

Social Distance Crazy-as-a-Coot Bird Walks: July 7, 2020 (mostly)

A few notes on the July 7+ lists:

Block Island - Susan M.'s Purple Martin was a nice addition. Perhaps Ball Farm would be a good place to put up a Purple Martin house/condo. And, nice to know that G. Ibis are still around.

From Afar – interesting notes from all the “foreign correspondents”.

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

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

Block Island

Canada Geese – 14

Domestic ducks – 3

Ring-necked Pheasant – 2

Double-crested Cormorant – 1

Great Egret – 7

Snowy Egret – 10

Yellow-crowned Night Heron – 1

Glossy Ibis – 3

Turkey Vulture – 2

Osprey – 1

Northern Harrier – 1

Hawk species (Cooper's) – 1

Gr. Yellow Legs – 2

Semi-palmated Plover – 4

Willet - 3

Great Black-backed Gull – 7

Herring Gull – 6

Tern species – >500

Mourning Dove – 11

Rock Dove (pigeon) – 4

American Crow – 5
Fish Crow – 3
Blue Jay – 2
Barn Swallow – 20+
Bank Swallow – 14+
Purple Martin – 1
Carolina Wren – 3
American Robin – 6
Gray Catbird – 12+
European Starling – 8
Yellow Warbler – 3
Rufous-sided Towhee – 12+
Song Sparrow – 3
Northern Cardinal – 2
Red-winged Blackbird – 9
Common Grackle – 2
American Goldfinch – 6
House Sparrow – 8

From Afar Seattle WA; Eugene, OR; Stanfordville, NY; Edinburgh, Scotland; Drangedal, Norway;

*=European species.

Mute Swan – 3+
Great Blue Heron – 2
Osprey – 3
Gull species – 10+
*Cuckoo – 1
*Swift – 3
Anna's Hummingbird – 10+
American Crow – 10+
Blue Jay – 2

Steller's Jay – 1

California Scrub Jay – 5

Barn Swallow – 20+ (*Hirundo rustica*, same genus species in U.S., Britain, Norway. A.k.a. Swallow)

Tree Swallow – 10+

Chimney Swift – 4

*Wagtails – 10+

Black-capped Chickadee – 3

Tufted Titmouse – 4

Nuthatch species – 4

Carolina Wren – 1

American Robin – 7

*Robin – 10+

Common Yellowthroat – 1

Northern Cardinal – 2

Rose-breasted Grosbeak – 4+

Black-headed Grosbeak – 1

House Finch – 7

American Goldfinch – 4

Curt Milton, Good afternoon! Not a ton of birds today. Weather was in the upper 50s this morning, overcast with a breath of wind. Saw a few birds in my Seattle neighborhood (Eastlake) and then went out to Discovery Park, which sits on a bluff above Puget Sound. Lots of swallows there and also crows ... and a few others. Here's my list: Crows: numerous (10+), Robin: 5, Steller's Jay, Black-capped chickadee: 3, Anna's hummingbird: numerous, Barn swallows: numerous, Gulls: numerous, Tree swallows: numerous, Common yellowthroat, female ... see the not-so-great pix below. I'm pretty sure this is a female common yellowthroat. See what you think. (I really need a better lens.) And that's it from Seattle! [Per CM notation: "numerous" = 10+ ~kg]

Ellen Davis – Hi Kim, Here's my list from Stanfordville, NY and environs where it's been warm and humid (and buggy!) lately. There are a lot of scraggly looking juveniles around which I've included in the totals. At birdfeeder - tufted titmouse & juv - 4; nuthatch - 4; goldfinch & juv - 4; blue jay - 2; cardinal (male and female) - 1 ea; carolina wren - 1; house finch & juv – many ["many" = 7.-kg]; red breasted grosbreak & juv - 2 pair. While out in the area - great blue heron - 2; chimney swifts - 4; osprey (juvenile in nest) – 3. I'm sorry to hear the public walks are still not allowed but will continue to enjoy the socially distant ones until they are. Hope all are safe and well.

Elspeth Crawford – Hi Kim. I did see some birds earlier this week - another swan family doing their thing [[photos here](#)]. I have just listened to a wonderful podcast about a birdwatcher <https://podcasts.apple.com/gb/podcast/this-is-love/id1337100398?i=1000474436763> 35 minutes from someone who loves birds and just happens to be black. Very

much to the point after hearing news this week of a black birder being accused of threatening behaviour in Central Park. Hope it is of interest.

Erica Anderson – My bird walk was mostly a dud today. Overcast at 10:30am with the sun starting to break through enough that it got hot by the end of the walk. Saw 5 California scrub jays, 2 American robins and one juvenile black headed gross beak. Heard lots of stuff in the woods but couldn't spot a darn thing. Still, who can complain about a wonderful walk in a new area.

Faye Benedict – I was not able to do a proper bird walk, but thought I would observe the diurnal pattern, since there are so darn many ["so darn many" = 10+. ~kg] wagtails and swallows and blackbirds and robins, due to all the no-see-ums and other insects. There has been lots of activity in the early morning and at "dusk" (which lasts from about 5 to 11 pm).

So on Wednesday, early in the morning, I went out and was surprised that it was quiet. Saw something kind of big and gray swoop across the fields and grabbed my camera and binocs. Well have do you know, it came and landed on my clothes line! see pic. After a while it took off and flew across the road to perch on a telephone line. I assumed it was a young of a predator of some kind (baby bustard I thought...) due to the size and flight, but after looking at the pictures I realized it was **a cuckoo!** First time for me to see one (and realize what I was seeing). You will be glad to know this is a European bird (see wiki or other bird sources) that is a long distance migrator from Africa. Cuckoos are featured in at least one iconic folk song about somebody walking along a trail in the spring, and a number of myths. It lays its eggs in other birds' nests, which I am sure there are plenty of around here. But the numbers are decreasing and the cuckoo was red-listed in Norway in 2015 as "nearly threatened" or something like that. I don't know what the trend has been since then but I was happy to have seen and identified it! **Bird-happiness.**

A friend also told me that several tårnseiler (*Apus apus*, I think it is **a swift**, you could check) were here too. It is also European. He heard its distinctive call. It is a little bigger than the swallows but I have a hard time distinguishing it in flight.

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cuckoo> cuckoo;

<https://www.birdid.no/bird/eBook.php?specieID=1914> tårnseiler

Kim Gaffett (with Diandra Verbeyst & Tadgh O'Neill) – July 14, 2020 Sunny at Andy's Way. Double Crested Cormorant 1, Great Egret 7, Snowy Egret 10, YC Night Heron 1, Glossy Ibis 3, Semi-palmated Plover 4, Gr. Yellow Leg 2, Willet 3, Osprey 1, Black Backed Gull 7, Herring Gull 3, Tern species > 500, Mourning Dove 1, Fish Crow 3, Barn Swallow 3, Carolina Wren 1, RW Blackbird 5, C. Grackle 2.

Susan Matheke – Ok this is my list from Tuesday, - nothing special but still enjoy knowing and doing a focused look on a particular day. And I saw 3 different swallows at Ball Farm, early morning, and was able to truly identify 2. so here is my list: 5 barn swallows, 2 bank swallows, 1 **purple martin** ??? I looked this up immediately, not a starling, wings looked like a purple martin [Cool! -kg], 7 starlings, 8 mourning doves, 6 American robins, 4 Goldfinch, 2 Blue Jay, 2 yellow warbler, 8 Canada Geese, 6 Canada Geese goslings, 1 female pheasant, 2 Carolina wrens, 1 turkey vulture, 1 male cardinal. Thanks for keeping us going.

Vicki, Lawrence & Laura Kikuchi – Thanks Kim, for the reminder and invitation to get out birding today! Three of us went out about 10:30 (I know, late) and our walk took us from the top of Pilot Hill, past John E's Tughole, across on driveways to Payne Road and back up the hill. Lots of birds: Barn swallows, dozens ["Dozens" = 12+ in this report], Rough-wing swallows, dozens [Rough-winged swallows are not that common in those numbers on BI; and can be hard to distinguish from Bank swallows when on the wing. However, Bank Swallows are very numerous on BI. In fact BI may have the largest nesting population of this species in RI. I am going to list these as Bank Swallows, but feel free to let me know if you are fairly certain that they were Rough-winged swallows. -kg], Song sparrow 3, House sparrow 8, Cardinal 1, Mourning dove 2, Rock dove 4, Crow 5, Domestic duck 3, Am. Goldfinch 2, Yellow warbler 1, Red wing blackbird 4, Grackle 1, Starling 1, Catbird, dozens, Northern towhee, dozens, Herring gull 3, Ring-neck Pheasant 1, Turkey vulture 1, Harrier 1, Hawk (coopers?) sp. Thanks again, can't wait until it can be in person.