

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

Date: 10/26/16 **Trip Leader:** Nancy Kenyon **Tide:** 5.2 ft. HIGH TIDE at 7:43 AM; 1.1 ft LOW TIDE at 1:53 PM
Skipper: Robert Sloan. **Birders who actively contributed to the count:** Sharon Harrow with her scope, Darrell Wilson, Chuck Nichols, visiting birder from Switzerland, Markus Ehrenguber, Don Clement, and Nancy Kenyon.

The air was very still and we enjoyed looking at perfect reflections along the shore all the way up the bay. The sun was shining and there were scattered high clouds with interesting formations. Many of the birds along the shore were backlit and the low vegetation along the shore was still moist from the recent rain and was sparkling in the sunshine.

We saw 4 fake owls on the roofs of houses overlooking the bay and 1 tall black witch on a broomstick on one of the roofs. As we passed the Santa Ynez Spit, we were amazed to see a whole section of the slope covered with Western Sandpipers, packed tightly together and looking rather like light grey pointy rocks until they were spooked by a nearby crow which was walking around and the entire flock of some 2000+ birds rose from the ground. There were 3 huge flocks of them and they wheeled this way and that, their wings flashing gray and then white as they changed their formation. We could hear the sound their wings made as they flew. It was an awesome sight and one I will never forget!

As we went further up the bay, we saw an Osprey perched on the top of a high pole by the Back Bay Science Center, Great and Snowy Egrets stalking their prey in the shallow water near the shore, terns plunge diving into the water, Redhead (ducks) in the sunlight, their reddish heads brilliant in the light, Black Skimmers flying lower over the water skimming, Great Blue Herons standing like statues in the pickleweed probably waiting for an unwary frog to show itself, Western Grebes swimming by in small groups, a large flock of Least Sandpipers standing motionless along the shore, and a total of 4 Belted Kingfishers busily flying around looking for food. It was a wonderful morning!

Geese & Ducks	
13	Canada Goose
76	American Wigeon
11	Mallard
2	Blue-winged Teal
2	Northern Pintail
16	Redhead
2	Surf Scoter
10	Ruddy Duck
Grebes	
1	Pied-billed Grebe
6	Eared Grebe
43	Western Grebe
Pelicans & Cormorants	
13	Double-crested Cormorant
2	Brown Pelican
3	American White Pelican
Herons, Egrets, Ibis	
9	Great Blue Heron
8	Great Egret
16	Snowy Egret

Diurnal Birds of Prey	
3	Turkey Vulture
4	Osprey
1	Northern Harrier
2	American Kestrel
Rails & Coots	
50	American Coot
Plovers	
94	Black-bellied Plover
4	Killdeer
Sandpipers	
1	Spotted Sandpiper
4	Greater Yellowlegs
191	Willet
1	Whimbrel
1	Long-billed Curlew
138	Marbled Godwit
2100	Western Sandpiper
305	Least Sandpiper

Gulls, Terns & Skimmers	
2	Heermann's Gull
1	Ring-billed Gull
7	Western Gull
3	Caspian Tern
11	Forster's Tern
82	Black Skimmer
Kingfishers	
4	Belted Kingfisher
Woodpeckers	
1	Northern Flicker
Flycatchers	
4	Say's Phoebe
Crows & Ravens	
15	American Crow
Towhee & Sparrows	
5	Savannah Sparrow