

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

February 3, 2026

Incidental Notes

Hi Everyone,

What a delightful and robust set of observations. Especially Dan's and Carlos' warm weather birds. Before you know it Dan's Florida birds will be headed north during spring migration. Although Carlos' observed parrots and mochileroes won't head north, it is interesting to note that the Black Vultures and Cattle Egrets in Colombia are the same species as those found here in North America.

Surprisingly the number of species observed on BI is wonderfully high. With the number of observers BI observers we seemed to have collectively seen a little bit of everything – water fowl, sea ducks, shore birds, wading birds, all the possible winter raptors, and the special, and often-absent, winter visitors such as Evening Grosbeak, Fox Sparrow, and Eurasian Wigeon. In spite of the biting cold and treacherous footing at places, we amassed a terrific winter species list. Please take note of the individual observations below.

And wow! That is a beautiful fox photo that Annie shared; as well as the visual image of the flashlight-illuminated “raccoon sliding on the icy snow crust”.

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

Peace, Kim.

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- 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

(56 species)

Canada Goose – 105+

Gadwall – 4

Eurasian Wigeon – 1

American Wigeon – 6

Mallard – 53+

American Black Duck – 9

Ring-necked Duck – 18

Common Eider – 7

Surf Scoter – 2

Bufflehead – 53+

Common Goldeneye – 27

Hooded Merganser – 4

Red-breasted Merganser – 11

Horned Grebe – 4

Common Loon – 6

Double-crested Cormorant – 2

Cormorant species – 1

Great Blue Heron – 1

Black-crowned Night Heron – 1

Bald Eagle – 2

Marsh Hawk (aka Northern Harrier) – 4

Sharp-shinned Hawk – 1

Coopers Hawk – 3

Black-bellied Plover – 1

Bonaparte's Gull – 10

Ring-billed Gull – 25

American Herring Gull – 1

Great Black-backed Gull – 1+

Rock Pigeon – 11

Mourning Dove – 28

Red-bellied Woodpecker – 2

Downy Woodpecker – 4

Merlin – 1

Blue Jay – 12

American Crow – 26+

Fish Crow – 2

Common Raven – 1

Black-backed Chickadee – 28+

White-breasted Nuthatch – 2

Carolina Wren – 7

E. Starling – 55+

Eastern Bluebird – 2

American Robin – 4

Gray Catbird – 1

Brown Thrasher – 2

Northern Mockingbird – 2
Myrtle² Warbler – 2
Eastern Towhee – 3
Chipping Sparrow – 1

Fox Sparrow – 9
Song Sparrow – 35
White-throated Sparrow – 26
Slate-colored Junco¹ – 9

Northern Cardinal – 43
House Finch – 32
Evening Grosbeak – 1
House Sparrow – 1

Also seen: porch cherub and chickens.

From Afar South Kingstown, Cumberland, RI; Westport, MA; Jamesport, NY; Teaneck, NJ; Sarasota, FL; Seattle, WA; Kofan indigenous reservation of Santa Rosa del Guamuéz, Putumayo, Colombia (58 species)

Canada Goose – 2+
American Wigeon – 3
Mallard – 4+
Common Merganser – 5
Double-crested Cormorant – 1
Great White Heron – 2
Great Blue Heron – 1
Snowy Egret – 3
Little Blue Heron – 4
Cattle Egret – 7
Green Heron – 1
Sandhill Crane – 2
Limpkin – 1
Glossy Ibis – 2
White Ibis – 2
Black Vulture – 3
Turkey Vulture – 13
Osprey – 3
Bald Eagle – 2
Red-Shouldered Hawk – 4

Broad-winged Hawk – 1
Red-tailed Hawk – 1
Common Gallinule – 2
American Coot – 11
Southern Lapwing – 3
Amer. Herring Gull – 25+
Mourning Dove – 23
Green Parrot sp.(small) – 12+
Red-bellied Woodpecker – 10
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker – 1
Downy Woodpecker – 4
Hairy Woodpecker – 2
Blue Jay – 22
American Crow – 9
Common Raven – 2
Black-capped Chickadee – 4
Tufted Titmouse – 9
White-breasted Nuthatch – 4
Blue-gray Gnatcatchers – 8
Carolina Wren – 4

European Starling – 33
Eastern Bluebird – 5
Amer. Robin – 2+
Northern Mockingbird – 4
Palm Warbler – 9
Yellow-rumped Warbler – 1
Fox Sparrow – 2
Song Sparrow – 5
Swamp Sparrow – 1
White-throated Sparrow – 4
Dark-eyed¹ Junco – 17
Northern Cardinal – 6
Red-winged Blackbird – 25
Common Grackle – 12+
Brown-headed Cowbird – 40+
Mochilero – 2
House Finch – 5
House Sparrow – 17

Also seen: Fox, racoon, Eastern cottontail.

Amy Keeler – Bird Sightings Out and About Feb. 3-2026, Amy Keeler: 2 Eagle (1 Fresh Pond, & 1 Old Town Rd), All Above Hog Pen: 2 Gadwall, 4 Hooded Merganser, 3 Bufflehead, 1 Cormorant, 1 Fish Crow. 50+ Canada Goose at Fresh Pond. The following at home / Mitchell Lane: 45 Mallard Duck, 4 Black Duck, 17 Mourning Dove, 30 Starling, 12 Song Sparrow, 2 Fox Sparrow, 6 Blue Jay, 6 Cardinal, 8 Chickadee, 1 Downy Woodpecker, 6 Crow, 14 House Finch, 2 Carolina Wren, 1 Mockingbird, 1 Pheasant, 1 Black Back Gull.

Annie Kurz – Here are my bird observations *Plus*. I begin with the Plus: last night, a noise sent me outside with a flashlight which lit up a racoon sliding on the icy snow crust. :-). Earlier in the week, a fox (photo attached) came to my back door. I am happy to say it looked resplendently healthy. Bird list: Usual downy woodpeckers (3 or 4), one hairy, one red belly; Carolina wren, titmice 2, chickadee, mocking bird, 4 blue jays. Because they were moving so fast I couldn't be sure of the total numbers — this is the minimum: white throated 4, juncos 7, song sparrows 2. All the birds who usually are ground feeders have learned to perch on the suet and peanut butter cages to eat, except the blue jays who refuse.



Bayard duPont – Hi Kim, Chickadees, Juncos, starlings, crows are too numerous to count! (Gerry has chickens!) We think there are 6 or 8 finches, and at least 3 sparrows (Song); they are in and out of the feeder all day so it's difficult to count them and these are my estimates. With the ground covered with snow, the feeder has been busy!

We have seen both male and female Red-bellies, and Downies. But today only saw the female Downey and male Red-Belly. Nut hatches are white-breasted, there are at least 2 I think. Usually there are 2 or 3 Doves and probably half a dozen Blue Jays around. One Brown Thrasher (been around for several days now). Regards, Bayard duPont.

[Bird counting rule is that you count only the number of each species that are seen at one time. This avoids the problem of double counting. The exception is only when you can identify different sexed individuals. I.e. if at one time you see a male cardinal and at another time you see a female then you can say there are 2 individuals, however, if at each visit there is only one male downy the count is 1(one) individual-kg].



Carlos Salinas – Fifteen minutes this morning: Dozens of small green parrots (touch of yellow under wings, according to local informant,) one black vulture, two mochileros (brown with yellow, hanging weaved nests,) one cattle egret, a baby Mourning Dove and three Southern Lapwing.



[Mochileros (photo left by Mauricio Ossa. Likely a Crested Oropendola) belong to the family Icteridae. These New World blackbirds are famous for their long, woven, hanging nests in Colombia and other parts of S. America.- kg]

Cathy Joyce & Nigel Grindley – Hi Kim. Our bird list from Tuesday, all from around our home (except for the geese, which we see while driving to the Library for Coots). Canada Goose 70+, Cooper's Hawk 2 (one chasing the other!!). American Crow 8, Downy Woodpecker 2, Black-capped Chickadee 4, Carolina Wren 1, Eastern Towhee 3, Fox Sparrow 1, White-throated Sparrow 15, Song Sparrow 2, Northern Cardinal 16. Thanks for yet another most enjoyable walk and breakfast. Cheers, Cathy & Nigel

Chris Blane – 1 Northern Mockingbird, 4 Fox Sparrows (the most I have ever seen together) 1 Merlin, 1 Chipping Sparrow, 12 Cardinals (male and female), 1 Myrtle Warbler, 1 adult male Sharp-shinned Hawk, 1 immature female Cooper's Hawk (Boo,Hiss!) 4 Slate Colored Juncos, 1 male Northern Harrier, 2 female Northern Harriers, 4 Bluejays - (all banded on the right leg), 6 Song Sparrows, 2 White Throated sparrows, 2 Carolina Wrens, 1 Brown Thrasher.

The bird feeder and the Privet Hedge have been really active lately. Suet, Millet and nuts for the Black-capped Chickadees(5) that I forgot to mention.

Chuck McMellon – Kim: here is my bird count from February 3: 2 crows, 2 blue jays, both males, 2 cardinals, one male, one female, 1 song sparrow on ground below feeder, 1 marsh hawk (northern harrier) a fly by, not at feeder. Chuck McMellon.

Corrie Heinz– Greta and I had the pleasure of coming across this guy [Black-crowned Night Heron, photo right] on our walk on the way out and back. on the way back it was attempting to gobble down a fish. I saw it fly over a few days ago while I was driving at the culvert on beach. I think he is all snug in the phragmites and has running water. [Reported later-kg] Hi, 3 horned grebes off south crescent beach, female harrier, 2 b eagles. Great Salt Pond / Hog Pen / Payne's: loons 4, bufflehead 20 +\-, RB merganser 10, eider 20 +\-, great blue heron.



Crazy-as-a-Coot bird walkers – Old Harbor (W. corner) & Surf Beach, Washington, Rhode Island, US. Feb 3, 2026 8:00 AM - 9:00 AM, Protocol: Stationary. Checklist Comments: Sunny, WNW wind 15mph, 18F. Met at Library and walked around Surf Hotel and mostly surveyed ocean and Old Harbor basin from Surf Hotel east porch. Lots of snow on the ground and drifts blocking regular paths and walkways. Participants: Margaret Haight, Drew Wheelan, Susan Matheke, Judy Gray, Anne Salinas, Cathy Joyce, Nigel Grindley, Heather Hatfield, Barbara Stavola, Jim Reale, Nancy Miles, Chuck McMellon, Amy Keeler, Mena Hautau, Vashti Brotherhood, & Kim G.

25 species: Canada Goose 1, Gadwall 2, Eurasian Wigeon 1 (Observed by all in attendance including several very good birders. This bird has been in this area for approximately one week.), American Wigeon 6, Mallard 2, American Black Duck 5, Ring-necked Duck 18, Common Eider 1, Surf Scoter 2, Bufflehead 30, Common Goldeneye 7, Red-breasted Merganser 1, Rock Pigeon (Feral Pigeon) 7, Black-bellied Plover 1, Bonaparte's Gull 10, Ring-billed Gull 25 (Extreme winter weather has resulted in many gulls & gull species. Ring-billed have been here on Block Island in large number recently. 25 Ring-billed gulls is a conservative undercount.), American Herring Gull 1, Horned Grebe 1, Common Loon 2, Double-crested Cormorant 2, American Crow 3, Fish Crow 1, European Starling 3, House Sparrow 1, Song Sparrow 2

Curt Milton – I didn't have much time to look yesterday but saw some waterfowl on my walk. Location: Wards Cove on Lake Union in Seattle. Temps around 50 with overcast sky. Here's what I saw:

Common Merganser: 5; Canada Geese: 2; American Coot: numerous; Double-crested Cormorant: 1; American Wigeon: 3. That's it!

Dan Kasuba Hi Kim, I was out and about in Sarasota FL 2/3 and saw many bird species. A few observations: Mid west coast FL, along with much of the state, is suffering from drought conditions. Wetlands, ponds and streams I've become familiar with over the years were dry, or lower than I've ever seen, leading to no birds seen in some spots or a concentration of fish/ birds in others. Also, the lowest temps in decades have been coinciding with the deep freeze up North. 2 bald eagles, 2 sandhill cranes, 3 snowy egrets, 6 cattle egrets, 1 GBH, 1 green heron, 4 little blue herons, 2 great white herons, 2 common gallinules, 1 American coot, 4 female mallards, 1 limpkin, 13 Turkey and 2 black vultures, 4 red shouldered and 1 red tailed hawk, 3 ospreys, 6 mourning doves, 9 palm and 1 yellow-rumped warbler, 8 blue gray gnatcatchers, 2 white and 2 glossy ibises, 30 E starlings, 3 blue jays and 2 Northern cardinals, 4 American crows, 2 common grackles, 7 red-bellied woodpeckers, and 3 Northern mockingbirds. Thanks and enjoy !

Heather Hatfield – Feb. 3, 2026. Sunny, 30F, W wind. Old Town Road: Evening Grosbeak 1, Cardinal 6, Mourning Dove 11, Song Sparrow 3, White-throated Sparrow 6, House Finch 12, Pigeon 4, BC Chickadee 2, Carolina Wren 2, N. Harrier 1, Mallard 6, Blue Jay 2. Dories Cove: Song Sp. 6, Fox Sparrow 2, Canada Geese 6. Beach Ave.: B.C. Night Heron 1. Crescent Beach: yellow-rumped Warbler 1. Hog Pen: Bald Eagle 1, C. Eider 6.

Kim Gaffett – Going about my day – At home: raven 1, Song sparrow 1, Catbird 1; TNC office: Chickadee 6.

Lauren Miller-Donnelly – Hi Kim, Tuesday the 3rd was my shortest observation of the year! Only 4 minutes as my car warmed up...but here is what I got: Mourning Dove 1, Hairy Woodpecker 1, Blue Jay 5, Eastern Bluebird 2, American Robin 1, House Sparrow 1, House Finch 1, Dark-eyed Junco 3, Northern Cardinal 1.

Because this list doesn't encapsulate the highlights from the yard since the big snow I am noting some cool feeder birds including 5 Fox Sparrows, a Hermit Thrush, a Pine Warbler, and 4 voracious Eastern Bluebirds.

I have kept our compost piles open and a small patch of grass along the stonewall and they really like it. And of course we are feeding mealworms so whenever the Bluebirds see me they come begging for more worms (and the Pine Warbler is usually with them)! Take care, Lauren.

Mary Komosinski – A lot of the birds are hanging around the heated bath, especially the Mourning Doves [estimate 10 for the list – kg] and this Yellow-bellied Sapsucker! I've had so many birds in the last couple of weeks, it's incredible. I was on the phone with Maggie the other day and I told her I counted 16 Cardinals! I think I'm going to go get another feeder and more/different food! Stay warm! 🐼



Peter Kinoy – Hi Kim, I thought you'd like this (photo left). Peter. [On a Corn Neck Rd., BI deck: White-throated Sparrow 1, N. Cardinal 1, Red-bellied Woodpecker, and one Cherub -kg]

Susan Matheke – I do not have a bird feeder so my list is always short. 1 Bald Eagle flying on Old Town Road, 18 Canada Geese at Ball Farm, 4 Robins on our Winter Berry, 12 Starlings in the spruce trees, 2 white-throated sparrows in the remains of Della's hay.

Tim Mooney – Hi Kim - Bird activity has been a little quiet, but stable through this cold winter. When I opened the door to go out, the first thing I heard was a Song Sparrow. A little tentative, but unmistakable. It was

also the last bird I heard as I arrived back home. And I was happy to hear a couple Carolina Wrens trilling this week, hanging in there. A starling and a robin were eating juniper berries.

Also, eastern cottontails are taking advantage of the "snowpack," nibbling the twigs at the top of our rose bushes that otherwise would be out of reach. I was surprised to find rabbit pellets on top of a snowbank beside our driveway, at least 3 feet off the ground. The adventurous bunny had climbed up to munch on some leftover honeysuckle leaves, which I didn't mind at all.

Neighborhood walk - Cumberland, RI: Song Sparrow – 1, House Sparrow – 16, Dark-eyed Junco – 5, Tufted Titmouse – 4, Black-capped Chickadee – 2, House Finch – 2, Blue Jay – 7, American Crow – 3, European Starling – 1, American Robin – 1, Red-bellied Woodpecker – 1 Downy Woodpecker – 2, White-breasted Nuthatch – 3, Carolina Wren – 2.

Tom Fetherston – 3 February 2026. Good evening, Kim – Another cold start, it was 4 degrees when I got up before sunrise although it did moderate to 36 by mid-afternoon. Not much moving at first, however as the sun rose above the horizon and the temperature climbed bird activity increased substantially. The pond remains completely frozen over, pretty desolate save for some gulls but Vesper and I did try ice fishing and caught the first fish of 2026, a pickerel. Nothing exciting today, just the usual winter suspects.

Notes for this week:

- The “blackbird” flocks have become more mixed. Oddly, the majority are brown-headed cowbirds, with quite a few red-winged blackbirds and a few grackles thrown in. Only a couple of starlings seen, fighting with the bluebirds at the feeder and not associating with the other blackbirds. My estimates for numbers of each species reflects their relative abundance in the flocks.

Here’s the list. Birds seen around Wordens 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 herring gull (25*) WP, American crow (2), Common raven (2), Broad-winged hawk, White-throated sparrow (5), Fox sparrow (2), Song sparrow (2), Swamp sparrow, Dark-eyed junco (2), Eastern bluebird (3), Northern cardinal (3), Tufted titmouse (3), Blue jay (3), White-breasted nuthatch, Carolina wren, Black-capped chickadee, Mourning dove (5), European starling (2), Brown-hd. cowbird (40*), Red-winged blackbird (25*), Common grackle (10*), Downy woodpecker, Red-bellied woodpecker.
Cheers, Fether

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- 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”.
 - ²Q. 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 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.