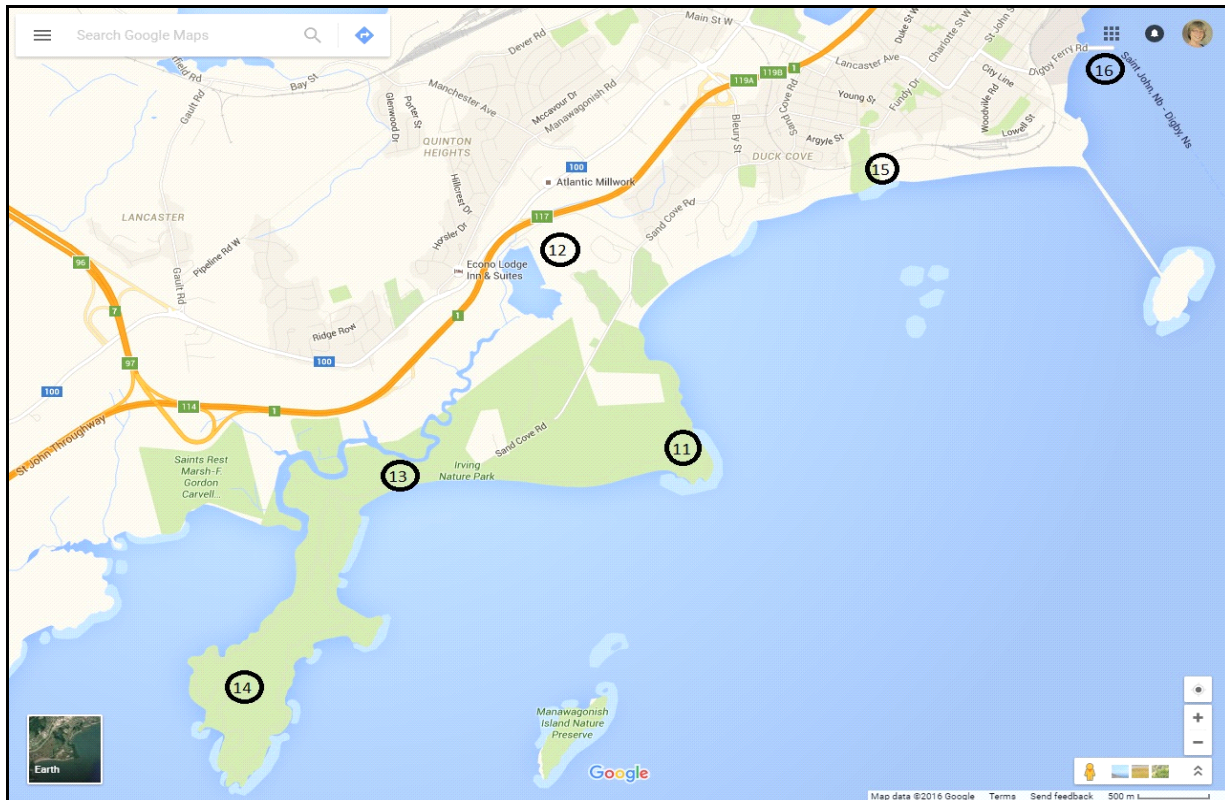


SAINT JOHN WEST – MAP 1C



From the birder's point of view, the most interesting part of west Saint John is Saints Rest Marsh and its environs. The Irving Nature Park contains Sheldon Point, the Children's Forest, Saints Rest Beach, Taylor's Island at the end of the causeway and part of Saints Rest Marsh. To reach the park if you are travelling west on Route 1, take Exit 119 A under the overpass and keep right onto Bleury Street. If you are travelling east on Route 1, take Exit 119 A-B Catherwood and turn right at the lights onto Bleury Street. At the end of Bleury Street, turn right onto Sand Cove Road.

11. SHELDON POINT

The parking lot for Sheldon Point is on the left (eastern) side of Sand Cove Road 1.7 km from the Sand Cove/Bleury junction. A 4 km trail from the barn winds through low-growth deciduous and older growth conifers to the rocky point. Seabirds such as Double-crested Cormorants and gulls fly close to this headland on their trips from their nesting colonies on Manawagonish Island. Eiders, scoters, and loons may be seen off shore. Warblers migrate along this coast. The first 200 meters of the trail is excellent habitat for warblers and other passerines and has yielded more than its fair share of rarer species.

12. LANCASTER SEWAGE LAGOON

Continue on Sand Cove Road past the Sheldon Point entrance for 0.3 km. Park in the small parking area on either side of the road near the radio towers and walk down the gravel lane on the right side of Sand Cove Road directly to the lagoon. The lower end of the trail before reaching the lagoon winds through alders and can be quite wet. This is a preferred route in the morning. When the sun is setting, it is easier to view the lagoon by taking the trail found in the Children's Forest Park that leads down to the western side of the lagoon. The lagoon can also be viewed from the east-bound lane of Route 1, just past the Tourist Bureau. Ducks, gulls and a variety of shorebirds are often abundant, especially in spring and fall.

13. SAINTS REST MARSH

At the end of Sand Cove Road a large tidal marsh is on the right surrounded by fields, conifers and a one-kilometer barrier beach on the left. The staff of the Irving Nature Park work diligently to educate visitors about the Marram Grass of Saints Rest Beach which is vital to maintaining the integrity of the shoreline and the marsh. Any traffic on the Marram Grass, by foot or vehicles, causes damage that will eventually threaten the marsh.

Nelson's Sharp-tailed Sparrows nest here in summer and Snow Buntings, Lapland Longspurs and Horned Larks may be seen in winter. This is a good spot for migrants: land birds (late March to mid-May, mid-August to late October), shorebirds (late July to mid-October) and waterfowl (late March to mid-May, late September to mid-November). Shorebirds congregate on the marsh and on the barrier beach at high tide. Look for duck, heron and egret on marsh ponds and in the creek. Peregrine Falcons, Merlins and Northern Harriers patrol the marsh and beaches. The Tourist Bureau on the east-bound lane of the Saint John Throughway, Route 1, is also a good viewing spot for the marsh. To reach the Tourist Bureau from Saint John, take Route 1 west to Exit 112 (Lorneville). Return on the east-bound lane of Route 1 to the Tourist Bureau.

14. IRVING NATURE PARK (TAYLOR'S ISLAND)

This peninsula is reached by a causeway 3.9 km from the Sand Cove/Bleury junction. A 6.5 km perimeter road and many trails make the area very accessible. A 300 meter boardwalk (found on the right just past the causeway) allows good views of the southern area of the marsh. A short trail across from the information kiosk (located about 700 meters from the causeway) leads to a good spot to view migrating shorebirds as they feed on the rich mudflats (August – October). Just north of the information kiosk, a tower provides a spectacular view of the marsh and land birds in the treetops. From the southern shore of the island, eiders, mergansers and loons can often be seen.

15. BAY SHORE

This area of sand and mudflats has numerous gulls and in migration, some shorebirds. Offshore are the Shag Rocks, a favorite roosting place for cormorants when the tide is not too high. Best access is from the south end of Sea Street reached from Lancaster Avenue and Dufferin Row. You can also reach this shore by walking down from the entrance to Seaside Park on Fundy Drive which is off Sand Cove Road.

16. DIGBY FERRY

The car ferry to Digby Nova Scotia offers the local birder a chance to get out on the open seas to find shearwaters, gannets, alcids, jaegers and perhaps storm-petrels depending on the time of the year. Most of those birds do not come close to land and are best seen from July to October.