

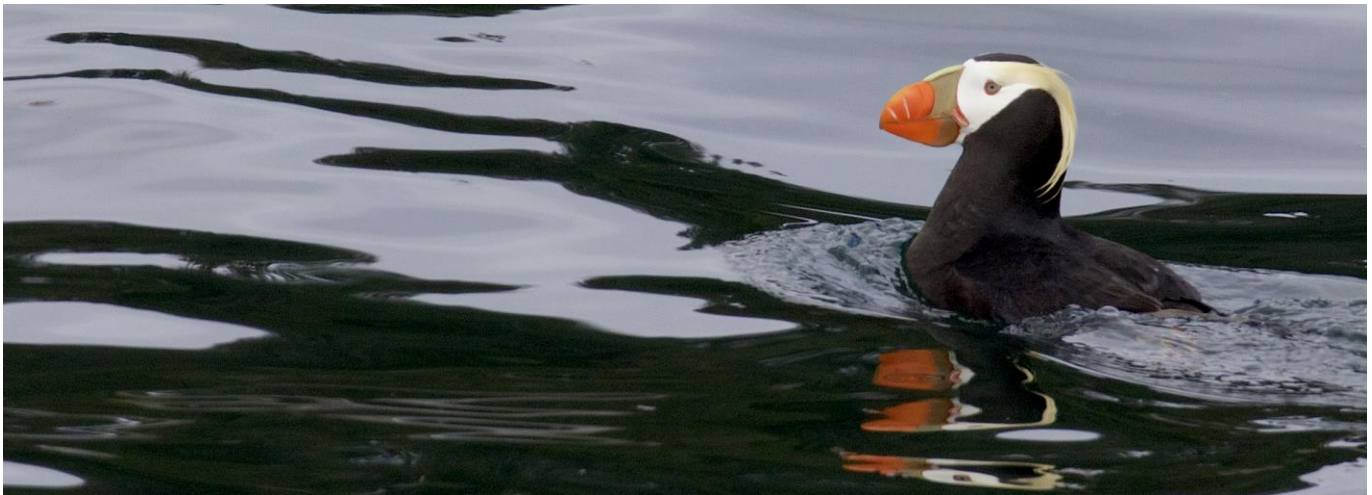


**June 2 - 13, 2019**

## **Alaska: Birding and Wildlife**

With Greg Smith & John Roser and 13 participants

Compiled by Greg Smith



**BIRDS: 144 species**

### **DUCKS, GEESE, AND SWANS Anatidae**

**Greater White-fronted Goose** *Anser albifrons* – A pair on our last full day in Denali at the creek into Wonder Lake

**Brant** *Branta bernicla* – There were close to 200 on Safety Sound Lagoon

**Canada Goose** *Branta Canadensis* – Seen sporadically on the Seward Peninsula, more common further south

**Trumpeter Swan** *Cygnus buccinators* – The swan species we saw nesting in the back areas of Nome

**Tundra Swan** *Cygnus columbianus* – Over 150 were seen on the east of Safety Sound Lagoon

**Northern Shoveler** *Spatula clypeata* – Seen once or twice a day on the Seward Peninsula

**Gadwall** *Mareca strepera* – Potter March and Westchester Lagoon each had a few pairs swimming around

**American Wigeon** *Mareca Americana* – We saw up to ten different individuals a day on the Seward Peninsula

**Mallard** *Anas platyrhynchos* – Only one was seen on our time on the Seward Peninsula

**Northern Pintail** *Anas acuta* – The most common dabbling that we saw on the Peninsula

**Green-winged Teal** *Anas crecca* – Small groups were seen every day on the Seward Peninsula

**Falcated Duck** *Anas falcata* – The drake present on Potter Marsh gave us a great look

**Ring-necked Duck** *Aythya collaris* – A pair in a roadside pond on our drive back from Seward to Anchorage

**Greater Scaup** *Aythya marila* – The only scaup we saw while on the Seward Peninsula

**Lesser Scaup** *Aythya affinis* – The “scaup” in the Denali kettle ponds

**Common Eider** *Somateria mollissima* – Fairly “common” all along Safety Sound lagoon

**Harlequin Duck** *Histrionicus histrionicus* – Common on the Seward Peninsula Rivers, & along the shore of Seward

**White-winged Scoter** *Melanitta deglandi* – We got to observe four drakes offshore of Safety Sound

**Black Scoter** *Melanitta Americana* – Only sighting was of a pair on the east end of Safety Sound

**Long-tailed Duck** *Clangula hyemalis* – A few pair were seen on the ponds just outside of Nome  
**Bufflehead** *Bucephala albeola* – A bit more common than in years past with five seen in Denali  
**Barrow's Goldeneye** *Bucephala islandica* – A good looking drake in "Duck" Pond was very cooperative  
**Common Merganser** *Mergus merganser* – Seen flying over the boat as we returned to the Seward Harbor  
**Red-breasted Merganser** *Mergus serrator* – Very common along the rivers of the Seward Peninsula

#### **PARTRIDGES, PHEASANTS, AND ALLIES Phasianidae**

**Willow Ptarmigan** *Lagopus lagopus* – It was a good year for this species in the Nome area, and in Denali  
**Rock Ptarmigan** *Lagopus muta* – Only three were seen along the Nome-Teller Road, and each gave us long looks

#### **GREBES Podicipedidae**

**Red-necked Grebe** *Podiceps grisegena* – Lots of nesting pairs in Anchorage, and a few up in the Nome area

#### **PIGEONS AND DOVES Columbidae**

**Rock Pigeon (I)** *Columba livia* – A small flock in Nome was an unusual location

#### **HUMMINGBIRDS Trochilidae**

**Rufous Hummingbird** *Selasphorus rufus* – Seen of all places at Cataract Cove near the waterfall

#### **Cranes Gruidae**

**Sandhill Crane** *Antigone Canadensis* – Seen every day on our Nome leg of the tour

#### **Oystercatchers Haematopodidae**

**Black Oystercatcher** *Haematopus bachmani* – A nesting pair were chasing an immature Bald Eagle away from its nest out near Northwestern Fjord

#### **Plovers and Lapwings Charadriidae**

**Black-bellied Plover** - *Pluvialis squatarola* – We found a number of these on Woolly Lagoon Road, & one on a nest  
**Am. Golden-Plover** - *Pluvialis dominica* – The less common of the two goldens, & did find a nest on Curlew Dome  
**Pacific Golden-Plover** *Pluvialis fulva* – More gold highlights on this species, and plenty of individuals  
**Semi-palmated Plover** *Charadrius semipalmatus* – A common nester that we found mostly on gravel roadsides

#### **SANDPIPERS AND ALLIES Scolopacidae**

**Whimbrel** *Numenius phaeopus* – We always got to see a couple a day in the Nome area  
**Bristle-thighed Curlew** *Numenius tahitiensis* – We only saw one individual and it was up on the hill  
**Bar-tailed Godwit** *Limosa lapponica* – Two breeding plumaged males were feeding along Safety Sound  
**Marbled Godwit** *Limosa fedoa* – A surprise as it was a couple of years ago, feeding near, but not with the Bar-t's  
**Surfbird** *Calidris virgate* – Seen on the strenuous hike up to Camp Ridge in Denali  
**Rock Sandpiper** *Calidris ptilocnemis* – We told there was something interesting at the top of the slope at MP 34 on the Nome-Teller Road. And this is what we found  
**Least Sandpiper** *Calidris minutilla* – Not a common species by the least, nice to have found one in the Nome area  
**Semipalmated Sandpiper** *Calidris pusilla* – The most common sandpiper in the greater Nome area  
**Western Sandpiper** *Calidris mauri* – Te second most common sandpiper, but the best colored one of all  
**Wilson's Snipe** *Gallinago delicate* – Lots of winnowing and display flights going on, and great ground looks  
**Red-necked Phalarope** *Phalaropus lobatus* – Always has some in view every 15 minutes in the Nome area  
**Spotted Sandpiper** *Actitis macularius* – Like in other parts of the country, found near the edge of water  
**Wandering Tattler** *Tringa incana* – A few were seen on nesting bars in the middle of streams

#### **JAEGERS AND SKUAS Stercorariidae**

**Pomarine Jaeger** *Stercorarius pomarinus* – Only saw one individual of the Cadillac of jaegers  
**Parasitic Jaeger** *Stercorarius parasiticus* – More common than in years past, with about fifteen sightings

**Long-tailed Jaeger** *Stercorarius longicaudus* – The most common, and it was always putting on an aerial show

#### **AUKS, MURRES, AND PUFFINS Alcidae**

**Common Murre** *Uria aalge* – Not nearly as common as last year in Resurrection Bay

**Thick-billed Murre** *Uria lomvia* – Only saw four, but they were pretty good looks

**Pigeon Guillemot** *Cepphus Columba* – We saw at least fifty scattered around on our Northwestern Fjord trip

**Marbled Murrelet** *Brachyramphus marmoratus* – A large raft of birds in Emerald Cove was unusual

**Kittlitz's Murrelet** *Brachyramphus brevirostris* – There was a total of six seen out near Northwestern Glacier

**Ancient Murrelet** *Synthliboramphus antiquus* – Two small flyby groups were out near Ailiak Fjord

**Cassin's Auklet** *Ptychoramphus aleuticus* – Just one individual flying away from our boat as we watched the killer whales

**Parakeet Auklet** *Aethia psittacula* – Three different sightings of less than five birds each, all out by the Chiswell Islands

**Rhinoceros Auklet** *Cerorhinca monocerata* – We did get to view two different groups of nearly fifteen

**Horned Puffin** *Fratercula corniculata* – Certainly the more common of the two puffins out on the Chiswell Islands

**Tufted Puffin** *Fratercula cirrhata* – Still one of the more stunning birds on the trip

#### **GULLS AND TERNS Laridae**

**Black-legged Kittiwake** *Rissa tridactyla* – Huge nesting colonies, with our best looks at Cape Resurrection

**Mew Gull** *Larus canus* – The most common gull of interior Alaska, nesting in marshes, on building tops & in trees

**Herring Gull** *Larus argentatus* – A few were moving around the Nome area, with one being the *vega* race

**Slaty-backed Gull** *Larus schistisagus* – Only one was seen at the Safety Sound Bridge during our fox watch

**Glaucous-winged Gull** *Larus glaucescens* – The common gull along the Seward shoreline

**Glaucous Gull** *Larus hyperboreus* – The common gull of the Nome area, big bruisers for sure

**Aleutian Tern** *Onychoprion aleuticus* – We had a few foraging and flying around down at the Bonanza Bridge

**Arctic Tern** *Sterna paradisaea* – Common wherever there was water

#### **LOONS Gaviidae**

**Red-throated Loon** *Gavia stellate* – A common pond nester in the Nome area. Absolutely striking

**Pacific Loon** *Gavia pacifica* – Only saw four in Nome, and one was on a nest

**Common Loon** *Gavia immer* – Best sightings were in the Nome area

#### **PETRELS AND SHEARWATERS Procellariidae**

**Sooty Shearwater** *Ardenna grisea* – A few went by during our seated, outgoing boat trip to the Chiswells

#### **CORMORANTS Phalacrocoracidae**

**Red-faced Cormorant** *Phalacrocorax urile* – Only one flyby was seen and that was only by three of us

**Pelagic Cormorant** *Phalacrocorax pelagicus* – Nesting by the outer islands in the Chiswell area

**Double-crested Cormorant** *Phalacrocorax auritus* – Scattered around the Resurrection Bay area

#### **OSPREY Pandionidae**

**Osprey** *Pandion haliaetus* – Only one seen on the trip was up by the Bonanza Bridge in Nome

#### **HAWKS, KITES, AND EAGLES Accipitridae**

**Golden Eagle** *Aquila chrysaetos* – The two on Kougorok gave us great looks at copulation, nest building & flying

**Northern Harrier** *Circus cyaneus* – Adult males seemed to be the most prevalent indicating incubation was on

**Northern Goshawk** *Accipiter gentilis* – Only one seen and that flew over the vans on our way to Seward

**Bald Eagle** *Haliaeetus leucocephalus* – Seen in Anchorage and Seward almost daily

**Red-tailed Hawk** *Buteo jamaicensis* – A Harlan's Hawk was seen during the drive to Denali National Park

**Rough-legged Hawk** *Buteo lagopus* – We had birds on two nests and a few flying individuals in Nome

### OWLS Strigidae

**Short-eared Owl** *Asio flammeus* – Seen once in Nome and three times in Denali

### KINGFISHERS Alcedinidae

**Belted Kingfisher** *Megasceryle alcyon* – We heard one bird calling while at the fish weir on Bear Creek

### WOODPECKERS Picidae

**Downy Woodpecker** *Picoides pubescens* – One was eating peanut butter at Ava's feeders

**Hairy Woodpecker** *Picoides villosus* – A female was taking turns with the male Downy at Ava's at the peanut butter feeder

### FALCONS AND CARACARAS Falconidae

**Merlin** *Falco columbarius* – Seen along the Park Road on our second day in Denali

**Gyr Falcon** *Falco rusticolus* – Anest with three young and attendant adults feeding them was a treat

**Peregrine Falcon** *Falco peregrinus* – A fly by on the Council Road was right over the willow tops

### TYRANT FLYCATCHERS Tyrannidae

**Alder Flycatcher** *Empidonax alnorum* – Heard more than seen on the Nome-Teller Road at Penny River

**Say's Phoebe** *Sayornis saya* – One was alongside the road on the Nome-Teller Road

### SHRIKES Laniidae

**Northern Shrike** *Lanius excubitor* – Seen during our musk ox stop at the Nome cemetery

### CROWS AND JAYS Corvidae

**Gray Jay** *Perisoreus Canadensis* – Two were seen on our drive from North Face Lodge to the Denali RR Depot

**Black-billed Magpie** *Pica hudsonia* – In the yard of the Copper Whale in Anchorage

**Northwestern Crow** *Corvus caurinus* – Seen on some of the outer islands of Resurrection Bay

**Common Raven** *Corvus corax* – Seen every day of the trip

### LARKS Alaudidae

**Horned Lark** *Eremophila alpestris* – Seen on both the foray and the strenuous hike from North Face Lodge

### SWALLOWS AND MARTINS Hirundinidae

**Tree Swallow** *Tachycineta bicolor* – Very common near any forested area in Alaska

**Violet-green Swallow** *Tachycineta thalassina* – Seen all around the town of Seward

**Bank Swallow** *Riparia riparia* – Seen up in the Nome area near gravel quarries with piles of sand

**Cliff Swallow** *Petrochelidon pyrrhonota* – Common under most bridges in the Nome area

### TITS AND CHICKADEES Paridae

**Black-capped Chickadee** *Poecile atricapillus* – Seen during our train ride south and during our time in Anchorage

**Chestnut-backed Chickadee** *Poecile rufescens* – We saw one of the ten that Ava said frequented her feeders

**Boreal Chickadee** *Poecile hudsonicus* – We had a very cooperative pair at the Road Maintenance Station at the end of the Council Road

### DIPPERS Cinclidae

**American Dipper** *Cinclus mexicanus* – This was the first year of seeing an individual at the Penny River Bridge since the killer freeze from a few years back

### KINGLETS Regulidae

**Ruby-crowned Kinglet** *Regulus calendula* – We heard one singing overhead at the fish weir on Bear Creek

**Starling** *Sterna vulgaris* – A small flock was feeding along the walkway at Westchester Lagoon

#### **LEAF WARBLERS Phylloscopidae**

**Arctic Warbler** *Phylloscopus borealis* – Seen in Denali on the east side of Stoney Pass

#### **OLD WORLD FLYCATCHERS AND CHATS Muscicapidae**

**Bluethroat** *Luscinia svecica* – Everyone got great looks at the Salmon River campground on Kougorok

#### **THRUSHES Turdidae**

**Varied Thrush** *Ixoreus naevius* – Seen foraging on the as we made a turn to go back to the Bald Eagle at Ava's

**Gray-cheeked Thrush** *Catharus minimus* – Ubiquitous in Nome

**Swainson's Thrush** *Catharus ustulatus* – Seen and heard in riparian areas of Denali NP

**Hermit Thrush** *Catharus guttatus* – Heard singing a couple of times, once at Westchester, and once in Seward

**American Robin** *Turdus migratorius* – Very common in the Nome area, and very bright colors on all...

#### **PIPITS AND WAGTAILS Motacillidae**

**Eastern Yellow Wagtail** *Motacilla tschutschensis* – Scattered about and never seeming to land for too long

**American Pipit** *Anthus rubescens* – UP in the high pass meadows doing their pipit thing

#### **FINCHES Fringillidae**

**Pine Grosbeak** *Pinicola enucleator* – A male and female with one immature were nice enough to show at Ava's

**Common Redpoll** *Acanthis flammea* – Yes, the more common of the two, but plenty colorful

**Hoary Redpoll** *Acanthis hornemanni* – Always seen foraging on snow banks

**Pine Siskin** *Spinus pinus* – Best look was at a small group at Ava's feeders

#### **LONGSPURS Calcariidae**

**Lapland Longspur** *Calcarius lapponicus* – Very common along the coast, less common inland

**Snow Bunting** *Plectrophenax nivalis* – Only one, maybe two with both being flybys

#### **NEW WORLD SPARROWS Passerellidae**

**American Tree Sparrow** *Spizelloides arborea* – Very common and very striking looking

**Fox Sparrow** *Passerella iliaca* – Bright red and gray birds were actively singing over sparsely treed areas

**Dark-eyed Junco** *Junco hyemalis* – Seen outside of North Face Lodge gathering nesting material

**White-crowned Sparrow** *Zonotrichia leucophrys* – We would see them every day, but not in hut not in huge numbers

**Golden-crowned Sparrow** *Zonotrichia atricapilla* – Just so striking up here, we never quite get to see them looking this good down south

**Savannah Sparrow** *Passerculus sandwichensis* – Very common in grassy areas or short shrubby habitat

**Song Sparrow** *Melospiza melodia* – There were at least two at Ava's feeders mixing it up with the Fox Sparrows

#### **NEW WORLD BLACKBIRDS Icteridae**

**Red-winged Blackbird** *Agelaius phoeniceus* – A female alongside of Potter Marsh was the only sighting

#### **NEW WORLD WARBLERS Parulidae**

**Northern Waterthrush** *Parkesia noveboracensis* – Skulkers back home, but belting it out on treetops up here

**Orange-crowned Warbler** *Oreothlypis celata* – Common in short scrub areas along streams

**Common Yellowthroat** *Geothlypis trichas* – Heard singing during our time on the Potter Marsh boardwalk

**Yellow Warbler** *Setophaga petechial* – Not overly common, but usually seen in shrubby areas along streams

**Blackpoll Warbler** *Setophaga striata* – Heard singing at the Bear River Maintenance Station on Council Road

**Yellow-rumped Warbler** *Setophaga coronata* – First one was at the Bear River Maintenance Station at the end of Council Road

**Wilson's Warbler** *Cardellina pusilla* – The most common warbler out in the Seward Peninsula

#### **OLD WORLD SPARROWS Passeridae**

**House Sparrow (I)** *Passer domesticus* – A small was feeding at the Firetap parking lot

#### **MAMMALS: 23 species**

**Red Fox** *Vulpes vulpes* – A number were seen in Nome, and an all black in Denali

**American Black Bear** *Ursus americanus* – A sow and three cubs climbed a tree next to the train on our ride to ANC

**Brown (Grizzly) Bear** *Ursus arctos* – We saw five on our very first day in Denali

**Harbor Seal** *Phoca vitulina* – All over the place on the ice at the base of Northwestern Glacier

**Ringed Seal** *Pusa hispida* – Only sighting was on the Council Road just past the Safety Sound Bridge

**Steller's Sea Lion** *Eumetopias jubatus* – Common but declining in numbers from past years out on the Chiswell Islands

**Sea Otter** *Enhydra lutris* – We was witnessed both mating and a female hauled out on a rock with its young

**Moose** *Alces alces* – Seen just about every day of the trip except in Denali

**Caribou/Rangifer** *tarandus* – We saw Grant's caribou on the Kougorok and

**Mountain Goat** *Oreamnos americanus* – Seen at Cataract Cove on our boat trip to Northwestern Glacier

**Dall Sheep** *Ovis dallii* – We had at least twenty on our ride into Denali

**Muskox** *Ovibos moschatus* – Seen all across the Seward Peninsula

**Humpback Whale** *Megaptera novaeangliae* – We were fortunate to see at least seven individuals on our Seward boat ride

**Killer Whale (Orca)** *Orcinus orca* – Three different pods swam past our boat in thirty minutes, wow...

**Dall's Porpoise** *Phocoenoides dalli* – Only one sighting and that was just after turning into Northwestern Fjord

**Snowshoe Hare** *Lepus americanus* – An abundant year for this species in Denali

**Alaskan Hare** *Lepus othus* – Only one was seen way out on the Kougorok Road

**Hoary Marmot** *Marmota caligata* – On the slopes above the Eilson Visitor Center

**Arctic Ground Squirrel** *Spermophilus parryii* – Nome and Denali areas had plenty of these bear burritos

**American Red Squirrel** *Tamiasciurus hudsonicus* – Seen at the rest area in Denali and crossing the highway to Seward

**Beaver** *Castor Canadensis* – Seen on our drive into North Face Lodge

**Nearctic Brown Lemming** *Lemmus trimucronatus* – The one we saw fell victim to a Northern Shrike

**Collared Lemming** *Lemmus* – We saw two, one a fox victim, and one a victim to a pair of Long-tailed Jaegers