

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

March 5, 2024

Incidental Notes

Hi Everyone,

Here is another great compilation of observations from near and far.

As I write this, Block Island has had their first osprey sighting on March 16, while Sandy reports her first observation of osprey in VA on March 5. How fun to be able to note the progression northward of this beloved spring migrant.

Meanwhile down in Florida, island friends, Ellen, Helen and Stephanie met-up for some birding and are reporting the nesting of soon-to-be-seen-on-BI species such Great Egret. See stunning photos below.

And, new contributor, Charlotte, observes sandpipers and plovers that will also be winging their way north soon; while Martha in MA reports hanging-on winter species that will soon leave our (southern New England) environs for breeding locations further to the north.

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

Peace, Kim.

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- 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

(28/29 species)

Canada Goose – 19

American Wigeon – 3

Mallard – 70+

Green-winged Teal – 3

Ring-necked Duck – 18

Ruddy Duck – 1

Ring-necked Pheasant – 1

Bald Eagle – 2

Rock Pigeon – 10

Mourning Dove – 38+

Red-bellied Woodpecker – 2

Downy Woodpecker – 2

Downy/Hairy Woodpecker – 1

Blue Jay – 4

American Crow – 33+

Common Raven – 1

Black-capped Chickadee – 7

Carolina Wren – 4

Hermit Thrush – 1

American Robin – 25+

Gray Catbird – 2

E. Starling – 48+

Song Sparrow – 5

White-throated Sparrow – 5

Northern Cardinal – 17

Red-winged Blackbird – 23

Common Grackle – 53+

Brown-headed Cowbird – 2

House Sparrow – 9

From Afar: Cumberland, and South Kingston, RI; Cambridge & Westport, MA; North

Cemetery/Woodbury, CT; Jamesville, VA; Wakodahatchee Wetlands, FL; Bird Point, Eleuthera.

(55 species)

Canada Goose – 29

Mallard – 7

Greater Scaup – 80

Wild Turkey – 30

Red-throated Loon – 1

Pied-billed Grebe – 2

Double-crested Cormorant – 4

Wood Stork – 3+

Great White Heron – 18

Great Blue Heron – 5

Great Egret – 6

Tri-colored Heron – 6

Cattle Egret – 6

Green Heron – 2

Glossy Ibis – 6

Turkey Vulture – 12
Osprey – 2
Red-tailed Hawk – 1
Unidentified raptor – 1
Common Gallinule – 2
Snowy Plover – 2
Spotted Sandpiper? – 3
Sanderling – 16
Herring Gull – 50
Mourning Dove – 3
Rock Pigeon – 3
Red-bellied Woodpecker – 5
Downy Woodpecker – 4
Hairy Woodpecker – 1

Northern Flicker – 7
Black-whiskered Vireo? – 1
Blue Jay – 20
American Crow – 7
Fish Crow – 2
Common Raven – 1
Black-capped Chickadee – 5
Tufted Titmouse – 6
White-breasted Nuthatch – 8
Brown Creeper – 1
Carolina Wren – 4
Eastern Bluebird – 5
American Robin – 62
European Starling – 32

Bohemian Waxwing – 1+
Prairie? Warbler – 1
Song Sparrow – 7
White-throated Sparrow – 3
Slate-colored Junco¹ – 16
Northern Cardinal – 11
Red-winged Blackbird – 20+
Common Grackle – 38
Brown-headed Cowbird – 1
House Finch – 4
American Goldfinch – 5
House (English) Sparrow – 20

Also seen: Alligator 2, many iguanas, squirrels, red admiral butterfly.

Cathy Joyce & Nigel Grindley – Hello Kim, Here is our bird list for today... At our backyard feeder: Cardinal - 4 (2m, 2f), Chickadee – 2, Song Sparrow – 1, White-throated Sparrow – 1, Blue Jay – 1, Red-bellied Woodpecker - 1 (female - she's a regular here!). On our driveway: one pheasant. Thanks, as always, for an enjoyable bird-walk! Cheers, Cathy & Nigel

Charlotte Herring – Greetings from Bird Point! I guess I should submit my first ever where-on-earth bird list as our cottage is on Bird Point on Eleuthera. I'm surprised by the lack of bird life but I did manage a small list. I'll send photos next. 16 sandpipers [Sanderling], 2 plovers (I think semipalmated) [looks more like Snowy Plover] and 3 unidentified birds [spotted sandpiper?] 🐦 🖤

Crazy-as-a-Coot Bird Walkers – Pilot Hill Rd. south, Chalet Pt., & environs, Washington, Rhode Island, US. March 5, 2024 8:00 AM - 9:00 AM. Protocol: Traveling 0.5 mile(s). Checklist Comments: Cloudy, foggy, with off-and-on light rain. Chilly 40F and NE wind. Location: met at intersection of Mohegan Trail and Pilot Hill Rd. walked half way down PHr, tried to see John E's Tug Hole through the fog. And wandered down a private drive to the east towards (but not to) Payne Pond. (We did not look to the ocean from Chalet Pt.) Participants: Susan Matheke, Cathy O'Riordan, Heather Hatfield, Faye Benedict, Chuck McMellon, Cathy Joyce, Nigel Grindley, Mena Hautau, & KimG. And in the drizzly, foggy, cool damp there was a little cluster of purple Crocus blooming on the bank along Pilot Hill Rd.

11 species: Canada Goose 3, Mallard 4, Ring-necked Duck 17, Ruddy Duck 1, American Crow 2, Carolina Wren 3, Gray Catbird 2, Hermit Thrush 1, American Robin 25, Song Sparrow 3, Northern Cardinal 1

Darcy Thurrott – Hi Kim, Bad time and weather so not a lot of birds, but robins are happy & singing! Hope your day was good & fruitful! Darcy 🐦 North Cemetery Woodbury, Connecticut, US (41.553, -73.21). Mar 05, 2024, 12:37 PM. Traveling 1.56 miles, 50 minutes. All birds reported? Yes. Comments: 45° rf 39° wind ENE 10mph raw and wet with rain drizzle.

24 Canada Goose, 1 Red-bellied Woodpecker, 8 Blue Jay, 4 American Crow, 3 Black-capped Chickadee, 2 White-breasted Nuthatch, 24 European Starling, 2 Eastern Bluebird, 9 American Robin, 12 Red-winged Blackbird, 8 Common Grackle, 2 Northern Cardinal.



Ellen Davis with Helen D. & Stephanie Baute – Hi Kim, Those are wood storks building their nests in the tree at the right and great egrets, sitting on their eggs in the left tree. I think we saw some great white herons too (very green around their eyes) but I'll have to go back now that I know there's more than one big white bird in So Florida! What a variety of birds and even an alligator. It was a

lovely visit of BI friends and we spoke about our great birding leader who brought us together. Take care, Ellen, Helen [Davis] and Stephanie [Baute].



Great Egret (L) Tri-colored Heron (R)

Kim, Steph and Helen,

Here's my attempt at a list from our fabulous walk on Sunday, March 3rd. Steph and Helen, please fill in the birds/creatures I forgot! Kim, there were so many birds, I'm not sure how to put a quantity on them so have made my best guesstimate ;) It really was a fun day, especially sharing it with my enthusiastic fellow BI birders. Glossy ibis – 6, Anhinga – 12, Wood stork – 24, Great white heron - 18 (see pic), Great blue heron - 4, Green heron – 2, Tri colored heron – 6 (see pic), Great egret – 6, cattle egret – 6, Osprey – 1, Common moorhen – 2, Black whiskered vireo (?) -1, prairie warbler? - 1, Double crested cormorant – 4, Turkey vultures – 12, Alligator – 2. Iguanas - many!



Erica Simkins – Kim! Just had a bohemian wax wing need rescuing on the mountain, it flew into one of our patrol shacks so I had a mini bird session with everyone 😊

They are all over the place up in Killington, VT for the past 2 weeks or so! This was today and after a short stint on their back they flew right back into the rain hopefully to find some warmth.

I had never seen one either! Mistook it for a cedar waxwing at first but was corrected. Very unique behaviors, they fly in groups of hundreds and will stay in one area on the mountain for a day then move to another area the next

Heather Hatfield – 3/5/24 Rainy, 40F. Pit – Mallards 49, Green-winged Teal 3, Amer. Wigeon 3. Dories Cove Rd. – Mallard 1, Ring-necked duck 1. Overhead at power company – Bald eagles 2. Old Town Rd. – Blue Jay 3, Cardinals 9, Grackle 50+, White-thr. Sparrow 4, House sparrow 5, House Finch 20+, BC Chickadee 3, RW Blackbird 11, RBWoodpecker 1, Downy 2, Mourning dove 30+.

Kim Gaffett – Going about the day: at my feeder C. Grackle 3, Br. Cowbird 2, Red-wing Blackbird 3, chickadee 2, song sparrow 1, cardinal 1, mourning dove 4, mallard 2. On the pond and in the yard: mallard 10+, Canada geese 6, Carolina wren 1. On the roof of the BI Grocery: C. raven 1. At TNC office: rock pigeon 10, starling 8, assorted exotics – emu, ruddy shelduck, etc. 😊

Lauren Miller-Donnelly – Hi Kim, This month I am getting a lot of common grackles and the woodcock AND great horned owl do not disappoint at dusk. Also, we have a group of Canada geese that have been hanging around our back fields every day this week. Still have not missed a day on the "[2024 Checklist-a-day Challenge](#)", I really want to get my name in the hat for the Zeiss binoculars. Here is the list from my backyard feeder area: Mourning Dove 1, Red-bellied Woodpecker 1, Downy Woodpecker 1, Northern Flicker 1, Blue Jay 3, Black-capped Chickadee 1, Tufted Titmouse 1, European Starling 6, House Sparrow 1, Dark-eyed Junco 10, Song Sparrow 1, Red-winged Blackbird 5, Common Grackle 8, Northern Cardinal 2. Thanks, Lauren

Martha Velie-Gass – Report from Fresh Pond Cambridge, MA. 2 pied-billed grebes, 1 red throated loon, 1 brown creeper.

Sandy Clifton – Hi Kimberley, I hope this note finds you healthy and happy!

Yesterday's [March 5] sightings from Jamesville, Eastern Shore of VA:

- 1) 1st sighting of osprey returning to nest! He/she was about 10 days earlier this year than last year.
- 2) Blue heron flying low over Nassawadox Creek
- 3) 2 Canada Goose visited an empty osprey nest, then visited our dock for a few hours. There was an awful upset with 2 other Canada Geese, more squawking than I've ever heard from them.
- 4) Cardinals, Carolina wrens, flicker, [counted at conservative 3 per species] and, nuthatch or titmouse? [both possible and fairly common so listed both as 2 per species, since I couldn't determine which, and both are likely this time of year – thus not likely to be an overcount. -kg] , squirrels at bird feeder
- 5) Small raptor looking type bird in a tree
- 6) A Butterfly! [Red Admiral]

I think that's it for yesterday. Thanks for all you do! Sandy Clifton (Jennifer Phillips sister)

Hi again Kim, thought you and your crew would enjoy this lovely poem 😊.

<https://grateful.org/resource/mindful/> [Wonderful! – kg]

Hi Kim! Yesterday [March 12] I saw 1 soaring eagle, 2 osprey in nest, 1 blue heron, cardinals and blue birds and other little birds at the feeder. Also saw 2 tiny butterflies, 1 solid light blue and then 1 solid yellow. I love nature! [These not added to the March 5 tally above, but delighted to have and share the observations. – Kg]

Susan Matheke – This is my out and about list for Tuesday, March 5, 2024. The sightings are from Ball Farm, Della's pastures and neighborhood, and Joe's pit (however I believe that Heather will report and have more from the pit). 4 Mallards (2 pairs), 40+ Starlings, 10 Canada Geese, 1 Downy or Hairy Woodpecker (I think it was too big for a Downy and I believe it was a Hairy), 4 House sparrows, 9 Red Wing Blackbirds, 11 American Crows, 4 Mourning Doves, 20+ American Robins, 2 Cardinals - male and female. In the Sprague's pit – 1 Green-Winged Teal and a mess of Mallards.

Tim Mooney – Hi Kim, Regrettably, no Frigatebirds to report this week! The early migrants started showing up in my Cumberland neighborhood around February 10, and they are welcome any time. Lots of birdsong out there on a gray morning, although rain canceled my planned afternoon walk. Be well, Tim

Common Grackle – 22, Red-winged Blackbird – 3, Brown-headed Cowbird – 1, European Starling – 2, Rock Pigeon – 3, Mourning Dove – 2, Mallard – 5, Canada Goose – 2, Red-tailed Hawk – 1, House Sparrow – 19, Song Sparrow – 4, Slate-colored Junco – 2, Tufted Titmouse – 1, Black-capped Chickadee – 1, Carolina Wren – 1, Northern Cardinal – 4, House Finch – 2, White-breasted Nuthatch – 2, Northern Flicker – 3, Red-bellied Woodpecker – 2, Downy Woodpecker – 1, American Crow – 1, Fish Crow – 2, Blue Jay – 7, American Robin – 3

Tom Fetherston – 5 March 2024 Good evening, Kim – Windy, whitecaps on the pond with periods of heavy rain, normally not great birding conditions but the wind dropped off later and during breaks in the downpours lots of birds were out. I made one trip to town, other than that all observations were around the yard or on the pond from the dock, which is now half-submerged!

Notes for this week:

- More red-winged blackbirds and grackles have joined the starlings at the feeders. As noted last report, the starlings in particular were emptying the tube feeder filled with mealworms before the bluebirds could get to it much of the time. I found a “starling proof” bluebird feeder, circular in shape with a screen around the perimeter and a cup in the middle for mealworms. The mesh in the screen is large enough to admit bluebirds but too small for starlings. It took the bluebirds a few days to figure it out but now they crawl inside, and the starlings are stymied 😊
- After having large flocks of Canada geese on the pond for a while there were none to be seen yesterday. Lots of gulls in the lee of the north shore, several flocks of scaup riding it out in the waves and a pair of mallards in a sheltered cove near the road.

Here’s the list. Birds seen on or around Worden’s Pond are annotated with WP, birds seen off Tuckertown Road during the drive to town have TR following. Estimates noted with an asterisk (*) Birds in the field or at the feeders were counted as singles unless present simultaneously or different sexes.

Herring gull (50*) WP, Greater scaup (80*) WP, Mallard (2) WP, Wild turkey (30*) TR, American Robin (50*) TR, Downy woodpecker (2), Hairy woodpecker, Red-bellied woodpecker, Common raven, American crow (2), Blue jay (2), Tufted titmouse (2), White-breasted nuthatch (2), Dark-eyed junco (4), White-throated sparrow (3), Song sparrow (2), House finch (2), American goldfinch (5), Eastern bluebird (3), Northern cardinal (4), Mourning dove (4), Black-capped chickadee (2), Ruby-crowned kinglet, Myrtle warbler, Carolina wren (2), Red-winged blackbird (4), Common grackle (5), European starling (12*), Gray catbird. Cheers, Fether

- ¹**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”.
- ²Q. What is a ²**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.
- ³Western Scrub-Jay has been “split” in to California Scrub-Jay and Woodhouse’s Scrub-Jay.