

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

Date: 5/20/15 **Trip Leader:** Nancy Kenyon **Tide:** 3.77 ft. high tide at 12:14 PM **Skipper:** Robert Sloan

Birders who actively contributed to the count: Everyone on board the boat this morning was actively looking at the birds and calling out sightings. They were all involved with our count!

Comments: Due to the low tide, we had a lot of mud flats on which birds were sitting, standing, or actively feeding. Some of the birds were really difficult to find on the gray mud flats because of the cloudy sky and low light, and, of course, many of the ducks and shorebirds were in short supply because they had already migrated north to their nesting areas. Highlights included a Green Heron in full breeding plumage slinking across the mud, neck outstretched, hunting for food; a group of 3 Eared Grebes swimming together in tight formation, each with its golden "ear tufts" and bright red eyes contrasting with dark heads & necks; 2+ Ridgway Rails out in the open and calling; a group of 33 Black Skimmers resting on a large mudflat in the company of 13 Caspian Terns and a Royal Tern – the colors of the skimmers' bills showed up strikingly against the dark mudflat; Forster's Terns were flying everywhere and diving for fish; 2 Western Gulls were sitting on top of a Channel Closed sign, on their nest. We also enjoyed seeing a Great Blue Heron hunkered down on top of a chimney, a Forster's Tern feeding a hungry fledgling, 2 fully grown Ospreys standing together on the Back Bay nesting platform, hearing the Black Skimmers calling to each other, 3 crows dive-bombing a hidden raptor in the top of a tall palm tree, and on the way back, we saw SEVEN Western Wood-Pewees perched on twigs above the pickleweed. Even though it was cold out there, we enjoyed every minute of a memorable trip!

Geese & Ducks	
9	Mallard
1	Lesser Scaup
Grebes	
4	Pied-billed Grebe
3	Eared Grebe
9	Western Grebe
Pelicans & Cormorants	
5	Double-crested Cormorant
Hérons & Egrets	
3	Great Blue Heron
3	Great Egret
19	Snowy Egret
2	Green Heron
2	Black-crowned Night-Heron
Diurnal Birds of Prey	
3	Turkey Vulture
4	Osprey
Rails & Coots	
2+	Ridgway's Rail
Plovers	
3	Black-bellied Plover
3	Killdeer
Sandpipers	
1	Long-billed Curlew
16	Marbled Godwit
Gulls, Terns & Skimmers	
7	Western Gull
14	Caspian Tern

15	Forster's Tern
1	Royal Tern
6	Least Tern
44	Black Skimmer
Pigeons & Doves	
1	Rock Pigeon
5	Mourning Dove
Flycatchers	
1	Black Phoebe
1	Cassin's Kingbird
7	Western Wood-Pewee
Crows & Ravens	
29	American Crow
Swallows	
15	Barn Swallow
Mockingbirds	
2	Northern Mockingbird
Starlings	
5	European Starling
Warblers	
6	Common Yellowthroat
Towhees & Sparrows	
1	Savannah Sparrow
1	Song Sparrow
Blackbirds	
1	Brewer's Blackbird