

*Corvid blog;

I feed them in the morning, I feed them in the evening, I feed them when I don't really want to; first thing in the morning [well, after the dogs and cat and grannie have been fed] I feed the birds. I daily have about twenty house sparrows and between fifteen and thirty rock doves all waiting for bird seed and food scraps from the night before. But I also have hoodie crows turning up, usually about five, stand-offish at first then when they observe that no birds are being harmed they move in grabbing as much as they possibly can and fly off, stashing the scraps in a wee nook and come back for more. That is why I'm not so keen on feeding them, they are too smart and get far more than their fare share. Panic filling their shopping trolley beaks then stashing the loot, secreted away for later.

I put out a mass of chopped up spaghetti recently [over-estimated for guests who couldn't turn up] and the Hoodies thought it was their birthday, seizing huge beakfuls, flying not far off, then stuffing it into holes in the grass and even covering the hoard with more grass on top to conceal it!



My nephew refers to them as “waistcoat birds” due to their dapper appearance in shiny black suits with fitted grey waistcoats and now I cannot get that image out of my mind, only adding the idea that they all also belong to some criminal crow clan. Possibly that is not far from the truth – The Corvids! I had to give up hanging out fat balls for the wee birdies because the fat balls were disappearing. One night even the wire cage went! I made another to replace it, put fresh fat balls in and tied it to the bird table, the tits and sparrows gleefully laid into it. As dusk fell, on the way to bed I glanced out of the window and saw to my amazement three conniving hoodies were working on the bird table like thieves in the night performing a mission impossible. Two were unravelling the string holding the cage whilst the other prised open the top. I was too impressed to disturb them.

The whole shebang fell to the ground and two fat balls rolled out of the cage the third stuck inside. The pair of more flighty robbers grabbed the balls in their powerful black beaks and flew off delightedly, the remaining bird, probably the big boss, actually took the handle of the feeder and tried to make off with everything but only succeeded in lifting it yards down the drive before dropping it and as the remaining ball rolled out, without landing the BOSS deftly snatched it up then also flew away at speed; a lucrative accomplishment artfully completed.

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Corvidae is a cosmopolitan family of passerine birds that contains carrion crows, hooded crows, ravens, rooks, jackdaws, jays, magpies and choughs. In common English, they are known as the crow family, or, more technically, CORVIDS.

*As opposed to COVID-19; derived from coronavirus disease 2019.

Donald Mitchell...2020

{Picture credit A. Summers.}