

# Crows & Ravens

Corvid Family



# Corvids

- Family Corvidae:
  - Crows
  - Ravens
  - Jays
  - Magpies



# Crows vs Ravens: Let's compare!



# Crows vs Ravens

- The Size (Ravens are noticeably larger than crows)
- The Voice (Ravens have a much deeper and more guttural sound)
- Social Behavior (Crows are much more social. They have bigger families and tend to be louder. Ravens are much more introverted and quiet)
- Habitat (Ravens prefer wilderness over cities)

# Flight Pattern



Crow tail is more flat (left), Raven tail is wedge shaped (right)

While both can glide and soar, Ravens glide more often than Crows. Crows will typically flap their wings more during flight. Ravens will glide and from a distance be confused with hawks or vultures, both of which are gliders.

# Appearance

- Ravens in general look more bulky or buff
  - Thick feathers around the neck while crows are more slender.
- The beak of the Raven is also larger

\*Identifying by appearance is good to know, however, difficult to spot from a distance\*



# Intelligence

- Both extremely intelligent, but there seems to be subtle differences between how that intelligence is displayed:
- There's evidence to suggest that Ravens are better at pure intelligence-based problem solving, while Crows perform better when there's a social element to the task (like facial recognition, and deciding who to trust).
- In terms of the actual manifestation of their intelligence in the field, you probably won't really be able to tell the difference.
- For all practical purposes, both Crows and Ravens are extremely intelligent with a wide variety of problem solving skills that gives them a major survival edge.
- Have been observed using tools, collecting shiny objects, even mimicking human words.
- They've also demonstrated having the ability to count with small numbers, and hold grudges against humans who do them wrong.

# Fun Facts!

- There are more than 40 different species of crows
- Some can fly as far as 40 miles per day
- They are omnivores, which means they eat both plants and animals including small animals such as frogs, worms, insects, fruit, seeds, and garbage
- They often mate for life
- They can live up to 14 years in the wild
- Crows exhibit a behavior called “anting” during which they rub ants all over their bodies. The formic acid that ants produce can stop bacteria, insects, or fungus from infesting the birds
- They have very good memories and will often hide food so they can come back and find it later



# Continuing Education

- The key to identifying is by practice!
  - Observe their behavior and note differences and similarities
  - Learn their calls (link available on Crows & Ravens page)
- Watch the “Intelligence of a Crow” documentary from NOVA
  - \*Link on site\*

## Sources:

<https://www.audubon.org/news/how-tell-raven-crow>

<https://nature-mentor.com/crows-vs-ravens/>

<https://www.allaboutbirds.org/guide/browse/taxonomy/Corvidae>

<http://www.oiseaux-birds.com/page-family-corvidae.html>