

Winter birds

This day in December, the winter landscape in South Greenland is feeling cold and greyish. The wind gets the snow to drift. There are not many people outside the houses. But the winter birds are still active outside. The snow buntings rush off in large flocks, as in search of a new place to find shelter and warmth. But the black ravens seem unaffected. They behave as usual as if they are masters of the situation.

If you are lucky, you get permission to winter feed one particular raven. Every day it comes faithfully and takes a piece of bread or an apple outside your window. And if you one day have forgotten the food, its gimlet, reproachful eyes look through the window until you deliver.

In Europe, we nearly exterminated the raven. It was too smart and too lazy, and let herself be feeding at inexhaustible dumping grounds. The poison destroyed the eggs and offspring of the bird, and suddenly the raven was only a rare visitor.

In Greenland there are plenty of ravens.

Too many, a lot of people will say. They feed on all sorts of food on the seashore, when the tide begins to go out. The fiord and the sea leave large amounts of crayfish, mussels and aquatic insects. This black bird also struts shamelessly around in the town and eats anything it finds. Often the people accuse each other throwing waste around the town. Get up early in the morning and you will see the real culprit: A raven, which dives into the trash to find bits of food.

I get a little annoyed at this otherwise interesting black bird, when I watch the white tailed eagle hovering over the town. Immediately, these tease makers are doing everything to make it hard for the world's largest white tailed eagle.

The ravens emerge from all sides to participate in the game. They look like a bunch of scamps, now bullying this great bird, which is different and a much more beautiful flying bird than they ever will be. But it is a dangerous game. The claws of the eagle manage to extinguish all life in such large birds like the ravens.



Playing ravens, Nuuk, april 2007