



Canada: Newfoundland Birding: Coastal Seabird Colonies, Boreal Forests and Magnificent Vistas

Day 1: Arrival in St. John's, NL.

Participants may arrive at any time during the day, but flights normally arrive after 5:00 PM, so no birding is likely today.

We usually offer the option to come in a day earlier, with an opportunity for birding on this arrival day (with additional lodging and guiding costs).

Overnight St. John's

Day 2: Morning birding at Cape Spear. Afternoon at Witless Bay area, including seabird/whale boat trip.

After breakfast at the hotel, we will visit any local ponds if Tufted Ducks or other unusual species have been reported. Then we will drive to Cape Spear, the most easterly point of land in North America. Scanning the sea from here, we hope to see Great Shearwater, Sooty Shearwater, Northern Gannet, Black-legged Kittiwake, Common Murre, Black Guillemot and Atlantic Puffin. We usually see Humpback Whales in the ocean as well. On shore, we will look for American Pipit and Savannah Sparrow.

By late morning, we will work our way south to Bay Bulls, where we will enjoy a two-hour whale and seabird boat trip. We should add Northern Fulmar, Thick-billed Murre and Razorbill, and get great up-close looks at whales.

Following dinner, those who are interested can walk the road near our lodging to look for Canada Jay, Fox Sparrow, Blackpoll Warbler and Pine Grosbeak, among others.

Overnight St. John's



Day 3: Birding the La Manche Trail in the morning. Afternoon drive to Trepassey.

A short drive from our lodging will bring us to the coast once again, where we will scan for seabirds. Next, we will walk the La Manche Trail, great for many boreal songbirds, including Yellow-bellied Flycatcher, Boreal Chickadee, Gray-cheeked Thrush, Blackpoll Warbler, Fox Sparrow and Red Crossbill.

From here, we will bird our way south along the coast, stopping occasionally to scan for birds and whales, before heading west across the Avalon Peninsula toward our lodging in Trepassey. After checking in there, we will have the opportunity for additional coastal birding in an area good for seeing shearwaters. At dusk, we have a good chance to see the Newfoundland subspecies of Red Fox.

Overnight Trepassey

Day 4: Birding the roads to Cape Race and St. Shotts.

After breakfast, we will begin the drive toward Cape Race, with stops en route, including at Portugal Cove South, another good place to scan for seabirds. As we drive, we will keep our eyes open for Willow Ptarmigan, Northern Harrier and Short-eared Owl, plus Woodland Caribou, all possible in the southern Avalon Peninsula.

Following lunch, we will drive out to the St. Shotts area, another coastal site where we can scan for seabirds. Common Eiders are sometimes seen from shore here, and this is one of the better locations to find Rough-legged Hawk. We will also look for the regional-endemic butterfly, the Short-tailed Swallowtail.

Overnight Trepassey



Day 5: Birding the Cape St. Mary's area.

Following breakfast, we will leave our lodging and head west, making a stop at St. Vincent's beach. This is called the place "where the whales come to play." On many days in summer, Humpback Whales can be seen just offshore, often jumping out of the water as if having fun. Northern Gannets share the ocean with the whales, crashing into the sea to capture prey. Sooty Shearwaters and Great Shearwaters are also often seen from shore here. If we have not already seen Arctic Terns, we will look for their nests along the beach.

We will soon continue our drive to our main destination for today: the Cape St. Mary's Ecological Reserve, which should be a real highlight of the trip. Thousands of Northern Gannets and Common Murres nest here, as well as many of the other seabirds we will have seen. If we have not already found Great Cormorant and Thick-billed Murre, we could add them here.

While this area is often shrouded in fog, you should still expect a great experience birding from the rocky cliffs along the shore. Since shorebirds may be migrating when

we are there (more likely on later July trips), we should be on the lookout for American Golden-Plover, Whimbrel, White-rumped Sandpiper and more. One year we found a Pacific Golden-Plover here, just the third record for Newfoundland. We will have more chances for ptarmigan and caribou.

We finish the day with a drive to Clarendville, passing more of the beautiful Newfoundland countryside.

Overnight Clarendville



Day 6: Terra Nova National Park.

We head off the Avalon Peninsula today, up to Terra Nova National Park, perhaps our best chance for some of the nesting boreal land birds - Black-backed Woodpecker, Olive-sided Flycatcher, Canada Jay, Pine Grosbeak, Common Redpoll, a few more warblers and both crossbills. We will also be looking for Common Loon, American Black Duck, Northern Goshawk, Merlin, Ruffed Grouse, Ruby-crowned Kinglet and Lincoln's Sparrow.

If there are any missed bird species still possible, we will work on finding them as well.

Overnight Clarendville



Day 7: Return to St. John's for flights home.

It is a little over a two hour drive back to the airport today. As we drive, we will scan for Northern Goshawks, sometimes seen on this stretch of road. If there are any large flocks of gulls, we will check to see if a Black-headed Gull might be among them. If we have not seen a Mourning Warbler yet, we can check any places they have been reported.

You should schedule your departure flight for as late in the day as possible, allowing for morning birding, possibly as Bidgood Park, a half hour from the airport. Any birding opportunities will depend on when the first flight out departs.