

Sea & Sage Audubon UNB Monthly Boat Trip/Bird Count from aboard the Newport Sea Base Pontoon Boat

Date: 4/20/11 **Trip Leader:** Nancy Kenyon **Skipper:** Tom Weiss **Tide:** Fairly low; incoming
Birders who helped with the census: Sally Menzel, Darrel Wilson, Nancy Kenyon, Chris Johnson, Pat Vranicar, Deana Collins. **Comments:** The trip began under heavy clouds & a light rain mist which ceased around 9:20. The water became absolutely still and we watched a solitary Snowy Egret stalking its prey at the water's edge, perfectly reflected in the quiet water. This was ideal birding weather with soft light, no glare from the sun, and still water. A huge gathering of Black Skimmers was on a mud flat along with large numbers of Caspian, Elegant and Forster's Terns. When a low jet passed overhead, all the skimmers and terns became airborne; it was quite a sight! Fortunately, they settled back down again and we were able to finish our count. Some of the birds were in breeding plumage: an Eared Grebe with golden "ear" feathers, American Avocets with cinnamon-colored heads & necks, one of the Black-bellied Plovers with a black belly, striking coloration on the flanks and tail of a male Blue-winged Teal, a rich brown speckled pattern on the backs of the Long-billed Curlews, and. . . the Willets which looked so different from the way we normally see them, that we didn't even recognize them at first! (The Willets we normally see are plain grey, but these birds were speckled with a warm brownish hue, and they didn't look like the Willets we knew at all, until they flew.) We saw a female Mallard followed closely by 6 fuzzy ducklings and, at the Back Bay Science Center, we were thrilled to see 2 Osprey chicks on the nesting platform with one of the Osprey parents. Further on, we saw a brightly colored male Hooded Oriole perched high in a palm tree and in the top of another palm tree, there was a Red-tailed Hawk being harassed by 2 crows. It was a wonderful morning to be out birding!

Ducks	
15	Mallard
3	Blue-winged Teal
1	Ruddy Duck
Grebes	
2	Eared Grebe
6	Western Grebe
Cormorants	
17	Double-crested Cormorant
Hérons & Egrets	
4	Great Blue Heron
1	Great Egret
11	Snowy Egret
Diurnal Birds of Prey	
13	Turkey Vulture
4	Osprey (+ 2 chicks in nest)
1	Red-tailed Hawk
Coots	
35	American Coot
Plovers	
5	Black-bellied Plover
5	Semipalmated Plover
2	Killdeer
Avocets	
26	American Avocet
Sandpipers	
132	Willet
2	Spotted Sandpiper
1	Whimbrel
4	Long-billed Curlew
29	Marbled Godwit
366	Western Sandpiper
28	Long-billed Dowitcher

Gulls	
1	Ring-billed Gull
27	Western Gull
Terns & Skimmers	
55	Caspian Tern
40	Forster's Tern
52	Elegant Tern
250	Black Skimmer
Pigeons & Doves	
1	Rock Pigeon
3	Mourning Dove
Hummingbirds	
2	Anna's Hummingbird
Flycatchers	
3	Black Phoebe
Crows	
14	American Crow
Swallows	
2	Northern Rough-winged Swallow
26	Cliff Swallow
Mockingbirds	
5	Northern Mockingbird
Warblers	
1	Common Yellowthroat
Towhees & Sparrows	
2	California Towhee (heard)
5	Savannah Sparrow (heard &/or seen)
7	Song Sparrow (heard &/or seen)
Orioles	
1	Hooded Oriole
Finches	
9	House Finch (heard)