

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

February 18, 2025

Incidental Notes

Hi Everyone,

What an interesting set observations!

~ I enjoyed Annie, Darcy and Mary's commentary alongside their observations. And, Dan there's nothing wrong with backyard birding – especially the day after the annual Great Backyard Bird Count 😊

~ And, how great to get Tim's report from Morrocco and Tom's from Peru. To see some interesting species accounts check out the links in Tim & Tom's reports below.

Thanks to one-and-all who spent time outside observing birds, and then sharing their sightings. Remember, 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. 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**

(36 species)

Canada Goose – 28+	Marsh Hawk – 1	White-breasted Nuthatch – 1
Gadwall – 2	American Herring Gull – 500+	Carolina Wren – 3
Mallard – 77+	Great Black-backed Gull – 500+	American Robin – 26
American Wigeon – 6	Rock Pigeon – 10+	N. Mockingbird – 2
Ring-necked Duck – 2	Mourning Dove – 64+	E. Starling – 1
Common Eider – 30	Downy Woodpecker – 3	Song Sparrow – 24
Harlequin Duck – 1	Northern Flicker – 1	White-throated Sparrow – 25
Black Scoter – 3	Blue Jay – 9	Northern Cardinal – 46
Bufflehead – 1	American Crow – 17	Red-winged Blackbird – 5
Red-breasted Merganser – 10	Common Raven – 2	House Finch – 42
Ring-necked Pheasant – 1	Fish Crow – 2	American Goldfinch – 6
Common Loon – 2	Black-capped Chickadee – 10	House Sparrow – 12

**From Afar:** Providence, RI; Jamesport, NY; Teaneck, NJ; Dalton, and Westport, MA; Marrakech, Morocco; Iquitos, Peru

(69 species)

Common Merganser – 1	Mourning Dove – 10	Northern Flicker – 2
Hooded Merganser – 1	Greater Ani – 6	Blue Jay – 7
Great Egret – 2	Belted Kingfisher – 3	American Crow – 2
Black Vulture – 4	Red-bellied Woodpecker – 1	Black-capped Chickadee – 7
Turkey Vulture – 2	Downy Woodpecker – 3	Tufted Titmouse – 7
Purple Gallinule – 1	Hairy Woodpecker – 1	White-breasted Nuthatch – 4

Carolina Wren – 2  
American Robin – 1  
Northern Mockingbird – 1  
Song Sparrow – 3  
White-throated Sparrow – 2  
Slate-colored Junco<sup>1</sup> – 17  
Northern Cardinal – 3  
House Finch – 2

### **Marrakech, Morocco**

House Sparrow – 1  
White Stork – 15  
Cattle Egret – 3  
House Bunting – ~50  
Swift species – ~300  
Common Bulbul – 8  
European Serin – 3

Gray Wagtail – 1  
Spotless Starling – 10  
Blackbird – 10  
Common Wood Pigeon – 2  
European Collared Dove – ~50  
Rock Pigeon – 200

### **Iquitos, Peru**

Gr. Yellow-headed Vulture – 1  
Yellow-headed Caracara – 1  
Black-collared Hawk – 1  
Cocoi Heron – 1  
Striated Heron – 1  
Large-billed Tern – 1  
Jacana – 3  
Blue-gray Tanager – 2  
Palm Tanager – 1

White-winged Parakeet – 15  
Red-bellied Macaw – 2  
Great Potoo – 1  
Green-backed Trogon – 1  
Lesser Kiskadee – 1  
Gilded Barbet – 1  
Golden-bellied Euphonia – 1  
Russet-backed Oropendola – 1  
Red-capped Cardinal – 1  
Tropical Kingbird – 1  
White-headed Marsh Tyrant – 2  
Fork-tailed Swift – 15  
Bluish-fronted Jacamar – 1  
Fiery Topaz – 1  
Glittering-thr. Hummingbird – 1  
Gray-winged Trumpeter – 1

**Amy Keeler** – Out and about my day after Coot Walk 2/18/25. Mitchell Lane: 8 Cardinal, 14 Song Sparrow, 7 Crow, 2 Chickadee, 33 Mallard Duck, 3 Bluejay, 12 Mourning Dove, 14 Robin, 1 Starling, 8 House Sparrow, 1 Pheasant.

**Annie Kurz** – Feb. 18, 2025. Revision to my yesterday's list: two nuthatches — I saw both at the same time. Assume it's a pair but maybe not? b/c do not share suet. BTW, it is now colder here than in Kazakhstan (where I have a cousin). Feb. 17, 2025. L O V E your email and switching the order of things.

I can tell you what birds I have had at my feeders (suet, peanut butter, shelled sunflower seeds, non-shelled sunflower seeds): male red belly, male and female downy woodpeckers, 4 titmice (at least one pair as they share suet and pb), 4 chickadees, 1 white sided nuthatch (maybe more but only one appears at a time), pair of carolina wrens, house finches, song sparrows, mocking bird. I trapped/killed three mice (really cute) and put the bodies out for crows to eat.

**Cathy Joyce & Nigel Grindley** – Hello Kim, Here is our bird list for today: At our backyard feeder area:

White-throated Sparrows – 7, Song Sparrows – 3, House Sparrows – 1, Cardinals - 22 (14m, 8f), House Finch – 26, Goldfinch – 5, Mourning Doves – 28, Blue Jays – 3, American Crows – 8, Downy Woodpeckers – 1, Chickadees – 5. On Warden's Pond: Gadwall – 2, Bufflehead – 1. Thanks for a great Coot-walk this morning! Cheers, Cathy & Nigel

**Crazy-as-a-Coot Bird Walkers** – Whale Swamp Rd, Washington, Rhode Island, US. Feb 18, 2025 9:30 AM - 10:30 AM. Protocol: Traveling 0.75 mile(s). Checklist Comments: Sunny, 21F, 25mph WNW, feel like temp = 4F. The group had breakfast first and compiled the following observations of sightings made as individuals en route to breakfast. Susan Matheke - 4 robins, 2 A. crow; Amy Keeler - 2 house sparrows, 3 cardinals, 6 mourning doves; Carlos & Anne Salinas - 4 cardinals; Heather Hatfield - 6 white-thr. sparrow, 2 song sparrow, 4 house finch, 1 blue jay, 1 white-br. nuthatch; Nigel Grindley & Cathy Joyce - 6 goldfinch, 5 cardinals, 2 song sparrow, 4 white-thr. sparrow, 3 chickadee; Nancy Miles, Mena Hautau and Kim G. present. Following breakfast the group (except Carlos S. had to work) walked Whale swamp road from Spring St. to the bluffs. The birds on this checklist include only the Whale Swamp Rd. observations. 13 species: Common Eider 30, Harlequin Duck 1, Black Scoter 3, Red-breasted Merganser 10, American Herring Gull 500, Great Black-backed Gull 500, Common Loon 2, Northern Flicker 1, Carolina Wren 3, Northern Mockingbird 1, White-throated Sparrow 4, Song Sparrow 2, Northern Cardinal 2. [When listing BI birds I used the larger number from the morning versus later-in-the-day "house" count, to avoid double counting. -kg]

**Dan Kasuba** – Greetings Kim, my bird sightings on 2/18/25 were all in Dalton, Massachusetts throughout the day. And due to the frigid temps, (the day started at 7 degrees and topped out at 15 degrees), and high winds, it was mostly “backyard birding” again. Hope your group managed OK ! [OF COURSE!! -kg].

2 tufted titmice , 3 black capped chickadees, 2 white breasted nuthatches, 2 blue jays, 1 robin, 1 mourning dove, 5 juncos, 1 downy woodpecker, 2 American crows, and two northern Cardinals. Spring is one month away ! Thanks and take care. Dan

**Darcy Thurrott** – Sounds like frigid frozen Coots!! Have a great breakfast at Ellen's. It's like the Arctic tundra here, ice everywhere, scary. Don't think I'll go out...yaktrax & ski pole necessary! Did do GBBC though! 23 species! [Excellent! -kg] Have fun, Darcy🐾

**Heather Hatfield** – Going about the day. 25F & windy. Off Dories Cove Rd.: Canada Geese 13, A. Wigeon 6; Joe's Pit, West Side Rd.: Mallard 12, Ring-necked Duck 2; Old Twn Rd. feeder & yard: Cardinal 7, Chickadee 3, Downy 2, House finch 12, RW Blackbird 5, Mourning Dove 13, White-thr. Sparrow 10, WB Nuthatch 1, House Sp.1, Song Sp. 3, Blue Jay 2.

**Kim Gaffett** – Going about my day – At home & on the pond: mallard 15+, Canada Geese in the field 15, Mourning Dove 5+, C Raven 2. At office: Rock Pigeon 10, Fish crow 2, A. Robin 4. Along the roads as I traveled about: N. Mockingbird 1, A. Robin 3, Marsh Hawk 1.

**Lauren Miller-Donnelly** – Going Hi Kim, If I remember correctly this day was brutally cold and windy. Seems like every day in February was like this. I was surprised to see a **COMMON MERGANSER** in the Woonasquatucket River as I drove into work, so I submitted an observation for Providence as well on this day. Had my first Woodcock on Feb 24th.

Westport MA: Mourning Dove 9, Blue Jay 5, Tufted Titmouse 1, House Finch 1, Dark-eyed Junco 12, White-throated Sparrow 2, Song Sparrow 1, Northern Cardinal 1

Providence RI: Hooded Merganser 1, Common Merganser 1

**Nancy Miles** – Thanks for another great bird walk. I love getting out and about with you and the group. It's great how they don't let a little thing like cold and wind stop them. I took this at the duck pond on Old Town Road. [17+ Mallard] Pretty picture of very cold ducks in a frozen pond! I saw one robin on Spring St across from the Manesses. I doubt I will see anything in my yard. My suet feeder, and the branch it was tied to, isn't there anymore!



**Mary Komosinski** – Hi Kim and thanks for the wonderful list! I've been seeing some Kingfishers (3 in one day) and have had a Hairy at my suet along with 2 Flickers (plus lots more)! My husband bought me a Bird Buddy for my birthday so that's fun watching live videos! Mostly House Finch, Cardinals, House Sparrows and Tufted Titmouse but still fun to watch them live up-close!! Quite an argument the other day between a House Finch and a Cardinal!! 😊 Stay well, Mary

**Tim Mooney** – Hi Kim – Thanks for checking in. We were off on another travel adventure last week, this time to Marrakech, Morocco (and the nearby Agafay Desert and Atlas Mountains). We had a blast and added some life birds, mostly in parks and gardens, but a few in the Ourika Valley, south of the city. These birds weren't all necessarily observed on Feb 18, but I thought you'd like to see the full list. 😊 Best, Tim  
White Stork - 15, Cattle Egret – 3, House Bunting – ~50, Swift sp – ~300, Common Bulbul - 8, European Serin – 3, Gray Wagtail – 1, Spotless Starling – ~10, Blackbird - ~10, Common Wood Pigeon – 2, European Collared Dove – ~50, Rock Pigeon - ~200, and House Sparrow – 1. [Although we could see Cattle Egret or House Sparrow in the U.S. House Bunting is a new one for me. Not surprising as its range is centered around Morocco. Check out <https://ebird.org/species/houbun3> -kg]

**Tom Fetherston** – Good afternoon Kim - Sounds positively frigid 🥶 It was 77 at sunrise this morning on the Amazon River, about 25 miles downstream from Iquitos, Peru. We had an early start to take a boat to Iquitos for a flight to Lima, so today didn't afford much birding time. I therefore used yesterday to make my list, hope that's ok. A few notes about birding here:

☛ The vegetation is so dense that seeing birds is a challenge. Our guide, a member of the Yagua tribe, was incredible at identifying birds by their vocalizations and using his voice to try and call them in. It worked on occasion. I didn't record any species I didn't see personally.

☛ Getting decent photos is frequently difficult as birds dart in and out of cover, often high in the canopy. I managed to get some ok photos out of many attempts.

☛ As is the case with fish, species diversity in the tropics is high, but the numbers of individuals of each species tends to be lower than in temperate regions because they are often filling relatively narrow niches in the ecosystem.

☛ The day of my counting was interrupted by torrential downpours a couple of times when birding wasn't possible. It's a rain forest after all! Here's the list, estimates noted with an asterisk (\*).

Black vulture<sup>1</sup> (4), Turkey vulture<sup>1</sup> (2), Greater yellow-headed vulture (2), Yellow-headed caracara, Black-collared hawk, Cooi heron, Great egret<sup>1</sup> (2), Striated heron, Large-billed tern, Jacana (3), Purple gallinule<sup>1</sup>, Blue-gray tanager (2), Black-billed thrush, Palm tanager, White-winged parakeet (15\*), Red-bellied macaw, Scarlet macaw (2), Great potoo, Green-backed trogon, Lesser kiskadee, Gilded barbet, Golden-bellied euphonia, Russet-backed oropendola, Red-capped cardinal, Tropical kingbird, Greater ani<sup>1</sup> (6\*), White-headed marsh tyrant (2), Fork-tailed swift (15\*), Bluish-fronted jacamar, Fiery topaz, Glittering-throated hummingbird, Gray-winged trumpeter. Next list from the Galapagos Islands! Cheers, Fether.

[These species<sup>1</sup> are listed in the regular "From Afar" list as they are species that are/can also be seen in North America. The remainder of this wonderful list of Amazonian birds is listed at the end – right after the introduced European English/House Sparrow. And, I couldn't resist, here are a couple of links to see a couple of the more dramatic looking birds (Gray-winged Trumpeter reminds me of Amer. Coot:

<https://ebird.org/species/gywtru1> and is the Great Potoo cute or ugly?

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ez\\_xES\\_ff7Y](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ez_xES_ff7Y) -kg]

- 
- <sup>1</sup>**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”.

- <sup>2</sup>Q. What is a <sup>2</sup>**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.