

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

**Date:** 11/20/13    **Trip Leader:** Nancy Kenyon    **Tide:** 5.47 ft. high tide at 9:33 AM    **Skipper:** Eric Walker  
**Birders who actively contributed to the count:** Sally Menzel, Sharon Harrow, Chuck Nichols, Nancy Kenyon, Deana Collins, and Bob Holcomb. **Comments:** The water was absolutely still and we had great reflections all the way up and all the way back. Western Grebes were calling back and forth to each other and Forster's Terns were diving for fish. We got an occasional glimpse of a massive flock of Willets out in the pickleweed. Due to the high tide, there was only one visible mud flat (at Constellation) and it was packed with Willets and Marbled Godwits. Just as we reached it, the sun came out from beneath the dark gray clouds and the colors of the shorebirds showed up beautifully with soft browns and grays. Unusual sightings included: 9 Belted Kingfishers, 5 Northern Harriers, 7 Clapper Rails, only 1 dowitcher and 4 Western Sandpipers, 25 Surf Scoters (some in the upper section of the bay), 5 Horned Grebes, only 1 Black Skimmer, and 20 female Red-winged Blackbirds. Though none of these are rare to the area, their numbers were unusual. We also saw 2 fake owls which we are sure did not fool anyone! Two of the Northern Harriers gave us quite a bit of trouble trying to identify: one was a very dark female perched on a stump a fair distance from the boat, and the other was a male sitting in the grass at the water's edge – an unusual spot for a raptor! We also watched as a Forster's Tern made repeated dives at an American Wigeon in the water. Bob Holcomb earned the distinction of spotting the first Clapper Rail of the morning. In all, we saw 7 of them and everyone was able to get good looks at them. Some of the rails were out in plain view at the water's edge while others were in the tall grass close to the shore with only their heads and necks visible. We enjoyed watching the Buffleheads bobbing around in the water and two Red-tailed hawks flying high above, doing aerial mating displays. As we left the upper bay and passed under the PCH bridge, a Brown Pelican was perched on one of the bridge supports like a lone sentinel. It was a wonderful morning!

<b>Geese &amp; Ducks</b>	
101	American Wigeon
8	Mallard
1	Northern Shoveler
19	Northern Pintail
26	Redhead
30	Lesser Scaup
25	Surf Scoter
76	Bufflehead
2	Ruddy Duck
<b>Grebes</b>	
8	Pied-billed Grebe
5	Horned Grebe
7	Eared Grebe
33	Western Grebe
9	Clark's Grebe
<b>Pelicans &amp; Cormorants</b>	
3	Brown Pelican
16	Double-crested Cormorant
<b>Hérons &amp; Egrets</b>	
6	Great Blue Heron
6	Great Egret
26	Snowy Egret
<b>Diurnal Birds of Prey</b>	
12	Turkey Vulture
3	Osprey
5	Northern Harrier
6	Red-tailed Hawk
1	American Kestrel
<b>Rails &amp; Coots</b>	
7	Clapper Rail (all visual!)
66	American Coot
<b>Plovers</b>	
31	Black-bellied Plover
10	Killdeer

<b>Avocets &amp; Stilts</b>	
8	American Avocet
<b>Sandpipers</b>	
1	Spotted Sandpiper
479	Willet
6	Long-billed Curlew
1	Whimbrel
478	Marbled Godwit
4	Western Sandpiper
1	Long-billed Dowitcher
<b>Gulls, Terns &amp; Skimmers</b>	
2	Heermann's Gull
8	Ring-billed Gull
58	Western Gull
15	Forster's Tern
1	Black Skimmer
<b>Pigeons &amp; Doves</b>	
11	Rock Pigeon
2	Mourning Dove
<b>Kingfishers</b>	
9	Belted Kingfisher
<b>Flycatchers</b>	
1	Black Phoebe
4	Say's Phoebe
4	Cassin's Kingbird
<b>Crows &amp; Ravens</b>	
51	American Crow
<b>Mockingbirds</b>	
1	Northern Mockingbird (heard)
<b>Sparrows</b>	
1	Savannah Sparrow
<b>Blackbirds</b>	
1	Western Meadowlark
20	Red-winged Blackbird (females)