

Social Distance Crazy-as-a-Coot Bird Walks: March 16, 2021

Incidental Notes.

- For the first time in a year, we were able to include an in-person Crazy-as-a-Coot Bird Walk on Block Island. For the time being the in-persons walks will be limited to 10 people, with, of course, mask-wearing and other Covid protocols.
- Both lists are an aggregate of observations from the two groups of observers (B.I. and Afar).
- A note of caution: when counting at a bird feeder it is the most reliable/conservative to count the number of a species seen at any one time. Care should be taken to not over count by tallying the cumulative number seen.
- [Things in brackets are notes by me - kg] How I quantify: Few=3, Several=5, Many/Numerous=10

Block Island

(40 species)

Canada Geese – 100

Mallard – 39+

Ring-necked Duck – 2

Common Eider – 17

Black Scoter - >1500

Long-tailed Duck – 9

Common Golden-eye – 19

Bufflehead – 11

Hooded Merganser – 2

Red-breasted Merganser – 10

Ring-necked Pheasant – 1

Double-crested Cormorant – 1

Northern Harrier – 3

Purple Sandpiper – 8

American Woodcock – 1

Herring Gull – 3

Great Black-backed Gull – 5

Mourning Dove – 16

Rock Pigeon – 15
Red-bellied Woodpecker – 2
Downy Woodpecker – 4
Woodpecker species – 1
Blue Jay – 2
American Crow – 39+
Fish Crow – 5
Black-capped Chickadee – 4
Red-breasted Nuthatch – 2
Carolina Wren – 10+
American Robin – 37+
Brown Thrasher – 1
N. Mockingbird – 1
European Startling – >200
Song Sparrow – 9
White-throated Sparrow – 7
Northern Cardinal – 26
Red-winged Blackbird – 149+
Common Grackle – 16
Brown-headed Cowbird – 14
House Finch – 7
Purple Finch – 2
House Sparrow – 32

From Afar Barrington and Cumberland, RI; St. Petersburg, FL; Pleasant Hill and Roseberg, OR; Sedbergh, England. (66 species)

Canada Goose – 3
Muscovy Duck – 8
Mallard – 12
Ring-necked Duck – 13
Bufflehead – 10
Common Merganser – 1

Red-breasted Merganser – 2
*Pheasant² – 3
Pied-billed Grebe – 9
Brown Pelican – 4
Anhinga – 2
Double-crested Cormorant – 6
Great Blue Heron – 4
Great Egret – 2
Green Heron – 1
Tricolored Heron – 1
Cattle Egret – 2
Roseate Spoonbill – 1
Black Vulture – 2
Turkey Vulture – 3
Osprey – 10
Bald Eagle – 1
Cooper's Hawk – 2
Common Gallinule – 8
Limpkin – 1
*Oystercatcher – 2
Sandpiper Species – 10
*Curlew – 2
Laughing Gull – 10
Herring Gull – 1
*Wood Pigeon – 3
Mourning Dove – 4
Rock Pigeon – 15
Acorn Woodpecker – 4
Red-bellied Woodpecker – 6
Northern Flicker – 2 Yellow-shafted
Northern Flicker – 2 Red-shafted
Pileated Woodpecker – 1

Steller's Jay – 1
Western Scrub-Jay – 2
Blue Jay – 3
*Magpie – 3
American Crow – 14
Common Raven – 2
*Crow species – 3
*Blue Tit – 3
White-breasted Nuthatch – 1
Black-capped Chickadee – 6
Tufted Titmouse – 2
Carolina Wren – 3
Ruby-crowned Kinglet – 1
*Blackbird – 3
*Robin – 3
American Robin – 12+
*Song Thrush – 2
European Starling – 1
Yellow-rumped Warbler – 1
Spotted Towhee – 1
Song Sparrow – 5
White-crowned Sparrow – 7
Golden-crowned Sparrow – 4
Oregon Junco – 5
Northern Cardinal – 4
Red-winged Blackbird – 2
Common Grackle – 2
American Goldfinch – 4
House Sparrow – 4

¹**Dark-eyed Junco** (*Junco hyemalis*) is a species that “includes at least six recognizable populations.” (The Sibley Guide to Birds). A junco seen on the east coast is Slate-colored Junco (*Junco hyemalis*). On the west coast, both Slate-colored and Oregon Junco (*Junco hyemalis*) can be found. So, when I am recording Junco sightings on the east coast I will list them as Slate-colored; however west coast Juncos will be recorded as Dark-eyed unless the reporter stipulates Oregon or Slate-colored.

²Pheasant (UK) and Ring-necked Pheasant (US) (*Phasianus colchicus*)

Barby Michel & Grace B. Hi Kim, We weren't out much but saw a few birds. 3 red-winged blackbirds, dozens of robins, dozens of crows, 2 Canada geese, 2 mallards, 1 northern harrier

Cathy Joyce & Nigel Grindley – Here's our "home" list from yesterday - the first 3 species are from Warden's Pond, the rest from our feeders and yard. Canada Goose 11, Ring-necked Ducks 2, Hooded Merganser 2, Mourning Dove 2, Red-bellied Woodpecker 1, Downy Woodpecker 2, Blue Jay 1, Am. Crow 5, Black-capped Chickadee 4, Red-breasted Nuthatch 2, Carolina Wren 1, Brown Thrasher 1, White-throated Sparrow 7, Song Sparrow 4, Cardinal 21, Red-winged Blackbird 26, Common Grackle 1, Brown-headed Cowbird 1, House Finch 4, Purple Finch 2, House Sparrow 5

Crazy-as-a-Coot Bird Walkers – 3/17. Amy Keeler, Gail & Shorty Cahill, Heather Hatfield, Nigel Grindley & Cathy Joyce, Socha Cohen, Susan Matheke, & Kim Gaffett. Area covered: Statue of Rebecca to Ballard's Beach, behind Harbor Church, up Spring street to Spring House Pond; with a brief stop at Pat Campbell's to celebrate her birthday. DC Cormorant 1, Canada Geese 58, Mallard 12, C. Eider 15, Long-tailed Duck 9, Black Scoter >1,000, C. Golden-eye, Bufflehead 9, RB Merganser 5, Pheasant 1, Purple Sandpiper 8, H Gull 2, GBBG 1, Mourning Dove 12, Rock Pigeon 15, Woodpecker species heard 1, Blue Jay 1, Amer.Crow 8, Fish Crow 5, Carolina Wren 3, A. Robin 12+, E. Starling>50, Song Sp. 3, N. Cardinal 3, Red-winged BlkBrd 100+, C. Grackle 8, Brown-headed Cowbird 13, House Sparrow 25.

Dan Kasuba – A lot of the "snowbirds" have left St Petersburg, including the white pelicans and warblers. Still a few pine and yellow rumped around, and still lots to see !!

1 roseate spoonbill, 1 limpkin, 2 black and 2 turkey vultures, 8 common galinules, 8 Muscovy ducks, 1 bald eagle, many ospreys, American crows and ring necked ducks, 6 mallard ducks, 4 great blue herons, 2 cattle egrets, 1 green and 1 tricolored heron, 4 brown pelicans, many unidentified sandpipers, many laughing gulls, 2 great herons [Listed as Great Egret? -kg], 8 pied billed grebes, 1 pileated wood pecker, 6 red bellied wood peckers, 6 double crested cormorants and 2 anhingas. Thanks as always !!

Erica Anderson – Pleasant Hill, OR. Hi Kim, our weather on Tuesday was clear, sunny but a cold breeze keeps reminding us it's only spring here. Our wild flowering current is out which means the hummingbirds are back in town. I didn't see many birds today but I got to see a real treat. There have been 3 hawks, which I think are Cooper's Hawks flying around our house, landing in the trees by the river. We hear them calling during the day. Yesterday I was watching one through my binoculars as it flew around, landed in one tree and flew around some more. I saw it settle at the top of a Ponderosa in the field next to us. Another hawk came flying towards it and I assumed it was going to dive bomb the hawk in the tree. Turned out it was going to mate with the one in the tree! I got to see their brief copulation then the male flew away. They are still flying around calling today and I'm really hoping to report a nest and chicks over the next few months.

Kim Gaffett – Cold (below 32 most of day) but low wind. I spent time in Rodman's Hollow (RH), home yard & feeders (KG), and at the table of Nancy Greenaway (NG). RH: from the bluff - >500+ Black Scoters (likely other Scoter species also in the rafts), Common Eider 2, Red-breasted Merganser 5; in the pond along Black Rock Rd. – Bufflehead 2; throughout the trails – Canada Goose 9, + 5 Herring Gull 1, GBBG 4, American Crow 6, Carolina Wren 5+, Song Sparrow 2, N. Cardinal 2, Marsh Hawk 1, A. Robin 1, KG: Mallard >25, Canada Goose 15, Mourning Dove 2, Downy Woodpecker 2, Red-bellied Woodpecker 1, A. Crow 4, A. Robin 12, E. Starling >150, Red-winged blackbird 20+, C. Grackle 7+, Carolina Wren 1, House finch 3, House Sparrow 2. NG: N. Harrier 1, A. Crow 4, N. Mockingbird 1.

[Laura Rosenzweig](#) - I hope spring will be with you very soon. It's certainly making me feel better now that the days are longer and getting warmer (and drier!). I have a short report gathered over a couple of days while I've been out and about: The first thing to report is the return of the Curlews. I saw two flying over some open moorland on Sunday [3/14] (Mother's Day here in the UK). I love their trilling call, it's such a



pure note. One of the many myths about curlews says that if they are flying and calling there is a storm on the way and sure enough not long after they had passed overhead we got hammered by a short sharp hailstorm. Apparently both farmers and sailors say this about the curlew. I've attached a photo of one I took on Loch Nevis several years ago. They're one of my favourite birds, I think it's the beautiful beak that does it for me!

Yesterday [3/17] I saw my first two song thrush of the year, spooked out of their hiding place in an overgrown thicket by you-know-who. And the wren showed up again in our garden. I think they nest in between the dry stones of our walls.

Other firsts this week include the frogs coming back to the pond and some large sleepy bumblebees buzzing around the winter-flowering honeysuckle.

There are more blackbirds around now too, along with the ubiquitous robins, blue tits, pigeons and crows and pheasants. I've also seen magpies and oystercatchers here and there. [Listed 3 of each as a conservative accounting -kg]

That's all for this Coot report. I shall try to keep my eyes open for more unusual songbirds and ducks on the river.

[Lauren Miller-Donnelly](#) – I totally did not get in any birding yesterday (3/16). I have been visiting Police Cove in [Barrington](#) with frequency because of a new dock that is being installed there. It's a really diverse spot because it's kind of wet with backyards abutting it with established trees and overgrown areas along the bike path it even has some really nice thicketed habitat. Spring is in the air! Multiple Robins, 3 Song Sparrows, 3 Carolina Wrens, a male cardinal and red winged blackbirds all singing away.

3/17: Bufflehead 10, Red-breasted Merganser 2, Pied-billed Grebe* 1, Rock Pigeon (Feral Pigeon) 15, Mourning Dove 2, Herring Gull 1, Northern Flicker 1, Blue Jay 2, Black-capped Chickadee 3, Carolina Wren 3, American Robin 8, American Goldfinch 2, White-throated Sparrow 7, Song Sparrow 3, Red-winged Blackbird 2, Northern Cardinal 2. *I saw the Pied-billed Grebe here Friday last week doing a site visit, so I was really hoping it was going to be there for this count. **And it was!** I found it unusual to have that species in a semi-estuarine habitat so that's pretty cool.

[Molly O'Neill](#) – 3/15 We saw a woodcock this evening by the Breed property - on the trail to the beach! Very exciting

[Penny Lapham](#) – Still staying close to home. Sunny but very chilly for our time of year - the daffodils were unhappy.

2 American Goldfinch, 5 Oregon Junco, 3 House Sparrow, 4 Golden-crowned Sparrow, 1 Spotted Towhee, 1 Yellow-rumped Warbler, 3 American Robin, 1 Ruby-crowned Kinglet, 2 Black-capped Chickadee, 1 Common Raven, 2 Western Scrub-jay, 1 Steller's Jay, 2 Northern Flicker, 4 Acorn Woodpecker, 2 Mourning Dove, 1 European Starling, 1 Common Merganser, 3 Ring-necked Duck, 6 Mallard, 3 Canada Geese.

[Tim Mooney](#) - Cumberland, RI. High 30s but calm. An exciting bird today – Common Raven. I never actually saw it, but I could hear it croaking off and on all day. I can't remember hearing another one before at home. Crows were calling at the same time so I could compare the two. I almost blinded myself looking for it in the southern sky, somewhere overhead! Common Raven – 1 (flying over and around), Turkey Vulture – 1 (flying over the house, low. It was early,

about 7am), American Crow – 4, Blue Jay – 1, Common Grackle – 2, Northern Cardinal – 2, American Robin – 1, Song Sparrow – 2, House Sparrow – 1, Tufted Titmouse – 2, Black-capped Chickadee – 1, Northern Flicker – 1, White-breasted Nuthatch – 1