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Canada's Bay of Fundy: Migration on a Grand Scale August 7-13, 2019



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Protecting the Nature of Massachusetts

New Brunswick in August offers a window into just how awe-inspiring migration can be. The largest tides in the world occur on the Bay of Fundy and its mudflats are a critical staging area for shorebirds. Every summer over a hundred thousand shorebirds stop to feed along the beaches of the upper Bay of Fundy, fueling their migration from the Canadian Arctic to South America - a truly unforgettable avian spectacle.

Further north Kouchibouguac National Park's barrier beach, salt marsh, bogs, and northern forest hold a rich array of shorebirds, terns, waterfowl and songbirds including Hudsonian Godwit, Piping Plover, Whimbrel, Red Knot, Caspian Tern, Common Merganser, Black-backed Woodpecker, Boreal Chickadee, Pine Siskin, Purple Finch, Nelson's Sparrow, Nashville, Cape May, and Magnolia Warblers, and Rusty Blackbird.

On picturesque Grand Manan, Deer and Campobello Islands in the lower Bay of Fundy pelagic seabirds are the stars of the show. They are attracted by the upwelling of deep, nutrient-rich water caused by the combination of the bay's geology and enormous tides. Coastal bluffs provide views of whales and seabirds from land, while multiple ferry trips and a whale watch will get us closer to the action. Avian possibilities include Great, Sooty, and Manx Shearwaters, Wilson's and Leach's Storm-Petrels, Black-legged Kittiwake, Black Guillemot, Common Murre, Razorbill, Atlantic Puffin, Red and Red-Necked Phalaropes, and Pomarine and Parasitic Jaegers. Marine mammals add to the excitement with finback, humpback, minke, and North Atlantic right whales, harbor porpoises, dolphins, and seals.

Day 1, Wednesday August 7

Our trip begins midday at the Moncton International Airport.

We will waste no time before experiencing our first Bay of Fundy migration spectacle. Carefully timing our visit with the afternoon tide, we'll explore the area around the Johnson's Mills Shorebird Interpretative Center. Tens of thousands of migrating Semipalmated Sandpipers, along with Semipalmated and Black-bellied Plovers, Least and White-rumped Sandpipers, Sanderling, Dunlin, and Greater and Lesser Yellowlegs crowd shoulder to shoulder as the tide comes in, until the beach is invisible underneath a giant mass of birds. Swirling flocks create stunning, unforgettable images. We may spot a Peregrine Falcon searching for its dinner.

Lodging Moncton

Day 2, Thursday August 8

Rising early we will travel north to Kouchibouguac National Park with 150-square-miles of sandy beach, salt marsh, peat bog, freshwater wetland, and mixed boreal and Northern hardwood forests. From the barrier beach, we will look for Caspian Tern, Whimbrel, Red Knot, Hudsonian Godwit, and Northern Gannet. Nelson's and Savannah Sparrows nest in the marshes. Along forest trails White-winged Crossbill, Ruffed and Spruce Grouse, Pine Siskin, Pine Grosbeak, Lincoln's Sparrow and migrating warblers are all possible. We will seek out northern forest specialties like Black-backed Woodpecker, Canada Jay, and Boreal Chickadee in black spruce bogs.

We will return to Moncton in the late afternoon in time to view another Bay of Fundy spectacle on the Petitcodiac River - a tidal bore. The powerful flow from the incoming tide forms a wave of water that advances along the narrow river. Unforgettable!

Lodging Moncton

Day 3, Friday August 9

We will depart early for Mary's Point Shorebird Reserve on the eastern end of the Bay of Fundy, where we will have another chance to view the Semipalmated Sandpiper migration show. This time we will arrive on an outgoing tide to watch the tightly packed mass of shorebirds disperse, following the receding tide, actively feeding on the newly exposed buffet. Massive flocks fill the air, executing sharp turns in tight formation as they take advantage of the fresh mudflats rapidly exposed by the outgoing tide. We may also see Northern Harrier, Merlin and Peregrine Falcon, along with breeding and migratory songbirds, including Alder Flycatcher, Purple Finch, Cedar Waxwing, Cape May Warbler and American Redstart.

Our next stop is nearby Hopewell Rocks, the backdrop in the iconic scene pictured on every New Brunswick tourism ad. The rock formations, caused by tidal erosion, tower 40-70 feet over the water below, a testament to the extreme tidal forces at work in the Bay of Fundy.

After enjoying the rock formations and the shorebirds we find there, we will drive to Black's Harbor to catch an hour long ferry ride to Grand Manan Island. The ride itself can provide great pelagic birding. Red and Red-necked Phalaropes, Common Murre, Dovekie, Razorbill, Black Guillemot, Atlantic Puffin, Black-legged Kittiwake, and Great, Sooty and Manx Shearwaters are all possible. With luck we will see finback, humpback and minke whales as we cross the channel. Harbor porpoises may be close to shore as we approach North Head Harbor.

Lodging Grand Manan

Day 4, Saturday, August 10

Grand Manan is a magical place in August with an amazing diversity of bird species, from seabirds to shorebirds to boreal and migrant songbirds. We will begin our adventure at Long Eddy Point, known locally as The Whistle, a renowned seabirding overlook. Impressive coastal cliffs provide an expansive view of the sea below, where we hope to find Great and Sooty Shearwaters, along with gulls, cormorants, sea ducks, gannets, loons, grebes, and possibly alcids and jaegers, along with a variety of marine mammals. Southbound migrant songbirds are often seen in wooded edge habitat here.

Next we will head to Seal Cove to board a whale watch boat. Atlantic Puffin, Red-Necked and Red Phalaropes, Wilson's and possibly Leach's Storm-Petrels and Great Shearwater are regular along with finback, humpback and minke whales. While waiting to board, we will check out Seal Cove for unusual gulls and any migrants we can find.

Before returning to our lodging, we will bird Castalia Marsh, a large, coastal marsh that is one of the best places on Grand Manan for late summer shorebirds. We will comb the thickets for Nelson's Sparrow, Horned Lark, American Pipit and any migrants we can spot.

Lodging Grand Manan

Day 5, Sunday August 11

This morning we will take a short ferry ride to Whitehead Island, a small island just off Grand Manan which feels wonderfully remote. Terns and seabirds are possible on the way to the island. On this scenic island we will look for Baird's and White-rumped Sandpipers, Red-necked and Red Phalaropes, Whimbrel, Red Knot, and other shorebirds on the mudflats, and Boreal Chickadee, Blackpoll Warbler, Olive-sided Flycatcher, and other songbirds in the coastal boreal forest.

After returning to Grand Manan, we will head to the southern end of the island where steep, rocky cliffs provide the perfect vantage point to scan for seabirds from land. In the afternoon, we will return to North Head Harbor for a ferry ride back to the mainland and another great opportunity to see whales, shearwaters and other pelagic species.

Lodging St. George

Day 6, Monday August 12

This morning we will take two short ferry trips to picturesque Deer and Campobello Islands at the entrance to Passamaquoddy Bay. We will seek out migrant songbirds on heavily wooded Deer Island before transferring to Campobello, enjoying large numbers of Bonaparte's Gull, Common Tern and Black-legged Kittiwake on our passage. We will bird the Roosevelt-Campobello International Park looking for Cape May, Magnolia, Tennessee, Nashville and other migrating warblers, along with Swainson's Thrush, Purple Finch, Red-breasted Nuthatch, and Bald Eagle. After enjoying a full day on the islands, we will return to the mainland and our lodging.

Lodging St. George

Day 7, Tuesday August 13

We will enjoy a final morning of birding in New Brunswick before heading to Saint John Airport. Our exact destinations will depend on any target species we may be missing. We have a wealth of nearby choices from coast to woodland. Our return flight gives us a chance to marvel at the wonder of migration - having witnessed the diverse strategies used by shorebirds, seabirds and songbirds.

Please note:

This is a natural history field trip – we will rise early every morning and be active all day. Participants should be able to be to walk at least 1 mile and be on your feet for 1-2 hours.

While we attempt to be true to our itinerary, all scheduled events are subject to change depending on the weather and other considerations.

If you are prone to motion sickness, please bring medication for the boat trips.

Fees:

Member \$1725; Non-member \$2070

Single Room Supplement: \$400

Deposit: \$250 due with registration;

Final payment is due June 7, 2019.

Fee covers all ground transportation, lodging, entrance fees, and boat trip. Participants are responsible for personal supplies, snacks, and meals.

Cancellation Policy:

Cancellations must be made in writing or by email, and are effective upon receipt. Cancellations received up to 6 months prior to departure will be refunded in full. For cancellations less than 6 months prior to departure, the deposit is not refundable. Final payment is due 60 days prior to departure; no refunds are available for cancellations less than 60 days prior to departure. However, if we are able to fill your spot, a partial refund may be possible.

Flights:

DO NOT book your flight until we have given you the flight information for the trip leaders. Please schedule your flight to arrive no later than 30 minutes after the leaders, and for your return flight not to depart earlier than that of the trip leaders. Please provide us with your flight details.

Trip Insurance:

If you cancel for any reason, the cancellation policy will apply. If you wish to purchase trip cancellation insurance, you can search for policies at www.insuremytrip.com.

Registration Form – Bay of Fundy, August 2019

To register please call the registrar or fill out this form and mail it with a deposit.

Program Registration

Drumlin Farm Wildlife Sanctuary
208 South Great Road
Lincoln, MA 01773
781-259-2220
drumlinfarmeducation@massaudubon.org

For more information about the trip please contact:

Kathy Seymour
781-259-2207
kseymour@massaudubon.org

Name(s) _____ Member no. _____

Address _____

Telephone Cell _____
Daytime _____
Evening _____

E-mail address _____

Would you like to receive our monthly e-mail Birders Connection? Yes ___ No ___

I would like to join Mass Audubon: Family \$65 _____ Individual \$48 _____

Single Room Requested: Yes ___ No ___ Please note single supplement fee.

Deposit Enclosed: _____

Visa/Mastercard/Discover/American Express: _____

Exp. date ___/___

Payment by check is greatly appreciated, and enables us to use more of our funds for programming. Please make your check payable to Mass Audubon. Thank you!

Checklist – Bay of Fundy, August 2019

Canada Goose	Red Phalarope	Red-tailed Hawk	Cedar Waxwing
Wood Duck	Spotted Sandpiper	Belted Kingfisher	House Finch
Blue-winged Teal	Solitary Sandpiper	Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	Purple Finch
Gadwall	Greater Yellowlegs	Black-backed Woodpecker	Red Crossbill
American Wigeon	Willet	Downy Woodpecker	White-winged Crossbill
Mallard	Lesser Yellowlegs	Hairy Woodpecker	Pine Siskin
American Black Duck	Pomarine Jaeger	Pileated Woodpecker	American Goldfinch
Northern Pintail	Parasitic Jaeger	Northern Flicker	Chipping Sparrow
Green-winged Teal	Common Murre	American Kestrel	Dark-eyed Junco
Ring-necked Duck	Razorbill	Merlin	White-throated Sparrow
Common Eider	Black Guillemot	Peregrine Falcon	Nelson's Sparrow
Surf Scoter	Atlantic Puffin	Olive-sided Flycatcher	Savannah Sparrow
White-winged Scoter	Black-legged Kittiwake	Eastern Wood-Pewee	Song Sparrow
Black Scoter	Bonaparte's Gull	Yellow-bellied Flycatcher	Lincoln's Sparrow
Hooded Merganser	Laughing Gull	Alder Flycatcher	Swamp Sparrow
Common Merganser	Ring-billed Gull	Least Flycatcher	Bobolink
Red-breasted Merganser	Herring Gull	Eastern Phoebe	Red-winged Blackbird
Ring-necked Pheasant	Lesser Black-backed Gull	Eastern Kingbird	Brown-headed Cowbird
Ruffed Grouse	Great Black-backed Gull	Blue-headed Vireo	Rusty Blackbird
Spruce Grouse	Caspian Tern	Philadelphia Vireo	Common Grackle
Pied-billed Grebe	Common Tern	Red-eyed Vireo	Ovenbird
Red-necked Grebe	Arctic Tern	Canada Jay	Northern Waterthrush
Rock Pigeon	Red-throated Loon	Blue Jay	Black-and-white Warbler
Mourning Dove	Common Loon	American Crow	Tennessee Warbler
Common Nighthawk	Wilson's Storm-Petrel	Common Raven	Nashville Warbler
Ruby-throated Hummingbird	Leach's Storm-Petrel	Tree Swallow	Common Yellowthroat
Black-bellied Plover	Northern Fulmar	Bank Swallow	American Redstart
American Golden-Plover	Cory's Shearwater	Barn Swallow	Cape May Warbler
Semipalmated Plover	Great Shearwater	Cliff Swallow	Northern Parula
Piping Plover	Sooty Shearwater	Black-capped Chickadee	Magnolia Warbler
Killdeer	Manx Shearwater	Boreal Chickadee	Bay-breasted Warbler
Whimbrel	Northern Gannet	Red-breasted Nuthatch	Blackburnian Warbler
Hudsonian Godwit	Great Cormorant	White-breasted Nuthatch	Yellow Warbler
Ruddy Turnstone	Double-crested Cormorant	Brown Creeper	Chestnut-sided Warbler
Red Knot	Great Blue Heron	Winter Wren	Blackpoll Warbler
Sanderling	Great Egret	Golden-crowned Kinglet	Black-throated Blue Warbler
Dunlin	Black-crowned Night-Heron	Ruby-crowned Kinglet	Palm Warbler
Baird's Sandpiper	Turkey Vulture	Eastern Bluebird	Pine Warbler
Least Sandpiper	Osprey	Veery	Yellow-rumped Warbler
White-rumped Sandpiper	Northern Harrier	Swainson's Thrush	Prairie Warbler
Pectoral Sandpiper	Sharp-shinned Hawk	Hermit Thrush	Black-throated Green Warbler
Semipalmated Sandpiper	Cooper's Hawk	American Robin	Canada Warbler
Short-billed Dowitcher	Bald Eagle	Gray Catbird	Wilson's Warbler
Red-necked Phalarope	Broad-winged Hawk	European Starling	Northern Cardinal