



# the ExPro EXPERIENCE

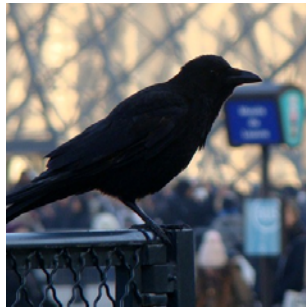
12/08/2021

## SOCAL SAFARI: PART 1

*Birds! The permanent residents or seasonal campers on your property(s).*

### Sparrows, Pigeons, and Crows!

These are among the most common birds found on commercial properties throughout SoCal. They are numerous and the type to hunker down if they like the area. But what keeps them hanging around? It's a safe roost/shelter, access to food and water, and little to no predators. Except for maybe crows, who tend to separate from large groups as they mature, these sorts of birds will make a home of your property. If they have access to nesting materials, then expect to have a multi-generational bird colony.



**Fun Fact:** Though they may seem similar, grackles and corvids (including crows and ravens) are not related! Grackles belong to the Icteridae family which includes a variety of blackbirds. And for the record, there aren't separate "brown" or "black" grackle species we see here in SoCal. They are Great-tailed grackles, the males being black and the females being brown. No wonder why they hang around together!



### Birds Be Gone!

Here are some bird control solutions if they have become pests on your property:

- Bird Spikes and Spiders
- Predator & Sonic Calls
- Scent Repellent
- Other methods



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## MORE ABOUT GRACKLES

These little aggressive birds find themselves a nuisance in Southern CA shopping center food courts. They are smart, notoriously destructive, and can live up to 20 years. They can get downright confrontational over their young and food, and they aren't shy about dive bombing those they perceive to be too close. They also make a lot of noise at night. Since they're flock birds, they tend to infest. Because of their numbers, these birds produce an alarming amount of waste, which corrodes paint and metal. They can also carry transmissible diseases. They are not great fliers and are much better running on the ground. We have found the most effective treatments are a combination of constant trash pick-up, scented grape spray and ultrasonic devices. This is by no means a cure for the patrons that decide to feed them, but they are effective deterrents when used in combination.



## Water Loving Birds

Waterfowl may take a special liking to your property if it has a water feature like a pond or fountain. Some varieties of Ducks, Geese, or Swans are seasonal residents, and others are year-round residents. Here are some year-round ducks that may hunker down by your water feature: Mallard ducks, Gadwall ducks, and Cinnamon Teal.



*A heron about to disregard the sign posted. If that heron could read, he would be very upset! "Can I speak to the property manager?"*

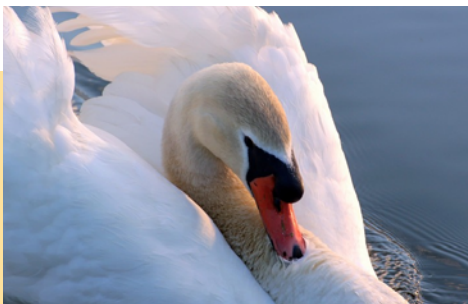
## Koi Killers

Beware! Herons and Egrets, though beautiful, are predatory birds. An unsuspecting koi fish makes an easy meal for them. Here are some ways you can protect your koi and pond critters from predation:

- ◆ Pond netting is an easy deterrent and can also keep litter and debris out of your pond. Though note, it will reduce the visual appeal of the pond.
- ◆ Fish caves and hides placed 2-3 feet down or more will give your koi a place to hide from predation. It is not a deterrent, but it will increase your koi's survivability. Also, note that herons are very crafty birds. If they are persistent, they will try and lure your fish out by regurgitating a past meal. Nasty!
- ◆ Decoys are a great deterrent, though require you to move them around from time to time to be effective. Herons in particular are territorial, so putting up a heron statue in or near your pond can scare others away. Another consideration is throwing a faux koi into your pond. As the predator realizes their meal is oddly tough and inedible, your koi have time to evade predation.

## Know your birds!

There are a lot of birds that can happen upon your property that are invasive species or worse, an abandoned pet. The latter is most concerning, as domesticated/captive birds do not have the drive or knowledge on how to properly care for themselves in the wild. With waterfowl especially, it is not uncommon for irresponsible people to abandon their birds by a water feature. Being able to properly identify your native, non-native, and domestic species can help save a bird's life. If you suspect that a bird was abandoned on your property, contact a no-kill shelter or sanctuary. They will be able to safely remove the bird and provide it with a loving forever home.



**Fun Fact:** The Mute Swan, often seen in bodies of water all around SoCal, are actually an invasive species! Do not let their looks fool you either. They can be very aggressive, especially if you wander too close to their nest.