

Eastern Newfoundland BIRD FINDER



SITES KEY

- Key Sites
- Second-tier Sites
- Areas of Interest

About the Sites . . .

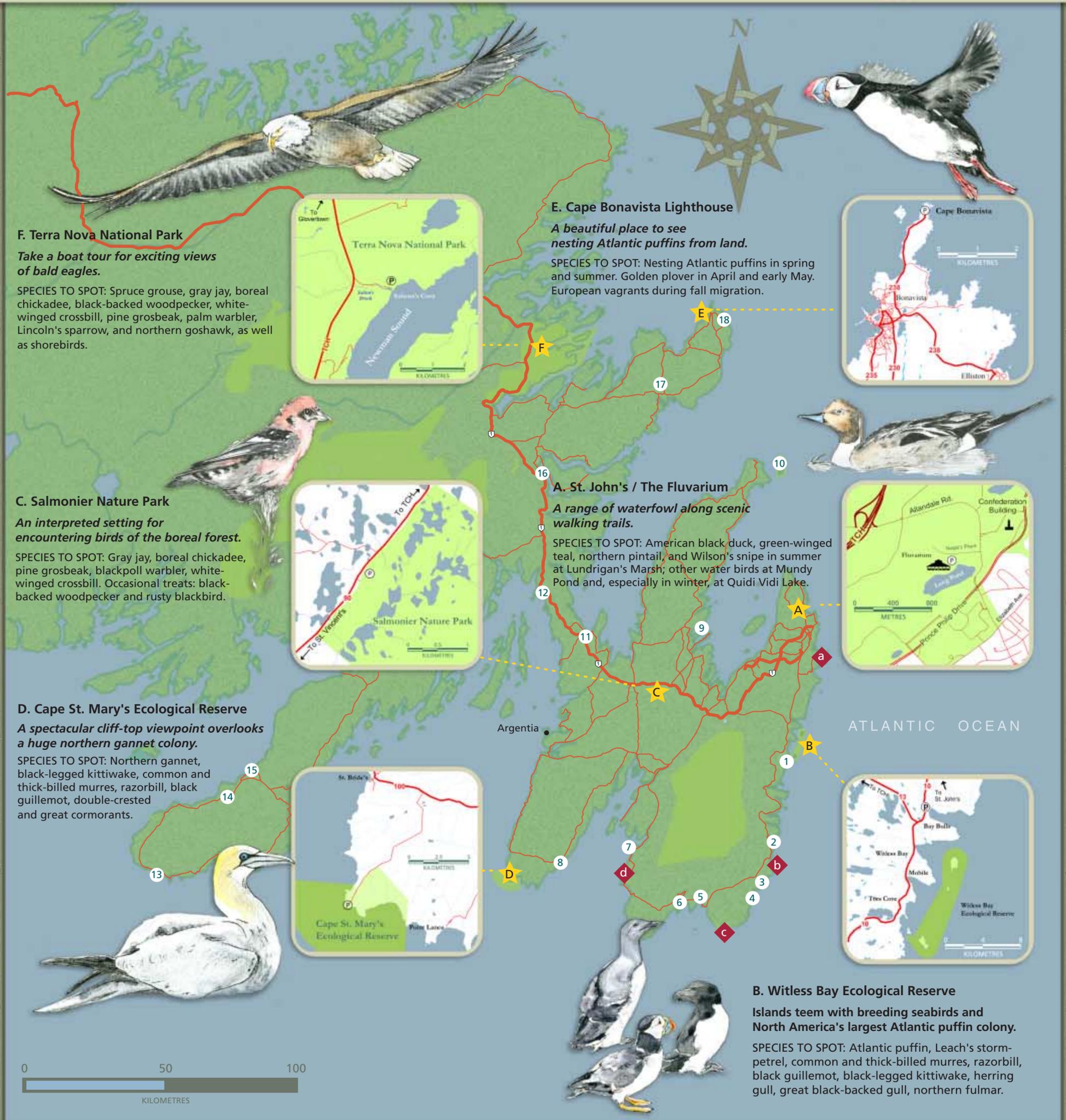
Our six **Key Sites**—marked by stars and short profiles on the map—are outlined in more detail on the reverse side of the sheet.

Four additional locations are also outlined there, as well. These are our **Second-tier Sites**. Marked by a red diamond on the map, they provide particularly rewarding birding experiences (regularly or in season). The four locations are:

- a Cape Spear:** The easternmost point in North America provides excellent vantage points for viewing seabirds.
- b Renew's:** Its long and protected shallow harbour is attractive to shorebirds in late summer.
- c Cape Race Road:** The southeastern tip of the Avalon Peninsula is often a landing point for vagrant species.
- d St. Vincent's Beach:** From the sweeping gravel strand you can easily see northern gannets plunge-diving for capelin in early summer.

The 18 sites marked by a white dot on the map are additional **Areas of Interest**—just a sampling of locations in eastern Newfoundland where local birders go to look for birds. Birds can be seen almost anywhere, of course, but you may wish to try your luck at these sites when you are in their vicinity. The GPS coordinates will take you to preferred vantage points.

- 1 La Manche Provincial Park** 47°09'47.03"N 52°53'54.40"W
Birds of both woodland and bog habitats.
- 2 Ferryland** 47°00'36.40"N 52°58'54.35"W
An inland wetland area in early winter has lingering songbirds.
- 3 Cappahayden** 46°52'21.92"N 52°56'20.75"W
In fall, the pull-off at Bear Cove is a good place to see vagrant songbirds.
- 4 Chance Cove Provincial Park** 46°45'41.10"N 53°03'37.42"W
Woodland birding is possible near the parking lot when the park is open.
- 5 Biscay Bay** 46°44'35.40"N 53°17'04.11"W
Water birds frequent the protected area inside the barchois from July to September.
- 6 Trepassey** 46°43'33.27"N 53°22'02.94"W
Terns, gulls, and cormorant are seen on the bay from June through October.
- 7 Point La Haye** 46°54'15.52"N 53°36'55.63"W
From the headland in summer, look for alcids, shearwaters, gannet, jaegers, and scoter.
- 8 Branch** 46°53'02.40"N 53°56'55.56"W
Shorebirds frequent the estuary especially during migration.
- 9 Spaniard's Bay** 47°35'44.47"N 53°16'38.11"W
Scan the tidal estuary for shorebirds from mid-July through September.
- 10 Baccalieu Island Ecological Reserve** 48°05'08.08"N 52°53'46.82"W
The Bay de Verde Heritage House has an exhibit about the inaccessible but spectacular nearby seabird breeding colony.
- 11 Bellevue Beach Provincial Park Reserve** 47°38'07.04"N 53°46'30.74"W
The barchois behind the beach is home to nesting osprey; shorebirds use the east end of the beach from mid-July to early October.
- 12 Arnold's Cove** 47°46'06.62"N 53°58'48.20"W
Several bird sanctuaries shelter wintering waterfowl; shorebirds congregate from early July to late fall. A map of several local sites is available.
- 13 Lamaline** 46°51'41.44"N 55°48'47.26"W
The salt marsh is home to a nesting colony of common tern; look for short-eared owl and rough-legged hawk on the barrens near Pt. Crewe.
- 14 Grand Beach** 47°07'55.59"N 55°30'08.64"W
From the highway overlooking the pond a range of shorebirds can be seen in summer.
- 15 Frenchman's Cove** 47°11'41.00"N 55°26'00.00"W
Shorebirds may be seen in late summer and fall, both from the lookoff west of town and in the lagoon north of Frenchman's Cove Provincial Park entrance.
- 16 Clarenville** 48°09'03.44"N 53°57'35.96"W
Waterfowl, geese, and gulls congregate in the bay in late fall and winter.
- 17 Lockston Path Provincial Park** 48°27'00.91"N 53°21'40.98"W
Boreal forest birds are regular breeders in the woods of the park.
- 18 Elliston** 48°37'34.56"N 53°01'11.89"W
Atlantic puffins nesting on nearby islands can be seen from land.



F. Terra Nova National Park

Take a boat tour for exciting views of bald eagles.

SPECIES TO SPOT: Spruce grouse, gray jay, boreal chickadee, black-backed woodpecker, white-winged crossbill, pine grosbeak, palm warbler, Lincoln's sparrow, and northern goshawk, as well as shorebirds.



E. Cape Bonavista Lighthouse

A beautiful place to see nesting Atlantic puffins from land.

SPECIES TO SPOT: Nesting Atlantic puffins in spring and summer. Golden plover in April and early May. European vagrants during fall migration.



C. Salmonier Nature Park

An interpreted setting for encountering birds of the boreal forest.

SPECIES TO SPOT: Gray jay, boreal chickadee, pine grosbeak, blackpoll warbler, white-winged crossbill. Occasional treats: black-backed woodpecker and rusty blackbird.



A. St. John's / The Fluvarium

A range of waterfowl along scenic walking trails.

SPECIES TO SPOT: American black duck, green-winged teal, northern pintail, and Wilson's snipe in summer at Lundrigan's Marsh; other water birds at Mundy Pond and, especially in winter, at Quidi Vidi Lake.



D. Cape St. Mary's Ecological Reserve

A spectacular cliff-top viewpoint overlooks a huge northern gannet colony.

SPECIES TO SPOT: Northern gannet, black-legged kittiwake, common and thick-billed murres, razorbill, black guillemot, double-crested and great cormorants.



B. Witless Bay Ecological Reserve

Islands teem with breeding seabirds and North America's largest Atlantic puffin colony.

SPECIES TO SPOT: Atlantic puffin, Leach's storm-petrel, common and thick-billed murres, razorbill, black guillemot, black-legged kittiwake, herring gull, great black-backed gull, northern fulmar.



KEY SITES

★ St. Johns / The Fluvarium

St. John's is of most interest to experienced birders from fall to late spring, when a range of waterfowl, gulls, and European vagrants is present throughout the city. The Fluvarium overlooks Long Pond and is open year-round. It's a good place to ask about which bird species frequent the St. John's area throughout the year, and where to look for them. Located on one of the many walkways built alongside the city's rivers and ponds, it's also a pleasant starting point for nature watching.

SPECIES TO SPOT: American black duck, green-winged teal, northern pintail, and Wilson's snipe in summer at Lundrigan's Marsh; other water birds at Mundy Pond.

WINTER BIRDS: Vagrant songbirds (particularly warblers) are often spotted in late fall in the Waterford River Valley. In winter Quidi Vidi Lake may provide sightings of tufted duck, Eurasian wigeon, greater golden-plover, Eurasian green-winged teal, and several gulls—up to a dozen species have been recorded in the city in a single day.

ADDITIONAL ATTRACTIONS: The Fluvarium and related exhibits (fee for entrance); walking trails.

The Fluvarium is operated by the Quidi Vidi/Rennies River Development Foundation. The Fluvarium (709) 754-3474 www.fluvarium.ca

GPS coordinates: 47°34′47.40″N 52°43′57.40″W﻿ / ﻿47.579306°N 52.732611°W﻿ / 47.579306; -52.732611

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* Limited access to trails

★ Witless Bay Ecological Reserve

The four islands protected as the Witless Bay Ecological Reserve are important seabird breeding areas from early June to early September. The best viewing is from a tour boat—there are several licensed operators in five communities from Bay Bulls to Bauline East. The islands have the largest Atlantic puffin colony in North America (260,000 pairs), and the second largest Leach's storm-petrel colony in the world (620,000 pairs, though the birds are seldom seen because they spend daylight hours at sea).

SPECIES TO SPOT: Nesting species include Atlantic puffin, Leach's storm-petrel, common murre, razorbill, black guillemot, black-legged kittiwake, herring gull, great black-backed gull, and, in smaller numbers, northern fulmar and thick-billed murre.

WINTER BIRDS: Dovekie, common eider, red-breasted merganser, common loon, long-tailed duck, and black guillemot can often be spotted from shore in winter.

ADDITIONAL ATTRACTIONS: Whale-watching (July and August), icebergs (May and June), sea-kayaking, access to East Coast Trail.

Bay Bulls Visitor Information Centre
Open May to mid-October
(709) 334-2609 toll free 1-877-700-5667
www.southernavalontourism.ca
Email: irish@nfld.com
Holly Hogan, Reserve Manager (709) 334-1016 (Apr. - Sept.)
www.env.gov.nl.ca/parks/wer/r_wbe/

GPS coordinates: Bay Bulls Visitor Information Centre 47°19′12.06″ N 52°49′06.39″ W﻿ / ﻿47.320017°N 52.818472°W﻿ / 47.320017; -52.818472

In summer, birds can be seen only by boat and facilities vary by tour-boat location and operator. Visitor Centre in Bay Bulls is wheelchair accessible.

★ Salmonier Nature Park

A nature centre open to the public and school groups, Salmonier Nature Park is a popular destination where you can walk trails and view the wildlife of Newfoundland and Labrador. Its three kilometres of boardwalk is also an excellent place for viewing birds of the northern boreal forest in the wild. On-site staff and interpretive signs can help with species identification. The park is open June 1 to Thanksgiving weekend.

SPECIES TO SPOT: Gray jay, boreal chickadee, pine grosbeak, blackpoll warbler, white-winged crossbill. Occasional sightings of black-backed woodpecker and rusty blackbird. Checklist available.

WINTER BIRDS: The park is closed during the winter, but a call to the office can provide you with help for your birding plans.

ADDITIONAL ATTRACTIONS: Exhibit in interpretive centre. Salmonier Nature Park is operated by the province's Wildlife Division. Call year-round: (709) 229-3915 or -7888. www.env.gov.nl.ca/snp

GPS coordinates: Park entrance 47°15′50.14″N 53°16′59.28″W﻿ / ﻿47.263928°N 53.283133°W﻿ / 47.263928; -53.283133

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★ Cape St. Mary's Ecological Reserve

Cape St. Mary's is one of the best places in the world to see nesting seabirds. The main cliff-top viewing station, which faces a nest-covered sea stack, is reached by a 1.3-kilometre path that can be tricky in foggy or wet weather (guided tours are available). The Cape is the only place on the Bird Finder map where thick-billed murre can be easily seen from land—ask for guidance. The interpretive centre is open from early May to early October.

SPECIES TO SPOT: Northern gannet (24,000 pairs), black-legged kittiwake, common and thick-billed murres, razorbill, black guillemot, double-crested and great cormorants, and a few pairs of northern fulmar, from April to late September.

WINTER BIRDS: The reserve is closed during the winter.

ADDITIONAL ATTRACTIONS: Exhibit in Visitor Centre.

Cape St. Mary's is operated by the province's Department of Environment and Conservation. Tony Power, Reserve Manager: (709) 277-1666 www.env.gov.nl.ca/parks/wer/r_csme/

GPS coordinates: Parking lot by Visitor Centre 54°11′39.75″W 46°49′20.54″N﻿ / ﻿54.194611°W 46.822372°N﻿ / -54.194611; 46.822372

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★ Cape Bonavista Lighthouse

The Cape Bonavista lighthouse, a Provincial Historic Site, sits atop a rocky shoreline; just below its cliffs, across a narrow tickle, is a small island where Atlantic puffins nest in summer. The birds, often with beaks full of capelin, are visible right from the lighthouse parking lot. Additional puffin viewing sites are accessible by hiring a local guide, and other species can be viewed from your car on the drive to the lighthouse.

SPECIES TO SPOT: Puffins breed in the island's sod from late May to late August, while black guillemot breed on its cliff face. European and arctic vagrants use the site from mid-April to mid-May, and in late fall.

WINTER BIRDS: On the water, look for glaucous and Iceland gulls, dovekie, murre, and black guillemot. Snowy owl, phalarope, and other arctic vagrants appear in late fall and early winter; eider duck may be seen in late winter/early spring.

CAUTIONS: Walk carefully and at your own risk on coastal paths, particularly during wet weather.

ADDITIONAL ATTRACTIONS: Lighthouse and exhibit in Visitor Centre (fee for admission), nature tours, historic sites in nearby Bonavista (including sister site, the Mockbeggar Plantation).

Cape Bonavista Lighthouse Provincial Historic Site
709 468-7444 (mid-May to early October);
(709) 729-0592 (off-season)
www.tcr.gov.nl.ca/tcr/historicsites/Cape Bonavista Lighthouse.htm

GPS coordinates: Parking lot 48°42′01.04″N 53°05′12.64″W﻿ / ﻿48.700261°N 53.087389°W﻿ / 48.700261; -53.087389

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★ Terra Nova National Park

Just over 50 years old, Terra Nova National Park is Newfoundland and Labrador's first national park. Its hiking trails and roads wind through a variety of habitats where you can spot birds of the northern boreal forest. A highlight of a summertime trip to the park is watching bald eagles from a privately operated tour boat. For information, begin your visit at the Visitor Centre, at Salton's Brook off the TCH.

SPECIES TO SPOT: Spruce grouse, gray jay, boreal chickadee, black-backed and three-toed woodpeckers, white-winged crossbill, pine grosbeak, palm warbler, Lincoln's sparrow, and northern goshawk, as well as shorebirds, particularly from mid-July to September. Additional migrants during June and July.

WINTER BIRDS: Except for the warblers and sparrows, many of the boreal birds are resident year-round. Waterfowl are best seen in winter, on the south side of the Traytown causeway (also look there for bald eagles).

ADDITIONAL ATTRACTIONS: Exhibit in Visitor Centre, as well as outdoor activities and interpretive programs. Golf course.

Terra Nova National Park (709 533-2801)
www.pc.gc.ca/pn-np/nl/terranova/
The park is open year-round; full services available from mid-May to mid-October.

GPS coordinates: Visitor Centre 48°34′45.95″N 53°56′50.98″W﻿ / ﻿48.579181°N 53.947469°W﻿ / 48.579181; -53.947469

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SECOND-TIER SITES

◆ Cape Spear

Depending on the wind direction and visibility, Cape Spear is an excellent place to see seabirds (as well as whales and dolphins) June through September. The easternmost point in North America, Cape Spear is a National Historic Site of Canada with a visitor centre and the oldest surviving lighthouse in the province. Facilities are open mid-May to mid-October, and the grounds are open year-round. The roadside near the community of Blackhead (5 km before the Cape) is a good place to view common songbirds June through early August and a "hot spot" for migrating warblers in the fall.

SPECIES TO SPOT: In summer, look for sooty, greater, and Manx shearwaters, common murre, razorbill, black guillemot, black-legged kittwake, northern gannet, Atlantic puffin, and sometimes jaegers and skuas from the shore at Cape Spear. Forest songbirds include Wilson's and blackpoll warblers, northern waterthrush, gray-cheeked thrush, fox sparrow, and pine grosbeak.

WINTER BIRDS: Dovekie and thick-billed murre on the ocean, and often common eider. On shore at the Cape, fall/winter species include purple sandpiper, greater yellowlegs, snow bunting, willow ptarmigan, and snowy owl.

CAUTIONS: Keep well back from cliff edge and rocks on the shoreline. Obey all warning signs and remain on designated trails.

ADDITIONAL ATTRACTIONS: Lighthouse (fee), exhibits in Visitor Centre, access to East Coast Trail.

Cape Spear National Historic Site (709) 722-5367
www.pc.gc.ca/lhn-nhs/nl/spear/

GPS coordinates: Cape Spear National Historic Site parking lot 47°31′21.29″N 52°37′25.82″W﻿ / ﻿47.522222°N 52.622778°W﻿ / 47.522222; -52.622778

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◆ Renews

About an hour and a half's drive south of St. John's, the shallow protected waters of Renews harbour are a good place to spot water birds, particularly in August and September. Here Arctic and common terns are often together, making identification (through comparison) that much easier. In areas where the width of the shoulder permits—as well as at a pull-off near a tern colony—you can watch from your car.

SPECIES TO SPOT: Arctic and common terns from mid-June to mid-August, and possibly willet; migrating semipalmated and black-bellied plovers in late summer.

WINTER BIRDS: Few species noted in winter.

ADDITIONAL ATTRACTIONS: Access to East Coast Trail in the community.

There is no agency or operation currently responsible for nature-viewing in this area.

GPS coordinates: Renews pulloff 46°55′55.96″N 52°57′02.17″W﻿ / ﻿46.932211°N 52.950325°W﻿ / 46.932211; -52.950325

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◆ Cape Race Road

The 21-kilometre gravel road that leads to the southeastern tip of the Avalon Peninsula is a good place to spot seabirds summer through fall, as well as vagrants attracted to the inland barrens during migration. A path to a rookery begins about 5 kilometres beyond Portugal Cove South—look for a hand-painted sign—and passes through the Mistaken Point Ecological Reserve. Good seabird viewing is possible at other spots along the road (hiking required), as well as at the Cape Race lighthouse, at the end of the road.

SPECIES TO SPOT: Common murre, razorbill, black guillemot, and black-legged kittiwake breed at the rookery. Look for northern gannet, sooty, greater, and Manx shearwaters, and parasitic and pomarine jaegers offshore. American pipit, and horned lark are on the barrens in summer; spring and fall look for whimbrel and occasional vagrants: fork-tailed flycatcher, redwing, and corn crane.

WINTER BIRDS: Snowy owls can be spotted when the road is open.

ADDITIONAL ATTRACTIONS: Visitor Centre at Portugal Cove South (ask here about access to the Mistaken Point Ecological Reserve, and about guided tours of fossil sites inside it), Cape Race Lighthouse National Historic Site at the end of the road.

CAUTIONS: The area is often foggy, the ground is uneven and may be boggy, and the cliffs are generally sheer. Caution advised in wet, foggy, or winter weather.

Portugal Cove South Visitor Orientation Centre (709) 438-1100
Open June to October.

GPS coordinates: Visitor Centre 46°42′39.92″N 53°15′33.68″W﻿ / ﻿46.711367°N 53.262222°W﻿ / 46.711367; -53.262222

Facilities vary by location along the road. Some services are available in season at the Cape Race-Portugal Cove South Visitor Centre, and at the Cape Race lighthouse.

About the birds of Eastern Newfoundland . . .

A happy confluence of geographic factors means the eastern portion of the island of Newfoundland is a fascinating place to watch birds. On the edge of a continent, surrounded by waters where cold south-flowing currents meet warm north-flowing ones, ringed by islands where nests are safe from many predators, the Island provides outstanding breeding areas for millions of seabirds. Some even call it "the seabird capital of North America."

During spring and fall, Newfoundland also provides important staging points for dozens of migrating species. In addition, some southern species are at the northern edge of their ranges on the Island, and many northern birds are at their southern limit. And sometimes our rambunctious weather will blow in rarely seen vagrant species.

. . . and how to find them.

This bird finder is intended to guide visitors and beginning birders to some of the places in Eastern Newfoundland where the fascinating, gentle, and rewarding pastime of birdwatching can be easily enjoyed. The sites are labeled in one of three ways:

- ★ **Key Sites:** Places that offer both good birdwatching and additional information about birding in the area.
- ◆ **Second-tier Sites:** Locations that can also yield successful experiences, but just a little less predictably.
- **Areas of Interest:** A few of the spots where local birders go to scout for bird activity.

Because some birds live here year-round and others only pass through, each Key and Second-tier site listing notes the season(s) that yield the best results. Contact information and additional resources are provided so you can find out more about the birds and your birding destinations before you set out.

Notes on birding

Successful birdwatching results from a combination of preparedness (bring binoculars, have a guidebook handy, dress appropriately for comfort and safety), plus patience and slow quiet movements—not to mention a bit of luck. Birders know that dawn and dusk are particularly good times to see birds. And although birdwatching occurs year-round, spring and fall usually offer the most species, highest numbers, and the most bird activity. The notable exceptions are nesting seabirds (colonies are not used in winter).

We ask that you carry on the tradition respected by birders everywhere: do not disturb the birds you watch, and leave no trace of your presence behind you.



◆ St. Vincent's Beach

This long gravel beach about two and a half hours from St. John's can be a spectacular place to watch whales feeding on capelin (late June to mid-July); the small spawning fish also attract a variety of seabirds, making this an excellent spot to watch northern gannets plummet after their prey. Holyrood Pond, behind the barachois, also attracts black-legged kittiwake.

SPECIES TO SPOT: Sooty and greater shearwaters (and some Manx), black-legged kittiwake, northern gannet, and pomarine and parasitic jaegers. A variety of gulls roost on the beach spring through fall. Leach's storm-petrel may be seen on foggy days.

WINTER BIRDS: Few species noted in winter.

ADDITIONAL ATTRACTIONS: Interpretation centre and gift shop across the road on the shores of the pond; viewing platform with shelter on the beach.

CAUTIONS: The sides of the road can be soft; parking at the viewing platform is recommended. Use caution near the waters flowing under the bridge.

Interpretation centre (seasonal) (709) 525-3100

GPS coordinates: Viewing platform 46°47′08.43″N 53°37′54.81″W﻿ / ﻿46.785647°N 53.631336°W﻿ / 46.785647; -53.631336

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*At Interpretation centre

SYMBOL KEY			
Symbols refer specifically to the birding site and experience.			
Parking Available	Ⓘ	Washrooms	👤 ♿
Roadside Parking	Ⓡ	Hiking Required to View Birds	🚶
Visitor Centre	Ⓥ	Tour Boat Required to View Birds	🚤
Fee Charged to View Birds	💰	Picnic Tables	🏡
Accessible Vantage	♿	Drinking Water	🚰
Walking Shoes	👟	Camping	🏕
Hiking Boots	👢	Nearest Accommodation	🏠 KM

Eastern Newfoundland

BIRD FINDER

Your guide to birdwatching locations from St. John's to Terra Nova National Park

Includes:

- Wayfinding aids**
- Typical bird species**
- Facilities & resources**



Online Birding Resources

www.newfoundlandlabrador.com/BirdWatching/
The province's tourism site provides information about birds, seabird ecological reserves, and private tour operators.

www.cs.mun.ca/~nhs/
The Natural History Society of Newfoundland and Labrador's site has a birding checklist for the province, and occasionally information about birding activities.

www.env.gov.nl.ca/parks/wer/
The province's Parks and Natural Areas site lists and describes seabird ecological reserves.

http://groups.google.com/group/nf.birds/topics
This Google group site is where local birders report recent sightings of interest.

Illustrations: Ralph Jarvis
Front cover image: Wildlife Division photo
Binoculars image: Stanley London