

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

Date: 5/21/14 **Trip Leader:** Nancy Kenyon **Tide:** 0.09 low tide at 10:04 am **Skipper:** Eric Walker

Birders who actively contributed to the count: Sally Menzel, Sharon Harrow, Deana Collins, Mark Kincheloe, Chuck Nichols, Darrell Wilson, David Evans & Nancy Kenyon.

Comments: The weather was partly cloudy and cool with a strong breeze blowing. The tide was low enough to allow us to see lots of mud flats which were areas we had not seen for a good many months. Due to the season, there were very few shorebirds around, so those which were on the mud flats were easy to count once we found them, though they did blend in well with their surroundings. There were lots of terns flying around and the Least Terns were actively diving into the water. We watched a Great Blue Heron slowly stalking its prey. On the mud flat right before the Back Bay Science Center, we got good views of a group of Caspian, Forster's, Elegant, and Least Terns and Black Skimmers sitting on the bank. In front of the BBSC, we saw two juvenile Ospreys perched like statues on posts; they appeared to have white speckles all over their backs, but the speckles were actually white feather tips. On the nesting platform, there was an adult Osprey with one more juvie. We speculated that it was about to leave the nest and it was not in sight when we passed the nesting platform on our return trip. On the east shore further up the channel, we saw the Reddish Egret in the water searching for food. There were a number of Turkey Vultures on the ground, two of which were attending to part of a carcass while an interested Western Gull looked on. Two White-tailed Kites were hunting, one on the east side and the other on the west side, and three Northern Harriers were flying together on the west side. Later, we saw 15 crows mobbing a raven in the air. When we returned to the dock, we were greeted by the resident Rock Pigeons which hurriedly flew below the deck where they probably had their nests. It was an interesting morning with lots to see.

Geese & Ducks	
1	Canada Goose
3	Mallard
1	Red-breasted Merganser
Grebes	
2	Pied-billed Grebe
5	Western Grebe
1	Clark's Grebe
Pelicans & Cormorants	
3	Brown Pelican
2	Double-crested Cormorant
Hérons & Egrets	
10	Great Blue Heron
5	Great Egret
12	Snowy Egret
1	Reddish Egret
Diurnal Birds of Prey	
16	Turkey Vulture
5	Osprey
2	White-tailed Kite
3	Northern Harrier
Plovers	
25	Black-bellied Plover
7	Killdeer
Sandpipers	
2	Spotted Sandpiper
1	Greater Yellowlegs
6	Willet
4	Whimbrel
9	Marbled Godwit
2	Long-billed Dowitcher

Gulls, Terns & Skimmers	
13	Western Gull
17	Caspian Tern
19	Forster's Tern
10	Elegant Tern
17	Least Terns
16	Black Skimmer
Pigeons & Doves	
11	Rock Pigeon
1	Mourning Dove
Swifts	
1	White-throated Swift
Crows & Ravens	
39	American Crow
2	Common Raven
Swallows	
1	N. Rough-winged Swallow
7	Barn Swallow
Mockingbirds	
3	Northern Mockingbird (heard)
Starlings	
1	European Starling
Sparrows	
9	Savannah Sparrow
Marine Mammals	
1	Sea Lion