

THE MONTCLAIR BIRD CLUB

YOUR WEEKLY BIRD 20

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Pictures & Text by Rick Wright



The common cuckoo, *Cuculus canorus*, is a common and extremely widespread Old World bird, breeding across virtually all of Eurasia and wintering in sub-Saharan Africa. Its abundance, dapper good looks, and above all its strikingly horologic song have earned this species a firm place in European folklore and myth.

While our yellow-billed and black-billed cuckoos only rarely resort to laying their eggs in the nests of other birds, the common cuckoo is among the many species in the family that never build their own nest, instead relying on foster parents to hatch and rear the young. Over the common cuckoo's entire range, nearly 200 different bird species are known to have played that role.

In North America, this species is a scarce and infrequent visitor to Alaska. There are also records from California and British Columbia—and Quebec, Massachusetts, and Rhode Island. Are we next?