

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

June 6, 2023

Incidental Notes.

Hi Everyone,

With June comes a shift away from migrants to resident breeding birds. And, on Block Island a busier season with less time for birding afield on Coot walk days, thus only the group list to report.

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

(25 species)

Ring-necked Pheasant – 4

Double-crested Cormorant – 31

Herring Gull – 12

Great Black-backed Gull – 4

Mourning Dove – 10

American Crow – 5

Fish Crow – 1

Tree Swallow – 7

Barn Swallow – 1

Black-capped Chickadee – 3

Carolina Wren – 1

American Robin – 3

European Starling – 1

Cedar Waxwing – 3

Common Yellowthroat – 3

American Redstart – 4

Yellow Warbler – 5

Eastern Towhee – 5

Song Sparrow – 1

Northern Cardinal – 2

Red-winged Blackbird – 10

Common Grackle – 4

House Finch – 1

American Goldfinch – 3

House Sparrow – 1

From Afar: Pautucket, Cumberland & South Kingston, RI; Seattle, WA

(50 species)

Canada Goose – 45
Mallard – 23
Wilson’s Storm-petrel – 3
Double-crested Cormorant – 11
Great Blue Heron – 8
Osprey – 7
Bald Eagle – 1
Sharp-shinned Hawk – 1
Cooper’s Hawk – 1
Red-tailed Hawk – 1
American Coot – 1
Killdeer – 2
Ringed-bill Gull – 2
Great Black-backed Gull – 4
Mourning Dove – 5
Rock Pigeon - 3
Chimney Swift – 5
Ruby-throated Hummingbird – 3
Anna’s Hummingbird – 1
Red-bellied Woodpecker – 1
Downy Woodpecker – 1
Northern Flicker – 1
Eastern Wood-pewee – 1
Eastern Kingbird – 1
Warbling Vireo – 1
Blue Jay – 4
American Crow – 13
Fish Crow – 2
Tree Swallow – 3
Barn Swallow – 2
Black-capped Chickadee – 5
Tufted Titmouse – 2
White-breasted Nuthatch – 3
Bewick’s Wren – 1
Carolina Wren – 2
American Robin – 11
Gray Catbird – 1
Northern Mockingbird – 4
European Starling – 21
American Redstart – 2
Song Sparrow – 7
Northern Cardinal – 5
Black-headed Grosbeak – 1
Red-winged Blackbird – 7
Common Grackle – 13
Brown-headed Cowbird – 1
Baltimore Oriole – 1
House Finch - 4
American Goldfinch – 1
House Sparrow – 16

Crazy-as-a-Coot Bird Walkers – Block Island--Cooneymus Rd, Washington, Rhode Island, US

Jun 6, 2023 8:00 AM - 9:30 AM. Protocol: Traveling 0.5 mile(s). Checklist Comments: Cloudy, sw wind.

Participants: Heather Hatfield, Cathy Joyce, Amy Keeler, Gail & Shorty Cahill, Donna Ortelli, Susan Matheke, Dianne Goodrich, Caty Belle with Veronica, Joe & Don, Joyce & Don Henshaw, Chuck McMellon, Viki Butlevska with Georgia, and Kim G. 25 species: Ring-necked Pheasant 4, Mourning Dove 10, Herring Gull 12, Great Black-backed Gull 4, Double-crested Cormorant 31, American Crow 5, Fish Crow 1, Black-capped Chickadee 3, Tree Swallow 7, Barn Swallow 1, Carolina Wren 1, European Starling 1, American Robin 3, Cedar Waxwing 3, House Sparrow 1, House Finch 1, American Goldfinch 3, Song Sparrow 1, Eastern Towhee 5, Red-winged Blackbird 10, Common Grackle 4, Common Yellowthroat 3, American Redstart 4, Yellow Warbler 5, Northern Cardinal 2

Curt Milton – Good afternoon! It's a beautiful day in Seattle for a bird walk. Clear skies and temps in the low 70s. I saw birds in my neighborhood walking to get coffee and also at the Union Bay Natural Area, my usual haunts. Here is my list: House Sparrow: 1, Song Sparrow: several, American Robin: several, House Finch: 2, American Crow: numerous, Anna's Hummingbird: 1, Black-headed Grosbeak: 1, Bewick's Wren: 1, Mallard: numerous, including a mom and 6 babies, Great Blue Heron: 1, Red-winged Blackbird: 1, Canada Geese: numerous, American Coot: 1. I'll attach a couple of photos: a cute baby duck (can't have too many of those) and my first GBH photo of the year. Enjoy! Curt



Lauren Miller-Donnley – Hello Kim, on June 6th I was lucky to go out with the Coastal Restoration Team on the upper Seekonk River. There were awesome birds at the Pawtucket Boat Ramp also known as Festival Pier. Its actually right across from the Tide Water Landing Soccer Field construction site as well.

Mallard 10, Killdeer 2, Ring-billed Gull 2, Double-crested Cormorant 10, Great Blue Heron 7, Great Egret 3, Osprey 6, Red-tailed Hawk 1, Eastern Wood-Pewee 1, Eastern Kingbird 1, Barn Swallow 2, Song Sparrow 1, Common Grackle 2, American Redstart 1.

Tim Mooney – Good morning, Kim! June 6 was an exciting day, as the resident mockingbird and robin chicks all fledged. Robins nested in our garage this year (the back door doesn't stay shut). At the start of the season, I shooed the mother out of the garage several days in a row, but she was insistent. In any event, the chicks grew quickly, leaving a manageable mess. I wondered if the chicks would find the way out on their own. On the

fateful day, I heard a few loud “cheeps!” from inside the garage, so I went in to check on them. Sure enough, one ended up in an open-topped storage bin, unable to climb out from between the household junk. I scooped it up and ushered it out the door. Its nestmate wanted to go up instead of out, but eventually it made its way down from the rafters and out the door it went.

Meanwhile, the mockingbird chicks left their little stick nest, tucked away in a boxwood shrub by the house. The nesting pair have stood guard against all front yard intruders for weeks. They’ve dive bombed chipmunks, intercepted crows and scattered young starlings into the air. One evening, a grackle family got too close and a mockingbird was right after them. The juvenile grackle didn’t know what hit it, and as it tried to avoid the mocker, it bounced off the front door. (It was fine after a moment.) Anyway, it’s great having the mockingbirds around the yard, providing free pest control. The chicks are still dependent on the adults for food, but they can fly 100 feet or more, and they seem to be thriving. On Saturday, I watched a mockingbird grab a moth, then the moth escaped, and the mockingbird chased it all around the yard, even flying right through a chain link fence, which I thought was amazing. The moth got away this time... Best, Tim

Cumberland, RI (residential area): American Robins (2 fledglings) – 4, Northern Mockingbirds (2 fledglings) – 4, Northern Cardinals – 3, House Finch – 2, Song Sparrow – 1, House Sparrows – 15 (conservative est), Black-capped Chickadee – 4, European Starling – 21 (mixed adults/juveniles, a high number even for them), Common Grackle – 5, Red-winged Blackbird – 1, Brown-headed Cowbird – 1, Fish Crow – 2 (heard), Blue Jay – 3, Cooper’s Hawk – 1, Downy Woodpecker – 1, Northern Flicker – 1, Mourning Dove – 3, Rock Pigeon – 3, Carolina Wren – 1, Chimney Swift – 5 (steady number flying together all spring), Ruby-throated Hummingbird – 1, Canada Goose – 4 (flyover)

Tom Fetherston – Hi Kim - Here’s my list. Another new species for me (warbling vireo). You’ll read that today wasn’t a good one offshore so only had a couple of [off shore] sightings. Cheers, Fether

06 June 2023. Good evening Kim - An interesting day, started before sunrise here at the house and the dock on the pond, then met colleagues from the Atlantic Shark Institute for our trip to BI at 0930. Forecast was 2’ seas, 7 second period. Cleared the West Gap and the seas were 2’, 3 second period. Not going to be a fast trip but manageable. As we continued south the wind picked up and seas built. Finally, just past 1 BI we were in 3’ – 5’, white water and occasional green water over the bow. Called Jules and told him we were on the way back. Fought the helm the entire way, not fun at all. I only have two sea bird sightings as a result :-/ The morning, however, was really fun. I tried the Merlin “Sound ID” app, and it was amazing what it detected. I’ve used Merlin for passive acoustic identification during marine mammal research, but this was the first time with birds, it made 18 detections in ten minutes. I believe for our list we need visual ID, so only recorded the species I saw. However, Merlin identified quite a few I didn’t including the Eastern wood-pewee and Northern Parula I’d seen in the past month but not recently. Merlin also detected a yellow warbler and song sparrow, the latter of which is commonly around the yard but not observed today. The trees in full leaf make spotting birds in the canopy difficult. I had acoustic detections of the warbling vireo (new for me) and American redstart, but it took a while to actually see them. By the way, the male redstart reminds me of a miniature oriole on speed, zipping branch to branch, never staying on one place very long. The female is sighted most days, I do think they are nesting here.

This week’s observations:

- The bluebirds are running me out of mealworms regularly. The juveniles have started eating from the feeder but do prefer when mom or dad dump some on the ground for them. As I mentioned recently, there were four juveniles together this week, never saw more than three together but they do swap positions a lot. They are getting a lot more blue in the feathers. The adults keep going to the house, so I do believe there is another brood.
- The young bluebirds spend time high in the canopy “bugging” now. Nice to see them out on their own.
- There are three or four small-looking nuthatches hanging out together. Could they be young of the year now?
- I have an orange feeder for orioles, but recently the primary customer is a male red-bellied woodpecker. Funny to watch him back down the tree to the feeder.

- A sharp-shinned hawk sailed overhead early this morning. I found a pile of catbird feathers in the yard, would it be the culprit or a larger Cooper's hawk more likely?

Here's the list. Birds seen on or around Worden's Pond are annotated with WP, Block Island Sound (BIS). 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 (8 + 13 goslings) WP, American crow (3), Northern cardinal (2), Tufted titmouse (2), Blue jay, Red-bellied woodpecker, Black backed gull (4) BIS, Wilson's storm petrel (3) BIS, Mourning dove (2), White-breasted nuthatch (3), Black capped chickadee, Mallard (3) WP, Osprey (WP), Tree swallow (3) WP, Common grackle (6*) WP & yard, Red-winged blackbird (5*) WP & yard, American robin (2), Bald eagle (WP), Ruby-throated hummingbird (2), Carolina wren, Baltimore oriole, Gray catbird, Warbling vireo, American redstart, American goldfinch, Sharp shinned hawk, Double crested cormorant (WP). Cheers, Fether.