

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

April 18, 2023

Incidental Notes.

Hi Everyone,

Wow, another interesting compilation of observations. The From Afar list is interesting in its sheer quantity of species. Key to large number is surely the diversity of habitats combined with species movements because of early migration.

Tim's entry is a good example of species diversity due to distinctly different habitats. Thanks to Martin's observations along country roads in the east north central part of the country – a very different habitat compared to New England. And, Dan's observations from a western New England forest. All very cool.

For the fun of it, check out these fun facts about Canada Geese [10 Fun Facts About the Canada Goose | Audubon](#) Not mentioned however, is the basic fact that there is **no such thing as Canadian** Goose/Geese! Always use Canada (not Canadian) Goose/Geese. 😊

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

Peace, Kim

- 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, Flock = 15+

Block Island

(38 species)

Canada Goose – 8

Mallard – 18

Ruddy Shelduck - 1

Bufflehead – 12

Red-breasted Merganser – 17

Ring-necked Pheasant – 6

Osprey – 9

Northern Harrier – 2

Rough-legged Hawk – 1

Golden Eagle – 1

Herring Gull – 7

Great Black-backed Gull – 8

Mourning Dove – 20+

Ruby-throated Hummingbird – 1

Belted Kingfisher – 1

Red-bellied Woodpecker – 1

Downy Woodpecker – 3

Blue Jay – 2

American Crow – 8

Fish Crow – 3

Black-capped Chickadee – 5

Red-breasted Nuthatch – 1
Carolina Wren – 7
Blue-gray Gnatcatcher – 2
Golden-crowned Kinglet – 1
Ruby-crowned Kinglet – 1
American Robin – 31
European Starling – 2
Eastern Towhee – 13
Chipping Sparrow – 2
Song Sparrow – 5
White-throated Sparrow – 6
Northern Cardinal – 11
Red-winged Blackbird – 96+
Common Grackle – 15
Brown-headed Cowbird – 10
House Finch – 7+
American Goldfinch – 12

From Afar: Exeter, Charlestown, West Kingston & South Kingston, RI; Pittsfield & N. Westport, MA;
Madison, WI.
(94 species)

Canada Goose – 212
Mute Swan – 1
Gadwall – 1
Wood Duck – 2
American Wigeon – 6
Mallard – 35
Blue-winged Teal – 134
Northern Shoveler – 63
Green-winged Teal – 127
Ring-necked Duck – 45
Lesser Scaup – 16
Bufflehead – 13
Duck species – 7
Ring-necked Pheasant – 1
Wild Turkey – 3
Great Blue Heron – 5
Great Egret – 1
Glossy Ibis – 2
Black Vulture – 1
Turkey Vulture – 13
Osprey – 7
Bald Eagle – 1
Red-tailed Hawk – 2
Sora Rail – 1
Common Gallinule – 1
American Coot – 130
Sandhill Crane – 3
Killdeer – 13

Pectoral Sandpiper – 49
Greater Yellowlegs – 11
Lesser Yellowlegs – 2
Greater/Lesser Yellowlegs – 10
American Woodcock – 6
Bonaparte's Gull – 3
Ring-billed Gull – 215
Herring Gull – 103
Rock Pigeon – 4
Eurasian Collared-Dove – 2
Mourning Dove – 19
Great Horned Owl – 1
Barred Owl – 2
Whip-poor-will – 1
Belted Kingfisher – 2
Red-bellied Woodpecker – 3
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker – 2
Downy Woodpecker – 2
Hairy Woodpecker – 3
Northern Flicker – 5
Pileated Woodpecker – 3
American Kestrel – 4
Eastern Phoebe – 5
Blue-headed Vireo – 3
Purple Martin – 2
Blue Jay – 8
American Crow – 9
Common Raven – 1
Horned Lark – 3
Tree Swallow – 21
Barn Swallow – 3
Black-capped Chickadee – 8
Tufted Titmouse – 19
White-breasted Nuthatch – 5
Red-breasted Nuthatch – 1
Winter Wren – 3
Carolina Wren – 2
Blue-gray Gnatcatcher – 11
Ruby-crowned Kinglet – 1
Eastern Bluebird – 10
Hermit Thrush – 2
American Robin – 34
Gray Catbird – 2
Brown Thrasher – 2
Northern Mockingbird – 1
Louisiana Waterthrush – 1
Black-and-white Warbler – 3
Northern Parula – 2
Yellow Warbler – 2
Palm Warbler – 1

Pine Warbler – 4
Yellow-rumped Warbler – 6
Eastern Towhee – 13
Chipping Sparrow – 12
American Tree Sparrow – 1
Field Sparrow – 3
Savannah Sparrow – 4
Song Sparrow – 26
Swamp Sparrow – 1
White-throated Sparrow – 5
Northern Cardinal – 10
Red-winged Blackbird – 118
Yellow-headed Blackbird – 105
Common Grackle – 31
Brown-headed Cowbird – 3
House Finch - 4
American Goldfinch – 7

Also seen: American Copper, Spicebush Swallowtail, six-spotted green tiger beetle, ground nesting bees;

[Chris Blane](#) – Via text on 4/18: “Golden Eagle had lunch [photo] out at Graham Jones. Must have been hungry! Also, I have a pair of Chipping Sparrows here, and saw my first Hummingbird today!”

[Crazy-as-a-Coot Bird Walkers](#) – Clay Head Long Lot Loop, Washington, Rhode Island, US. Apr 18, 2023 8:00 AM - 10:00 AM. Protocol: Traveling, 2.0 mile(s). Checklist Comments: Sunny, southwest breeze, 50F. Corn Neck to Long Lot Pond to Stump Pond, Tear Drop Pond to bluff edge at former Little Sachem Pond back to Corn Neck Rd. via the blazed Long Lot Trail. Participants: Heather Hatfield, Cathy Joyce, Nigel Grindley, Susan Matheke, Amy Keeler, Leigh Klonski, Max & Ollie Wolf, Socha Cohen, Judy Gray, Chuck McMellon, Faye Benedict, John Formica, & Kim G. 21 species: Canada Goose 3, Mallard 6, Red-breasted Merganser 17, Ring-necked Pheasant 5, Mourning Dove 1, Herring Gull 5, Great Black-backed Gull 8, Osprey 3, Rough-legged Hawk 1 (large hawk the size of N. Harrier, but not a N. Harrier, with which all the observers are very familiar. Light patches on upper wing near, but not at, the wing tip. Several fairly good birders saw this bird for about 10 minutes flying and resting in a tree (Hodge Preserve, BI) while being harassed by 3-5 Amer. Crow), American Crow 5, Black-capped Chickadee 2, Ruby-crowned Kinglet 1, Golden-crowned Kinglet 1, Blue-gray Gnatcatcher 2, Carolina Wren 5, American Robin 20, White-throated Sparrow 4, Song Sparrow 4, Eastern Towhee 12, Red-winged Blackbird 10, Northern Cardinal 1.



[Dan Kasuba](#) – Hi Kim, I was in the Pittsfield Mass. state forest on 4/18/23, from 7:30-9:30 AM, and saw the following birds- 1 Eastern Towhee, 3 winter wrens, 2 hermit thrushes, 7 mourning doves, 3 blue headed vireos, 1 turkey vulture, 1 brown headed cowbird, 6 Northern cardinals, 4 American crows, 8 robins, 1 Louisiana waterthrush, 3 pileated woodpeckers, 1 ruby crowned kinglet, 2 yellow bellied sapsuckers, 2 red bellied woodpeckers, 1 yellow rumped warbler, 1 common grackle, 2 Eastern phoebes, 2 tufted titmice, 2 white breasted nuthatches, 1 Northern flicker, 4 song sparrows and 3 black capped chickadees. Thanks Kim !!

Kim Gaffett – Going about my day, at home BH Cowbird 6, Canada G. 5, Red-winged Blackbird 3, Downy Woodpecker 2, Carolina Wren 2, Mallards 6, Ruddy Shelduck 1 (photo).

On walk from Redgate to home: Fish Crow 3, A. Robin 2, Mourning dove 1, Mallard 6, Belted Kingfisher 1, Bufflehead 12, Osprey 1, Song sparrow 1.



Lauren Miller-Donnelly – Hi Kim, On Tuesday 4/18 we had relatively south winds overnight so I was optimistic I would discover some early Spring migrants out back behind my house in North Westport. So I headed out at 6:30 AM before work and I got my first Black and White Warbler of the season! Here is my list:

Canada Goose 1, Mallard 1, duck sp. 7, Mourning Dove 1, Killdeer 1, Herring Gull 3, Red-tailed Hawk 1, Downy Woodpecker 1, Northern Flicker 1, Eastern Phoebe 1, Blue Jay 1, American Crow 1, Black-capped Chickadee 1, Tufted Titmouse 5, Tree Swallow 8, White-breasted Nuthatch 2, Blue-gray Gnatcatcher 2, Carolina Wren 2, Gray Catbird 2, Northern Mockingbird 1, Eastern Bluebird 2, American Robin 5, House Finch 4, American Goldfinch 2, Chipping Sparrow 4, White-throated Sparrow 1, Savannah Sparrow 4, Song Sparrow 2, Swamp Sparrow 1, Eastern Towhee 2, Red-winged Blackbird 5, Brown-headed Cowbird 2, Common Grackle 1, Black-and-white Warbler 1, Pine Warbler 1, Northern Cardinal 2.

Martin Kaehrle – Hi Kim, I checked some country roads outside of Madison, WI this evening. Beautiful sunny weather. Canada Goose 204, Blue-winged Teal 134, Northern Shoveler 63, Gadwall 1, American Wigeon 6, Mallard 28, Green-winged Teal 127, Ring-necked Duck 45, Lesser Scaup 16, Bufflehead 13, Ring-necked Pheasant 1, Rock Pigeon 4, Eurasian Collared-Dove 2, Mourning Dove 7, Sora 1, Common Gallinule 1, American Coot 130, Sandhill Crane 3, Killdeer 12, Pectoral Sandpiper 49, Greater Yellowlegs 11, Lesser Yellowlegs 2, Greater/Lesser Yellowlegs 10, Bonaparte's Gull 3, Ring-billed Gull 215, Great Blue Heron 1, Turkey Vulture 12, Red-tailed Hawk 1, Belted Kingfisher 1, American Kestrel 2, Blue Jay 3, American Crow 3, Horned Lark 3, Tree Swallow 6, Barn Swallow 3, European Starling 16, American Robin 6, Chipping Sparrow 1, American Tree Sparrow 1, Song Sparrow 10, Yellow-headed Blackbird 10, Red-winged Blackbird 105, Brown-headed Cowbird 1, Common Grackle 7, Yellow-rumped Warbler 5, Northern Cardinal 1. Hope you are enjoying the start of the spring, Martin

Nigel Grindley & Cathy Joyce – Hi Kim, Here's our bird list for Tuesday:

At our home: Osprey 5 & 1 flying fish! (All seen at the same time flying and calling over and around our house; 2 were on the Ruddle nest today [Wednesday]), Mourning Dove 6, Red-bellied Woodpecker 1, Blue Jay 2, American Crow 3, Black-capped Chickadee 2, American Robin 2, Eastern Towhee 1, White-throated Sparrow 2, Northern Cardinal 8 (5m, 3f), Red-winged Blackbird 50+, Common Grackle 3 (1 with a striking white tail feather!), House Finch 4, Goldfinch 12! (all at the same time - there were 7 crowded onto the thistle feeder)
At the kids Mansion Rd house: Ring-necked Pheasant 1, Osprey 1, Northern Harrier 2 (1 striking "gray ghost"), Mourning Dove 2, American Robin 7, Starling 2, Red-winged Blackbird 30+, Common Grackle 12. Thanks for a lovely Coots walk, Cathy & Nigel.

Nancy Greenaway – From the dining table with Kim G. Downy Woodpecker 1, C. Grackle 2, House Finch 3+, N. Cardinal 2, Herring Gull 2, Marsh Hawk 1, Mourning Dove 10+, BH Cowbird 4, Red-wg. Blackbird 3+, BC chickadee 1, Red-breasted Nuthatch 1.

Tim Mooney – Hi Kim and Lauren – I was running around a good bit last week. I think I was outside every day except Tuesday... but here's what I found here and there.

The Carter Preserve visits were occasions to tag along with two groups of URI scientists. On Wednesday night, I observed a team of grad students capturing a male woodcock and putting a radio transmitter on it. A network of "nodes" or receivers will allow the scientists to track woodcocks (and soon, other songbirds) around the field, field edge and forest to see which habitats they are using. The other study sites are Arcadia, Big River, Great Swamp, and Tillinghast Pond.

On Thursday morning, I was back at Carter with a different group, and they were flying drones over the preserve, monitoring for any southern pine beetle infestations. Some pretty cool-looking toys! The project will also provide very high resolution LiDAR coverage of the preserve, which will be useful to the woodcock project. Friday's walk at the Great Swamp was a practice walk for myself, getting ready for a donor walk on Saturday.

Queen's River Preserve, Exeter, RI (Monday 4/17): Barred Owl – 1, Eastern Towhee – 2, Field Sparrow – 1
Carter Preserve, Charlestown (Wednesday and Thursday, 4/19 and 4/20*): American Woodcocks – 6, Whip-poor-will – 1, Barred Owl – 1, Great Horned Owl – 1, American Kestrel – 2, Eastern Bluebird – 2, American Robin – 5, Field Sparrow – 2, Eastern Towhee – 3, *Brown Thrasher – 2

In addition, two hikers shared a photo of a northern water snake they encountered on the trail.

Great Swamp Management Area, West Kingston, RI. The Purple Martins were life birds for me. I've seen them reported at Carter once in a while, which had me wondering if I'd seen them before and not realized it. Well, now having seen two martins flying side-by-side with a tree swallow, there's no mistaking them for something else. They splashed down on the pond's surface repeatedly... putting on a great show. Mallard – 2, Canada Goose – 5, Osprey – 6, Great Blue Heron – 2, Great Egret – 1, Glossy Ibis – 2, Belted Kingfisher – 1, American Kestrel – 2, Northern Parula – 2, Black and White Warbler – 2, Yellow Warbler – 2, Palm Warbler – 1, Pine Warbler – 3, Blue-gray Gnatcatcher – 9, Song Sparrow – 8, Chipping Sparrow – 5, Eastern Towhee – 4, American Goldfinch – 1, Northern Cardinal – 2, Blue Jay – 1, Tufted Titmouse – 10, Black-capped Chickadee – 3, American Robin – 7, Eastern Bluebird – 4, Eastern Phoebe – 2, Hairy Woodpecker – 1, Northern Flicker – 1, Red-bellied Woodpecker – 1, Tree Swallow – 6, Purple Martin – 2, Red-winged Blackbird – 2, Common Grackle – 2, Brown-headed Cowbird – 2. In addition, an American copper, a fresh spicebush swallowtail and a six-spotted green tiger beetle (plus numerous ground-nesting bees that I can't ID.)

Tom Fetherston – Good morning Kim - Here's my list. As always, some new and interesting observations. Enjoy! Yesterday was cool and blustery, too rough to go out on Wordens Pond fishing first thing so I took a trip to Carolina Trout Pond in the Carolina Management Area before sunrise, returned at 0830 with a couple of trout and then spent the remainder of the day working in the yard. I walked down to the dock several times to see what was happening there. Much of the day it was so windy there wasn't a lot of activity but as it calmed somewhat in the evening there were more birds in evidence.

Some notes:

- On my way to Carolina, I encountered three gobblers not far from here in the middle of the road. It should be near breeding season but there wasn't a hen in sight. Maybe they were all having a coffee asking each other where the hens were? They barely moved out of my way as I passed.
- While fishing at Carolina Trout Pond, I noticed an osprey perched in a dead tree at the south end of the pond. About 18" from it at eye level was a Northern flicker. They were staring at each other, stayed that way for a couple of minutes till the flicker took off. Strange to observe two very different sized birds having a face-off like that. The osprey caught a trout a few minutes later. 😊
- The male bluebird has become more aggressive defending the area around his bird house. Our dogs have learned to keep their distance. The male seems to have particularly enmity towards a red squirrel that lives in a big white pine on the west edge of the yard. That squirrel has been commuting between the tree and bird feeders on the east side of the property for a while, generally traveling through the trees along the perimeter of the yard. Now, as soon as the squirrel starts its trip, the male bluebird is all over it, forcing the squirrel to make a wide loop around to the feeders. Wonder why that animal is particularly singled out?
- Another new (to me) bird interaction occurred this week while I was raking leaves in the front yard. An adult bald eagle landed in a tree by the dock and appeared to enjoy watching a human perform a seemingly useless task. A short while later two herring gulls began harassing the eagle, swooping by at close range the way crows sometimes will. The eagle stood its ground (more properly "branch") and they eventually left. I'd never noticed gulls hounding a raptor here before. Crows used to mob eagles

around the pond but no longer seem interested. Perhaps because eagles aren't novel in the neighborhood anymore?

Here's the list. Birds seen on or around Worden's Pond are annotated with WP, birds observed at Carolina Management Area are (CMA). Estimates noted with an asterisk * Birds in the field or at the feeders were counted as singles unless present simultaneously or different sexes.

Canada goose (2) WP, American crow (5) WP & CMA, White-throated sparrow (4), Northern cardinal, Tufted titmouse (2), Blue jay (3), Hairy woodpecker (2), Downy woodpecker, Herring gull (100*) WP, Mourning dove (4), White-breasted nuthatch, Red-breasted nuthatch, Wood duck (2) CMA, Black capped chickadee, Mallard (4) WP, Mute swan (WP), Osprey (CMA), Tree swallow (WP), Common grackle (20*), Brown headed cowbird (4), Red-winged blackbird (6) Yard & CMA, Eastern bluebird (2), American robin (3), Song sparrow (2), Chipping sparrow (2) CMA, Wild turkey (3), American goldfinch (4), Northern flicker (2) CMA, Eastern towhee, Great blue heron (2) WP, Black vulture (WP), Bald eagle (WP), Common raven (WP). Cheers, Fether