

Social Distance Crazy-as-a-Coot Bird Walks: May 19, 2020 (mostly)

A few notes on the May 19+ lists:

~ Both lists are an aggregate of observations from the two groups of observers (B.I. and Afar).

~ It looks like peak spring migration happened the weekend before our Coot Walk, never-the-less there were many passers-through observed. However, when you look at the Block Island list you will note (with the exception of the sea birds) that they are *almost* all nesting birds on the island. And alas, it seems that the Sandhill Crane had also continued its migrations the weekend before our Coot Walk – it would have been fun to have added that to the list.

~For the fun of it check out this short Bird Note audio clip. In many ways it seems apt, especially the last sentence. <https://www.birdnote.org/show/salmonberry-bird>

~ [Things in brackets are notes by me = kg]

Block Island

Canada Geese – 48+

Mute Swans – 6

American Black Duck – 2

Mallard – 25

Black Scoters – 12

Red-breasted Merganser – 4

Ring-necked Pheasant – 11

Northern Gannet – 8

Cormorant species – 1

Great Blue Heron – 2

Great Egret – 4

Snowy Egret – 3

Turkey Vulture – 3

Osprey – 6

Northern Harrier – 1

Herring Gull – 66 +

Great Black-backed Gull – 8

Gull species – 133 +/-

Mourning Dove – 8
Downy Woodpecker – 5
American Kestrel – 2
Great-crested Flycatcher – 2
Eastern Kingbird – 4
Blue Jay – 5
American Crow – 37
Fish Crow – 3
Tree Swallow – 20
Bank Swallow – 15
Barn Swallow – 49
Swallow species – 17
Black-capped Chickadee – 19
Brown Creeper – 1
Carolina Wren – 24
American Robin – 65
Gray Catbird – 24
European Starling – 11
Yellow Warbler – 19
Common Yellowthroat – 8
American Redstart – 2
Rufous-sided Towhee – 35
Savannah Sparrow – 1, plus 4 eggs
Song Sparrow – 24
Northern Cardinal – 25
Rose-breasted Grosbeak – 1
Red-winged Blackbird – 101
Common Grackle – 33
Brown-headed Cowbird – 7
House Finch - 15

American Goldfinch – 26

House Sparrow – 15

From Afar Providence, RI; Cambridge, MA; Boston, MA; Delray Beach, FL; FL; Seattle WA; Sedbergh, England; Drangedal, Norway;

*=European species.

Canada Goose – 5

Mallard – 13

*Oystercatcher – 3

Sanderling – 16+

Wild Turkey – 1

Common Bobwhite – 1

Brown Pelican – 2

*Black-headed Gull – 15+

Gull species – 1

Royal Tern – 1

Sandwich Tern – 1

*Wood Pigeon – 3

*Collared Dove - 3

Anna's Hummingbird – 2

Ruby-throated Hummingbird – 1

*Great Spotted Woodpecker – 1

Red-bellied Woodpecker – 4

Downy Woodpecker – 1

Hairy Woodpecker – 1

Northern Flicker – 2

Pileated Woodpecker – 2

Eastern Kingbird - 1

Blue Jay – 3

*Carrion Crow – 8

*Jackdaw – 3

American Crow – 15

*House Martin – 3

Swallow / Barn Swallow – 35+ (*Hirundo rustica*, same genus species in U.S., Britain, Norway)

Black-capped Chickadee – 2

Bush Tit – 1

White-breasted Nuthatch – 2

Eastern Bluebird – 3

Veery – 1

American Robin – 17

*Robin – 6+

*Blackbird – 2 (a thrush in Britain & Europe)

Gray Catbird – 8+

Northern Mockingbird – 8+

European Starling – 15

Warbling Vireo – 1

Red-eyed Vireo – 1

Northern Waterthrush – 1

Black-and-white Warbler – 6

Nashville Warbler – 1

Common Yellowthroat – 1

American Redstart – 5

Northern Parula – 1

Magnolia Warbler – 1

Yellow Warbler – 3

Chestnut-sided Warbler - 1

Blackpoll Warbler – 1

Black-throated Blue Warbler – 2

Myrtle Warbler a.k.a Yellow-rumped Warbler – 10

Black-throated Green Warbler – 1

Wilson's Warbler – 2

*Willow Warbler – 1 (a.k.a. LYJ)

*Pied Wagtail – 3

Song Sparrow – 12

White-crowned Sparrow – 1

Oregon Junco – 2

Indigo Bunting – 1

Common Grackle – 10

Boat-tailed Grackle – 7+

Baltimore Oriole – 7

House Finch – 1

*Siskin – 8

American Goldfinch – 20+

House Sparrow – 3 (a native species in England, introduced species in U.S.)

Amy Keeler – Mitchell Lane /Lakeside Dr. Missing our group!!! Tuesday May 19, 2020. 1 Savannah Sparrow (sitting on ground nest w/4 eggs), 12 House Sparrow, 5 Cowbird, 16 Seagull GULLs (Fresh Pond), 12 Mallard Duck, 2 Cardinal, 1 Great Egret, 2 Chickadee, 18 Robins, 2 American Crow, 6 Grackles, 16 RW Blackbirds, 2 Barn Swallow, 6 Tree Swallow, 4 Mourning Dove, 8 Starlings, 1 Osprey (fishing Seneca Swamp), 4 Catbird, 1 Towhee, 1 Eastern Kingbird, 2 Carolina Wren, 3 Yellow Warbler, 1 Pheasant

Barby Michel & Lily Brunig – 1 great egret, 2 Canada geese, 3 turkey vultures, 2 osprey, 2 mallards, 2 black ducks, 2 small hawks - probably kestrels [If small, they probably are American Kestrels, technically a falcon (look for pointed wings). They nest in cavities – trees and nest boxes – it would be very exciting to confirm a nesting site. -kg], 3 pheasants, 32 gulls, 4 common yellow throats, 6 robins, 12 barn swallows, ? tree swallows, ? redwing black birds, 4 house finch, 4 goldfinch, ? towhees, 4 Carolina wrens, ? song sparrows, ? chickadees. [Assuming ?=many, therefore =10. -kg] There are so many song birds right now and we're new to this so they were hard to count. I would love a resource for learning some bird calls. I think that would help with our identifying the birds. [\[I am not much of an app user – I'm old school and prefer field guides – but lots of people I know like the bird ID app called Merlin, from the Cornell Lab of Ornithology https://merlin.allaboutbirds.org/ And, I often use the web site All About Birds for quick reference and birds that are not in my eastern US guides. And, each species page includes bird call\(s\)/song. You may find this useful, especially when working with younger generations. 😊 -kg\]](#)

Cathy Joyce & Nigel Grindley: Here is our list of birds seen: In our backyard, at or around the feeders, mostly in the morning: Carolina Wren – 1, Robin – 1, Rose-breasted Grosbeak – 1, House Finch - 6 (approx), Goldfinch - 10 (approx), Cardinal – 3, Catbird – 3, American Crow – 1, Eastern Towhee – 3, Red-winged Blackbird – 3, Black-capped Chickadee – 2, Song Sparrow – 1, Common Grackle – 1, Mourning Dove – 1, Blue Jay – 2. Seen from Southwest Point, afternoon: Gannet – 8, Red-breasted Merganser – 4, Scoter sp. (almost certainly black scoters) – 12. The RB Grosbeak was definitely our Bird-of-the-Day! Hope you are getting some interesting migrants at the banding station! [The previous weekend – May 16-18 – was fun and interesting. -kg]

[Curt Milton](#), Seattle WA. Wasn't able to look much this morning so I think I missed a bunch. Here is what I saw this afternoon: Robin: several, Crow: several, Anna's hummingbird: 2, Junco [assume Oregon J.]: 2, Chickadee: 1, Starlings: several, Song sparrow (saw 1, heard many), White-crowned sparrow: 1, Gull: 1, Female House Finch: 1, Bushtit: 1. I think the last bird is a bushtit. It was way up in a tree and backlit to boot. Hope you all had a good day! [Several = 5, Many = 7. -kg]

[Ellen Davis](#), Delray Beach, FL – I love the sandhill crane! That's big bird. The only time I've seen a sandhill crane was in the parking lot of a golf course. There were at least a dozen of them hanging around sort of like a flock of pigeons only much bigger of course. The beach is open again so there were more shore bird sightings but still not a lot. Here's my list from Delray Beach, FL: Blue jays – 2, Mockingbirds – many [7+], Boat tailed grackles – many [7+], Royal tern – 2, Sanderlings - 16 (at least), Brown pelican – 2. Turtle nests - 18 (It seems the leatherheads arrive first, followed by the loggerheads and green turtles as the summer progresses. The hatchlings should appear in a couple of weeks.)

After some research, I realized that one of the royal terns I reported was actually a Sandwich Tern! Just want to have full disclosure in these days of fact checking.

[Faye Benedict](#)., Drangedal, Norway - I took a bird drive yesterday but without much luck in identification despite many birds flitting past and around in the newly greened vegetation. I can report these sightings at home though. Barn swallows: 5 - just a few early arrivals. The European roof swallows (taksvaler) haven't arrived to nest in the house roof, as they do every year, just yet. Rødstrupe (Eur. Robin) 3 and more in the woods. Black thrush (svarttrost) - European, characteristic hop helps distinguish from starling. Flaggspett!! (Great spotted woodpecker, European and common). I hear them often, but rarely see one as I did today. Unmistakeable red rump. Grønnsisik - a little green/yellow finch, Spinus spinus, "Eurasian siskin" in English, says internet. Lots of them, a sign of spring. It has been lots of fun looking and observing.

[Gail Cahill](#): Another beautiful day! I went to the Labyrinth and Breed Property today (just the dirt road). 15 Bank Swallows, 2 Tree Swallows, 3 Barn Swallows - I studied the shape of the tails for a long time. I think I have it right. As always take my sightings with a grain of salt! [you are a good observer, these all look spot-on to me], 1 Crow, 75 Gulls (give or take a few) on Sachem Pond, 1 Starling, 3 Redwing Blackbird, 1 Pheasant (male). I am sure there were others flying around me but I was concentrating on those swallows!!!

[Heather Hatfield](#): ~ The Maze, sunny/windy. Great-crested Flycatcher – 2, Downy – 1, Cardinal – 3, Towhee, Catbird – 6, Yellow Warbler – 3, C. Yellowthroat – 1, Goldfinch – 2, Crow – 6, GB Heron – 1, RW Blackbird – 3. Backyard feeders: Cardinal 8, Downy – 1, BH Cowbird – 2, Song Sparrow – 1, Carolina Wren – 1, Goldfinch – 1, House finch – 5, C. Grackle – 1, RW Blackbird – 6, House Sparrow – 2, BC Chickadee – 1.

[Judy Gray](#) – Very excited to report on "the plains" at the end of Sands Pond Road: **Downy Woodpecker** in a tree at 12:30pm, **Great Blue Heron** and **Great American Egret** flying past at 4:45pm. Hope I'm not too late to report these wonderful Tuesday sightings. Cheers! -Judy-

[Kim Gaffett](#) – Clay Head south loop from Lapham house to Clay Head Trail parking lot and back via Lapham driveway (include bluff edge, inland paths & clearings, beach, Clay Head Swamp & associated areas. Sunny & cool with stiff east wind. 25 species: Canada Goose 3, Mallard 2, Ring-necked Pheasant 3, Mourning Dove 2, Great Black-backed Gull 5, Osprey 1, Northern Harrier 1, Downy Woodpecker 2, Eastern Kingbird 1, American Crow 2, Fish Crow 3, Black-capped Chickadee 4, Tree Swallow 2, Bank Swallow 25, Carolina Wren 7, Gray Catbird 15, American Robin 18, American Goldfinch 6, Song Sparrow 2, Eastern Towhee 20, Red-winged Blackbird 10, Common Yellowthroat 3, American Redstart 2, Yellow Warbler 7, Northern Cardinal 4.

[Laura Rosenzweig](#), Sedburgh, England. It's raining here for the first time in 8 weeks. Much needed, the trees and hedgerows have been drooping and quite a few of the really parched ones have dropped their leaves which is unheard of in Spring! But temps are due to climb again for the next few days before more rain arrives for the weekend. Today was colder and misty all day but I did eventually get out for a walk and this is what I saw: Pied Wagtail, Robin, Blackbird, House Sparrow, Crows - carrion I think, the most common around here, Jackdaw — looks a bit like a crow but has a grey

head, I see a lot of these, Oystercatcher, Mallard, Grey Heron, House Martin, Swallow, Black-headed Gull, Wood Pigeon, Collared Dove; and, a little green/yellow job but it was flying too fast for me! I want to say a yellow warbler but I don't think such a thing exists, so maybe a willow warbler? In all cases (except the lyj) it was 2-4 of each species except for swallows (at least 30 flying fast and low over a field that had just been spread with muck), gulls (at least 15), and crows (lots!). All the best from a murky Sedbergh and a tuckered out pup.

Martha Velie-Gass, Fresh Pond, Cambridge, MA. Redstart, Northern Parula, Yellows and Black and Whites [estimate minimum of 3 each], Warbling Vireo [1], pair of Baltimore Orioles [2], Mockingbird [1], and many Catbirds [8+].

Mary Lutz – With bird book in hand, only a lunch hour at noon, here's what I saw out in our yard on Corn Neck: 3 Cardinals, 1 Brown Creeper (twice), 20 Common Grackles, ~~5 Boat-Tail Grackles~~ [not around these parts, I have added these to your Common Grackle number], 31 Red-wing Blackbirds, 1 ~~Blackthroat~~ Sparrow [assuming you mean house sparrow], 1 Blue Jay, 1 Starling. Usually I see some Purple Finches and a pair of Towhees, but today was rather windy and those Redwings are pretty bossy. I hope this helps boost today's count, if only for the commoners. If you know of a place to order Nyjer seed, I'm much obliged. I'm missing the Goldfinches and am still pissed that Petco bought Drs. Foster...so I've been getting Wagners' regular seed from Chewy. [Jerry's Hardware near BI boat, has bird seed and will deliver to the boat – kg]

Nancy Greenaway – On my walk today, May 20, I did see more than 30 Canada geese, two swans and four signets, two ducks and multiple ducklings [2+5 Mallards], ~~young~~ osprey on the platform (I think), many red-winged blackbirds, crows, gulls, swallows, song sparrows, and a beautiful cardinal couple. [Many = 10 -kg] May 22: And I might add: robins, yellow birds, catbirds, and assorted wrens and hawks. [While the May 22 grouping is poetic, they are not included in the group list – a little too nebulous re: numbers and species 😊 -kg.]

Rupa Datta, Providence, RI - I did see a couple of Black capped Chickadee and a couple of American Robins (I think). [No doubt about it. -kg]

Sara McGinnes, FL – Two very large pileated woodpeckers calling loudly to each other outside our window. Wish I had a better camera than my telephone. Friday, May 22.

Sharlene and Will Cochrane, Franklin Park in Boston, MA – Thanks for the photo of the Sand Hill Crane--we've seen the migration on the Platte River in Nebraska and it's magical!! Amazing that this one ended up on Block Island. We had one of our best days ever birding at Franklin Park in Boston. However, it was Saturday, May 16, not Tuesday. Tuesday was cold, windy, and not good at all! So I don't know if you can use it in the summary, but wanted to share with you, at least, so you can see what was here recently: Warblers: Black-throated Green, Black-throated Blue 2, Black Poll, Black and White 3, Parula, Red Start 2, Chestnut-sided, Yellow rump many, Magnolia, Nashville, Wilson-2, Common Yellowthroat, Waterthrush [assuming Northern Waterthrush]. Other: Oriole 4 [assuming Baltimore], Kingbird, Song Sparrow 2, Mallards 10, Canada Goose 5, Robins many, Blue Jay, Grackle many, Starling many, Crows, Red-bellied Woodpecker 2-3, Flicker 2, Red-eyed Vireo, Veery, Nuthatch [assuming White-breasted. [Many=10, kg] All of that in a two hour period (after a big storm the day before!) Thanks for all you do! [That is a nice list. I too had a good banding day on Saturday, a nice wave of migrants rode the southwest winds to New England. The Covid-Coot bird list has some pretty lax rules. I'll definitely include your list with the appropriate date-stamp. -kg]

This just in – May 25: Wanted to share with you a one-time sighting here in our backyard--a Bob White! Announced himself with such a clear sound, and finally spotted him on the fence railing. I've never seen one and was quite surprised to see him right here!

Stephanie Baute, Surry, NH – From my bird feeders (? New NH): Male hairy woodpecker, Male downy woodpecker, Male red bellied woodpecker, 1 female turkey, 20+ goldfinch, 3 bluebirds 2 male and one female, 2 song sparrows, White breasted nuthatch, Male Baltimore Oriole, AND FINALLY MALE INDIGO BUNTING. And a Ruby-throated Hummingbird.

Susan Matheke: - Della's Pasture 6:30AM: 1 herring gull with a defective right wing, looked very healthy, spent the night, now gone somewhere, 5 Carolina wrens, 1 male pheasant, 2 male goldfinch, 6 American Robins, 3 American crow. Ball Farm 7:30 AM: 1 cormorant (Great?), 1 great egret, 7 barn swallows, 5 red wing blackbird, 13 Canada geese, 11 American Robins, 4 Carolina wrens, 1 Eastern Kingbird. Fun as always, thank you!!!

Valerie Preler & Judy Gray - Judy Gray and I had a wonderful walk. We went walking along the 2 roads and along the beach just south of the dump. It was a beautiful day for a walk. Here is our list: 5 - 6 dozen herring gulls (counted around us and out to Beane Point), 3 great black-back gulls , 1 osprey, 1 pheasant, 3 snowy egrets, 2 mallards, 6 crows, 4 red wing blackbirds, 1 American goldfinch, 5 robins, 7 swallows (sp), 1 mourning dove, 1 catbird, 1 starling, 1 eastern kingbird.

Willie Feuer - 11:30 - 1:00PM Old Mill Rd. 2 cardinals - male and female, 2 blue jays, 6 American crows, 6 flitty, drunken, yellow warbler's -very yellow maybe Wilson's warblers?? [I'm going with Yellow Warbler, more likely since they nest on BI and because of the number. Although Wilson's Warblers are sighted during this migration time, it would be unusual to see 6.], 1 pheasant – heard, 5 turtles [I'm assuming Painted turtle, but always keep on the look out for the less commonly seen but very present Spotted turtles.]