

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

January 18th, 2022

Incidental Notes.

- Wow! The From Afar species count is amazing - that's what happens when you get coverage from mainland RI, to the great Northwest, to sunny Florida, to the tropics of Mexico.

Will's Mexico bird species were a nice mix of neotropical residents that we will likely never see here (although there was a Vermillion Flycatcher on BI once) and migrants (think N. Parula) that we will see during spring and fall migrations.

It is always great to compare BI to S. Kingstown – so close, yet far enough and more forested to get a different group of birds. For instance, only once has there been a Tufted Titmouse (a common mainland bird) seen on BI.

And, it is great fun to think about the different species of the northwest. Only rarely is a Trumpeter Swan reported on BI or in the east. I'd love to see a Golden-crowned Sparrow or Acorn Woodpecker one day. It is interesting to consider the differences in Junco species, and check out Erica's information about Anna's Hummingbird.

We would have no wading birds if not for Dan's report. Although we do occasionally get Sandhill Cranes on BI, it is wonderful to know that they are being seen on the east coast more frequently as they start to repopulate areas where they once were abundant. Even the "Also seen" list is wonderfully diverse.

- The Block Island count is not too shabby given the brutal weather on Jan. 18. Highlights of the Coot Walk were certainly the Snow Geese, E. Meadowlark and Cedar Waxwings. But the most unlikely winter bird of the observation is Joanne Warfel's report of Baltimore Oriole. Thanks for her valiant efforts to supply nourishment in this difficult season for a bird that would prefer to be much farther south.
- 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".
- 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, +=10+, +++=10++.

Block Island

(26 species)

Snow Goose – 25
Canada Geese – 32
American Black Duck – 6
Mallard – 22
Bufflehead – 4
Red-breasted Merganser – 1
Norther Harrier – 1
Herring Gull – 1
Great Black-backed Gull – 5
Mourning Dove – 4
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker – 2
Northern Flicker – 1
American Crow – 9
Black-capped Chickadee – 1
Carolina Wren – 6
American Robin – 7+
Northern Mockingbird – 1
Cedar Waxwing – 11
Song Sparrow – 5
White-throated Sparrow – 3
Northern Cardinal – 2
Baltimore Oriole – 1
Eastern Meadowlark – 7
Red-winged Blackbird – 2
House Finch – 4
House Sparrow – 15

From Afar South Kingston, RI; Connecticut; Siesta Key, FL; Seattle, WA; Roseburg, OR;

(86 species)

Canada Goose – 13
Trumpeter Swan – 14
Gadwall – 10
American Wigeon – 10
American Black Duck – 5
Muscovy Duck – 1 (feral?)
Mallard – 2
Green-winged Teal – 10
Ring-necked Ducks – 6
Scaup species – 10
Bufflehead – 13
Hooded Merganser – 9
Common Merganser – 4
Red-breasted Merganser – 40

Brown Pelican – 24
American White Pelican – 1
Magnificent Frigatebird – 2
Double-crested Cormorant – 5
Great Blue Heron – 5
Great Egret – 1
Snowy Egret – 1
Reddish Egret – 1
Little Blue Heron – 1
White Ibis – 6
Roseate Spoonbill – 4
Sandhill Crane – 2
Black Vulture – 2
Turkey Vulture – 4
Osprey – 1
Bald Eagle – 5
Sharp-shinned Hawk – 1
Red-tailed Hawk – 2
Goshawk – 1
Willetts – 6
Ruddy Turnstone – 13
Semipalmated Sandpiper – 10
Laughing Gull – 10
Ring-billed Gull - 10
Herring Gull – 30+/-
Royal Terns – 10
Black Skimmers – 5
Mourning Dove – 1
Eastern Screech Owl – 2
Anna's Hummingbird – 2
Belted Kingfisher – 1
Acorn Woodpecker – 4
Red-bellied Woodpecker – 1
Hairy Woodpecker – 2
Northern Flicker – 1
Peregrine Falcon – 1
*Vermillion Flycatcher – 1
*Lesser Kiskadee – 5
*unidentified Flycatcher - 3
Blue Jay – 1
Stellar Jay – 2
Western Scrub Jay – 1
American Crow – 13
Chimney Swift – 10
Black-capped Chickadee – 10
Tufted Titmouse – 3
White-breasted Nuthatch – 1
Nuthatch species – 1
Brown Creeper – 1

House Wren – 1
Carolina Wren – 1
Ruby-crowned Kinglet – 1
American Robin – 15
*Tropical Mockingbird – 1
European Starling – 20+
Cedar Waxwing – 15+
Northern Parula – 2
Rufous-sided Towhee – 1 (1/17)
Song Sparrow – 4
White-throated Sparrow – 1
Golden-crowned Sparrow – 1
Slate-colored¹ Junco – 3
Dark-eyed Junco – 5
Oregon Junco¹ – 6
Northern Cardinal – 4
Indigo Bunting – 5+
Oriole species – 2
Common Grackle – 100+
Boat-tail Grackle
*Antillian Grackle – 100+
House Finch – 2
American Goldfinch – 2
*Mexico/Central American species

Also Seen:

3 Bottle-nose Dolphins.

Long-tailed Weasel scurrying along the ice.

*Cappybura 2, Raccoon 1, Spider Monkey 3.

Crazy-as-a-Coot Bird Walkers eBird report: Ball Farm & Merck Rd/Mansion Rd Loop, Washington, Rhode Island, US. Jan 18, 2022 8:30 AM - 9:45 AM. Protocol: Traveling approx.. 1.5 mile(s). **Checklist Comments:** Cold! (approx. 25-30F) & windy from NW. Walked from Corn Neck & Mansion Rd. along Corn Neck to J. Merck Rd. and then over field to Martha Ball's horse fields to her door yard and field & pond east of her house, and back to Corn Neck via Mansion Rd. Participants: Susan Matheke, Diane King, Amy Keeler, Nigel Grindley, Cathy Joyce, Judy & Sarah Gray, Susan Stover, and Kim G. 20 species: **Snow Goose 25** - A flock of 20+ - 30+/- Snow Goose have been around Block Island (often at Ball Farm) for more than 3 weeks (to date 1/29) starting around January 7, Mallard 2, American Black Duck 6, Bufflehead 4, Red-breasted Merganser 1, Mourning Dove 40, Herring Gull 1, Great Black-backed Gull 5, Northern Flicker 1, American Crow 9, Black-capped Chickadee 1, Carolina Wren 5, Northern Mockingbird 1, American Robin 2, **Cedar Waxwing 11**, House Sparrow 15, White-throated Sparrow 3, Song Sparrow 5, **Eastern Meadowlark 7**, Red-winged Blackbird 2

Curt Milton – Good evening! Here is the Where-on-Earth report from Seattle for Jan. 18. I went out about 2 p.m. to the Union Bay Natural Area on Lake Washington. Temperature was in the upper 40s with overcast skies. The highlight of the day was seeing four (or maybe five) Bald Eagles. They seemed to be squabbling over territory. One bird (photo below) may be perching on only one foot. At least one eagle seemed to be a juvenile. Pretty cool! -- Here is my list: American Crow: numerous, American Robin: 11, Hooded Merganser: 2, Black-capped Chickadee: 1, Canada Geese: numerous, Anna's Hummingbird: 1, European Starlings: numerous, Bald Eagles: 4 or 5, Green-winged Teal: Numerous, Scaup ... not sure if they were Greater or Lesser

Scaups: numerous, Bufflehead: numerous, Gadwall: numerous, American Wigeon: numerous, Trumpeter Swan: 14, Song sparrow: 3, Golden-crowned sparrow: 1, Dark-eyed Junco: 1, Double-crested cormorant: 1
Thanks for organizing our walks! Curt

Dan Kasuba – Hi Kim, I went to Siesta Key beach(7:30 -9:00 AM) and siesta key bay(10-11 AM)on 1/18. In the bay are a string of mangrove islands that are a rookery you can kayak around. Really a treat to see so many birds clustered together! 1 peregrine falcon,1 white pelican, 20 brown pelicans, 2 double crested cormorants, 1 great and one snowy egret, 40 red breasted mergansers, and 4 roseate spoonbills. Also, many black skimmers, laughing gulls and ring-billed gulls, semi-palpatated sandpipers, royal terns and ruddy turnstones. 6 willets, 1 reddish egret, 3 GBHs, 6 white ibises, 2 sandhill cranes and 2 Eastern screech owls. Thanks! Almost forgot! 3 bottle-nosed dolphins.

Erica Anderson - Pleasant Hill, Oregon – Hi Kim, Today it was cool, overcast about 42. Not a lot of bird activity around the house, even at the feeders. Even with the small amounts I got to see a male Anna's hummingbird sitting atop a leafless hazelnut tree flashing it's amazing vermilion head this way and that. I've heard it around many times but today was the first sighting I've had. Black Capped Chickadee 5, Dark-eyed Junco Oregon 6, Stellar Jay 2, Ruby-crowned Kinglet (female) 1, Anna's Hummingbird (male) 1. Note: I couldn't believe it about the Anna's. It was so striking. My book says "only in recent decades has the Anna's Hummingbird become the most common hummingbird in some parts of lowland western Oregon and western Washington, vying with the Rufous Hummingbird for that distinction. Moreover, it is the only hummingbird that remains year-round in the Northwest. This colorful recent arrival has greatly expanded its breeding range, which was once limited to the mountains of southern and central California. So new to the Northwest, the Anna's Hummingbird has not had time to evolve a migration pattern southward for winter; so it simply stays put, adapting as need be to Northwest winters." (Birds of the pacific northwest by John Shewey & Tim Blount)

Gail & Shorty Cahill – Here is our list from Connecticut today. Along Hamburg cove, Eight Mile River and Connecticut River (marsh area), 2 Common Mergansers (male/female pr), 1 Cardinal, 3 Turkey Buzzards, 2 Mallards (male/female pr), 1 Nuthatch [species?], 1 House Wren [?], 2 Hooded Mergansers (male/female pr), 100+ C. Grackles, 2 Great Blue Herons, 5 Black Ducks, 2 Red Tailed Hawks (1 in Marsh in Connecticut River area other over Rogers Lake)

Almost forgot one long tailed Weasel scurrying along the ice on the Eight Mile River. Missing our walks with you all, but fun to get out here today. Thanks, G & S

Kim Gaffett – Going about my day on BI: (Home) Mallards 20, Canada Geese 32, N. Cardinal 2, Carolina Wren 1, House finch 4. At Nancy Greenaway's: Robin 5+, Mourning Dove 4, Marsh Hawk 1.

Joanne Warfel – Via Text: “Hey Kim I’m looking at a tbird at my feeder that resembles an American Goldfinch but is definitely bigger. Yellow beak, light yellow all over except for gray wings with some white stripes. Not a grosbeak. I’m baffled. Didn’t see him or her until I put out some seed in addition to my usual suet.”

[After several back & forth texts and some blurry cell phone photos we determined that it was a Baltimore Oriole (1st year female). As of this writing on Jan. 29 the bird was still feeding at the feeder – in the middle of the snow storm. Also, at the feeder on Jan. 22, a Yellow-bellied Sapsucker (2 on the following day). Way to go Joanne! – kG]

Penny Lapham – Crazy-as-a-Coot walk around the house in Roseburg, Oregon. January 18, 2022.

5 Hooded Mergansers, 2 Common Mergansers, 3 Buffleheads, 6 Ring-necked Ducks, 6 Mallards, 3 Canada Geese, 2 Double-crested Cormorants, 1 Belted Kingfisher, 15+ Cedar Waxwings, 10 European Starlings, 1 Western Scrub-Jay, 4 Dark-eyed Juncos, 2 Black-capped Chickadee, 4 Acorn Woodpeckers, 1 Northern Flicker,

4 American Robins. (I did see a Merganser with a big fish being chased by another Merganser. He was able to swallow the fish before being caught)

Tom Fetherston Good afternoon Kim –I didn't venture far afield today so everything is either my yard or Worden's Pond. The pond was mostly ice-covered first thing this morning but the gale winds opened it up so that the ice only extended 100' from the dock when Maggie & I checked at 1530. It was so rough only the hard-core herring gulls were gathered out there on some remnant ice.

Another note of interest, shortly after sunrise a variety of birds started gathering at the feeders. I got my notepad and binoculars to begin counting when they all burst into the air in a rush and disappeared?? Then I saw the sharp-shinned hawk flying off, couldn't see if it had anything captured but it was staying low entering the woods across the road.

Here's today's list. As usual birds seen on Worden's Pond will have WP next to them and * means a biologist's best guess because an actual count wasn't possible. Birds at the feeders were only counted as multiples if seen at the same time or were identifiable as different sexes. [If no number designated it was counted as 1 individual. – Kg]

White breasted nuthatch, Northern cardinal (3) Two males & one female, Blue jay, Brown creeper, Sharp-shinned hawk, American crow (3), Herring gull WP (30)*, Tufted titmouse (3), Mourning dove, White-throated sparrow, House finch (2), Black-capped chickadee (2), Carolina wren, Red-bellied woodpecker, Hairy woodpecker (2) male & female, Slate-colored junco (3), Song sparrow, Goldfinch (2). Rufous-sided towhee* Saw him yesterday so not in today's count but thought it was an interesting sighting. Cheers, Fether

Will Young - Kim, we are in Mexico, south of Tulum at the Hard Rock Resort. All birds seen yesterday (Jan.18) throughout the day. --- Ruddy Turnstone 3, Brown Pelican 4, Lesser kiskadee 5, Indigo bunting 5+, N parula 2, Chimney swift 10, Vermillion Flycatcher 1, UI flycatchers 3, Muscovy duck feral?, Antillian Grackle +++, Boat Tail Grackle ++, Magnificent frigate bird 2, T Vulture 1, Black vulture 2, Little blue heron 1, Osprey , Tropical mocking bird 1, Oriol not sure of the species 2, Goshawk - 5 years old, in training as a falconry bird at resort. Also seen: Cappy Bura 2, Raccoon 1, Spider monkey 3. Will & penny. (Sorry for spelling issues -on my phone.)



Curt Milton, in Seattle, WA