Where-on-farEarth & Crazy-as-a-Coot Bird Walks

October 20, 2026

Incidental Notes

Hi Everyone,

Another great list of observations from far and wide. On Block Island we are starting to see the shift from breeding birds and passers-through migrants to our winter birds, especially the ducks.

Two interesting tid-bits of information are illustrated by Amy's observations of Brown-headed Cowbirds in their typical behavior – atop a herd animal (to learn more go to: https://www.audubon.org/field-guide/bird/brown-headed-cowbird); and Ellen's observation of gulls flying in a V formation – a behavior that I had not known in gulls before Ellen commented on it..

Again in this compilation is another fun look at Sean William's morning flight birds (see below, but not listed in the BI list).

Peace, Kim

Remember, no matter where on earth you are, enjoy the birds and the day.

- 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. Observations in Gray are deemed to be a double observation and are therefore not counted in the list. 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, Flock = 15+

Block Island

(35 species!)

Canada Goose – 146+
Mallard – 37
Ring-necked Pheasant – 14
Common Eider – 4
White-winged Scoter – ~35
Red-breasted Merganser – ~40
Northern Gannet – 10
Cormorant species – 10
Double-crest. Cormorant – 25
Bald Eagle – 2
Northern Harrier – 9
Sharp-shinned Hawk – 2
Cooper's Hawk – 3
Gull species – 184+
American Herring Gull – 12
Great Black-backed Gull – 2
Mourning Dove – 8
Rock Pigeon – 10+
Downy Woodpecker – 2
Northern Flicker – 1
Blue Jay – 43
American Crow – 52+
Common Raven – 2
Black-capped Chickadee – 1
Carolina Wren – 3
American Robin – 6
Northern Mockingbird – 2
European Starling – 100+
Black-and-white Warbler – 1
Blackpoll Warbler – 2
Black-thr.-blue Warbler – 1
Song Sparrow – 3
Northern Cardinal – 3
Brown-headed Cowbird – 3
House Sparrow – 6

From Afar

Cumberland & South Kingstown, RI; Jamesport - Southold, NY; Westport, Pittsfield & Dalton, MA;

(46 species)

Canada Goose – 54+
Mallard – 5
Wild Turkey – 9
Turkey Vulture – 2
Bald Eagle – 3
Cooper's Hawk – 2
Red-shouldered Hawk – 1
Broad-winged Hawk – 2
Red-tailed Hawk – 1
Ring-billed Gull – 8
Amer. Herring Gull – 8
Rock Pigeon – 10

Mourning Dove – 32
Great Horned Owl – 2
Red-bellied Woodpecker – 8
Downy Woodpecker – 5
Hairy Woodpecker – 1
Northern Flicker – 2
Pileated Woodpecker – 1
Blue Jay – 24
American Crow – 18
Fish Crow – 3
Common Raven – 4
Black-capped Chickadee – 9
Tufted Titmouse – 12
White-breasted Nuthatch – 10
Carolina Wren – 2
Eastern Bluebird – 2
American Robin – 19
Northern Mockingbird – 4
European Starling – 17
Cedar Waxwing – 2
Yellow-rumped[2] Warbler – 2
Yellow-breasted Chat – 1
Chipping Sparrow – 5
Song Sparrow – 7
White-throated Sparrow – 7
Slate-colored[1] Junco – 3
Northern Cardinal – 6
Red-winged Blackbird – 36
Common Grackle – 26
Brown-headed Cowbird – 7
House Finch – 9
Pine Siskin – 1
American Goldfinch – 4
House Sparrow – 21

Also seen: a bunch of squirrels,

Amy Keeler – Bird List Tuesday, October 20,2026. Going about my day. What a beautiful bird walk we had this morning ‼Thank You, Kim. Bird sightings between Mitchell Lane, Westside and Corn Neck Rd. Area. Always the best sightings on top of a horse. Speaking of horses: 3 Cowbird (on horse's back), 12 Crow, 14 Bluejay, 100+ Canada Goose (50 flying/50 at Ball Farm), 26 Mallard (Beacon Hollow Farm), 1 Cooper Hawk, 6 Marsh Hawk, 2 Downy Woodpecker, 50+ Starling (cn), 2 Carolina Wren, 6 RN Pheasant , 9 Cormorant, 1 Raven (ml), 4 Gull species, 1 Flicker, 2 Mockingbird, 6 House Sparrow, 2 Song Sparrow.



Br-Hd'd Cowbird



Cathy Joyce & Nigel Grindley – Hi Kim. Here's our bird list for today seen around the yard or at the Cooneymus beach: Mallard 2, Common eider 4, White-winged scoter ~35 (remarkably, 4 were on Warden's Pond giving us a particularly close look!), Red-breasted merganser ~40, Double-crested cormorant 15, Herring gull 12, Great black-backed gull 2, Mourning dove 4, Blue jay 7, American robin 2, Chickadee 1 and as the sun was setting - 30+ American crows! Great walk this morning - many thanks for showing us another of Block Island's magical places! Cheers, Cathy and Nigel

Crazy-as-a-Coot bird walkers – Lewis Farm Rd-Dennis's Meadow, Washington, Rhode Island, US
Oct 20, 2026 8:00 AM - 9:45 AM. Protocol: Traveling 2.0 mile(s) Checklist Comments: Cloudy, 50F, windy/NE 20 mph (gusts to 30mph). Lewis Farm Rd. to TNC's Dennis's Meadow and environs. Participants: Cathy Joyce, Nigel Grindley, Melissa Edberg + 1, Amy Keeler, Pat Saylor, Nancy Miles, Chuck McMellon, Emily Sessa, Ellen Davis, Robin Langsdorf, Laura Rosenzweig, Gail & Shorty Cahill, & Kim G. Birds sparse, so spent time on plants & fungi: Sweet Everlasting, Mouse ear Hawkweed, gone-by-goldenrods and asters, clumps of black cherry, and puffballs, wax cap and Russala mushrooms. 13 species: Canada Goose 40, Ring-necked Pheasant 2, Mourning Dove 4, Double-crested Cormorant 11, Sharp-shinned Hawk 2, Cooper's Hawk 2, Marsh Hawk 2, Blue Jay 14, American Crow 10, Common Raven 1, Carolina Wren 1, American Robin 1, Blackpoll Warbler 2.

Dan Kasuba – Hi Kim, After 40 years in Boston it's been great returning to my roots in the Berkshires a few years ago. While raking yesterday I witnessed a large V of Canada geese, barely visible, honking their way South.(3rd time over past week). 10/20/26-Sightings in Pittsfield MA throughout the day: 2 turkey vultures, 13 American crows, 8 ring-billed gulls, 1 Cooper's hawk; Dalton MA- > 50 Canada geese, 2 white throated sparrows, 2 bluebirds, 1 blue jay, 2 American robins, 1 white breasted nuthatch, 2 black capped chickadees, 2 tufted titmice, 2 slate-colored juncos, 1 mourning dove, 1 red-bellied woodpecker and 1 pileated woodpecker. Thanks! And on October 22: Hi Kim, I just wanted to let you know that a large flock of Bohemian wax wings was in my yard this morning. Very exciting.! [Very cool! -Kg]

Ellen Davis – Thanks again for the great walk. The colors and flora were lovely. For my "out and about" list - Very few birds were around during the afternoon. I did see one male pheasant, one cormorant, five ducks (male, female and 3 juveniles). Mostly interestedly was a large v-formation of approx 80 gulls, not sure what kind, flying north.

Follow-up messages: The gannets are back! & Hi Kim, The ducks were mallards. At first I thought the v was either Canada geese or cormorants but I'm fairly certain they were neither. They looked like gulls! So I googled it and AI told me this….. "Seagulls fly in a V-formation to save energy. When the lead gull flaps its wings, it creates an upward-moving current of air called an **upwash** at its wingtips. Trailing gulls fly slightly behind and to the side to catch this lift, which cuts down on wind resistance and physical effort during long flights between feeding and roosting spots." Of course this description could be for any flock that flies in a v [true -Kg]. I'd trust your opinion more than AI. Number of gannets - 10. They've moved on now. Best, Ellen.

[Of course I'm dismayed at the use of "seagull" on the web 😊. I followed your lead and checked a few resources, and I also learned that sometimes gulls (especially in the *Larus* genus - such as Amer. Herring, Great Black-backed, and Ring-billed gulls) will fly in V formation to and from feeding grounds. I love learning something new sparked by your (and other's) observations. Many thanks. -Kg]

Emily Sessa – Yes, two eagles! Also blue jays, let's say three of them.

Katrina Scott – Block Island 10/20: A.M. observations on Breed Land ROW to the beach: Black-throated Blue Warbler 1, Black-and-white Warbler 1, Blue Jay 5, Cardinal 1, Pheasant 5; on utility wires near Mitchel Farm lots of E. Starling [20+]. Oct. 19 Breed Land & Sachem Pond: Laughing Gull 10, Ruddy Duck 10+, Herring Gull 10+, Common Loons 5, Double-crested Cormorant 10, Canada Geese many. [numbers are conservative estimate; and, 10/19 birds are not in the Block Island list above. -kg]

Kim Gaffett – At home: Robins 3, Canada Geese 6, Mallard 4; while transiting island roads: E. Starlings 50+, Pigeon 10+; at Lapham's: N. Cardinal 1, Song Sparrow 1, C. Raven 1.

Laura Rosenzweig – On Block Island - Out and about: 1 x Marsh Hawk, all the gulls on the island (or so it seemed, dozens and dozens!) flocked together on old harbour pier below The Surf. [100+ -Kg]. Laura

Lauren Miller-Donnelly – HI Kim, hoping for some good late migrants this month and in early November. Blackbirds are starting to mass-up at dusk, they will start to gather in the thousands soon. A large group of ~50 Fish Crows has been seen around the neighborhood over the last week. And pine siskins and yellow-rumps are heard daily.

Not too windy in my yard before work on the 20th. Here are the regulars from my yard: Mourning Dove 2, Cooper's Hawk 1, Hairy Woodpecker 1, Northern Flicker 1, Blue Jay 2, American Crow 1, Fish Crow 1, Black-capped Chickadee 1, Tufted Titmouse 1, White-breasted Nuthatch 1, Carolina Wren 1, American Robin 10, Cedar Waxwing 1, House Sparrow 3, House Finch 4, Pine Siskin 1, Chipping Sparrow 5, Dark-eyed Junco 1, Red-winged Blackbird 25, Common Grackle 2, Yellow-rumped Warbler 2, Northern Cardinal 1. Best, Lauren

Maggie Komosinski – Hi Kim, another season of COOTS/WOE walks! Yesterday's weather here on Long Island's North Fork was just right for watching birds. My sightings include birds in the yard, along our dog-walk routes (am&pm) and also birds seen as I drove east to Southold in the afternoon; this was where I saw

the eagle and hawk, both soaring. No warblers! No kinglets! Wishing you a great Autumn - Maggie. Jamesport NY and areas: 20 Oct 2026: Canada Goose – 4, Wild Turkey – 9, Red-tailed Hawk – 1, Bald Eagle – 1, Mourning Dove – 8, Red-bellied Woodpecker – 5, Downy Woodpecker – 3, Blue Jay – 4, B.C. Chickadee – 2, Tufted Titmouse – 1, White-breasted Nuthatch – 1, Northern Mockingbird – 4, Am. Robin – 3, European Starling – 15, Red-winged Blackbird – 5, Brown-headed Cowbird – 3, C. Grackle – 19, Song Sparrow – 2, House Finch – 5, Am. Goldfinch – 2, House Sparrow – 8, Northern Cardinal – 1.

Mary Komosinski – Hi Kim! I hope you are doing well. My first list in a while is short as I was out and about quite a bit yesterday! But, here it is! 1 Cardinal, 3 Blue Jays, 1 Red Bellied Woodpecker, 1 White-throated Sparrow, 2 Song Sparrows, 12 Mourning Doves, 4 Grackles, 6 Red-winged Blackbirds, 2 House Sparrows, 1 Starling, 1 Robin. And a bunch of squirrels!!! Stay well, Mary

Sean Williams – RI Div. Fish & Wildlife - Block Island morning flight Tuesday 20 October 2026. Counting period: 06:49-10:04. Count type: all species. Weather (first period): wind NNE 21mph, cloud-cover 5/8, temperature 49 °F. Totals: 1392 individuals, 20 species, 3:15 hours

Common Eider	4	Ring-billed Gull	2	American Crow	6
Surf Scoter	9	Red-throated Loon	3	Common Raven	1
White-winged Scoter	240	Common Loon	18	American Pipit	11
Black Scoter	41	Northern Gannet	177	House Finch	1
Red-breasted Merganser	4	Great Cormorant	2	Pine Siskin	126
Bonaparte's Gull	2	Double-crested Cormorant	699	Savannah Sparrow	1
Laughing Gull	43	Sharp-shinned Hawk	2		

Tim Mooney – Hi Kim – If not for the Where-on-Earth walks, I don't know that I would have paused to look at a certain bird perched on a wire near my house. But I did look and sure enough, it was a cedar waxwing! A few blackbirds showed up this week, too. On October 19, a flock of about 50 grackles flew over, but just 1 remained on the 20th. Last week, I heard a late afternoon chorus of Red-winged Blackbirds in a nearby marsh. Two other local arrivals since the last official walk day are yellow-rumped warblers and white-throated sparrows. Best, Timm Brown-headed Cowbird – 4, Common Grackle – 1, European Starling – 1, Rock Pigeon – 10, Mourning Dove – 4, White-throated Sparrow – 1, House Sparrow – 8, Black-capped Chickadee – 2, Tufted Titmouse – 5, White-breasted Nuthatch – 3, Northern Flicker – 1, Red-bellied Woodpecker – 1, American Robin – 3, Blue Jay – 11, Cedar Waxwing – 1.

Tom Fetherston – Good evening, Kim – Another windy birding day, trees swaying and surf breaking over the dock on Wordens Pond. Made it challenging for the Labs to execute their retrieves in 2' waves. Once again, I'm sure the weather limited the number of birds seen, but there were some interesting sightings nonetheless, including the first arrival of white-throated sparrows.
Notes for this week:

- A pair of great horned owls has been taking evident delight in waking me during the wee hours for the past several nights. One will be in a tree by the pond, the other stationed near my bedroom window. Today was no different, although they did let me sleep in till 0450. I obviously couldn't see them in the pitch dark but counted the species on my list because there's no mistaking that hooting.
- While I sat having coffee on the side porch this morning, I was treated to a raptor fly-by overhead. The wind was so strong the birds were soaring and sometimes hovering above the trees. First one was a red-shouldered hawk, who stayed around for a bit. I wonder if it was the same chap who had snatched a chipmunk from the yard a couple of days ago, hoping for another careless rodent? I'll attach the photo I sent you, a very handsome bird. Next in the procession was an adult bald eagle, followed by a number of broad-winged hawks. I never saw more than two at once but had the sense, due to their

positions when they appeared over me that there were more than that. Ravens crashed the party, saw four at once but again think there were additional individuals.

- There were few birds on the pond due to the high waves. Did see some gulls, mallards and a juvenile bald eagle being harassed by crows.
- Here's an odd one. I've had a few Merlin detections of a yellow breasted chat during the summer. Never saw one, read they were difficult to spot because they sulk in thick brush. I got another hit on Merlin this morning, so went over to the edge of the woodland swamp on the west side of the yard and played back a recorded song. Within minutes the mystery bird was hopping around in the tree over my head. Huzzah! Another lifer.

Here's the list. Birds seen around Worden's Pond will be noted with WP. Estimates are noted with an asterisk (*) Birds in the field or at the feeders were counted as singles unless present simultaneously or different sexes.
Great horned owl (2), American crow (4), Fish crow (2), Common raven (4), Mallard (5) WP,
American herring gull (8*) WP, Bald eagle (2) yard & WP, Red-shouldered hawk, Broad-winged hawk (2),
Tufted titmouse (3), Black-capped chickadee (2), American goldfinch (2), Mourning dove (5), N. Cardinal (3),
Blue jay (3), Carolina wren, Downy woodpecker (2), White-breasted nuthatch (4), Song sparrow (3),
White-throated sparrow (3), Yellow-breasted chat. Cheers, Fether.
Photo: Red-shouldered hawk

- [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. What fun it will be if we get reports of one of the other Juncos which are generally seen in limited areas "mid-country".
- [2]Q. What is a [2]**Myrtle Warbler**? A. Yellow-rumped Warbler (YRWA), *Setophaga coronata*. The species YRWA is comprised of two subspecies, once considered separate species. The eastern population/subspecies was known as Myrltle Warbler (*coronata*) , and the western population/subspecies known as Audubon's Warbler (*audubonì*). These two reginal populations have been "lumped" to form Yellow-rumped Warbler.