



September 12 – 19, 2021 Maine's Monhegan Island

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Summary:

Maine's Monhegan Island is the quintessential Maine coastal Island. It's remote location, beautiful rocky shorelines, deep green forests, working harbor, and weathered cedar shake homes and buildings is a wonderful place to spend a week in September. With its varied habitats of town, forest, tidal water, sea cliffs and freshwater marsh, it's also an important migration stopover for migrating seabirds and songbirds alike. We treated our ferry rides from Port Clyde to Monhegan Island as mini pelagic tours where we spotted harbor porpoise, Common Loons, Northern Gannets, and scoter species.

We spent five days on the island at the famous Island Inn birding in the mornings, hiking through forests to remote sea cliff locations in the afternoons. It was early in the migration season but we managed 15 warbler species, Orchard and Baltimore Orioles, perhaps thousands of Cedar Waxwings, and Merlin encounters that were second to none. Western Kingbird and a Yellow-crowned Night Heron were our most special individual sightings but the daily migration, with a good warbler fallout was what was truly special.

(HO)= Distinctive enough to be counted as heard only

(I)=introduced

BIRDS 106 species recorded, of which 2 were heard only):

DUCKS, GEESE AND SWANS: Anatidae (6)

Canada Goose *Branta canadensis*— Surprisingly, largely absent from this trip. Individuals seen at Port Clyde waiting for ferry and a flyby flock at Scarborough Marsh

Mallard *Anas platyrhynchos*— observed daily on mainland and Monhegan Island in both salt and fresh water habitats.

American Black Duck *Anas rubripes*— Observed daily on Ice Pond, Monhegan Island. Great opportunities to compare to female Mallards.

Common Eider *Somateria mollissima*— A constant presence on this trip, All in their dark eclipse plumage, Eiders were seen daily in most saltwater locations.

Surf Scoter *Melanitta perspicillata*— One individual spotted at close range during our ferry trip to Monhegan Island.

Black Scoter *Melanitta americana*— Spotted in Muscongus Bay while waiting for our Ferry to Monhegan Island.

PARTRIDGES, PHEASANTS AND ALLIES: Phasianidae (2)

Ring-necked Pheasant *Phasianus colchicus* (I)— Many pheasants were seen and heard daily during our adventures on Monhegan Island.

Wild Turkey *Meleagris gallopavo*— A large family flock observed at Gisland Audubon Farm on our arrival day hike.

PIGEONS AND DOVES: Columbidae (2)

Rock Pigeon *Columba livia* (1)— a small flock was fairly active in the harbor area of Port Clyde. Seen while staging for our ferry to Monhegan Island.

Mourning Dove *Zenaida macroura*— Seen daily on this trip. Many individuals staging on Monhegan Island.

CUCKOOS AND ALLIES: Cuculidae (1)

Black-billed Cuckoo *Coccyzus erythrophthalmus*— (probable)Very quick flyby in brushy vegetation while on one of our afternoon coastal hikes on Monhegan. Others were being reported nearby.

HUMMINGBIRDS: Trochilidae (1)

Ruby-throated Hummingbird *Archilochus colubris*— Observed daily on this trip, most notably during our sunrise walks in the meadow area next to Ice Pond.

PLOVERS AND LAPWINGS: Charadriidae (1)

Black-bellied Plover *Pluvialis squatarola*— HO -Some participants reported hearing flyby calls while on our afternoon coastal hikes.

SANDPIPERS AND ALLIES: Scolopacidae (5)

Sanderling *Calidris alba*— 100s observed on our last day at Pine Point Beach. We spent a good 30 mins at close range with this large feeding flock.

Dunlin *Calidris alpina*— One cooperative individual mixed in with 100s of Sanderlings and a few Semipalmated Sandpipers.

Spotted Sandpiper *Actitis macularius*—seen daily on the shoreline and cove inlets of Monhegan Island. Our best views were in the backwaters of Lobster Cove.

Solitary Sandpiper *Tringa Solitaria* – HO Calls heard overhead but not visually confirmed.

Greater Yellowlegs *Tringa melanoleuca*— Seen and heard on the island in the town marsh, aka lower field, on several occasions.

AUKS AND PUFFINS: Alcidae (1)

Black Guillemot *Cephus grylle*— Seen daily on coastal areas of Monhegan Island in their beautiful bright gray plumage.

GULLS AND TERNS: Laridae (5)

Laughing Gull *Leucophaeus atricilla*— Several flybys while on the ferry crossing to Monhegan Island; their black heads still present.

Ring-billed Gull *Larus delawarensis*— Seen only on a few occasions. One large feeding flock hawking for insects above the Fore River and a couple individual mixed in with the many Great Black-backed gulls on Monhegan Island.

Herring Gull *Larus argentatus*— Observed daily, probably our most common gull seen on Monhegan Island.

Great Black-backed Gull *Larus marinus*—Observed in great numbers on Monhegan Island and seen in most every plumage of their 5 year transition into adults.

Lesser Black-backed Gull *Larus fuscus*— Seen on Monhegan Island within groups of Greater Black-backed gulls. Their slaty colored back and yellow feet made them easy to pick out of the flocks.

LOONS: Gaviidae (1)

Common Loon *Gavia immer*— Many common loons in varying stages of molt observed in Muscongus Bay on ferry trips to and from Monhegan Island.

GANNETS AND BOOBIES: Sulidae (1)

Northern Gannet *Morus bassanus*— These giant bird, brilliantly white birds were observed daily from the ferry and the rocky cliff overlooks of Monhegan Island.

CORMORANTS: Phalacrocoracidae (2)

Great Cormorant *Phalacrocorax carbo*— with effort picking through commorant flocks, Great Cormorants were seen and photographed daily on Monhegan Island.

Double-crested Cormorant *Phalacrocorax auritus*—Large flocks of DC Cormorants were observed daily along the coastline Monhegan Island.

HERONS AND EGRETS: Ardeidae (4)

Great Blue Heron *Ardea herodias*—GBH were seen daily on Monhegan Island at various locations including the harbor, Ice Pond, the marsh, and coastal areas.

Great Egret *Ardea alba*— Large feeding flocks observed at Scarborough Marsh.

Snowy Egret *Egretta thula*— Several individuals found feeding with Great Egrets at Scarborough Marsh on our last day.

Yellow-crowned Night Heron – *Nyctanassa violacea* – Perhaps our rarest bird of the trip, a juvenile bird spent a day at Monhegan’s Ice Pond.

NEW WORLD VULTURES: Cathartidae (1)

Turkey Vulture *Cathartes aura*— only a few TVs were observed on our trip to Gisland Audubon Center. They were absent from the island.

OSPREY: Pandionidae (1)

Osprey *Pandion haliaetus*— Ospreys were observed only on the mainland areas of the trip, most notably in the bay area of Gisland Audubon Center.

HAWKS, KITES AND EAGLES: Accipitridae (4)

Northern Harrier *Circus hudsonius*— Seen a couple days on the Island working the marsh and upper field areas on the south side of the island.

Sharp-shinned Hawk *Accipiter striatus*— Observed several times on the island, most notably raiding the Cedar Waxwing trees at Ice Pond and also high overhead in migration.

Bald Eagle *Haliaeetus leucocephalus*— Seen often on mainland and on Monhegan-especially on nearby islands and outcrops.

Red-tailed Hawk *Buteo jamaicensis*— Great looks at a perched bird that crows harassed into a pine tree.

KINGFISHERS: Alcedinidae (1)

Belted Kingfisher *Megaceryle alcyon*— observed daily on mainland and Monhegan Island.

WOODPECKERS: Picidae (3)

Red-bellied Woodpecker *Melanerpes carolinus*— seen at a couple locations but best observed at Gisland Audubon Center where a juvenile was active near the feeders and the trail we were walking on.

Downy Woodpecker *Dryobates pubescens*— Observed daily with best looks in the trees near Ice Pond on Monhegan Island.

Northern Flicker *Colaptes auratus*— Northern Flickers were active in migration and were seen in the hundreds over our stay on Monhegan. Merlins seemed to enjoy harassing flickers any chance they got.

FALCONS AND CARACARAS: Falconidae (3)

American Kestrel *Falco sparverius*— Kestrels were observed on Manana Island (across the channel from our hotel) on several occasions.

Merlin *Falco columbarius*— We had incredible Merlin shows on this trip, especially on Monhegan Island. They were ever present on the island and were very active feeding and chasing the many migrating birds, especially young Cedar Waxwings which we witnessed being plucked from treetops.

Peregrine Falcon *Falco peregrinus*— After seeing so many Kestrels and Merlins, the Peregrines we saw were very distinctive in size and flight patterns. Several were seen on Monhegan Island.

TYRANT FLYCATCHERS: Tyrannidae (XX)

Olive-sided Flycatcher *Contopus cooperi*— Great looks and time to clearly review the field marks of this species, one very cooperative bird was seen at Ice Pond.

Eastern Wood-Pewee *Contopus virens*—?

Alder Flycatcher *Empidonax alnorum*— Trails, Alder/Willow flycatchers were observed at least daily on Monhegan Island.

Least Flycatcher *Empidonax minimus*—Several Least were observed on Monhegan Island

Eastern Phoebe *Sayornis phoebe*— Observed most days on Monhegan at various locations in town.

Eastern Kingbird *Tyrannus tyrannus*— a pair of Eastern Kingbirds were observed at the ferry docs in Port Clyde.

Western Kingbird *Tyrannus verticalis* – Observed twice in the scrub meadow and on power lines near the Trailing Yew.

VIREOS: Vireonidae (3)

Philadelphia Vireo *Vireo philadelphicus*— These beautiful little vireos were best observed at the yards and meadows near the Ice Pond on Monhegan Island.

Warbling Vireo *Vireo gilvus*— Seen along with the Philadelphia Vireos near the Ice Pond.

Red-eyed Vireo *Vireo olivaceus*— Observed daily on MI often feeding with the flocks of Cedar Waxwings in Mountain Ash trees.

CROWS AND JAYS: Corvidae (3)

Blue Jay *Cyanocitta cristata*— Seen daily in migration at most every location.

American Crow *Corvus brachyrhynchos*— Seen daily on the mainland and on Monhegan Island

Common Raven *Corvus corax*— Observed daily on Monhegan Island, most often hanging around the flocks of Greater Blackback Gulls, but also on Manana Island soaring off rocky outcrops.

TITS AND CHICKADEES: Paridae (2)

Black-capped Chickadee *Poecile atricapillus*— Seen in feeding flocks daily on Monhegan Island.

Tufted Titmouse *Baeolophus bicolor*— Observed only on the mainland at Gisland Audubon Center, the grounds of our hotel in Portland, and at Dodge Point Preserve.

KINGLETS: Regulidae (2)

Golden-crowned Kinglet *Regulus satrapa*—seen daily on Monhegan, especially in the apple trees on the road to the light house.

Ruby-crowned Kinglet *Regulus calendula*— Seen less frequently but observed and heard well in several forested locations on the north, uninhabited, side of the island.

NUTHATCHES: Sittidae (2)

Red-breasted Nuthatch *Sitta canadensis*— Seen and heard often in the conifers along the coastal trail behind the Trailing Yew.

White-breasted Nuthatch *Sitta carolinensis*—Observed only once on the island, this species was best observed at the Dodge Point Nature Preserve after our return to the mainland.

CREEPERS: Certhiidae (1)

Brown Creeper *Certhia americana*— Seen only on our first morning on Monhegan Island along the boardwalk near Ice Pond.

GNATCATCHERS: Polioptilidae (1)

Blue-gray Gnatcatcher *Polioptila caerulea*— One individual found behind the Trailing Yew B&B.

WRENS: Troglodytidae (2)

House Wren *Troglodytes aedon*— HO in shrubbery along the Lighthouse Road.

Carolina Wren *Thryothorus ludovicianus*— Heard daily and observed occasionally throughout Monhegan Island.

STARLINGS AND MYNAS: Sturnidae (1)

European Starling *Sturnus vulgaris* (1)— Seen daily, especially in Monhegan town and harbor areas.

MOCKINGBIRDS AND THRASHERS: Mimidae (2)

Gray Catbird *Dumetella carolinensis*— Heard and seen daily in back yard scrub areas throughout the island.

Brown Thrasher *Toxostoma rufum*— Observed briefly our last day on the island behind the Ice Pond meadow area.

THRUSHES: Turdidae (2)

Swainson's Thrush *Catharus ustulatus*— Several Swainsons thrushes were observed in forested areas near Ice Pond and Lobster Cover trails.

American Robin *Turdus migratorius*— Oddly enough, only seen one day on Monhegan Island near the Lobster Cove trail head.

WAXWINGS: Bombycillidae (1)

Cedar Waxwing *Bombycilla cedrorum*— Cedar Waxwings were seen in the thousands over our week on Monhegan. They would actively feed in large flocks on the numerous Mountain Ashes throughout the island.

OLD WORLD SPARROWS: Passeridae (1)

House Sparrow *Passer domesticus* (1)— Seen on the mainland around Portland and again on Monhegan Island, especially where lobster traps were being stored.

FINCHES: Fringillidae (2)

House Finch *Haemorhous mexicanus*— Observed several times on our hike at Gisland Audubon Center.

American Goldfinch *Spinus tristis*— Seen and heard in good numbers every day of our trip in most any location.

NEW WORLD SPARROWS: Passerellidae (9)

Chipping Sparrow *Spizella passerina*— Observed at several locations on the island, most notably at the old ball field area where we found them feeding with a Lark Sparrow and Clay-colored Sparrow.

Clay-colored Sparrow *Spizella pallida*—a great bird for this trip, this bird was seen on several occasions on the edge of the ball field parking areas near the lighthouse.

Lark Sparrow *Chondestes grammacus*— We were lucky enough to locate the Lark Sparrow that had joined the Clay-colored and Chipping sparrows that frequented the ball field area.

Dark-eyed Junco *Junco hyemalis*— Observed most days on the island, usually associated with other sparrows in brushy habitats.

White-throated Sparrow *Zonotrichia albicollis*— White-throated Sparrows arrived on the latter half of the trip and we're seen daily the last 3 days on the island.

Savannah Sparrow *Passerculus sandwichensis*—Observed only one time on this trip in the garden on the road below the lighthouse.

Song Sparrow *Melospiza melodia*—Prolific on the island, Song Sparrows were ever present on Monhegan Island and enjoyed hanging out in the piles of Lobster Traps.

Lincoln's Sparrow *Melospiza lincolnii*— Good looks of this species as they were observed in the marsh and in the garden below the lighthouse on several occasions.

Swamp Sparrow *Melospiza georgiana*— found while picking through Common Yellowthroats along the marsh.

NEW WORLD BLACKBIRDS: Icteridae (4)

Bobolink *Dolichonyx oryzivorus*— HO-Frustrating for us at times, Bobolinks were only heard by the group and never visually located.

Baltimore Oriole *Icterus galbula*— Frequent visitors to Mountain Ashes, especially in areas that were busy with feeding Cedar Waxwings.

Orchard Oriole *Icterus spurius*— Observed in the Apple Trees near the School house. A juvenile male, it's black throat patch was evident.

Red-winged Blackbird *Agelaius phoeniceus*—Oddly absent on this trip.

Common Grackle *Quiscalus quiscula*— Common Grackles were frequent sightings on this trip, especially the lone bird that was seen daily in the front yard of the schoolhouse.

NEW WORLD WARBLERS: Parulidae (15)

Northern Waterthrush *Parkesia noveboracensis*— A couple individuals were located in the small wetland area behind the brewery.

Black-and-white Warbler *Mniotilta varia*— seen in good numbers at Gisland Audubon Center and on Monhegan Island, most notably in the trees at the Ice Pond.

Tennessee Warbler *Leiothlypis peregrina*— Observed in a warbler feeding flock one morning at Ice Pond.

Nashville Warbler *Leiothlypis ruficapilla*— Seen only on our first day on the island at the Ice Pond meadow.

Common Yellowthroat *Geothlypis trichas*— Seen and heard in good numbers. Observed daily and best seen along the marsh in town.

American Redstart *Setophaga ruticilla*— Frequently observed on the mainland and Monhegan Island. Best observations were at Gisland Audubon Center where they were in a mixed warbler feeding flock.

Cape May Warbler *Setophaga tigrina*— Terrific looks and photographs in an apple tree in the front yard of a home near Lobster Cove.

Northern Parula *Setophaga americana*— Northern Parulas were prolific on the island and seen everyday.

Magnolia Warbler *Setophaga magnolia*— Seen near the brewery and again on our Seal Ledges hike.

Yellow Warbler *Setophaga petechia*— Yellow warblers were seen daily, especially along the marsh and lower field areas, but also at Ice Pond, and the meadow at Lobster Cove.

Chestnut-sided Warbler *Setophaga pensylvanica*— Best observations were in the feeding flock at Gisland Audubon Center, but we also had Chestnut sided on Monhegan.

Black-throated Blue Warbler *Setophaga caerulescens*— A Black-throated Blue was seen in the warbler feeding flock at Gisland Audubon Center.

Pine Warbler *Setophaga pinus*— Best seen at Dodge Point Preserve but also found one day on Monhegan Island.

Yellow-rumped Warbler *Setophaga coronata*— While early in their migration Yellow-rumped were seen daily on the mainland and on Monhegan Island.

Black-throated Green Warbler *Setophaga virens*— Observed daily on Monhegan either in the apple trees on the near the school house or at Ice Pond.

CARDINAL-GROSBEAKS: Cardinalidae (4)

Scarlet Tanager *Piranga olivacea*— One Tanager was observed at Ice Pond in the Mountain Ash feeding with Cedar Waxwings.

Northern Cardinal *Cardinalis cardinalis*— Seen well at Gisland Audubon but also found one day on Monhegan Island.

Rose-breasted Grosbeak *Pheucticus ludovicianus*— Heard and seen well in the meadow near Ice Pond on Monhegan.

55 Dickcissel *Spiza americana*— With their distinctive “bert” flight calls, Dickcissels were heard several times but eventually seen in the meadow areas between Lobster Cove and the Trailing Yew B&B.

Mammals (5 species)

Muskrat *Ondatra zibethicus*— close views in Ice Pond on Monhegan Island

Harbor Seal *Phoca vitulina*— Great views of Harbor Seals, especially at Seal Ledges where one was swimming around in the shallows near shore. Many were also seen on our ferry trips to and from the island.

Ground Hog *Marmota monax* – a lifer for some, ground hogs were found at Gisland Audubon Center.

Eastern Chipmunk – *Tamias striatus* - again, seen and heard at Gisland Audubon Center near the bird feeding station.

Eastern Gray Squirrel *Sciurus carolinensis* - Seen in the woods and at the feeders at Gisland Audubon Center.

Fish

Mola Mola or Ocean Sun Fish – observed off shore through the scope at Lobster Cove

Reptiles

Common Snapping Turtle *Chelydra serpentina* – a young hatchling was found in the grass near the Gisland Audubon Center Pond.