



July 10 - 20, 2019
Fins & Fiddles: A Canadian Maritimes Cruise



While not tallying up big numbers of species, this cruise in the long summer days of July provided us a fine opportunity to spend time around numerous seabird colonies, whales, and species that move north to breed, including a handsome male Harlequin Duck. Pine Grosbeak and eight species of warblers topped the songbird list, along with brief views of a Nelson's Sparrow at Fort Louisbourg. We had seven adult Common Loons, and Great Cormorant, Bald Eagle and a signature Canada Jay. BIG numbers of Atlantic Puffin, Common Murre, Razorbill and a nesting colony of 130,000 Northern Gannet were wonderful rewards to witness while exploring on our zodiac cruises. Northern Fulmar and three species of shearwaters gave us life birds and views on the wing. Amazing music with Cape Breton's Barra MacNeils, good food, and plenty of history in a setting of stunning scenery were more highlights of our time on this Canadian Maritime cruise.

- 7/10 - AM Sydney; PM Fortress Louisbourg Embarkation**
- 7/11 - AM at Sea; PM Sable Islands**
- 7/12 - AM Bird Islands; PM Ingonish**
- 7/13 - AM At sea; PM Georgetown**
- 7/14 - AM & PM Magdalen Islands**
- 7/15 - AM Bonaventure Highway; PM Gaspé Peninsula**
- 7/16 - AM & PM Anticosti Island**
- 7/17 - AM & PM Gros Morne NP and Woody Point**
- 7/18 - AM At sea; PM La Polie Bay**
- 7/19 - AM & PM St. Pierre and Miquelon**
- 7/20 - AM Sydney Disembarkation**

BIRDS: 75 species recorded

(I)=introduced

DUCKS, GEESE, AND SWANS Anatidae (7)

Canada Goose *Branta Canadensis*— A family group in Georgetown was the only wild group we saw during the trip

Mallard *Anas platyrhynchos*— Hard to find a true-blue, but we had a couple of males in Sydney

American Black Duck *Anas rubripes*—A little easier to find what appeared to find wild adults in Sydney

Northern Pintail *Anas acuta*— Two small groups in the Magdalen Islands, and both were on the road joining the largest two islands

Common Eider *Somateria mollissima*—Small family groups were interspersed along different sections of intertidal coastline

Harlequin Duck *Histrionicus histrionicus*— A nice looking male was roosting on a rock at the start of our hike on Isle Bonaventure

Common Merganser *Mergus merganser*— A female and a brood was seen from the bus in the Georgetown area

GREBES Podicipedidae (1)

Pied-billed Grebe *Podilymbus podiceps*— Seen and heard during the hike near Georgetown

PIGEONS AND DOVES Columbidae (2)

Rock Pigeon (I) *Columba livia*— Seen on three different occasions, two in the wilds and once in a town

Mourning Dove *Zenaida macroura*— Seen only once on the trip, and that was in Sydney

SANDPIPERS AND ALLIES Scolopacidae (5)

Whimbrel *Numenius phaeopus*—Seen flying and calling overhead in Saint Pierre

Least Sandpiper *Calidris minutilla*— We only had one early southbound migrant and that was on Anticosti Island

Spotted Sandpiper *Actitis macularius*— Seen occasionally along rocky intertidal coastline

Greater Yellowlegs *Tringa melanoleuca*— A group of four were feeding on a gravel bar Le Poile Bay

Willet *Tringa semipalmata*— A number of Willet were nesting at Fortress Louisbourg, and were very vocal when ravens would fly overhead

MURRES, PUFFINS, AND ALLIES Alcidae (4)

Common Murre *Uria aalge*—In most seabird nesting locations, but huge numbers at Saint Pierre

Razorbill *Alca torda*— Numerous rocky cliff locations hosted this fine looking alcid

Black Guillemot *Cepphus grille*— Never in huge numbers, but always a component of the seabird nesting colonies

Atlantic Puffin *Fratercula arctica*— The seabird nesting colony at Saint Pierre had significant numbers of this species

GULLS, TERNS, AND ALLIES Laridae (5)

Black-legged Kittiwake *Rissa tridactyla*— Numerous locations and always significant numbers nesting

Ring-billed Gull *Larus delawarensis*— Not common at all, with our best looks of birds on the water at Anticosti Island

Herring Gull *Larus argentatus*— Certainly the common gull for the entire trip

Great Black-backed Gull *Larus marinus*— Whenever we saw this species we realized just how large this species can be

Common Tern *Sterna hirundo*— A number of individuals were flying overhead returning to their nesting colonies

LOONS Gaviidae (1)

Common Loon *Gavia immer*— A stunning adult was in the Gulf of St. Lawrence off of Anticosti Island was apparently heading south on migration

PETRELS AND SHEARWATERS Procellariidae (4)

Northern Fulmar *Fulmarus glacialis*— We got to see one or two on our approach to the Magdalen Islands

Great Shearwater *Ardenna gravis*— Only seen during our voyage to Sable Island

Sooty Shearwater *Ardenna grisea*— Sporadic at best, and only on our first two days at sea

Manx Shearwater *Puffinus puffinus*— Two separate sightings of this black and white shearwater and both were on our third day at sea

GANNETS AND BOOBIES Sulidae (1)

Northern Gannet *Morus bassanus*— Best sighting would be the 130,000 that nest on Ilse Bonaventure, just amazing. Seen everyday of the trip

CORMORANTS Phalacrocoracidae (2)

Great Cormorant *Phalacrocorax carbo*— Best looks were at nesting individuals on the Bird Islands

Double-crested Cormorant *Phalacrocorax auritus*— The more common of the two cormorants, and seen every day of the voyage

HERONS AND EGRETS Ardeidae (1)

Great Blue Heron *Ardea Herodias*— Highest numbers were on Bird Island where they seemed to be preying young alcids and gulls

OSPREY Pandionidae (1)

Osprey *Pandion haliaetus*— Only saw one individual on the trip and was on our zodiac cruise near Georgetown

HAWKS, KITES, AND EAGLES Accipitridae (2)

Bald Eagle *Haliaeetus leucocephalus*— Seen regularly on the trip with the most unusual sighting being on Bird Island where an adult was feeding on a juvenile Herring Gull

Red-tailed Hawk *Buteo jamaicensis*— A pair was seen soaring over Anticosti Island at Cap Sandtop

KINGFISHERS Alcedinidae (1)

Belted Kingfisher *Megaceryle alcyon*— Seen only on a couple of days and usually along the shallow fringes of different bays

WOODPECKERS Picidae (1)

Northern Flicker *Colaptes auratus*— Out here on the east half of the hemisphere, it was the yellow-shafted form that we saw

TYRANT FLYCATCHERS Tyrannidae (2)

Alder Flycatcher *Empidonax alnorum*— Both this species and the next were seen on Ilse Bonaventure
Least Flycatcher *Empidonax minimus*— This bird, along with the Alder above were calling

VIREOS Vireonidae (1)

Red-eyed Vireo *Vireo olivaceus*— Seen on our first day in Sydney and in the Georgetown area

CROWS AND JAYS Corvidae (4)

Canada Jay *Perisoreus Canadensis*— Only seen on Anticosti Island

Blue Jay *Cyanocitta cristata*— Usually near human habitation, two best sightings were in Sydney and Georgetown

American Crow *Corvus brachyrhynchos*— More common near the coast than in inland areas

Common Raven *Corvus corax*— Seen more to the north of the trip as opposed to southern locations

SWALLOWS AND MARTINS Hirundinidae (4)

Tree Swallow *Tachycineta bicolor*— Easiest looks were during our time in Sydney, uncommon elsewhere

Bank Swallow *Riparia riparia*— Nesting colonies on Bird Island gave us the best looks at this diminutive swallow

Barn Swallow *Hirundo rustica*— Seen in Sydney at Wentworth Park and at Fortress Louisbourg

Cliff Swallow *Petrochelidon pyrrhonota*— A common nester under the eaves of Fortress Louisbourg

TITS AND CHICKADEES Paridae (1)

Black-capped Chickadee *Poecile atricapillus*— Seen only a couple of times, mostly on Ilse Bonaventure

NUTHATCHES Sittidae (1)

Red-breasted Nuthatch *Sitta Canadensis*— Only on Ilse Bonaventure on this trip

WRENS Troglodytidae (1)

Winter Wren *Troglodytes hiemalis*— We had this bird twice, and saw it once on Ilse Bonaventure

KINGLETS Regulidae (1)

Ruby-crowned Kinglet *Regulus calendula*— A few sightings, and mostly in boreal forest

THRUSHES Turdidae (1)

Veery *Catharus fuscescens*— Seen and heard on Ilse Bonaventure, and heard at Woody Point

Swainson's Thrush *Catharus ustulatus*— Only one seen was on Ilse Bonaventure

American Robin *Turdus migratorius*— Seen most everyday we were in boreal forest

STARLINGS AND MYNAS Sturnidae (1)

European Starling (I) *Sturnus vulgaris*— Seen sporadically throughout the trip, but usually in urban areas

FINCHES AND EUPHONIAS Fringillidae (2)

Pine Grosbeak *Pinicola enucleator*— Seen in two different locations, Woody Point and also in the Georgetown area

American Goldfinch *Spinus tristis*— Best looks were along the Sydney waterfront

NEW WORLD SPARROWS Passerellidae (7)

Fox Sparrow *Passerella iliaca*— Not as common as you would think, but in most open areas of boreal forest

Dark-eyed Junco *Junco hyemalis*— Found on Ilse Bonaventure near the restored residences
White-throated Sparrow *Zonotrichia albicollis*— Seen or heard on most landings
Nelson's Sparrow *Ammodramus nelsoni*— Seen briefly on a gravel road at Fortress Louisbourg
Savannah Sparrow *Passerculus sandwichensis*— Seen more towards the front of the voyage, with the Ipswich race seen on Sable Island
Song Sparrow *Melospiza melodia*— Fairly common, and quite often heard more than seen
Lincoln's Sparrow *Melospiza lincolnii*— A nesting adult put on a show on the trail to the Discovery Center in Woody Point

NEW WORLD BLACKBIRDS Icteridae (2)

Red-winged Blackbird *Agelaius phoeniceus*— Found on the Georgetown area during our hike
Common Grackle *Quiscalus quiscula*— Seen in the Georgetown area, our only sighting

NEW WORLD WARBLERS Parulidae (8)

Common Yellowthroat *Geothlypis trichas*— Seen and heard a couple of times with our best sighting being in Wentworth Park
American Redstart *Setophaga ruticilla*—A nice looking male took the opportunity to perch directly over the Ile Bonaventure hiking trail for a preen
Northern Parula *Setophaga americana*— Seen on Ilse Bonaventure during our gannet hike
Magnolia Warbler *Setophaga magnolia*— This and the Yellow Warbler were our two most common warbler species
Yellow Warbler *Setophaga petechia*— As above on the Magnolia Warbler
Blackpoll Warbler *Setophaga striata*—Best look of many was on the Woody Point trail to the Gros Morne Discovery Center
Yellow-rumped Warbler *Setophaga coronata*— Not common at all, with only three sightings for the trip
Black-throated Green Warbler *Setophaga virens*—More common at the onset of the trip than the later

OLD WORLD SPARROWS Passeridae (1)

House Sparrow (1) *Passer domesticus*— Seen in Sydney and Woody Point

Mammals (10)

MAMMALS

American Red Squirrel *Tamiasciurus hudsonicus*— Seen on our Georgetown area hike, common
White-tailed Deer *Odocoileus virginianus*— Seen only once on the trip, but tracks in numerous locations
Moose *Alces alces*—They came and went and only left tracks
American Mink *Neovison vison*— We had five – six of the sleek mustelids along the waterfront revetment in Sydney
Red Fox *Vulpes vulpes*— Seen on the drive to the hike in Georgetown, PEI
Harbor Seal *Phoca vitulina*— Not at all common, but there were one or two scattered around Anticosti Island
Gray Seal *Halichoerus grypus*— Very common in the Gulf of St. Lawrence, and on Sable Island
Atlantic White-sided Dolphin *Lagenorhynchus acutus*— Seen in the Gulf of St. Lawrence a couple of times near humpback whales
Humpback Whale *Megaptera novaeangliae*— Seen every two – three days on the trip, not as plentiful as in other years
Minke Whale *Balaenoptera acutorstrata*— The most common of the whales seen on the trip, usually in bays, and fairly close