



Field Guides Tour Report

Newfoundland & Nova Scotia 2016

Jun 26, 2016 to Jul 6, 2016
Chris Benesh & Doug Gochfeld

For our tour description, itinerary, past triplists, dates, fees, and more, please [VISIT OUR TOUR PAGE](#).



You can't help feeling a sense of awe after a trip to the seabird colony at Cape St. Mary's in Newfoundland. This time around we were exposed to the full Cape St. Mary's weather experience, as we got an appreciation for the fog that has contributed to the reputation of the area as treacherous for fishermen. (Photo by guide Doug Gochfeld)

The Canadian Maritimes have some of the most beautiful landscapes on the continent, and they really come alive with bird life in the summer. We were fortunate to be able to enjoy this bounty of nature with a combination of a great group of people and excellent weather.

We started out by birding around picturesque St. John's for the first morning, going to the top of Signal Hill for a bird's eye view of the harbor and a taste of the landscape we would enjoy for the next 10 days. We made a couple of productive birding stops as we made our way down to Cape Spear (the easternmost point in Canada), seeing our first Pine Grosbeaks and the endemic Type 8 Red Crossbill. From Cape Spear, we headed south towards Bay Bulls, and one of the main highlights of the trip, the boat trip to the Witless Bay Ecological Preserve. As we got out to offshore waters, we encountered fog, though the growing numbers of alcids, a Sooty Shearwater, and views of at least one Humpback Whale buoyed everyone's mood as we approached the breeding islands through the mist. Almost as soon as we got to Gull Island, we were greeted by the sun shining right down on us through a hole in the fog, and tens of thousands of Common Murres and thousands of Atlantic Puffins were revealed in great light. It was a truly mesmerizing experience. Before we left, we even had a look at a white-cheeked goose that turned out to be Newfoundland's first documented record of Cackling Goose!

After spending another night in St. John's (including an excellent harbor-side dinner as the sun set), we started making our way south towards the southern end of the Avalon Peninsula, stopping once again at Cape Spear to enjoy the view and for another chance at some seabirds from shore, before we bid the St. John's area farewell. On our way down to Trepassey, we stopped at La Manche Provincial Park, which gave us yet another hit of boreal birds, including Yellow-bellied Flycatchers and a family of often-elusive Black-backed Woodpeckers that put on a great show for the group.

The beautiful barrens of the southern Avalon were shrouded in mist as we worked our way west towards Placentia. A great opportunity to compare Common Tern and Arctic Tern in both adult and immature plumages at St. Vincent's was a wonderful learning experience for all. Along the way we also enjoyed a Northern Goshawk circling over the road while carrying prey, and we then ran across a beautiful male Mourning Warbler, defending a territory right alongside the road.

After waking up in Placentia, we headed south towards Cape St. Mary's for another one of the signature avian draws of Newfoundland. The Northern Gannet colony out at Cape St. Mary's is legendary, and it didn't disappoint. Gannets were constantly flying by, sometimes just an arm's length away, there was constant courtship and bickering on Bird Rock right in front of us, and downy young at various states of maturity were scattered throughout.

We eventually had to pry ourselves away from this magical spectacle and head to the ferry that would take us across Cabot Strait and on to Nova Scotia. Most of the ferry ride was through the fog that the strait is infamous for, but as we approached Nova Scotia the next morning, it cleared enough for us to see some Great Shearwaters and singles of Manx Shearwater and Leach's Storm-Petrel.

Our first major birding stop on Cape Breton Island was at Port Morien, where we got excellent views of several Nelson's Sparrows singing from the tops of bushes near the marsh and doing flight displays. These Nelson's Sparrows are of the *subvirgatus* subspecies, whose breeding range is restricted to salt marshes along the northeast coast of North America, only reaching as far south as northern New England. We also got to see our first Eastern Willets of the trip, along with scads of Savannah Sparrows in the dunes. A stop for lunch at the Lobster Kettle in Louisbourg was not only a hit for the food, but provided us with our first Common Eiders of the trip, swimming around in the harbor just outside. A stop at Point Aconi on the way towards the Cape Breton Highlands gave us a great comparison of Great and Double-crested cormorants, and then we climbed up into the Highlands.

The next couple of days we spent around Cape Breton Highlands National Park, one of the most stunningly beautiful areas in a region replete with natural beauty. Our boat trip out of Pleasant Bay was fortuitously timed as we encountered the first pods of Long-finned Pilot Whales to have arrived for the season, and we were able to get up close and personal with these fascinating marine migrants. Not only did we encounter many Gray Seals during the boat trip, we even spied a Black Bear browsing a meadow above one of the rocky coastal cliffs.

With our last couple of days in the province, we explored the area around Liscombe Lodge, on the east coast of Nova Scotia. We visited Waternish Road and Sinclair Lake Road, both of which continued to provide new species despite how far along on the trip we were. A particularly memorable encounter along the Sinclair Lake Road was a female Spruce Grouse and her chicks, and having time to watch them at length was a really special treat. Across the road from Liscombe Lodge we even had Black-backed Woodpecker, and great looks at some other boreal breeders like Yellow-bellied Flycatcher, Blue-headed Vireo, and Boreal Chickadee, all before breakfast!

We rounded out the trip with a couple of surgical strikes to see Sora, Virginia Rail, and some Bobolinks as we headed towards Halifax for the final dinner of what was a truly memorable tour. Thanks all of you for making such a great group, and we can't wait to travel with each and every one of you again!

--Doug & Chris

KEYS FOR THIS LIST

One of the following keys may be shown in brackets for individual species as appropriate: * = heard only, I = introduced, E = endemic, N = nesting, a = austral migrant, b = boreal migrant

BIRDS

Anatidae (Ducks, Geese, and Waterfowl)

CAKCLING GOOSE (*Branta hutchinsii*) – The most unexpected bird of the trip. This Cackling Goose was on the rocky upper slopes of Gull Island in Witless Bay during our Puffin boat trip out of Bay Bulls, and it represents the first record of the species for the island of Newfoundland! It appeared to be of the "Richardson's" subspecies (*b.h.hutchinsii*), though subspecific identification of the smaller white-cheeked geese is fraught with peril.

CANADA GOOSE (*Branta canadensis*) – A family in the fog on the southern Avalon eluded most of the group as we drove by, but we caught up with this surprisingly uncommon species on Nova Scotia, notably a large flock at Belle Côte.

WOOD DUCK (*Aix sponsa*) – Several of these dapper ducks were at the small roadside marsh south at Churchville, south of New Glasgow, in Nova Scotia on our final day of birding.

AMERICAN BLACK DUCK (*Anas rubripes*) – The Canadian Maritimes are still a stronghold of this species, which has had a noticeable population decline over the last several decades.

MALLARD (*Anas platyrhynchos*) – Scattered in small numbers throughout the trip, though not very numerous at all!

RING-NECKED DUCK (*Aythya collaris*) – 3 males, which we stopped for, near Bay Bulls as we were driving to the southern Avalon, and then 3 more seen from inside the van as we left Cape Breton Island onto mainland Nova Scotia

COMMON EIDER (DRESSER'S) (*Somateria mollissima dresseri*) – A few birds around Louisbourg, the first few of which we saw from inside the Lobster Kettle while ordering lunch. We also had a female with ducklings later in the day

HOODED MERGANSER (*Lophodytes cucullatus*) – A female and three young birds in with all the other ducks at the roadside marsh in Churchville on the last day of birding were a pleasant surprise.

COMMON MERGANSER (*Mergus merganser*) – Most memorably, we paced a group flying down a river as we were going 40 MPH in the van for a couple of minutes on the way to Waternish Road on our final morning of birding. There were also a few hauled out on the rocks north of Pleasant Bay, seen from the boat.

Phasianidae (Pheasants, Grouse, and Allies)

RING-NECKED PHEASANT (*Phasianus colchicus*) – A roadside encounter with a male, female, and at least one chick, on the final day. [I]

RUFFED GROUSE (*Bonasa umbellus*) – We had some brief, but very close views of one along the Waternish Road on the last full day of birding. We waited in vain for it to return to the roadside, though most people had gotten a great view before it evaporated into the boreal forest.

SPRUCE GROUSE (*Falcapennis canadensis*) – Great views of a female and a male at Money Point, in the northern Cape Breton Highlands for those who went on the pre-dawn excursion. We feared that the rest of the group may have missed out on it after that, but on the next to last evening we lucked into female and several fluffy chicks along Sinclair Lake Road. We were able to study the female and one of the chicks extensively as they perched motionless in trees, where they remained in place even as we got bored of them (I know, "bored of a Spruce Grouse" sounds like blasphemy, but that's really how good the looks were- in addition to how closely impending dinner was).

Gaviidae (Loons)

COMMON LOON (*Gavia immer*) – Views of adults scattered throughout the trip, and then a small group of non-breeding plumage birds just outside Pleasant Bay as we were heading out to the whales.

Procellariidae (Shearwaters and Petrels)

NORTHERN FULMAR (*Fulmarus glacialis*) – We saw at least six of these uncommon breeders around Gull Island in Witless Bay, which is a good number for the area. At least three were occupying likely nest sites on rock ledges. [N]

GREAT SHEARWATER (*Ardenna gravis*) – Several seen from the ferry during the morning sea watch, all of them showing primary molt, which is typical for adults of the species at this time of year.

SOOTY SHEARWATER (*Ardenna grisea*) – One seen in the distance from the boat between Bay Bulls and Witless Bay, nearby our ephemeral Humpback Whale.

MANX SHEARWATER (*Puffinus puffinus*) – One seen on the ferry in the morning in Nova Scotia waters.

Hydrobatidae (Storm-Petrels)

LEACH'S STORM-PETREL (*Oceanodroma leucorhoa*) – Seen briefly from the ferry during our morning sea watch as we approached Nova Scotia

Sulidae (Boobies and Gannets)

NORTHERN GANNET (*Morus bassanus*) – WOW! What else can be said about these majestic birds after a trip to Cape St. Mary's? Simply spectacular views of them in all aspects, including flight, courtship, and brooding youngsters.

Phalacrocoracidae (Cormorants and Shags)

DOUBLE-CRESTED CORMORANT (*Phalacrocorax auritus*) – These were fairly widespread around the rocky coasts of Cape Breton Island, and we even had one in the stream below Liscombe Lodge during breakfast two mornings in a row.

GREAT CORMORANT (*Phalacrocorax carbo*) – We finally caught up to several of these sparse breeders at Point Aconi on Cape Breton Island, on our first full day on Nova Scotia.

Ardeidae (Herons, Egrets, and Bitterns)

GREAT BLUE HERON (*Ardea herodias*) – Some absurdly distant ones at the Morien Bar, and then encounters with individuals in flight a couple of additional times while in Nova Scotia.

Pandionidae (Osprey)

OSPREY (*Pandion haliaetus*) – The best views by far were at an active nest near Liscombe, which we passed several times over the course of three days.

Accipitridae (Hawks, Eagles, and Kites)

NORTHERN HARRIER (*Circus cyaneus*) – In the fog around Cape St. Mary's on Newfoundland, and then a male winging by the van as we approached Halifax on the final evening.

NORTHERN GOSHAWK (*Accipiter gentilis*) – Two sightings of adult birds flying over the road as we were traveling, both giving opportunities for people to get out of the van and observe them- a rare thing when it comes to Goshawk encounters, which are often vanishingly brief. One was seen carrying prey over Maddox Cove Road, after leaving Cape Spear on the second day of the tour. The other was in the Salmonier Valley as we headed towards Placentia, a bit after emerging from the fog of the southern Avalon.

BALD EAGLE (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*) – Several seen, including some fun interactions with gulls and crows at Bay Bulls, and a blisteringly close flyby of an immature on Mooseland Road as we wrapped up our very last birding stop of the tour.

BROAD-WINGED HAWK (*Buteo platypterus*) – A brief encounter with one flying over the road between Liscombe and Sinclair Lake Road

RED-TAILED HAWK (*Buteo jamaicensis*) – Brief encounters in at least three places on Nova Scotia.

Rallidae (Rails, Gallinules, and Coots)

VIRGINIA RAIL (*Rallus limicola*) – At least three heard, and one seen exceptionally well, along Mooseland Road on the final day of the tour.

SORA (*Porzana carolina*) – The whole group got brief, but excellent and close, looks at a male at the roadside marsh in Churchville on the last full day.

Charadriidae (Plovers and Lapwings)

PIPING PLOVER (*Charadrius melodus*) – A family, including at least one adorable downy young was at Pomquet Beach Provincial Park in Nova Scotia.

Scolopacidae (Sandpipers and Allies)

SPOTTED SANDPIPER (*Actitis macularius*) – A few singles scattered around Trepassey on the 29th.

GREATER YELLOWLEGS (*Tringa melanoleuca*) – A couple in the fog around Trepassey, and then one at Morien Bar on our first morning on Cape Breton Island.

WILLET (EASTERN) (*Tringa semipalmata semipalmata*) – We had quite a few scattered around Morien Bar, and then had a cool flock of 4 fly by high over the ocean at Pomquet Beach while we were watching Piping Plovers. This latter group was likely in a migratory state of mind, as Eastern Willets depart the breeding grounds of the northeast coast exceptionally early on in the summer.

WILSON'S SNIBE (*Gallinago delicata*) – A couple of brief flight views between Placentia and Cape St. Mary's.

Alcidae (Auks, Murres, and Puffins)

COMMON MURRE (*Uria aalge*) – At least 10 or so were seen at Witless Bay...10 thousand that is. What an awesome spectacle the blankets of Murres on the water around Gull Island was! We had another couple of thousand around the Cape St. Mary's Gannet colony, and a handful on the ferry ride.

THICK-BILLED MURRE (*Uria lomvia*) – We caught up with an obliging pair on a ledge on Gull Island, in Witless Bay, and everyone got views of them as the captain idled alongside of them specifically for us.

RAZORBILL (*Alca torda*) – Close breeders at Witless Bay, and then some more distant birds from Point Aconi.

BLACK GUILLEMOT (*Cepphus grylle*) – Widespread around rocky coasts in both Newfoundland and Nova Scotia. The highest concentration we ran into was on the coast of the Cape Breton Highlands north of Pleasant Bay on our whaling trip.

ATLANTIC PUFFIN (*Fratercula arctica*) – Puffins, Puffins, Puffins!! We lucked into an exceptional day of Puffin-ing at Gull Island, as we had extraordinary numbers standing on the lawns outside their burrows.

Laridae (Gulls, Terns, and Skimmers)

BLACK-LEGGED KITTIWAKE (*Rissa tridactyla*) – Many scattered around the Newfoundland coast and seen from the ferry. The highest concentration, by far, was at Gull Island in Witless Bay, where there were hundreds of breeding pairs.

RING-BILLED GULL (*Larus delawarensis*) – Scattered around on both Newfoundland and Nova Scotia, in small numbers for the most part.

HERRING GULL (AMERICAN) (*Larus argentatus smithsonianus*) – Common throughout all coastal areas.

GREAT BLACK-BACKED GULL (*Larus marinus*) – These breeders were widespread throughout the coasts of both Newfoundland and Nova Scotia, with up to several dozen seen at a time.

COMMON TERN (*Sterna hirundo*) – At a few locations, with perhaps the most memorable being at St. Vincent's in Newfoundland, where we had excellent side-by-side comparisons with adult and immature plumages of Arctic Tern.

ARCTIC TERN (*Sterna paradisaea*) – Breeding colony at Renew's, and then really excellent comparison of an adult and an immature ("portlandica" type plumage) with a Common Tern at St. Vincent's.

Columbidae (Pigeons and Doves)

ROCK PIGEON (*Columba livia*) – We tried our hardest to miss this species on the trip, but it got itself seen in a couple of places while driving, and also along the Waternish Road. [I]

MOURNING DOVE (*Zenaida macroura*) – In a couple of places, with the best views being at the feeder at Liscombe Lodge.

Strigidae (Owls)

BARRED OWL (*Strix varia*) – An amazing experience with a bird on Waternish Road. We got to see this bird very well in the open, and even calling. It stayed around long enough for us to all watch it at our leisure, and this went on to win the bird of the trip award in an overwhelming vote!

Apodidae (Swifts)

CHIMNEY SWIFT (*Chaetura pelagica*) – A small group of these put on a show hawking insects over Waternish Road.

Trochilidae (Hummingbirds)

RUBY-THROATED HUMMINGBIRD (*Archilochus colubris*) – Some really nice looks at perched birds here and there in Nova Scotia.

Alcedinidae (Kingfishers)

BELTED KINGFISHER (*Megasceryle alcyon*) – Seen at Pleasant Bay and heard repeatedly from the bridge at the start of Waternish Road.

Picidae (Woodpeckers)

DOWNY WOODPECKER (*Picoides pubescens*) – Very cooperative individuals at Shieling Trail in the Cape Breton Highlands, and a couple of others elsewhere in Nova Scotia.

HAIRY WOODPECKER (*Picoides villosus*) – Great views of one on a telephone pole on the way out to Blackhead on the first full day of birding.

BLACK-BACKED WOODPECKER (*Picoides arcticus*) – Good views of a pair around a nest at La Manche Provincial Park in Newfoundland, while one or more young birds made a racket from their nest hole off the trail. Then another extremely cooperative male giving excellent views near the Liscombe Lodge in our first pre-breakfast outing from there.

NORTHERN FLICKER (*Colaptes auratus*) – Blackhead in Newfoundland, and then good looks at the Morien Bar in our first day birding Nova Scotia.

PILEATED WOODPECKER (*Dryocopus pileatus*) – A brief flyby in our early morning expedition at Liscombe Lodge.

Falconidae (Falcons and Caracaras)

AMERICAN KESTREL (*Falco sparverius*) – Perched at a bog while we were driving back to Liscombe Lodge for dinner one evening.

Tyrannidae (Tyrant Flycatchers)

OLIVE-SIDED FLYCATCHER (*Contopus cooperi*) – One very expressive individual at Benjie's Lake put on quite a show for us in the fog.

EASTERN WOOD-PEWEE (*Contopus virens*) – Waternish Road.

YELLOW-BELLIED FLYCATCHER (*Empidonax flaviventris*) – La Manche and Father Duffy's Well on Newfoundland, and at Liscombe Lodge in Nova Scotia.

ALDER FLYCATCHER (*Empidonax alnorum*) – Several of these were vocal in the Cape Breton Highlands and along Waternish Road.

LEAST FLYCATCHER (*Empidonax minimus*) – Good looks and listens at the Shieling Trail, and then a couple of additional ones around Waternish Road and to the south.

Vireonidae (Vireos, Shrike-Babblers, and Erpornis)

BLUE-HEADED VIREO (*Vireo solitarius*) – Liscombe Lodge and Waternish Road had a couple of these, which eventually gave very good views.

RED-EYED VIREO (*Vireo olivaceus*) – Common in deciduous woodland in Nova Scotia.

Corvidae (Crows, Jays, and Magpies)

GRAY JAY (*Perisoreus canadensis*) – Finally caught up to this unusually elusive species on Sinclair Lake Road.

BLUE JAY (*Cyanocitta cristata*) – Along the road on the way to Placentia, and then several around Liscombe Lodge.

AMERICAN CROW (*Corvus brachyrhynchos*) – The common and widespread corvid on this trip.

COMMON RAVEN (*Corvus corax*) – Scattered around between Newfoundland and Nova Scotia.

Alaudidae (Larks)

HORNED LARK (*Eremophila alpestris*) – Around the parking lot and visitor's center at Cape St. Mary's.

Hirundinidae (Swallows)

TREE SWALLOW (*Tachycineta bicolor*) – Ones and twos around Newfoundland and northern Nova Scotia, becoming more abundant as we moved towards Halifax.

BANK SWALLOW (*Riparia riparia*) – On Cape Breton Island at Point Aconi, and Pleasant Bay.

BARN SWALLOW (*Hirundo rustica*) – Largest concentration was at the barn along Waternish Road.

Paridae (Tits, Chickadees, and Titmice)

BLACK-CAPPED CHICKADEE (*Poecile atricapillus*) – We had one at Blackhead in Newfoundland, and then ran into a bunch in several places in Nova Scotia.

BOREAL CHICKADEE (*Poecile hudsonicus*) – Had great luck with this sometimes elusive boreal specialist at La Manche, and then Benjie's Lake trail.

Sittidae (Nuthatches)

RED-BREASTED NUTHATCH (*Sitta canadensis*) – The most memorable individual, perhaps, was one that was perching on utility wires at La Manche. More seen in Nova Scotia later on in the week.

Troglodytidae (Wrens)

WINTER WREN (*Troglodytes hiemalis hiemalis*) – We got to hear the wonderful song of this species at length along Waternish Road, and also had great views there as well.

Regulidae (Kinglets)

GOLDEN-CROWNED KINGLET (*Regulus satrapa*) – It took until Waternish Road for most of the group to catch up to this species, though we then had brilliant looks.

RUBY-CROWNED KINGLET (*Regulus calendula*) – Scattered throughout Nova Scotia, and especially dense in the Cape Breton Highlands.

Turdidae (Thrushes and Allies)

SWAINSON'S THRUSH (*Catharus ustulatus*) – Many singing in the Cape Breton Highlands, and good views along the Waternish Road.

HERMIT THRUSH (*Catharus guttatus*) – One on Newfoundland at Father Duffy's Well, and then scattered birds in appropriate habitat in Nova Scotia.

AMERICAN ROBIN (*Turdus migratorius*) – Seen every day of the trip, including a couple of good examples of the very dark-headed nigriceus subspecies of Maritime Canada.

Sturnidae (Starlings)

EUROPEAN STARLING (*Sturnus vulgaris*) – Present. [H]

Bombycillidae (Waxwings)

CEDAR WAXWING (*Bombycilla cedrorum*) – Heard in many places, and seen well along Waternish Road.

Parulidae (New World Warblers)

OVENBIRD (*Seiurus aurocapilla*) – Excellent views of a territorial male along the SHieling Trail in the Cape Breton Highlands.

NORTHERN WATERTHRUSH (*Parkesia noveboracensis*) – Only in Newfoundland, with the best views at Father Duffy's Well.

BLACK-AND-WHITE WARBLER (*Mniotilta varia*)

NASHVILLE WARBLER (*Oreothlypis ruficapilla*) – Benjie's Lake Trail, and on the early morning hike to the northern part of the Cape Breton Highlands.

MOURNING WARBLER (*Geothlypis philadelphia*) – A good show of a singing male near St. Mary's Harbor on the way to Placentia. Also some males singing on the pre-dawn trip to the northern tip of the Highlands.

COMMON YELLOWTHROAT (*Geothlypis trichas*) – Scattered around Nova Scotia, with excellent looks for all along the Waternish Road.

AMERICAN REDSTART (*Setophaga ruticilla*)

NORTHERN PARULA (*Setophaga americana*) – Common along Waternish Road

MAGNOLIA WARBLER (*Setophaga magnolia*) – Several seen in a few locations from the Cape Breton Highlands, to Waternish Road, to Liscombe Lodge.

BLACKBURNIAN WARBLER (*Setophaga fusca*) – A crowd-pleasing brilliantly bright male along the Waternish Road.

YELLOW WARBLER (*Setophaga petechia*) – A couple on Newfoundland, but more common once we got to Nova Scotia, especially along the wet areas of Waternish Road.

CHESTNUT-SIDED WARBLER (*Setophaga pennsylvanica*) – A great vocal male on our first visit to Waternish Road.

BLACKPOLL WARBLER (*Setophaga striata*) – Boreal habitat at Blackhead, Father Duffy's Well, and the northern Cape Breton Highlands.

PALM WARBLER (YELLOW) (*Setophaga palmarum hypochrysea*) – One heard in the distance at Benjie's Lake Trail, and then seen very well at a bog along Sinclair Lake Road.

YELLOW-RUMPED WARBLER (MYRTLE) (*Setophaga coronata coronata*) – Newfoundland and Nova Scotia, fairly widespread in appropriate coniferous habitat.

BLACK-THROATED GREEN WARBLER (*Setophaga virens*) – A couple at La Manche, and then on Nova Scotia, especially along Waternish Road.

Emberizidae (Buntings and New World Sparrows)

NELSON'S SPARROW (ATLANTIC COAST) (*Ammodramus nelsoni subvirgatus*) – Several on territory at Morien Bar, including some individuals performing acrobatic song flights.

FOX SPARROW (RED) (*Passerella iliaca iliaca*) – Good views of a singing male near the male Mourning Warbler along St. Mary's Harbour. Then more good experiences with the species in the Cape Breton Highlands

DARK-EYED JUNCO (SLATE-COLORED) (*Junco hyemalis hyemalis*) – Widespread throughout the coniferous woodland.

WHITE-THROATED SPARROW (*Zonotrichia albicollis*) – Common in appropriate habitat.

SAVANNAH SPARROW (*Passerculus sandwichensis*) – The highest concentration was at Cape St. Mary's, both around the parking lot and on the walk out to the colony.

SONG SPARROW (*Melospiza melodia*) – Widespread in appropriate habitat.

LINCOLN'S SPARROW (*Melospiza lincolni*) – Some nice views on the early morning trip to the northern Highlands, and then good views for all along Waternish Road.

SWAMP SPARROW (*Melospiza georgiana*) – First ones were on day one in St. John's, and then we continued to see these in ones or twos in appropriate marshy habitat.

Icteridae (Troupials and Allies)

BOBOLINK (*Dolichonyx oryzivorus*) – The final stop of the tour was to specifically target these guys, and we ended up seeing a few along Mooseland Road just south of Elmsvale, including several stunning males up close. We also had an up close reminder of one of the important grassland species conservation issues, as one of the fields they seemed to be utilizing was being mowed, much to the chagrin of some of the birds.

RED-WINGED BLACKBIRD (*Agelaius phoeniceus*) – Views of many breeding at the marsh at Churchville.

COMMON GRACKLE (*Quiscalus quiscula*) – Numerous and widespread on the lowlands of Nova Scotia.

Fringillidae (Finches, Euphonias, and Allies)

PINE GROSBEAK (*Pinicola enucleator*) – Some really nice experiences with these on the very first day of the trip, including one close bright raspberry-red male.

PURPLE FINCH (*Haemorhous purpureus*) – We had very good views of female-type birds on Newfoundland on day one at Blackhead, and then encountered the species only once before arriving at Liscombe Lodge, where there were double-digit numbers coming to the feeders at point blank range closer than our binoculars could focus.

- RED CROSSBILL** (*Loxia curvirostra*) – We had a very fortuitous look at a male of this endemic-to-Newfoundland "Type 8" Red Crossbill during our first day of birding, at Blackhead. [E]
- PINE SISKIN** (*Spinus pinus*) – Several scattered throughout appropriate habitat leading up to Liscombe Lodge, where we had excellent up-close views at the feeders, and were able to directly compare these dainty finches to some larger female Purple Finches.
- AMERICAN GOLDFINCH** (*Spinus tristis*) – Scattered throughout Newfoundland and Nova Scotia. Their summer garb is always a treat to see, no matter how often you come across it.
- EVENING GROSBEAK** (*Coccothraustes vespertinus*) – A very obliging pair of these beauties along the Waternish Road, that even came down to drink from the adjacent stream well below eye level.

Passeridae (Old World Sparrows)

- HOUSE SPARROW** (*Passer domesticus*) – We barely encountered this species, seeing one in Placentia, and then another near Elmsvale. [I]
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MAMMALS

- SNOWSHOE HARE** (*Lepus americanus*) – Widespread and fairly common on roadsides in Nova Scotia.
- PLAIN EASTERN CHIPMUNK** (*Tamias striatus*) – Common in Nova Scotia.
- WOODCHUCK** (*Marmota monax*) – One lumbering across the road behind the van at the final stop of the tour on Mooseland Road.
- RED SQUIRREL** (*Tamiasciurus hudsonicus*) – Common in Nova Scotia.
- MEADOW VOLE** (*Microtus pennsylvanicus*) – A few of these tiny rodents seen briefly here and there.
- NORTH AMERICAN PORCUPINE** (*Erethizon dorsatum*) – Finally caught up with a mobile one on the final day of the tour, as we were driving. After we stopped the van everybody was able to get out and watch it cross the road behind us.
- ATLANTIC WHITE-SIDED DOLPHIN** (*Lagenorhynchus acutus*) – Some splashing around briefly in the fog during the morning sea watch from the ferry.
- LONG-FINNED PILOT WHALE** (*Globicephala melas*) – A few were seen from the dining room as we ate breakfast on our approach to Nova Scotia on the ferry, but one of the biggest treats of the tour was hanging out with a pod of these right next to our boat on our maritime excursion out of Pleasant Bay.
- COMMON MINKE WHALE** (*Balaenoptera acutorostrata*) – A distant one seen looking off shore as we first arrived in the Cape Breton Highlands.
- HUMPBACK WHALE** (*Megaptera novaeangliae*) – We chased one around in the fog on the Bay Bulls boat trip, and ultimately got some very nice, though not prolonged, views of the beast.
- COYOTE** (*Canis latrans*) – One seen alongside the road on our pre-dawn excursion to the north end of the Cape Breton Highlands, and then a small pack of them heard howling a bit later that same morning.
- BLACK BEAR** (*Ursus americanus*) – Prolonged views, from the boat, of one grazing on a hillside above a steep cliff edge over the water on our Pilot Whale trip out of Pleasant Bay. We also had one cross the road in front of the van on the final day of the tour.
- GRAY SEAL** (*Halichoerus grypus*) – Both males and females were numerous on our boat trip out of Pleasant Bay. Excellent views of them on the water, as well as hauled out on rocks.
- WHITE-TAILED DEER** (*Odocoileus virginianus*) – Ran into a few on Nova Scotia.
- MOOSE** (*Alces alces*) – The group had one in the fog in the southern Avalon on Newfoundland, and then, a few days later, Roy saw one walking down the road while the rest of the group was out birding on Benjie's Trail in the Cape Breton Highlands.

Herps

- GREEN FROG** (*Lithobates clamitans*) – Heard on several days, and seen well on Waternish Road.
- PICKEREL FROG** (*Lithobates palustris*) – Great looks at one crossing the road as we were birding Sinclair Lake Road.
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ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

Totals for the tour: 118 bird taxa and 15 mammal taxa