

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

Date: 8/21/13 **Trip Leader:** Nancy Kenyon

Tide: 5 ft high tide at 10 AM

Skipper: Robert Sloan

Birders who actively contributed to the count: Deana Collins, Sharon Harrow, Nancy Kenyon, Gretchen & Michael Mavrovouniotis, Sally Menzel, Chuck Nichols, Jax Sanders, Darrell Wilson. **Comments:** The water was very calm and still all the way up the bay with perfect reflections on either side, and it was very quiet and peaceful. Because of the high tide, there were no mud flats along the way; instead, we found large flocks of shorebirds packed tightly together in just a few high spots. The first spot, which often has an interesting collection of shorebirds, was the big island just north of the PCH bridge where we saw a Black Turnstone along with a variety of other shorebirds, an unusual sighting for this area. We also saw a Brown Pelican sleeping on the island with his bill laid crosswise across his body, looking for all the world like a large grayish-white rock with a twig in front of it. On another part of the island, we saw a Great Blue Heron standing with "his" wings stretched out to catch the morning sunshine. Further up the bay, in the Constellation Area, we saw a group of 18 Black Skimmers, several of which were prone on the ground, head and bill extended forward, absolutely motionless. At first we thought they were dead until we saw a couple of them move and one get up and walk away. According to *Birds of North America*, they flop on the ground in this manner to reduce radiant heat uptake and to rest. A couple of the skimmers even had their wings outstretched to sunbathe. Also in this area, we saw 3 Clapper Rails. Several Mullet jumped out of the water and a Sea Lion swam in front of our boat. A large flock of sandpipers flew over the pickleweed like a grey cloud. We watched with interest as a Great Egret managed to swallow a fish, and in the shallows farther up the channel, we saw several stingrays swimming near our boat. Chuck told us how the females come to the shallows at this time of year to give birth to <10 tiny stingrays which are about the size of small tadpoles. In the pickleweed, we saw a Northern Harrier, several Great Blue Herons, and 12 Snowy Egrets, their white heads and long necks protruding above the green vegetation. On our return trip, a pair of Belted Kingfishers flew along the shore parallel with our boat. There were so many interesting things see this morning!

Geese & Ducks	
8	Mallard
Grebes	
1	Pied-billed Grebe
5	Western Grebe
Cormorants & Pelicans	
17	Double-crested Cormorant
5	Brown Pelican
Hérons & Egrets	
12	Great Blue Heron
10	Great Egret
25	Snowy Egret
Diurnal Birds of Prey	
1	Turkey Vulture
1	Osprey
1	Northern Harrier
1	Cooper's Hawk
Rails	
3	Clapper Rail
Plovers	
36	Black-bellied Plover
1	Killdeer
Sandpipers	
4	Spotted Sandpiper
159	Willet
2	Greater Yellowlegs
4	Long-billed Curlew
4	Whimbrel
136	Marbled Godwit
1	Black Turnstone
388	Western Sandpiper
165	Least Sandpiper

3	dowitcher sp.
Gulls, Terns, & Skimmers	
19	Western Gull
2	Caspian Tern
19	Black Skimmer
Pigeons & Doves	
2	Rock Pigeon
3	Mourning Dove
Kingfishers	
3	Belted Kingfisher
Hummingbirds	
1	Allen's Hummingbird
Flycatchers	
1	Black Phoebe
Crows & Ravens	
7	American Crow
1	Common Raven
Swallows	
1	N. Rough-winged Swallow
22	Barn Swallow
Mockingbirds	
2	Northern Mockingbird
Warblers	
1	Common Yellowthroat
Sparrows & Grosbeaks	
4	Savannah Sparrow
1	Song Sparrow
1	Black-headed Grosbeak
Blackbirds	
5	Red-winged Blackbirds
Finches	
12	House Finch