

House Crow

Species Description

Scientific name: *Corvus splendens*

AKA: Indian House Crow, Brân-y-tai Indiaidd (Welsh)

Native to: Indian subcontinent

Habitat: Generally confined to man-made habitats and conurbations

A medium-sized, slender crow, with long legs, large bill and grey neck and breast. Males and females have the same plumage.

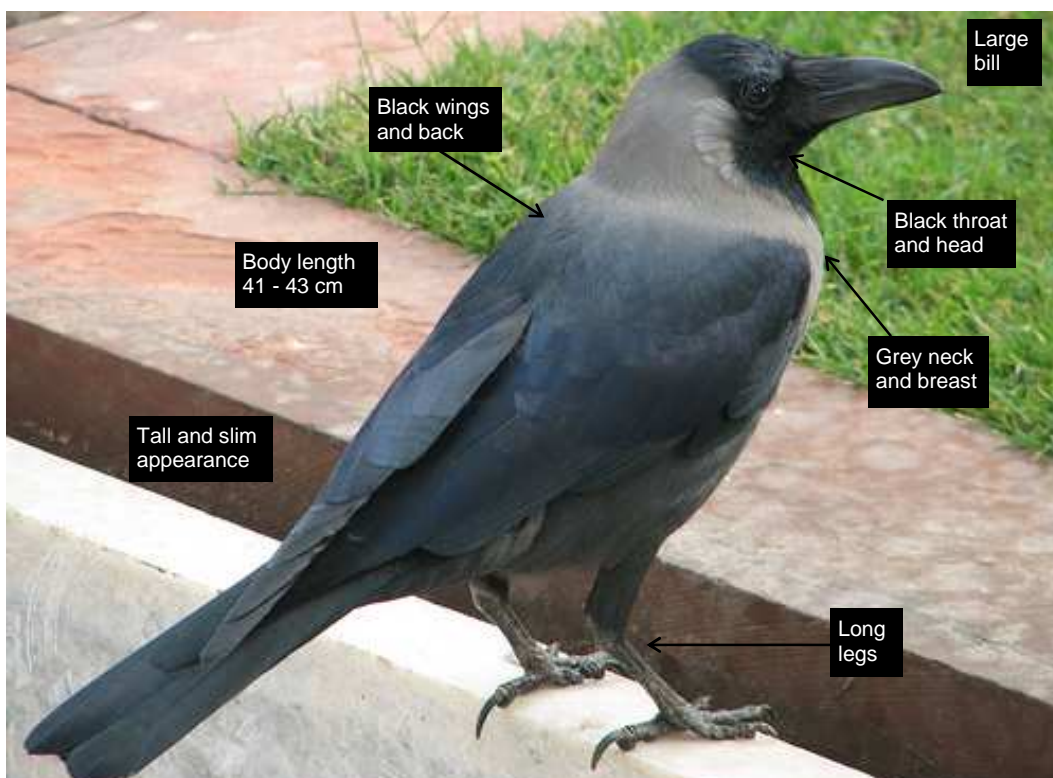
To date, the species is unrecorded in the UK, though there is one record from Ireland. However, a self-sustaining population exists around the docks in Hoek van Holland, the Netherlands. The spread of the house crow is ship-assisted (hitches a ride on passing ships) world-wide and most new sightings are from ports or coastal regions. A port is the most likely place for the species to arrive in the UK.

The house crow is considered a pest species in its naturalised range. As a versatile species it feeds on discarded food, crops, small native birds and their chicks and invertebrates. In its native range it has been noted as an agricultural pest, destroying fruit, wheat, grapes and maize crops. It also aggressively competes with native birds.

For details of legislation go to www.nonnativespecies.org/legislation.



Key ID Features



Field Signs

The following field signs are shared by many species of the crow family and cannot be used for the purpose of specific identification as house crow.

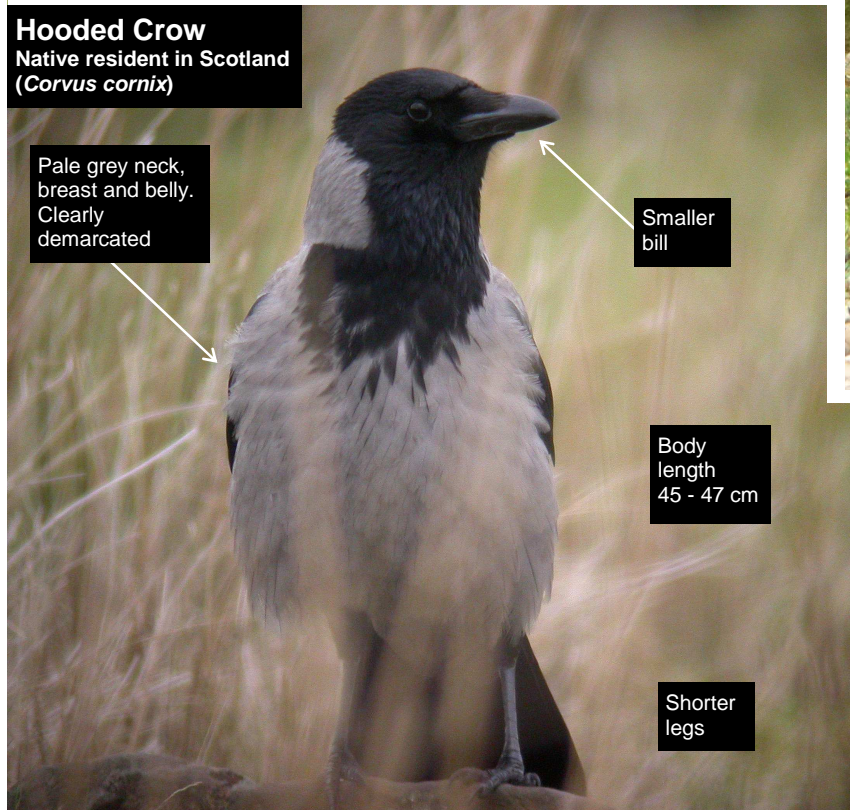
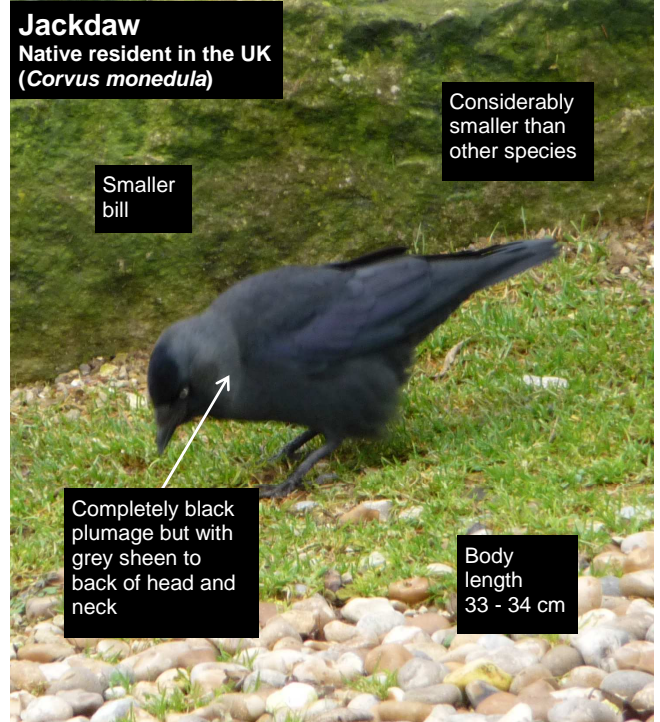
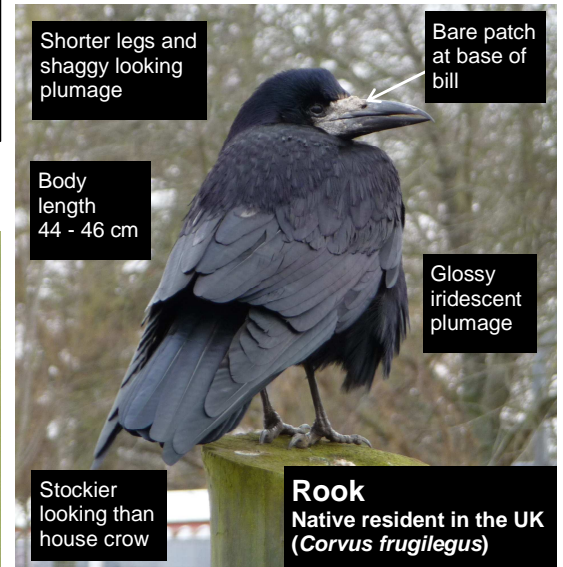
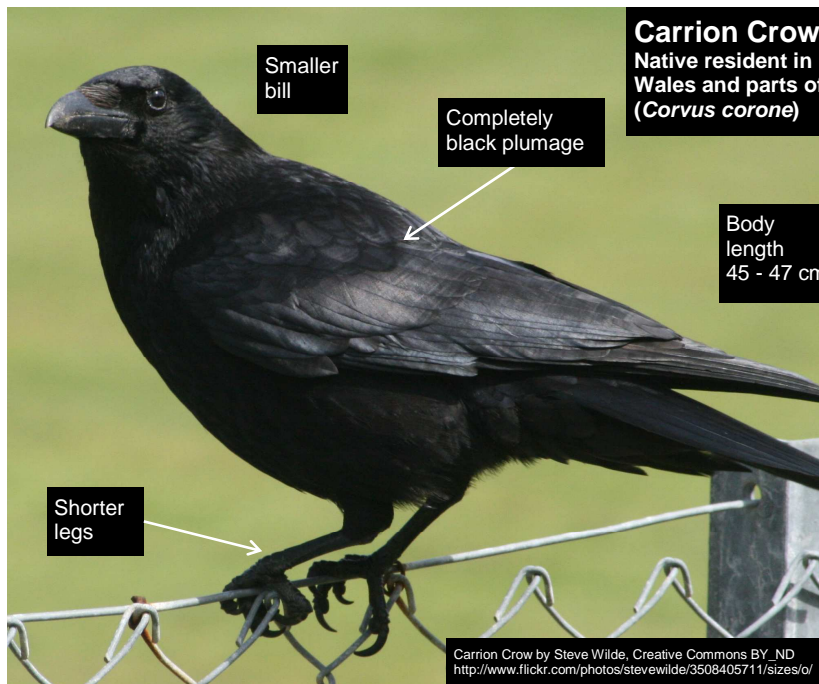
- Call - Similar to carrion crow: 'kwar kwar'.
- Nest - Untidy mess of both natural and man-made items, positioned in either trees or man-made structures. Always close to human habitations.
- Eggs - 3-5 in clutch, very variable in shape and colour with egg laying generally from mid-April to late-May, with the breeding season extending to July in its native range.

Distribution

The House crow is not yet found in the UK.

House crow is likely to be confused with a number of native crow species.

Similar Species



References and further reading:

- Lever, C (2005) "Naturalised Birds of the World". T & A D Poyser
- Madge, S and Burn, H (1999) "Crows and Jays: A Guide to the Crows, Jays and Magpies of the World". Christopher Helm, London
- Mullarney, K, Svensson, L, Zetterstrom, D and Grant, PJ (2001) "Bird Guide". HarperCollins
- Snow, DW and Perrins, CM (1998) "The Birds of the Western Palearctic." Oxford University Press