

Black Skimmer Courtship and Nesting



Courtship and Scraping Nest Bowls



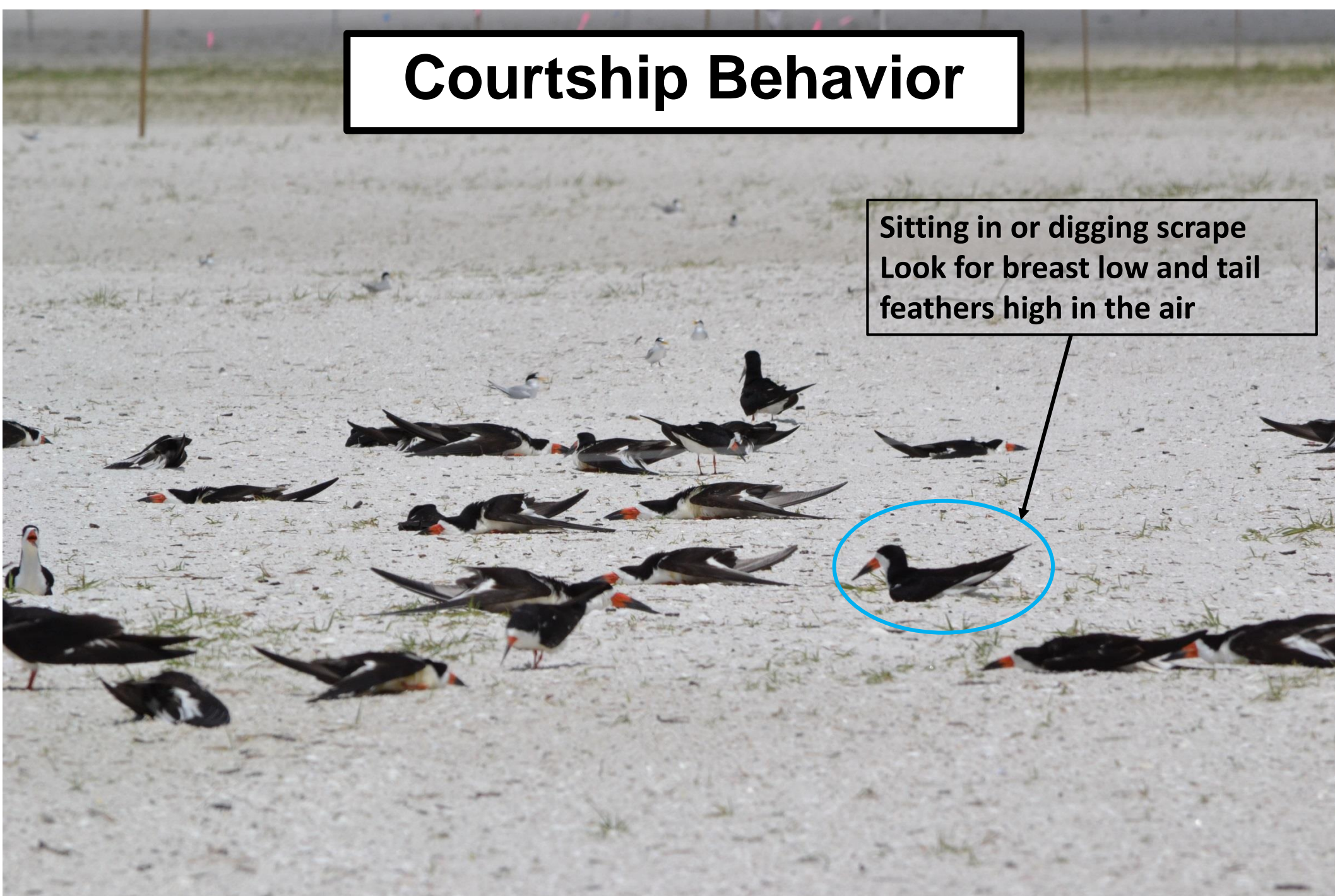
- Pair will loaf together in or near the colony
- Pre-nesting: digging scrape or sitting in the scrape
- Pre-nesting posture: look for breast low and wing tips high in the air
- Mate often seen resting or standing nearby

Courtship and Scraping Nest Bowls



Courtship Behavior

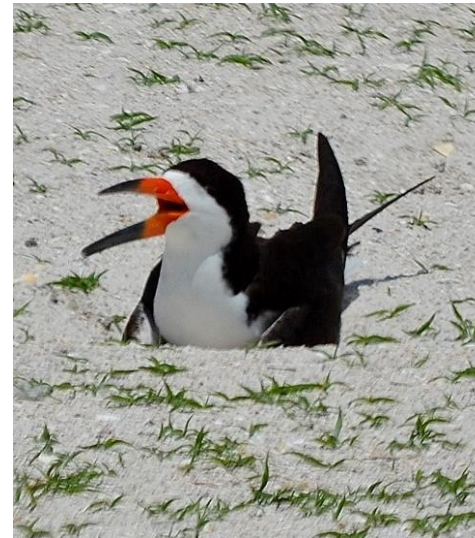
Sitting in or digging scrape
Look for breast low and tail
feathers high in the air



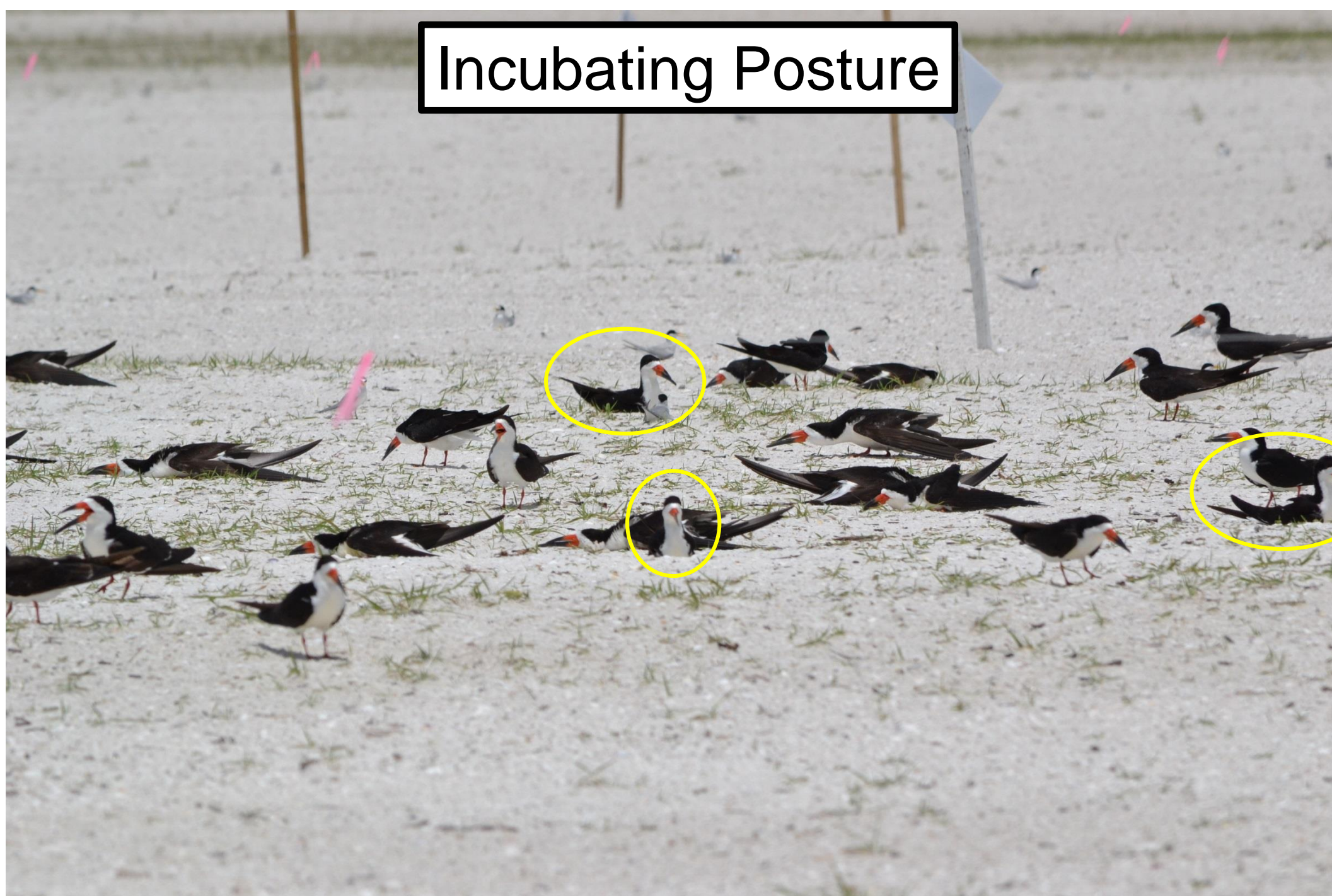
Incubating Posture



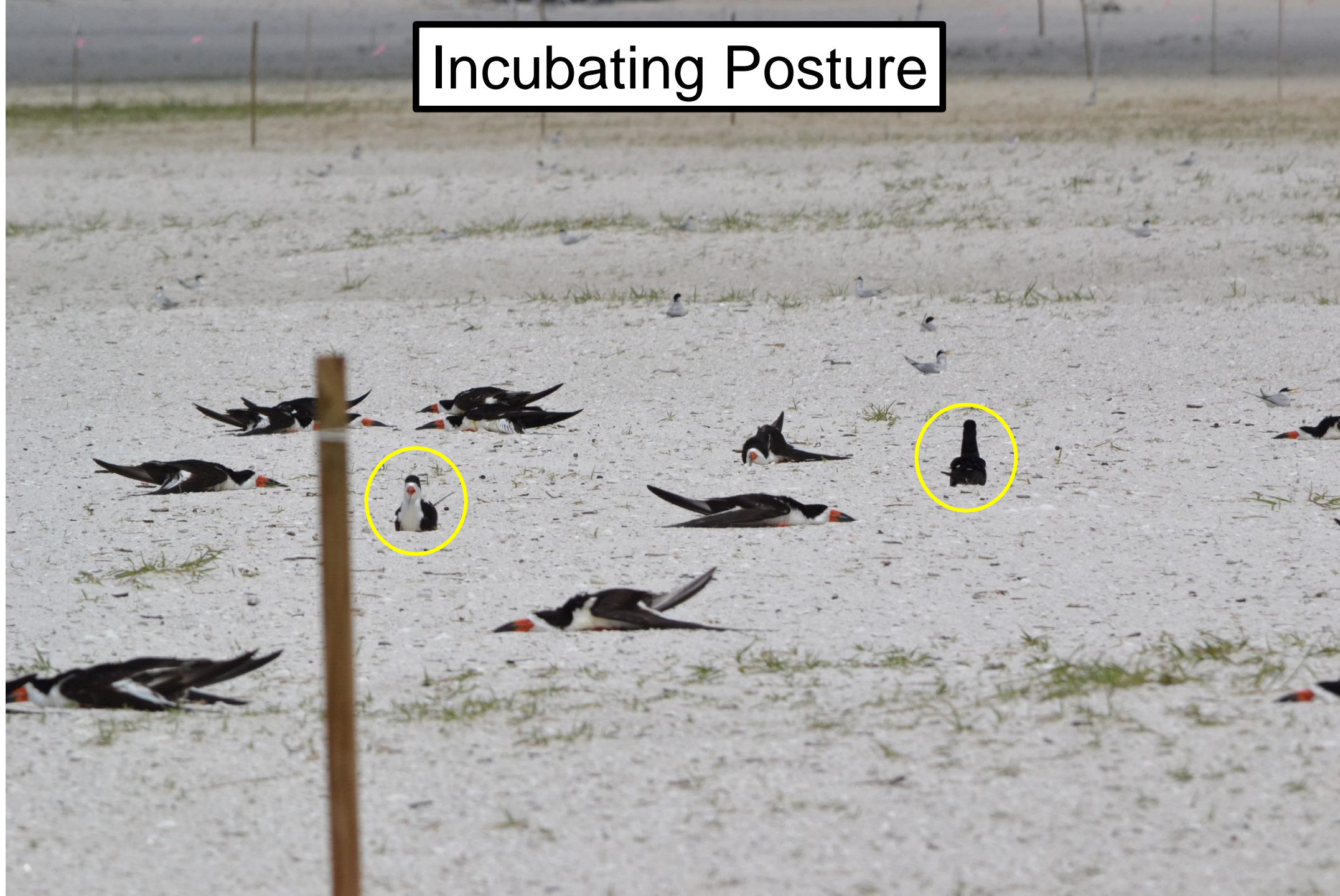
- Upright posture
- Neck elongated
- Wings tips low and close to the ground
- Wings may be slightly spread



Incubating Posture



Incubating Posture



1



Incubation Switch

1. Stands near mate
2. Lays head over mates shoulders
3. Calls to mate
4. Switch

2



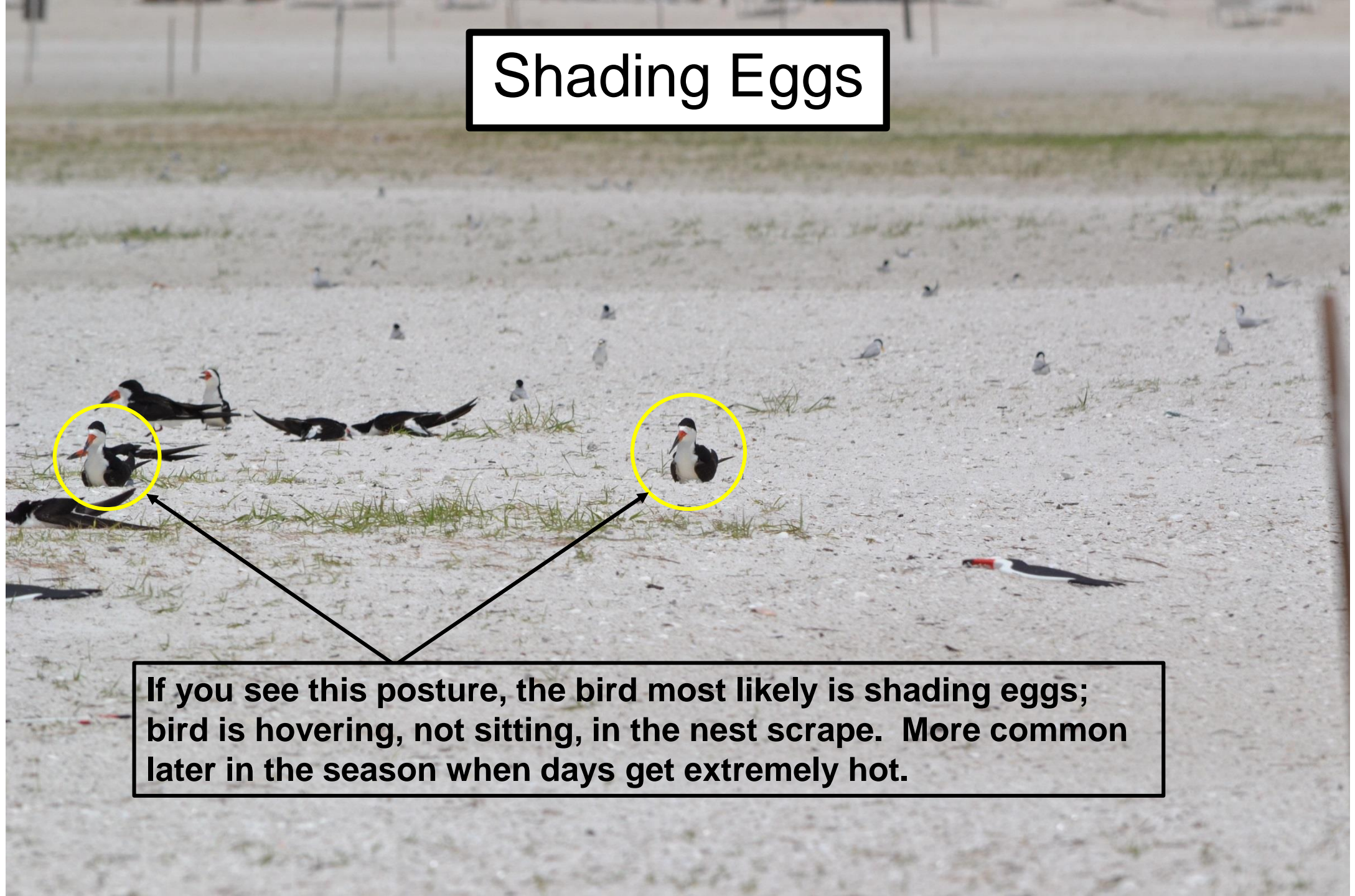
3



4



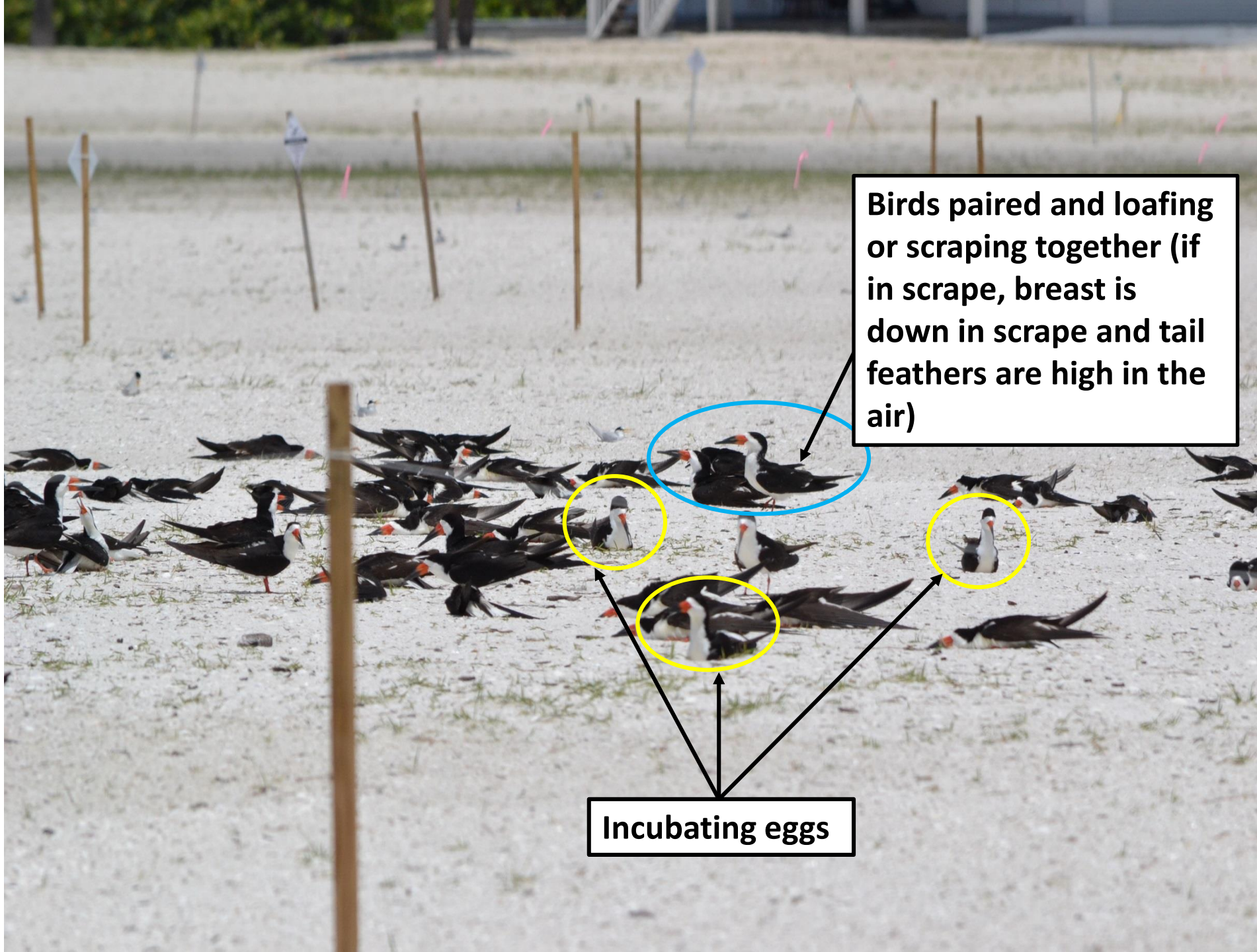
Shading Eggs



If you see this posture, the bird most likely is shading eggs; bird is hovering, not sitting, in the nest scrape. More common later in the season when days get extremely hot.

Which birds are courting & which birds have a nest?



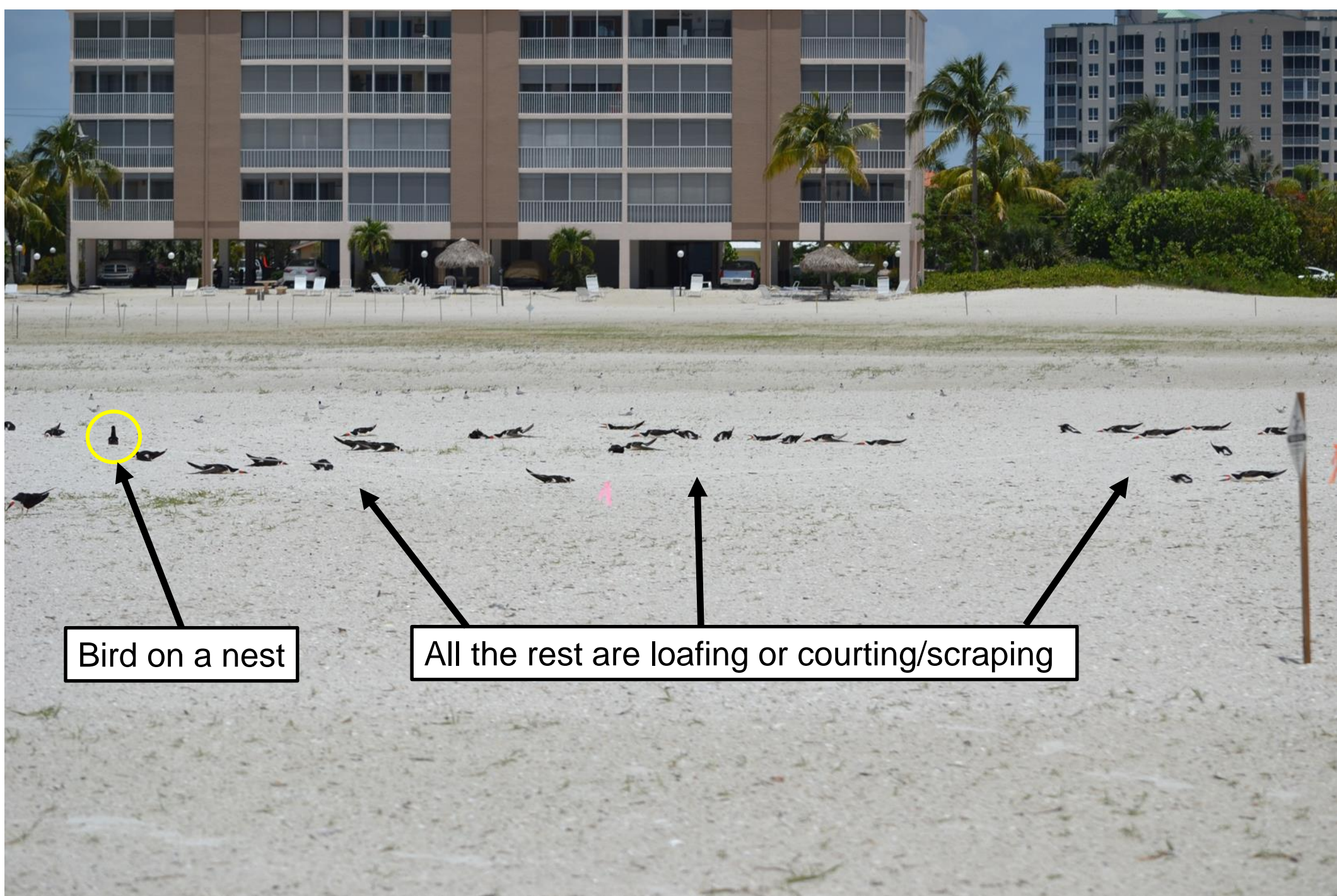


Birds paired and loafing or scraping together (if in scrape, breast is down in scrape and tail feathers are high in the air)

Incubating eggs

Which birds are loafing & which birds have a nest?





Bird on a nest

All the rest are loafing or courting/scraping

Which birds have a nest?





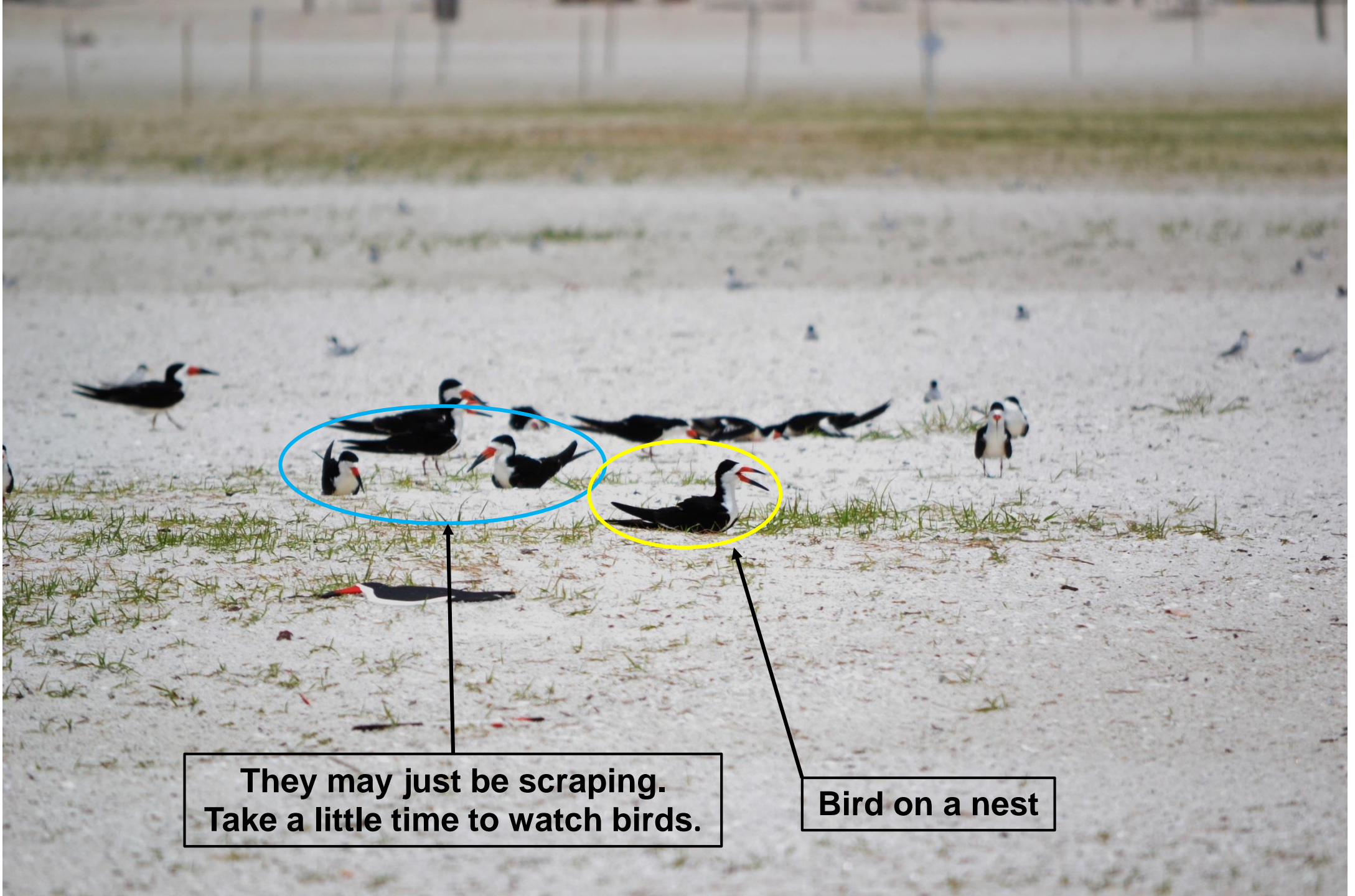
Which birds have a nest?





Watch birds, looks like they are shading eggs, but.....





**They may just be scraping.
Take a little time to watch birds.**

Bird on a nest

Unsure of what is going on in the colony?



Spend a little extra time



Loafing and courting birds within the colony may flush.
Incubating birds typically are less likely to flush.