’s breeding population. For over 30 years, local steward Ted D’Eon has been monitoring and protecting the birds nesting on these tiny islands, in cooperation with the Nova Scotia Department of Natural Resources and Environment Canada. Despite dedicated recovery efforts during the breeding season, the number of Roseate Terns nesting on North Brother Island has declined by 50\% over the last 10 years and there are now fewer than 60 pair nesting in Canada. Adult predation events during the breeding season can only explain a minor part of this decline. Recovery work in Canada, to date, has focused on breeding birds through population monitoring, protecting critical habitat, reducing threats, and developing a better understanding of basic population dynamics and potential limiting factors. However, data from US colonies support the hypothesis that pre-breeding Roseate Terns experience high mortality during the non-breeding season. Once fledglings leave our borders, threats are mostly unknown and are suspected to be the primary cause of the recent population decline observed across the northeast. A banding project is underway in collaboration with US partners to understand the survival and movement of Northwest Atlantic Roseate terns.