

Back Yard Birds & Coffee

The bird that wears the double-breasted suit

By
Clyde Wilson

Did I say double breasted? I should have said double crested!

Remember when double-breasted suits were in style? Maybe they still are, I don't know. It's been so long since I've worn a suit, but I still have a dark navy double breasted suit in my closet if the occasion ever calls for one. Believe it or not I can still get into it. Off of that rabbit trail and onto the story, "The Double-crested Cormorant."

According to "All About Birds" from Cornell this bird, the Double-crested Cormorant, is a gangly, prehistoric-looking, matte-black fishing bird with yellow-orange facial skin. Though they look like a combination of a goose and a loon, they are relatives of frigate birds and boobies and are a common sight around fresh and salt water across North America — perhaps attracting the most attention when they stand on docks, rocky islands, and channel markers, their wings spread out to dry. These solid, heavy-boned birds are experts at diving to catch small fish.

In breeding plumage the DC Cormorant have a crest on both sides of their head, hence the name. To see one

or 50 all you have to do is take a ride to Kerr Dam and look around.

If you get close enough to one of these birds they can dive under water and pop up 50 yards away. We use to do that when playing tag in the water. I loved diving down and grabbing the bottom and pulling myself along and pop up 50 feet away. I don't do that anymore. The last time I ran into a stump and had to get Dr. Bailey to put in a few stitches. Of course that was some years back. Now I'm leaving that up to the DC Cormorant. Check out the pics and take a kid to see this old bird, no not me, the Double-crested Cormorant.

Birding notes and quizzes

Kerr Lake Bird Club meets monthly. Next meeting Oct. 23. Social 6-7 p.m. Meeting 7-8 p.m. Topic "Birding by ear." Welcome Celeste Paynter. (Hope I spelled that right.)

The Brown Booby is still hanging out on Buoy 3. I got close enough to take pics with my cell phone; however the one shown was taken with my Cannon EOS 7D and 400 mm lense.

While shooting the Brown Booby I noticed some other shore birds flying about a mile away so I paddled a mile to check them out. Some really good birds.

1: Herring Gull, only one, we might have 25 or so to winter over.

20: Ring-billed Gulls, there are usually thousands to winter here.

6: Caspian Terns, really cool coral red bills, and 6 Foster Terns, which wear a dark mask. These two species are migrating through.

2: Eagles battling it out on the top of a pine tree.

Eagle, Tern and Brown Booby Kayak Tour this Friday, Sept. 18. Only three places left. See website www.backyardbird-coffee.com for more info. This is a three-hour tour. Reservations a must.

Daily Birds walks from 6:30 a.m. to 8:30 a.m. See www.backyardbird-coffee.com for more info. Reservations a must.

Quiz winner

Whose legs are these?

Diane Ratliff was our winner. Stop by Backyard Birds & Coffee and pick up your surprise. When the gate is open, I'm there or not far away. Gate closed, come back later. By the way I'm looking for someone part-time so I can get the gates open.

This is the email I received from Dianne:

"Now Clyde, I follow your articles and have friends that bird with you, however: How in the world did you, Clyde Wilson, get

a picture of my Aunt Lolly's legs? My Uncle Nor met and romanced Lolly and called her Lolly Dolly and referred to her as his beautiful little bird!

"We think he picked up this nickname following his service in WWII. Nor's plane was shot down in France, and the underground smuggled him back to England. I think women are often referred to as birds in England.

"When Uncle Nor returned and introduced the family to Lolly, we thought, 'Oh my goodness, Nor requires more therapy!'

"However we all fell in love with Lolly and quickly began buying her long skirts and Dr. Scholl's extra padded inbuilt liner shoes.

"So here is my (know-it-all) response — of course the legs belong to my Aunt Lolly! And can you guess what their children look like? However I must admit they are great tweeters!

"Respectfully submitted, Diane Ratliff"

Of course we know they are not Aunt Lolly's legs. These legs belong to the Black Vulture. However, it was a great story, thanks for sharing.

Send your bird story to joinclyde@gmail.com

This week's quiz... (see pic) Whose mug is this?

No it's not Uncle Nor!



A Brown Booby



A Double-crested Cormorant



A Double-crested Cormorant



Foster Terns



Whose mug is this?

When the unexpected happened,

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