

Sea & Sage Audubon UNB Monthly Boat Trip/Bird Count from aboard the Newport Sea Base Pontoon Boat (8:30 – 11:00)

Date: 1/20/16 **Trip Leader:** Nancy Kenyon **Tide:** 5.89 ft HIGH TIDE at 5:57 AM; 0.70 ft LOW TIDE at 01.10 PM.
Skipper: Robert Sloan. **Birders who regularly contribute to the count:** Sally Menzel, Sharon Harrow, Darrell Wilson, Mark Kincheloe, and Nancy Kenyon. On this trip, everyone on the boat except the skipper, was actively birding and contributing to the count. **Comments:** It was heavily overcast, a gray morning with drizzle when we set off, but everyone was eager to go and was active in their search for birds. We found 3 different Great Blue Herons perched on high chimneys about the houses. Loons began to show up along with lots of Surf Scoters and Bufflehead. We saw a crow on one of the boats taking a bath in a pool of water on a radar antennae. As we passed under the PCH bridge and headed toward the Santa Ynez Spit, we found 15 Black-bellied Plovers on top of the spit and a Brown Pelican which posed dramatically like a statue at the end of the spit. (The Great Blue Heron was missing from his usual spot beside the leafless bush.) Two Ospreys were on the platform at the Back Bay Science Center with a few sticks to show they were thinking about nesting there again this year. At the outfall on the east side, ducks were perched all over the place, some even on top of the cement ramp above the water. The boom by the Aquatic Center was being made good use of by 15 Forster's Terns, 13 Double-crested Cormorants, a Heermann's Gull and a Spotted Sandpiper. Further up the channel, we saw a large muted rainbow. The drizzle stopped but the skies remained gray and the water was very still – like smooth gray glass with faint ripples from our boat's wake. The shoreline was reflected in the water and when a Great Egret flew off, we saw its reflected white wings in the still water. The terns were diving without their raucous cries, so we were able to hear the calls of the Black-bellied Plovers, Willets, Marbled Godwits, and Black Skimmers which were in a large flock on a mudflat "talking" to each other. A Brown Pelican flew by our boat inches above the water, one Osprey was perched on the NO ENTRY sign in the channel, while another was on a Y-shaped snag by the water's edge, calling. The tide was getting progressively lower, exposing large mudflats on which flocks of Black-bellied Plovers, Western & Least Sandpipers, and other shorebirds were spread out, busily feeding. On our return route, we again saw a Red-tailed Hawk perched half-way up the trunk of a very tall Palm Tree. As we approached the dock, a Rock Pigeon flew out from below the deck. It was fun to have such an enthusiastic group of birders on board!

Geese & Ducks		21	Double-crested Cormorant	4	Dunlin
185	American Wigeon	Herons, Egrets, Ibis		33	Long-billed Dowitcher
2	Blue-winged Teal	6	Great Blue Heron	Gulls, Terns & Skimmers	
8	Cinnamon Teal	2	Great Egret	3	Heermann's Gull
2	Northern Shoveler	24	Snowy Egret	7	Ring-billed Gull
43	Northern Pintail	Diurnal Birds of Prey		13	Western Gull
27	Green-winged Teal	22	Turkey Vulture	21	Forster's Tern
5	Redhead	4	Osprey	82	Black Skimmer
91	Lesser Scaup	1	Northern Harrier	Pigeons & Doves	
34	Surf Scoter	3	Red-tailed Hawk	4	Rock Pigeon
34	Bufflehead	2	American Kestrel	1	Mourning Dove
1	Hooded Merganser	Rails & Coots		Kingfishers	
1	Red-breasted Merganser	47	American Coot	3	Belted Kingfisher
6	Ruddy Duck	Plovers		Flycatchers	
Loons		113	Black-bellied Plover	1	Black Phoebe
6	Red-throated Loon	Avocets		2	Say's Phoebe
5	Pacific Loon	32	American Avocet	1	Cassin's Kingbird
Grebes		Sandpipers		Crows & Ravens	
1	Pied-billed Grebe	3	Spotted Sandpiper	11	American Crow
7	Horned Grebe	177	Willet	3	Common Raven
12	Eared Grebe	4	Long-billed Curlew	Miscellaneous	
59	Western Grebe	98	Marbled Godwit	2	gray plastic owls
7	Clark's Grebe	463	Western Sandpiper	1	Seal/or Sea-Lion
Pelicans & Cormorants		11	Least Sandpiper		
6	Brown Pelican	15	peeps		