

# WEST NILE VIRUS BIRD IDENTIFICATION

## Birds of Interest to West Nile Virus Surveillance

Note: In 2004, only Blue Jays, Crows and Ravens are to be submitted for testing in Ontario.



**CROW** (*Corvus brachyrhynchos*)

**LARGE bird**

- Length: 45 to 41 cm (18 -16")
- Weight: 450 g (1 lb)
- Short tail, broad wings
- Wingspan: 99 cm (39")
- Colour: All black



**RAVEN** (*Corvus corax*)

**VERY LARGE bird**

- Length: 61 cm (24")
- Weight: 1,200 g (2.6 lb)
- Long narrow wings, wedged shaped tail, heavy bill
- Wingspan: 135 cm (53")
- Colour: All black



**GRAY JAY** (*Perisoreus canadensis*)

**MEDIUM sized bird**

- Length: 29 cm (11.5")
- Wingspan: 46 cm (18")
- Weight: 70 g (2.5 oz)
- Colour: Gray with white and black markings
- Resembles an oversized chickadee



**BLUE JAY** (*Cyanocitta cristata*)

**MEDIUM sized bird**

- Length: 28 cm (11")
- Weight: 85 g (3 oz)
- Wingspan: 41 cm (16")
- Colour: Blue and gray with white and black markings



**MAGPIE** (*Pica hudsonia*)

**Fairly LARGE Bird**

- Length: 48 cm (19")
- Wingspan: 64 cm (25")
- Weight: 175 g (6 oz)
- Colour: White and black
- Long blue coloured tail

## Birds Commonly Mistaken as Members of the Crow Family (DO NOT SUBMIT OR REPORT)



**COMMON GRACKLE**  
(*Quiscalus quiscula*)  
MEDIUM sized bird

- Length: 28 to 34 cm (11 to 13.5 inches)
- Colour: completely black with bluish sheen to feathers



**RUSTY BLACKBIRD**  
(*Euphagus carolinus*)  
SMALL bird

- Length: 23 cm (9")
- Wingspan: 36 cm (14")
- Weight: 60 g (2.1 oz)
- Colour: All black



**BREWER'S BLACKBIRD**  
(*Euphagus cyanocephalus*)  
SMALL bird

- Length: 23 cm(9")
- Wingspan: 39 cm (15.5")
- Weight: 63 g (2.2 oz)
- Colour: All black



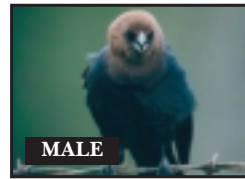
**RED-WINGED BLACKBIRD**  
(*Agelaius phoeniceus*)  
SMALL bird

- Length: 22 cm (8.75")
- Wingspan: 33 cm (13")
- Weight: 52 g (1.8 oz)
- Colour: All black except for red and white wing patches



**YELLOW-HEADED BLACKBIRD**  
(*Xanthocephalus xanthocephalus*)  
SMALL bird

- Length: 24 cm (9.5")
- Wingspan: 38 cm (15")
- Weight: 65 g (2.3 oz)
- Colour: Black body with yellow head and white markings on wings



**BROWN HEADED COWBIRD**  
(*Molothrus ater*)  
SMALL bird

- Length: 19 cm (7.5")
- Wingspan: 30 cm (12")
- Weight: 44 g (1.5 oz)
- Colour: Male- black body with brown head



**EUROPEAN STARLING**  
(*Sturnus vulgaris*)  
SMALL bird

- Length: 22 cm (8.5")
- Wingspan: 41 cm (16")
- Weight: 82 g (2.9 oz)
- Colour: Black to brown body with white markings

### RELATIVE SIZE OF BIRDS

This picture is to help in identification of bird species by providing a comparison of size. The Common Robin would fit between the Starling and the Crow.



Left to Right:

Starling (SMALL)  
Crow (LARGE)  
Raven (VERY LARGE)

### Ontario Region • First Nations and Inuit Health Branch

Région de l'Ontario • Direction générale de la santé des Premières nations et des Inuits

If you have any questions or concerns regarding West Nile Virus, please contact your Environmental Health Officer, Community Health Representative, or Community Health Nurse.

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