

## Social Distance Crazy-as-a-Coot Bird Walks: January 19, 2021

### Incidental Notes.

- Check out photos below from Elspeth Crawford (Edinburgh, Scotland), as well as her blog link in her report (also below.) Just a note about Asterix\* species: they are species found in Europe. Such as Blackbird, which in England is a robin-like bird. Greylag goose is a European bird, but every once in a while one ends up in this part of the world (i.e., northwestern coast of the Atlantic). Some species reported from our European friends like Common Gallinule (Moorhen) and Mute Swan are the same species as the ones that are also in this part of the world, therefore I do not asterix them.
- Nigel & Cathy have a couple of interesting species at their bird feeder, Rusty Blackbird is a treat and is a species that is rapidly declining, and a Brown Thrasher, which is usually gone from these parts at this time of year.
- 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]

### **Block Island**

(39 species)

Canada Geese – 28

Gadwall – 4

American Black Duck – 5

Mallard – 30+

Northern Pintail – 1

Common Eider – 17

Black Scoter – 3

Bufflehead – 14

Common Goldeneye – 7

Hooded Merganser – 3

Red-breasted Merganser – 3

Ring-necked Pheasant – 2

Red-throated Loon – 1

Common Loon – 2

Horned Grebe – 1  
Great Cormorant – 1  
Double-crested Cormorant – 1  
Great Blue Heron – 2  
Northern Harrier – 2  
Accipiter sp. – 1  
Sharp-shinned Hawk – 1  
Herring Gull – 13+  
Great Black-backed Gull – 13+  
Belted Kingfisher – 1  
Red-bellied Woodpecker – 1  
Downy Woodpecker – 3  
American Crow – 36+  
Fish Crow – 8  
Black-capped Chickadee – 9  
Red-breasted Nuthatch – 1  
Carolina Wren – 4  
American Robin – 12  
Brown Thrasher – 1  
European Starling – 30  
Song Sparrow – 4  
White-throated Sparrow – 2  
Northern Cardinal – 11  
Rusty Blackbird – 1  
House Finch – 5  
House Sparrow – 8

**From Afar** Cumberland & Providence, RI; Cambridge, MA; West Haven, CT; St Petersburg, FL; Pleasant Hill, OR; Seattle, WA; Edinburgh, Scotland; Lausanne, Switzerland  
(55 species)

Canada Goose – 21  
\*Greylag Goose – 10  
Mute Swan – 20

Wood Duck – 10+

Mallard – 12

Ring-necked Duck – 17

Bufflehead – 1

Common Merganser – 2

Red-breasted Merganser – 7

Pied-billed Grebe – 2

White Pelican – 2

Brown Pelican – 50

Cormorant species – 10

Anhinga – 1

Great Egret – 1

Little Blue Heron – 1

Tricolored Heron – 2

Cattle Egret – 1

White Ibises – 100

Wood Stork – 1

Turkey Vulture – 7

Osprey – 20

Red-tailed Hawk – 1

Unidentified hawk – 2

Common Gallinule (Moorhen) – 12

Unidentified Peeps (Sandpipers) – 40

Willet – 3

Black Skimmer – 30

Ring-billed Gull – 10

Herring Gull – 27

Rock Dove – 4

Eurasian Collared Dove – 4

Belted Kingfisher – 1

Downy Woodpecker – 1

Kestrel species – 1

Loggerhead Shrike – 1

American Crow – 3

\*Crow species – 5

\*Jackdaw – 20

Black-capped Chickadee – 4

Carolina Wren – 1

Blue-gray Gnatcatcher – 7

\*Robin – 1

\*Blackbird – 7

Northern Mockingbird – 3

Palm Warbler – 10

Yellow-rumped Warbler – 11

Prairie Warbler – 1

Song Sparrow – 2

White-Crowned Sparrow – 5

Golden-crowned Sparrow – 7

Oregon Junco – 2

Northern Cardinal – 2

House Finch – 3

American Goldfinch – 2

House Sparrow – 1

\*Dunnock? – 3

[Curt Milton](#) – Didn't have a lot of time today but I did have one pretty cool bird: a red-tailed hawk! I'll attach a photo. I went to the Union Bay Natural Area again. So many birds there! Weather was foggy and in the low 40s. There were a lot of waterfowl out on the bay but it was too foggy to get a very good look. Here's my list: White crowned sparrow: 4-6, Crows: 3, Red tailed hawk, Golden crowned sparrow: 6-8, Mallards: 2, Bufflehead, Rock pigeons: 4, Pied-billed grebe: 2

[Dan Kasuba](#)– Hi Kim, I loved reading the history of your group. I've included my sightings on 1/19/21 in St Petersburg FL. Thanks for all of your hard work! 7:30-8:30 downtown Bayfront Park. 50 brown pelicans, 1 loggerhead shrike, 20 ospreys, 40 unidentifiable sandpipers, 3 willets, 30 black skimmers, 4 Eurasian collared doves, 100 white ibises, 10 ring-billed gulls, 17 ring necked ducks, 1 belted kingfisher, 2 white pelicans, 1 little blue heron, 2 tricolored herons, 7 turkey vultures, 3 mockingbirds, 10 cormorants. At Sawgrass Lake Park, 1:00-2:30 PM- 11 yellow rumped warblers, 7 blue gray gnatcatchers, 10 palm warblers, 1 prairie warbler, 1 anhinga, 11 common moorhens, 1 wood stork, 1 great egret and 1 cattle egret Take care Dan

[Elliot Taubman](#) – I also miss Crazy-as-a Coot. Cannot walk any distance and have to stay on the mainland waiting for surgery on February 2; hopefully my spine will be fixed enough so I can walk again. The only way I can do the bird walk is

to look out the window in West Haven. There are two small trees I see and for some reason Cardinals like these two trees. There have been as many as the went Cardinals on the trees. This morning there was a male in one tree and a female in the other. They flew away together.

**Elsbeth Crawford** – Last weeks talk about ducks was inspiring. Today I cycled over to Duddinston Loch where there are always water birds and saw at least 100. The list with approximate numbers is: swans, 20; Canada geese, 16; greylag geese, 10; mallards, 10; moorhen, 1; herring gulls 25; jackdaws 20; blackbirds 7; crows, 5; wee brown birds [probably dunnocks] 3; British robin, 1. [See photos below.]

In better weather the loch is used to families who probably feed the birds in spite of all the notices that say do not. They are pretty tame - even come too close.

The most interesting to me were the herring gulls and jackdaws. There were flocks on the mud alongside all the others. Then every so often both gulls and jackdaws would take off and fly out over the loch, circle a bit and then return. I saw no reason why - no people near, no aggression from any of the bigger geese or swans, they just left, and both kinds of birds were almost flying as a single flock - gulls mostly ahead, jackdaws keeping up wheeling behind. They did it several times, every few minutes, till I got cold waiting and trying to get a decent photo of them in the air. No success at that. Maybe they are still at it. A lovely morning, thanks and best wishes. I put a lot more photos of the adventure on the blog here <https://elspethc.wordpress.com/2021/01/19/virtual-birdwalk/>

Follow up to query from KG: The blackbirds are the European, the males have a lovely yellow/orange bill and are black - the females are brown. There were lots of un-seens as well - I could hear all kinds of chatter in the hedges but I am not good at identifying by sound. I am looking forward to spring - we are in lockdown again - only out for exercise - it has gone on for a long time now. best wishes

**Erica Anderson** – Hi, Today was foggy with the sun trying to break through and it was a brisk 36. I was out in the park next door from about 10-11am, which has open grassy areas, the river and cotton wood forest. It hadn't really warmed up enough for much activity, although I could hear plenty in the tree tops. I saw 2 hawks that I couldn't identify as they flew by too fast. One flew into the woods and another chased it out of the woods, landed on a branch and then took off across the river. Probably a sharp-shinned and red tailed but don't feel I really identified them.:10+ Wood ducks, 5 Canada Geese, 2 Common Merganser fem+male, 2 Song Sparrows, 1 Female Downy Woodpecker, 3 Black Capped Chickadees, 2 Oregon Juncos, 3 House finches, 1 male, 2 female. - Pleasant Hill, OR

**Kim Gaffett** – Birded around Cormorant Swamp & Point, including a view into the New Harbor: Gadwall 2, Mallards 6, A. Black Duck 3, Great Blue Heron 1, Belted Kingfisher 1, A. Robin 5, Carolina Wren 1, Song Sparrow 3, N. Cardinal 1, A. Crow 10+, Fish Crow 8, RN Pheasant 1, N. Harrier 1, Herring Gull 5+, GBBG 5+, Common Eider 5, RB Merganser 1, Bufflehead 8, C. Goldeneye 7, Common Loon 2. At home around Mill Tail Swamp Pond: Great Blue Heron 1, mallard 20+, Herring G 4, GBBG 2, Canada Geese 17, BC Chickadee 2, Carolina Wren 1.

**Laura Rosenzweig** – Sedbergh, England. Well I'm afraid that all I have to report is that we have started to hear bird song in the mornings again. It's a wet, wet, wet day here today (Storm Christoph making himself felt and along with the small amount of snowmelt the already saturated fields and flooded roads are running into the raging rivers). I haven't seen so much as a crow today. Then again, my head wasn't exactly pointing upwards on our walk and my hood was pulled tight! Hope all is well and you're finding things to keep you busy and staying safe.

**Martha Velie-Gass** – Fresh Pond, Cambridge: 6 Common mergansers, Several ring necked ducks, 1 Downy woodpecker, 5 Titmice, 1 Cardinal couple, 2 Bald eagles. Backyard Visitors in Cambridge: at my heated bird bath, 6 Goldfinches, 12 Robins, 1 Carolina wren, 2 Juncos, 1 House finch, Bluejay, Mourning Dove, Song sparrow

**Nigel Grindley & Cathy Joyce** – I hope you had a great day watching BI birds; ours was exceptional and much aided by your most recent Zoom talk on ducks! We have two bird lists, both from this morning. The first is from our yard as follows: Ring-necked Pheasant - 1 (seen), Accipiter - 1 (either a female Sharp-shinned or a male Cooper's Hawk; probably the latter), Northern Harrier - 1, Red-bellied Woodpecker - 1, Downy Woodpecker - 3 (2 m, 1 f), American Crow - 7, B-C Chickadee - 7, Red-breasted Nuthatch - 1, American Robin - 1, Brown Thrasher - 1 (it's been at our feeder for at least a week), Song Sparrow - 1, White-throated Sparrow - 2, Northern Cardinal - 10, Rusty Blackbird - 1 (see picture; it looked like a Grackle but was barely larger than a Cardinal and smaller than the Thrasher), House Finch - 5, House Sparrow - 8

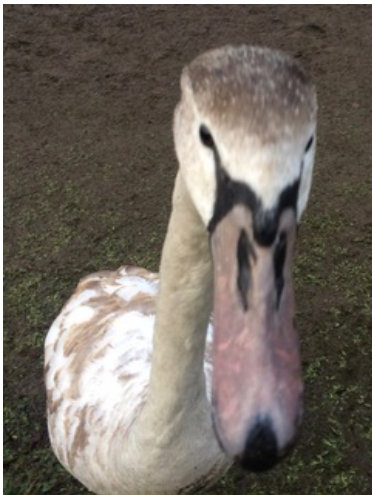
We then took a walk along Cooneymus to the beach and along the beach to South West Point. Along the walk we encountered: Am. Crows – 15, Carolina Wrens - 2 (heard, not seen). At Cooneymus Swamp we saw: Gadwall – 2, Am. Black Duck – 2, Mallard – 1, Northern Pintail - 1 (much helped by your Zoom talk), Bufflehead – 1, Hooded Mergansers – 3, Great Cormorant – 1. From the beach we saw: Bufflehead – 5, Common Eider – 12, White-winged Scoter – 7, Black Scoter – 3, Red-breasted Merganser – 2, Red-throated Loon - 1 (we would never have correctly ID'd this without your Zoom talk, but we are pretty confident), Horned Grebe – 1, Herring Gull – 4, Greater Black-backed Gull - 6 (including one that we saw catch a fish and bring it to the beach!) .....and a huge whale skull! All the best

[Nina Tang](#) – Lausanne, Switzerland. Okay! I need help!! I didn't have a lot of time to bird watch today because it was a tough day in lab. However! I did have a moment where I was waiting to meet with someone and saw an interesting bird. It was doing a very strange behavior that I had never seen before where it would soar then stop in place and just kind of flap in midair then keep soaring. I tried to get it on video here. You can see it a little but my phone was having trouble focusing. I think it may have been a Eurasian kestrel, but I'm not entirely convinced. It had a burnt orange belly and dark wings. Would love your help in IDing! Follow up exchange: [KG](#)- Funny, as I read your description I immediately thought Kestrel, before you suggested it. Unfortunately I really can't tell much, other than behavior, from the video. Probably a falcon – either Kestrel or Hobby – based on reddish tinge. [NT](#)-Thanks for your insight! Some folks from my lab said that the behavior was probably because birds frequently hunt mice in the field. I'm in Lausanne and apparently Kestrels are quite common here so I think that's my guess.

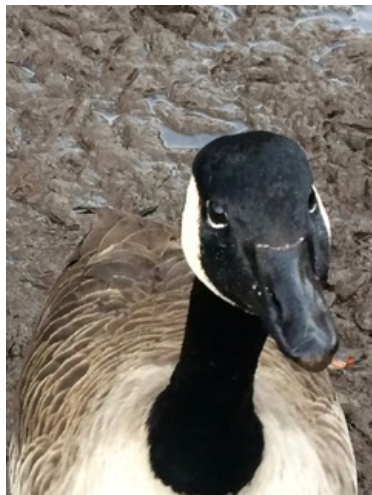
[Susan Matheke](#) – Hi Kim ,My list is very short, my early morning places and my early evening view spots have hunters and I do not want to disturb: 4 american crows, 3 mallards, 2 males and 1 female, 6 American robins, 30+ starlings, 1 double crested cormorant, 11 Canada Geese, 1 raptor, Sharpie I believe

PS I am quite sure I saw a [black swan](#) in Martha's pond but 2 hunters were hiding in the pond lot so I could not check close enough. (friends say it was a large Canada geese but the shape was very swan like?????)

[Tim Mooney](#) – I heard a few birds yesterday morning while taking out the trash and recycling: American Goldfinch – 2, Black-capped Chickadee – 1, House Sparrow – 1, Carolina Wren – 1 Then in the afternoon, I had a few minutes at India Point Park, while we taped an interview with Channel 12. Keep those binoculars in the car, just in case! Red-breasted Merganser – 7, Herring Gull – 2



Mute Swan, juvenile.



Canada Goose Photos: E. Crawford



Rusty Blackbird (diagnostic white eye) - Grindley/Joyce