

**Gustavus Bird Sightings
August - November 2011**

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I continued traveling into Glacier Bay's west arm aboard cruise ships as a marine mammal observer for Glacier Bay National Park until September 21. I was away for two weeks in early November. -NKD

Bruce Paige was in Gustavus until mid September.

Jeff Kamps was a seasonal ranger for Glacier Bay National Park stationed at Dry Bay on the outer coast. Jeff kept a bird list, and some of his observations are included.

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Brant

Six on 17 November at Bartlett Cove. -NKD

Five on 29 November on the Salmon River in town. -NKD, EHJ

Cackling Goose

The Cackling Geese observed by NKD were either presumed to be the minima subspecies or an unknown subspecies.

Three on 6 September near the Salmon River. -BBP

One on 8 September and 14 October west of the Salmon River with Canada Geese. This bird, or these birds, had a white neck collar that did not extend to the back of the neck and that was not obviously dark at the base of the collar. The head appeared flat-topped in some postures. The breast was dark, but not as dark as expected for minima Cackling Geese. -NKD

One on 10 September west of town. -BBP

Six on 15 October on the golf course with Canada Geese. One with a white collar. -NKD

Seven on 29 October on the golf course with Canada Geese.

One on 16 November west of the Salmon River with Canada Geese. -NKD

One on 18 November near the town dock with Canada Geese. -JFS

Canvasback

One to three from 14 to 30 October on a pond near the airport. -NKD

Nine on 31 October on the same pond near the airport. -NKD

Ring-necked Duck

Seventeen on 16 November on the gravel pit ponds north of town was a notable number. -NKD

Black Scoter

One on 30 August off the beach east of town at Rink Creek. -BBP, PMS, NKD

Sixty on 1 October off the beach west of town were the first noted at this location where they can reliably be found in winter. They were almost all adult males.

Numbers west of town grew through the month with 105 on 10 October, 140 on 17 October, and 230 on 28 October. They continued to be almost entirely adult males.

Numbers over 100 were seen west of town in the second half of November with female and juvenile birds in the mix, but accurate counts were not possible due to weather conditions.

-NKD

Hooded Merganser

One on 29 August near town. -BBP

Two on 7 September in Bartlett Cove. -NKD

Two on 9 September near the airport. -BBP

Horned Grebe

Over 200 on 30 August off the beach east of town at Rink Creek was notable. -BBP, PMS, NKD

Osprey

One on 15 and 25 September west of town. -NKD

One to two from about 19 to 23 September at Dry Bay. -JK

One on 29 September and into early October east of the town dock. -LMR and others.

Red-tailed Hawk

One Harlan's Red-tailed Hawk on 13 August at my cabin in town. -NKD This looked like the same bird photographed 29 July in Gustavus by Bruce Paige.

Two calling juveniles with an adult on 13 and 14 August north of town was an indication of nesting in the area. -NKD

Rough-legged Hawk

One on 28 October west of town. -NKD

Golden Eagle

One on 23 November in the state Crane Flats west of town. -NKD

Gyrfalcon

One on 20 November near the Salmon River where it killed a Short-eared Owl. -NKD

Peregrine Falcon

Peregrine Falcons were seen regularly (on something like 25 days) between 2 August and 17 October along Gustavus beaches and in Glacier Bay. -BBP, NKD, PMS, MDS, JN

Four on 7 August in lower Glacier Bay (NKD), **five** on 25 August west of town (BBP), and three on 1 October west of town (NKD) were the only counts reported of greater than two.

American Coot

One to four birds from 8 October to 3 November on ponds around the airport. -NKD
One on 18 November in the Salmon River with ice clinging to the feathers on its back. -NKD

Sandhill Crane

Migration was concentrated in mid-September and peaked on 15 September when over **10,000** cranes were estimated flying over Gustavus. -NKD

American Golden-Plover

Four on 11 August west of town. -NKD
Six on 13 August west of town. -BBP
Three on 16 August west of town. -NKD
Five on 19 August east of the dock. -BBP
Three on 20 August near the Salmon River. -BBP
One on 30 August west of town. -PMS
One on 3 September near the Salmon River. -BBP
Two on 6 September with one near the Salmon River and one east of the dock. -BBP

Pacific Golden-Plover

Pacific Golden-Plovers were seen regularly from 13 August to 29 October along Gustavus beaches. -NKD, BBP, PMS
The high count was thirteen Pacific Golden-Plovers with one unidentified golden-plover on 10 October west of town. -NKD
Ten on 17 October west of town was a good number for that late in the season. -NKD
Six on 29 October on the golf course in town were the last seen. -NKD

Unidentified golden-plovers were reported on a number of dates (BBP, NKD), including ten on 29 August east of the dock (PMS).

Six on 1 October west of town were a mix of American and Pacific Golden-Plovers. -NKD
Three on 9 October on the golf course appeared to be American Golden-Plovers. -NKD

Solitary Sandpiper

One on 12 August at the gravel pit ponds north of town. -BBP
One on 13 August in town. -NKD
One on 16, 18, and 19 August east of town. -BBP, NKD
One on 1 September at Dry Bay. -JK

Hudsonian Godwit

Two on 20 August west of town. -NKD

Least Sandpiper

One white (leucistic?) bird on 22 and 23 August in a small flock on the Salmon River. -BBP, NKD

White-rumped Sandpiper

One on 17 August east of the town dock with Least Sandpipers and Western Sandpipers. -BBP
This is the second record for the area.

Sharp-tailed Sandpiper

One, possibly more, on 2 September east of the dock. -BBP
One on 14 October with Long-billed Dowitchers on the Salmon River. -NKD

Dunlin

The arrival of winter shorebirds was not well documented due to weather conditions. The first flock of more than 500 shorebirds that I saw was on 26 November at the mouth of the Salmon River. I estimated 3,000 birds of which most were Dunlin with Rock Sandpipers and Sanderlings mixed in. -NKD

On 28 November west of town, I estimated 2,500 to 3,000 shorebirds of which most were Dunlin with 200-300 Rock Sandpipers and 100 or so Sanderlings. -NKD

Stilt Sandpiper

From 12 to 30 August, Stilt Sandpipers were seen regularly in streams and drainages along Gustavus beaches in numbers greater than ever before. (BBP, NKD) Only in the fall of 2007, when the area recorded its first Stilt Sandpiper, did numbers approach those of this season.

High counts were:

Seventeen on 14 August east of the dock. -BBP

Twenty-six on 17 August east of the dock. -BBP This tied the previous high count from 2007.

Seventeen on 20 August east of the dock. -NKD

One on 26 August in Bartlett Cove was the only report not from Gustavus beaches. -NKD

Buff-breasted Sandpiper

One, possibly two, on 6 September with one east of town and one west of town. -BBP, NKD

Red-necked Phalarope

Although abundant at times in Glacier Bay and Icy Strait, on 29 August Bruce Paige was surprised to see a Red-necked Phalarope land in his yard in north Gustavus and forage for insects in the lawn with robins before moving on. A new bird for his yard list of 23 years.

Sabine's Gull

One on 5 and 22 August in lower Glacier Bay. -NKD

Ring-billed Gull

One on 8 August at the top of the west arm of Glacier Bay. -NKD

California Gull

One on 12 August at the top of the west arm of Glacier Bay. -NKD

Three on 30 August east of town at Rink Creek. -BBP, PMS, NKD

One on 8 October west of the Salmon River. -NKD

Caspian Tern

Caspian Terns were at Bartlett Cove and along Gustavus beaches from 2 August to 8 September.
-BBP, NKD, PMS

High counts were:

Thirty-six on 2 August west of town. All adults -BBP

Fourteen on 20 August near the Salmon River. -BBP

Eleven on 16 August with four juveniles and seven adults west of town. -NKD

Twenty-one on 18 August with four juveniles and seventeen adults east of town. -NKD

Long-tailed Jaeger

One on 14 August in lower Glacier Bay. -NKD

One on 28 August in the west arm of Glacier Bay. -NKD

Kittlitz's Murrelet

Numbers in Glacier Bay dropped sharply after early August. A few birds continued to be seen regularly through 18 September, which was my last trip into the bay with decent viewing conditions. -NKD

Horned Puffin

One to four birds were seen regularly in Glacier Bay through 16 September. Two high counts during the period were eleven on 29 August and nine on 12 September. -NKD

Eurasian Collared-Doves

Up to four in early August, then two through the rest of the period at the house in town where they have been seen over the last year. -LMR

One to two were also seen occasionally during August and September in town at the boat harbor and may have been the doves from Laurie's house. -P. Berry, NKD

Great Horned Owl

One on 1 September in town. -RFWY

One on 12 and 18 September in Bartlett Cove. -NKD

One on 2 October and for several days prior in the Crane Flats west of town. -LMP

One on 3 October in the Good River neighborhood. -RFWY

One on 23 October in town. -NKD

Snowy Owl

One on 24 November near the town dock. -G&LJ

One on 26 November west of the town dock. -NKD

Northern Pygmy-Owl

One on 7 August on the Hydro road east of town. -BBP

One on 20 August in north Gustavus. -BBP

One heard and/or seen regularly from 15 September through 17 November at my cabin in town. -NKD

One on 9 September in the Good River neighborhood. -P. Barnes

One on 8 and 11 September east of the town dock. -BBP

One on 24 September in town. -PBSV

One on 27 September in northwest Gustavus. -PBSV

One on 29 September and 18 October in north Gustavus. -NKD

One on 5 October northwest of town. -NKD

One on 17 October along the beach west of town. -NKD

One on about 27 October in the Good River neighborhood. -AM

Barred Owl

One on 22 and 30 November near my cabin in town. On 30 November, the owl ate part of a bird including a leg that looked like it belonged to a small owl. -NKD

Short-eared Owl

One on 29 October in town. -TDV

A number of Short-eared Owls arrived in Gustavus on 17 November with several people reporting them in town. -LMR and others.

Six on 17 November were visible from the golf course along the beaches with three to the east and three to the west. -NKD

One to two were along the beaches visible from the golf course from 17 to 27 November. -NKD

Northern Saw-whet Owl

One on 22 September in the Good River neighborhood. -RFWY

Common Nighthawk

One on 27 August was flushed from the golf course. -NKD

Anna's Hummingbird

One probable Anna's Hummingbird on 26 September east of town in the Rink Creek area. -TJF (The description of the bird fit Anna's Hummingbird much better than Rufous Hummingbird.)

One on 1 October in town. -TDV

One from 3 October to 18 November at the Gustavus Inn in town where one was last fall and winter. -DL, NKD

Downy Woodpecker

One on 31 August and two on 4 September near town. -PMS, BBP

One on five dates from 7 September to 28 October at different locations in the Gustavus area. -NKD

American Three-toed Woodpecker

One on 13 October in west Gustavus. -NKD

One on 17 October and two on 28 October along Dude Creek west of town. -NKD

One on 22 November in Bartlett Cove. -NKD

Olive-sided Flycatcher

An adult feeding two juveniles on 6 August near the airport was evidence of local nesting. -NKD

Alder Flycatcher

Alder Flycatchers are regular (uncommon) breeders at reliable locations around Gustavus, including inside the airport fence. On 4 August, Alder Flycatchers were heard and/or seen at five locations along a half mile stretch of the airport fence including an adult with a bill full of insects at one location and two fledglings giving "free beer" calls at another. -NKD

Western Kingbird

One on 4 and 5 August near the airport. -NKD, BBP, JFS, MDS,

This is the third record for Glacier Bay and the first for Gustavus according to Bruce Paige.

Steller's Jay

Steller's Jays were common around town through the period.

Some high counts:

Fourteen on 7 August on the Hydro road east of town. -BBP

Eighteen on 1 September eating Mountain Ash berries in her yard. -KN

Thirteen on 23 October with nine at my cabin in town and four others in town. -NKD

Horned Lark

Two on 2 November west of town. -NKD

Black-capped Chickadee

Black-capped Chickadees were observed regularly from 9 August to 3 September at Dry Bay.

Up to fifteen on 9 August and twenty on 3 September were in mixed flocks that included Chestnut-backed Chickadees. -JK

Cedar Waxwing

None reported.

American Tree Sparrow

American Tree Sparrows, which winter along Gustavus beaches, started arriving in October.

A minimum of **sixty** on 18 November near the town dock was a new high count for me. -NKD

Chipping Sparrow

Two on 31 August near town. -PMS

Chipping Sparrow is very rare in Gustavus. This is one of only a few fall records.

Black-headed Grosbeak

One on 15 September at Dry Bay. -JK

Brown-headed Cowbird

One on 8 August riding on a cruise ship in Glacier Bay. -NKD

One on 28 August riding on a cruise ship in Glacier Bay. -NKD

One on 30 August above the beach south of the airport. -BBP, PMS, NKD

Pine Grosbeak

Pine Grosbeaks began arriving in Gustavus in early October. From 16 October through the end of the period, they were common in the Gustavus area and were heard and seen frequently.

I saw 23 Pine Grosbeaks on 19 November among four locations near town. -NKD

Red Crossbills and White-winged Crossbills

After the big winter, spring, and early summer for crossbills, they were almost non-existent this fall. During the period, I detected Red Crossbills on two dates- 11 and 15 August and White-winged Crossbills on one date- 23 November. -NKD

Common Redpoll

Small numbers of Common Redpolls were seen or heard regularly in the Gustavus area from 18 October through the end of the period. -NKD

Pine Siskin

There were very few Pine Siskins around in August and September. Small numbers were seen and/or heard regularly during October and November. -NKD