

Pilot Island is 3.25 acres, and houses a lighthouse and a dilapidated fog signal building. It is home every year to thousands of colonial nesting birds from April/May thru September. This article deals with one bird in particular the Double Crested Cormorant (DCCO), it does not include Pelicans or Terns. The numbers presented in the article have been obtained from a **Fish and Wildlife DCCO Nest Survey date 2021**. It encompasses 8 non-consecutive years of Rangers going to specific locations throughout Wisconsin and counting the number of Cormorant nests. In the data there are two areas most interesting, the number cormorants on Pilot Island and the percent of cormorants breeding in the Green Bay/Door County area vs. other areas in the state of Wisconsin.

The first set of data estimates the number of birds on Pilot Island based on the nest counts of each year. The number of birds is very significant when you consider Pilot Island is only 3.25 acres in size.

		1997	2005	2009	2011	2013	2016	2018	2021
Pilot Island-Lake MI	Nest Count	247.00	2,937.00	5,330.00	4,124.00	2,476.00	3,767.00	3,564.00	3,756.00
# nesting birds on Pilot	Adult males & female per nest	494.00	5,874.00	10,660.00	8,248.00	4,952.00	7,534.00	7,128.00	7,512.00
Add 30% for non-breeding adults and fledglings		148.20	1,762.20	3,198.00	2,474.40	1,485.60	2,260.20	2,138.40	2,253.60
Total Bird Estimates		642.20	7,636.20	13,858.00	10,722.40	6,437.60	9,794.20	9,266.40	9,765.60

The second set of data is the distribution of Cormorants throughout the State of Wisconsin. The Green Bay Islands locations are basically Cat(Brown County (GB)), Hat, Jack Spider, Pilot (Door County). In the year 2021 there were 12,485 nest pairs in Wisconsin, of the total 3,756 resided on Pilot Island (30%). If you add in Spider Island which is just South of Northport the total becomes 7,858 nest pairs or 69% of the total breeding cormorants in Wisconsin. Remember two birds make a pair, so 7,858 nests equates to 15,716 birds, then if you want you can increase the bird count by 30% for non-breeding birds and fledglings. to get a more accurate bird count.

% of WI Total DCCO	1997	2005	2009	2011	2013	2016	2018	2021
Green Bay Islands	85.2%	89.1%	84.9%	80.0%	70.9%	81.8%	79.8%	81.7%
East Central	6.8%	7.2%	10.7%	15.3%	20.7%	12.9%	16.3%	15.2%
Apostle Islands	5.4%	3.1%	3.3%	3.8%	6.6%	3.4%	2.4%	1.4%
Central/North Central	2.2%	0.5%	1.0%	0.9%	1.6%	1.8%	1.5%	1.7%
Upper Mississippi River	0.3%	0.1%	0.1%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Southeast	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.1%	0.1%	0.1%	0.0%