

# WHERE-ON-EARTH & CRAZY-AS-A-COOT BIRD WALKS

May 19, 2026  
Incidental Notes

Hi Everyone,

Here's another fun compilation from near and far. In all locations spring migrants were strongly present. It is an interesting observation that Barn Swallows were seen from Alaska to Block Island to England – and all these populations are the same genus species. Check out [https://www.allaboutbirds.org/guide/Barn\\_Swallow/overview](https://www.allaboutbirds.org/guide/Barn_Swallow/overview)



Interesting side note to the May 19 observations is the capture of a Swainson's Warbler in my bird banding nets on May 18. Amazingly, this is the second Swainson's Warbler banded on Block Island (May 22, 2011 and May 18, 2026). This southeastern species is quite rare in southern New England. To learn more go to: [https://www.allaboutbirds.org/guide/Swainsons\\_Warbler/overview](https://www.allaboutbirds.org/guide/Swainsons_Warbler/overview)

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

(4 species)

Canada Goose – 52+

Mute Swan – 3

Mallard – 10+

Common Eider – 21

Ring-necked Pheasant – 5

Double-crested Cormorant – 30

Great Egret – 1

Green Heron – 1

Yellow-crown. Night-heron – 1

Osprey – 2

Marsh Hawk (N. Harrier) – 1

**Black-necked Stilt – 2**

American Herring Gull – 25+

Great Black-backed Gull – 50+

Mourning Dove – 4

Belted Kingfisher – 1

Blue Jay – 5

Common Raven – 1

Tree Swallow – 2

Bank Swallow – 87

Barn Swallow – 3

Black-backed Chickadee – 5

American Robin – 23

Gray Catbird – 15

Common Yellowthroat – 2

Northern Parula – 2

Northern Yellow Warbler – 20

Blackpoll Warbler – 3

Rufus-sided Towhee – 6

Song Sparrow – 1

Northern Cardinal – 3

Red-winged Blackbird – 50

American Goldfinch – 5

**From Afar** South Kingstown, Cumberland RI; Newton, Westport, & Berkshire Co., MA; Ketchikan & Juneau, AK; Sedbergh, England

(82 species)

Canada Goose – 16	Downy Woodpecker – 2	American Robin – 25
Mute Swan – 1	Hairy Woodpecker – 1	Gray Catbird – 15
Mallard – 5	Eastern Wood-Pewee – 1	Northern Mockingbird – 2
Wood Duck – 11	Eastern Phoebe – 1	European Starling – 13
White-winged Scoters – 4	Great-crested Flycatcher – 1	Cedar Waxwing – 2
Pied-billed Grebe – 1	Eastern Kingbird – 3	Ovenbird – 4
Pigeon Guillemot – 24	Eastern Warbling Vireo – 2	Black-and-white Warbler – 3
Cormorant species – 12	Red-eyed Vireo – 4	<b>Tennessee Warbler – 1</b>
Double-crested Cormorant – 2	Blue Jay – 10	Common Yellowthroat – 4
Gray Heron* – 1	Stellar Jay – 1	American Redstart – 7
Great Blue Heron – 1	Carrion Crow* – 1	Northern Parula – 2
Snowy Egret – 1	Jackdaw* – 1	Northern Yellow Warbler – 13
Turkey Vulture – 1	American Crow – 7	Blackpoll Warbler – 3
Osprey – 1	Fish Crow – 1	Chipping Sparrow – 6
Bald Eagle – 4	Common Raven – 6	Song Sparrow – 10
Red-shouldered Hawk – 1	Tree Swallow – 8	Swamp Sparrow – 1
Killdeer – 1	Barn Swallow – 46+	Scarlet Tanager – 2
Semipalmated Sandpiper – 1	Black-capped Chickadee – 2	Northern Cardinal – 6
Gull species – 5	Tufted Titmouse – 6	Rose-breasted Grosbeak – 2
Amer. Herring Gull – 50	White-breasted Nuthatch – 2	Red-winged Blackbird – 40
Tern species – 5	Northern House Wren – 3	Common Grackle – 26
Arctic Tern – 10	Pacific Wren – 1	Brown-headed Cowbird – 6
Mourning Dove – 3	Blue-gray Gnatcatcher – 1	Baltimore Oriole – 9
Yellow-billed Cuckoo – 1	Thrush* species – 1	House Finch – 4
Barred Owl – 5	Blackbird* – 5	American Goldfinch – 8
Chimney Swift – 3	Eastern Bluebird – 2	House Sparrow – 21
Ruby-throated Hummingbird – 1	Veery – 2	
Red-bellied Woodpecker – 3	Wood Thrush – 3	

\*UK species

**Crazy-as-a-Coot bird walkers** – Bush Lot Hill/Sachem Pond/Corn Neck Rd. & environs, Washington, Rhode Island, May 19, 2026 8:00 AM - 9:15 AM. Protocol: Traveling 0.5 mile(s). Checklist Comments: Bottom of Bush Lot Hill to USFW/Kurz, & Red Gate Farm pond, Center Rd. Sunny and 60F with SW wind. Participants: Anne Salinas, Socha Cohen, Cindy Davis, Heather Hatfield, Nora Clark, Nancy Miles, Amy Keeler, Pat Saylor, Sue King, Maureen Dunn & Kenneth V., Susan Matheke, Callie Leslie, Judy Gray, & Kim G. 24 species: Canada Goose 30, Mallard 8, Ring-necked Pheasant 2, Mourning Dove 2, Black-necked Stilt 2 (in the Red Gate Farm pond), American Herring Gull 25, Great Black-backed Gull 50, Double-crested Cormorant 30,



Green Heron 1, Great Egret 1, Belted Kingfisher 1, Blue Jay 1, Bank Swallow 30, Tree Swallow 2, Gray Catbird 15, American Robin 12, Song Sparrow 1, Eastern Towhee 6, Red-winged Blackbird 50, Common Yellowthroat 2, Northern Parula 2, Northern Yellow Warbler 20, Blackpoll Warbler 3, Northern Cardinal 2. Black-necked Stilt (above).

**Dan Kasuba** Hi Kim, I was on the bike trail in Berkshire county MA the morning of 5/19 and saw the following: 1 killdeer, 6 goldfinches, 5 American redstarts, 10 common grackles, 12 red winged blackbirds, 2 Canada geese, 1 American crow, 1 ovenbird, 5 yellow warblers and 2 common yellow throats, 1 cardinal, 1 bluejays, 4 chipping sparrows, 1 phoebe, 3 Baltimore orioles, 2 American robins, 2 gray catbirds, and 6 starlings. Thanks and enjoy! Dan

**Ellen Davis** – Hi Kim, Greetings from Ketchikan, Alaska where the weather is overcast and the temperature is in the upper 40s. We took a walk this morning with a naturalist through a rainforest sanctuary. Amazing old trees, flora and fauna, and signs of bear. Here are the birds we spotted. I also saw some gulls and terns [“some” = 5 for counting purposes -kg] when we set sail but wasn't able to identify them more specifically as I didn't have my binos with me. Bald eagles - 4; Ravens - 6; Barn swallows - 12; Pacific wren - 1; Robin - 2; Stellar Jay - 1; Cormorants – 12, I'll let you know if I spot anything else interesting! Take care, Ellen  
PS I forgot to press send and thought I'd yesterday to this email where we went whale watching in Juneau, saw a cow and her calf, 4 white winged scoters and many arctic terns. May 22: Maybe it's not too late to add the 24 Pigeon Guillemots that I saw today to the list?

**Katrina Scott** – Seen in Cabot Woods, Newton MA. Red winged black bird, 5 Barred owl (family: parents and 3 babies), Robin, Catbird, Cardinal, Redstart, Rose-breasted Grosbeak, Blue Jay, Northern Parula, Scarlet Tanager, Eastern Kingbird, Wood Thrush, Goldfinch, Song Sparrow, Red-eyed Vireo. [Lacking individual count, I will record 2 of each species to the From Afar list, as a conservative estimate. -kg] Cheers, Katrina.



**Kim Gaffett** – Going about my day at home: Mute Swan 3, C. Goose 5, Mallard 2, C. Raven 1, A. Robin 2, N. Cardinal 1, Barn Swallow 3. Osprey 2, on the power company platform.

**Laura Rosenzweig** – A day late but I was out and about today instead and can report that the swallows are back! [Swallows in the UK are known as Barn Swallows (same scientific name) internationally. -kg] They were swooping this morning in their dozens over meadows filled with flowering buttercups and the last of the bluebells still flowering around the shaded edges of the fields. Also saw a carrion crow, a jackdaw with nest building materials in its beak, a grey heron [very similar to US Great Blue Heron, and the same genus: *Ardea*. -kg] flying high up and making a loud noise about something, a thrush digging for worms, and there are blackbirds [a thrush looking like a black robin and is in the same genus *Turdus*. -kg] everywhere also making a

lot of noise and hunting for food as their nests are already built — there's a beautiful one in my wisteria made entirely from fresh moss.

Here's to a bit of warm sunshine coming our way in the next few days. It's been a cold spring so far but the birds don't seem to mind. Laura

**Lauren Miller-Donnelly** – Hi Kim, I walked out on a small preserve in Westport today (Camara Preserve) that abuts the South Watuppa Pond. Just when it was turning out to be a normal morning I heard a very loud (& obnoxious) repeated song right at the start of the trailhead. And I am so excited to announce that it was a **Tennessee Warbler! I got great looks at it, too.** 5/19/26 Westport: Canada Goose 14, Mute Swan 1, Wood Duck 10, Yellow-billed Cuckoo 1, Chimney Swift 1, Ruby-throated Hummingbird 1, Red-bellied Woodpecker 1, Downy Woodpecker 1, Eastern Wood-Pewee 1, Great Crested Flycatcher 1, Eastern Kingbird 1, Eastern Warbling Vireo 1, Red-eyed Vireo 2, Blue Jay 1, American Crow 1, Tufted Titmouse 3, Barn Swallow 4, Blue-gray Gnatcatcher 1, Gray Catbird 3, Veery 2, Wood Thrush 1, American Robin 4, Cedar Waxwing 2, House Sparrow 4, Chipping Sparrow 1, Song Sparrow 5, Swamp Sparrow 1, Baltimore Oriole 2, Red-winged Blackbird 20, Brown-headed Cowbird 1, Common Grackle 2, Ovenbird 3, **Tennessee Warbler 1**, Common Yellowthroat 2, Northern Yellow Warbler 6, Blackpoll Warbler 2, Northern Cardinal 1.

**Maureen Dunn & Ken Voska** – Hi Kim, Happy turtle day ( weekend )! Ken took these three photos of the snapping turtles mating and one of the baby painted turtle. He is copied here if you have any questions.



Mating Snapping Turtles, Sachem Pond. (photos: Ken Voska.) Baby Painted Turtle crossing the road along Sachem Pond. Both turtles were seen during Crazy-as-a-Coot bird walk by most/all participants. To learn more about snapping turtle mating go to <https://naturallycuriouswithmaryholland.wordpress.com/2026/05/11/north-american-snapping-turtles-mating/>

We walked along Clay Head trail after the crazy-coot bird walk and aside from a few of the usual characters, only observed bank swallows. That was the purpose. It's really hard to give a count for the swallows but I'd say 50 at any one time. I did count over 350 holes and most looked active! Wow!

We also observed 21 common eider the evening before the bird walk up at Settler's Rock. I hope next year we can scout it out before hand and be more helpful.

Thank you for sharing all of your knowledge, of Block Island wildlife, with us. Maureen Dunn and Ken Voska.



**Sadie Flateman** – SF: Bird in Trims Pond. KG: Yellow-crowned Night-heron. SF: Nice! (Photo left).

**Susan Matheke** – Out and About list for Tuesday, May 19, 2026 from Susan M. My house and Ball Farm:  
3 Pheasants, 2 male and 1 female (Mr. Pheasants is a regular in Della's field), 4 Blue Jays, 2 Mourning Doves, 2 Black capped Chickadee, 5 Goldfinch, 9 American Robins (1 robin is sitting on a nest in the horse shelter), 1 Northern Harrier, 7 Bank Swallows, 5 Canada Goose Families (2 parents each and 3 to 7 goslings)

**Tim Mooney** – Hi Kim - Every year, we get a few migrating warblers passing through the neighborhood canopy in Cumberland, just stopping over for a day or two. This week (May 19), I heard Black-and-White Warblers, which was

unusual because I think of them as arriving in April. Also interesting is that a pair of Gray Catbirds are hanging around the back corner of our yard. One has been chattering constantly since he showed up on Coot day two weeks ago. But recently I've seen two together, sitting on the old wire fence next to our garage. And the front yard American Robins prevailed, despite a fairly low and open nest location. I took a peek this morning (May 22) and saw a sweet fledgling sitting on the top of the nest cup, waiting for meal. Final highlights from my Block Island walks: 3 American Redstarts and 2 Eastern Kingbirds at Nathan Mott Park (May 21). Thanks again for a great visit! Best, Tim

Cumberland, May 19: Black-&-White Warbler 3, Yellow Warbler 1, Red-shouldered Hawk 1, Gray Catbird 6, Northern Mockingbird 2, Chimney Swift 2, House Wren 1, Common Grackle 4, Br-headed Cowbird 3, European Starling 2, American Crow 1, Fish Crow 1, Blue Jay 6, Song Sparrow 3, Chipping Sparrow 1, House Sparrow 16, House Finch 4, Northern Cardinal 2, Tufted Titmouse 1, American Robin 11, Red-bellied Woodpecker 1.

**Tom Fetherston** – 19 May 2026. Good evening, Kim – A good day, but in the past two weeks the leaves have exploded making the high canopy almost invisible. I received 48 different specie's acoustic detections but could not see many of them, including quite a few warblers. Rather frustrating, but it's that time of year. Also, strange that birds that are always common such as jays and Carolina wrens weren't see today??

Notes for this week:

- There has been a Baltimore oriole festival going on in my yard for the past couple of weeks. Males chasing up to three other males, males chasing females, males displaying for females, mating behavior on a trellis (get a room!!), females stealing fibers from garden planters for nests, males and females attacking grackles or crows. It's rare to be sitting on the porch and not hear their calls or have three or four orioles within sight. Even their orchard oriole cousins have stopped by for the party but are not nearly as flamboyant as their Baltimore cousins.
- The housing market has been a bit confusing. In 2023 bluebirds chiseled out the hole in what had been a wren house and raised three broods. I bought a bluebird box, and they nested there in 2024. Last year they fledged one brood in that box before house wrens moved in. I set up another bluebird box outside the fence in our back woodlot this year, hoping the bluebirds would pick one of them. The house wrens took the box in the side yard, then the one in the back lot. Not sure if it's a "false nest" from the pair in the side yard or another couple. Sitting on the porch today, I saw bluebirds in the altered wren house they had lived in during 2023! Two bluebird boxes, both with house wrens and bluebirds in a wren house?? Guess they choose what looks best.

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. American crow (4), Canada goose (8, 3 goslings) WP, Great blue heron WP, Osprey WP, Barn swallow (6\*) WP, Tree swallow (8\*) WP, Snowy egret WP, Mallard (5) WP, Wood duck WP, Double-crested cormorant (2) WP, Pie-billed grebe WP, Semipalmated sandpiper WP,

American herring gull (50) WP, Turkey vulture, Downy woodpecker, Hairy woodpecker, Red-bellied woodpecker, Eastern bluebird (2), Song sparrow, House sparrow, American goldfinch, Tufted titmouse (2), White-breasted nuthatch (2), Northern house wren (2), Northern yellow warbler, Blackpoll warbler, Warbling vireo, Gray catbird (2), American robin (4), European starling (5), Brown-headed cowbird (2), Red-winged blackbird (6), Common grackle (10\*), Baltimore oriole (4), Black-capped chickadee (2), Mourning dove (3). Cheers, Feather

Photos: Female Baltimore oriole snatching fibers from a planter and female bluebird in her reclaimed house.



- 
- <sup>1</sup>**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”.
  - <sup>2</sup>Q. What is a <sup>2</sup>**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 Myrtle Warbler (*coronata*), and the western population/subspecies known as Audubon’s Warbler (*auduboni*). These two regional populations have been “lumped” to form Yellow-rumped Warbler.