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Crawlies with Cri: by Christy Solo

"The Raven"
*"And the Raven, never
 flitting, still is sitting,
 still is sitting
 On the pallid bust of Pallas
 just above my chamber door;
 And his eyes have all the
 seeming of a demon's that is
 dreaming,
 And the lamp-light o'er him
 streaming throws his shadow*

*on the floor;
 And my soul from out that
 shadow that lies floating on
 the floor Shall be lifted—
 nevermore!"*
 ~Edgar Allan Poe,

Happy Halloween!
 What better crawl to represent All Hallows Eve than the common raven (*Corvus corax*)? Ravens are fascinating animals, wickedly intelligent, playful and at the heart of the folklore of many cultures.

It's difficult to know where to begin when introducing them, but I will start with some basic facts. Ravens are the largest of the passerines or "songbirds" though they aren't big on singing, though do make lots of sounds. Like jays and other corvids, they are expert mimics. Some ravens have even learned to say "nevermore."

Ravens used to live throughout the United States, but now are only in the western states.

Unlike many songbirds, ravens are omnivores eating everything from seeds to small animals such as mice



The common raven (*Corvus corax*)

and carrion. When the turkey vultures fly south for the winter, ravens take over the Southern Oregon carcass cleanup duty. Ravens are so clever, that when one or a pair, find a carcass they will call out to other ravens in the area so the group can outnumber other carrion eaters (like bald eagles) who want in on the roadkill.

How smart are ravens? Very. They rank up with dolphins and primates in the brains department. They also

use tools and have a complex language including body language. They will use their beak to point out an object to another raven as if we would use our finger. They will drop nuts onto roadways so cars will drive over them and crack the shells.

In addition to "thinking" intelligence, they also have high emotional intelligence and are capable of empathy. For example, if one raven loses a scuffle to another, its compadres will come and comfort it. They also remember the faces of their enemies (all types of faces, not just other ravens) and their friends. Do not vex the raven.

Ravens are also playful. They will play on air thermals, soaring and diving. In addition, they love to play games with sticks, dropping them while in flight and catching them before they hit the ground. They will also slide down snowy inclines and slippery rooftops.

Cultural icons: Celtic goddesses of warfare took the form of ravens during battles. The Norse god, Odin, had two ravens, Hugin (thought) and Mugin (memory), which flew around the world every day and reported to Odin every night about what they saw. Native American tribes worshipped the raven as a deity in and of itself.

Ravens are so important to England, there is a Ravenmaster at the Tower of London for it is said that if the ravens ever leave the tower, London will fall. The current Ravenmaster is Christopher Skaife who even has his own Twitter account @ravenmaster1 with 62,000 followers.

It's clear that ravens are truly compelling birds, throughout history and evermore.



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	Thursday, Nov. 1 Partly Cloudy High -- 70 Low -- 47
	Friday, Nov. 2 Cloudy High -- 65 Low -- 47
	Saturday, Nov. 3 Partly Cloudy High -- 65 Low -- 48
	Sunday, Nov 4 Showers High -- 60 Low -- 49
	Monday, Nov 5 Partly Cloudy High -- 60 Low -- 47
	Tuesday, Nov 6 Mostly Sunny High -- 55 Low -- 42
	Wednesday, Nov 7 Sunny High -- 58 Low -- 43

Following are the high & low temperatures, and rainfall recorded at The End of the Road in O'Brien by Cheryl Johnson:

Oct	High	Low	Rain
19	74.7	35.3	
20	75.9	35.1	
21	77.0	34.8	
22	78.1	35.5	
23	56.9	38.2	0.05
24	65.2	44.0	
25	69.3	40.1	

Oct Rain: .039" YTD Rain: 0.39"

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