

# Raven

By Susa Morgan Black



## PART ONE CORVIDOLOGY

*If men had wings and bore black feathers,  
few of them would be clever enough to be crows.*  
- Rev. Henry Ward Beecher

If you are fascinated with ravens, read incessantly about them, observe them in nature, can recognize their unique voice, collect their feathers, collect raven art and artifacts, and know their literature and folklore from around the world, you are probably a *CORVIDOLOGIST*, which is the branch of Ornithology specializing in RAVENS and their family. And magically speaking, Raven is your totem.

### Genus

Raven (*Corvus corax*), also known as the *Common Raven* or the *Northern Raven*, is the largest bird in the family *CORVIDAE* or *CORVINI*. Raven's closest relatives in the subspecies *CORVUS* include the crows, jackdaws, and rooks. More distant Corvid cousins are Choughs, Treepies, Nutcrackers, Magpies and Jays.

There are many species of ravens around the world - Australian Raven (*Corvus coronoides*), Little Raven (*Corvus mellori*), Forest Raven (*Corvus tasmanicus*), New England Raven (*Corvus (t). boreus*), Chihuahuan Raven (*Corvus cryptoleucus*), Dwarf Raven (*Corvus (r). edithae*), Brown-necked Raven (*Corvus ruficollis*), White-necked Raven (*Corvus albicollis*), and Thick-billed Raven (*Corvus crassirostris*)

### Habitat

Most of us are familiar with the Common, or Northern Raven. It is the most widespread of all corvids, ranging throughout Europe, North Africa, Western Siberia, North America and Greenland. The bird prefers wild upland and mountainous regions, but also inhabits forests, inshore islands, coastal areas, steppes, semi-deserts, and plains. I have observed these expert foragers in cities and suburban areas as well.

### Appearance

Raven is a striking all black bird, 58 - 69 cm from beak to tail. Ornithologists believe that the all black plumage helps them absorb and retain heat in high altitudes and northern latitudes.

Distinctive features (to help you distinguish them from crows) are their large size, heavy bill, shaggy throat hackles, long fingered wing tips and long wedge shaped tail. In aerial silhouette their longer features (bill, tail and fingered wings) easily distinguish them from crows.

On closer observation (and they are often displayed in zoos) you will notice the strongly decurved distal part of the culmen, with prominent nasal bristles. The throat feathers are long and pointed, the tail is long and graduated. The entire body is glossy black, as are the bills, legs and feet. The black glossy feathers go slightly greenish on the head, under parts, tail and primaries, and bluish-purple on upper parts, secondaries and wing coverts. Their irides are dark brown.

Females measure smaller, but are not easily distinguishable from males. Juniors are a duller blackish brown until their second year.

### Voice

The voice is normally a distinctive deep, harsh croak, or hollow croaking honk. Ravens have a large, complex vocabulary of sounds in their repertoire including a high knocking "toc toc toc", a dry, grating "Kraa", low guttural rattles, and some more musical calls. Captive birds have even been taught to speak.

### Breeding

They are solitary nesters, creating bulky nests out of twigs and branches lined with roots, moss, wool, and rags daubed with mud and dung. They build frequently on cliff faces or high in large trees, but have been known to nest in old buildings, or even in low bushes or on the ground in undisturbed open country.

Their clutch consists of three to seven (averaging five) eggs in various shades from light blue to greenish blue or blotched olive, gray and brown. Ravens usually lay in February, but it varies depending on the climate (as late as April in Greenland, or as early as December in Pakistan). Incubation is 18 - 21 days, with a sitting female, and the male will bring food to the nest. The young ravens fledge at 35 - 42 days, are fed by both parents, and stay with the pair for six months afterwards.

### Habits

We usually observe ravens in pairs or family parties, but non-breeders gather in large groups at feeding sites or communal roosting. Their territories are large (between 17 and 44 sq. km), but with few disputes as they are tolerant of other birds. Flocks usually

number in the tens, but flocks of more than 100 have been seen at feeding sites in harsher environments such as Iran or the Shetlands, or in winter.

Ravens enjoy playful flight patterns, such as soaring, tumbling and rolling. Their longer wings make them quite agile aerial acrobats.

### Lifespan

A wild raven can live more than thirty years.

### Diet

They are omnivorous eaters, preferring to scavenge, but able to kill when necessary. They prefer carrion - dead sheep, cattle, rabbits and fish, but will also eat nestling birds and eggs, rodents, shellfish, insects, seeds, berries and grain. They have been known, in Greenland, to hunt and kill ptarmigan in flight, and to kill puffins emerging from their burrows. Ravens will also hide and store food for later use. Near human habitations, they boldly scavenge in garbage dumps and for slaughter house scraps.

In northern regions they have been observed to hunt cooperatively with wolves. Ravens will alert wolves to prey, wait for the kill, then feed. Wolves and ravens have also been seen to engage in playful behavior with each other, ravens swooping down at the wolves, who will chase them playfully.

### Enemies

Ravens have been heavily persecuted by man, especially in farmlands where they will eat the seed and grain. In some regions the species have disappeared completely.

*Corvophobia* is the unnatural fear of corvids, especially ravens and crows. This fear has been promulgated throughout literature, such as the words of Edgar Allan Poe, who described them as “. . . grim, ungainly, ghastly, gaunt and ominous creatures.” This is unfortunate, because they, in fact, are more helpful than harmful. Only one percent of their omnivorous diet consists of corn, while actually they prefer to devour agricultural pests such as grubs, caterpillars and worms. A study in New York found a single family of crows to devour about forty thousand pests in one nesting season.

In the animal world, ravens natural enemies are the great horned owl and red tail hawk. Ravens will cooperate together and mob these bigger birds to drive them off.

### Intelligence

In spite of these obstacles, ravens (as well as the other corvids) are a highly successful species due to their high level of intelligence, flexibility, and adaptability.

In *The Audobon Society Encyclopedia of North American Birds*, ornithologist John Terres writes, "Corvids have probably achieved the highest degree of intelligence to be found in any birds." Animal behaviorist Konrad Lorenz agrees, writing that raven has the "highest mental development" among the avian species. Naturalist Tony Angell has proven in controlled laboratory experiments that ravens are "superior in intelligence to all other avian species tested." Irene Pepperberg, of the University of Arizona, has gone even further, stating that corvids share "the cognitive capacities of many primates."

A tale told by Aesop informs us that the intelligence of corvids has long been known. A thirsty crow found a pitcher of water, but the water was too far below the rim for his beak to reach. The clever crow began dropping pebbles into the pitcher, raising the water level until it reached the brim, where she could quench her thirst.

At Oxford University in England, ornithologists conducted an unusual experiment with two New Caledonian Crows named Betty and Abel, reported in the August 9, 2002 issue of the journal *Science*. They placed a tiny bucket of meat inside a pipe, and left two pieces of wire in their cage, one hooked and one straight, to see if the birds would choose the hooked wire to retrieve the bucket of meat, proving that birds were "tool users" on a par with higher levels of animal intelligence.

"We were delighted and extremely surprised" reported Alex Kacelnik, one of the bird experts studying the crows, when Abel stole the hooked wire from Betty, and rather than giving up, Betty "modified" the straight wire into a hooked wire, and was thus able to hook the bucket, pull it up, and retrieve her snack. This elevates ravens from "tool users" to "tool makers", which places them on a par with primates.

According to neurologist Stanley Cobb, birds do not have a complex cerebral cortex, such as mammals do, but rather, they have developed their *hyperstriatum*, a part of their forebrain, that can carry out complex functions. Corvids, especially Ravens, Crows, and Magpies, have the largest brain size (i.e. the largest number of brain cells) among birds, including the largest hyperstriatum.

(Sources - *Crows and Jays, A Guide to the Crows, Jays and Magpies of the World*, by Steve Madge and Hilary Burn, Houghton Mifflin Company, Boston, New York, 1994; *Bird Brains* by Candace Savage, Sierra Club Books, San Francisco, 1995)

## Part Two FOLKLORE

*They slept until the black raven,  
the blithe hearted  
proclaimed the joy of heaven*  
- Beowulf

### Native American

According to Jamie Sams and David Carson, in their excellent book *Medicine Cards* (which accompanies a beautiful deck of animal cards), Raven's medicine is *magic*. She is the Great Mystery of the Void.

Black, to Native Americans, is a color of magical power, and only to be feared if misused. Raven symbolizes the void - the mystery of that which is not yet formed. Ravens are symbolic of the Black Hole in Space, which draws in all energy toward itself and releases it in new forms. The iridescent blue and green that can be seen in the glossy black feathers of the raven represents the constant change of forms and shapes that emerge from the vast blackness of the void. In Native American tradition, Raven is the guardian of both ceremonial magic and healing circles. She is also the patron of smoke signals.

Raven's element is air, and she is a messenger spirit, which Native American shamans use to project their magic over great distances.

In many northwestern American Indian traditions, Raven is the Trickster, much like the Norse Loki. Observing ravens in nature, we find that they often steal food from under the noses of other animals, often working in pairs to distract the unfortunate beasts. Anne Cameron has written several northwestern Indian tales (*Raven and Snipe*, *Raven Goes Berry-picking*, *Raven Returns the Water*, and others) with the Raven as Trickster theme.

### China

Ravens are considered a solar symbol in Chinese mythology. The three legged raven lives in the sun, representing the sun's three phases - rising, noon and setting. When the sunlight hits their glossy black feathers just right, they seem to turn to silver.

### Japan

The Shinto Goddess, Amaterasu is sometimes represented as a giant raven, Yata-Garasu.

## India

Brahma appears as a raven in one of his incarnations. Ravens are also sacred to Shiva and Kali.

## Australia

In Aborigine mythology, Raven tried to steal fire from seven sisters (the Pleiades), and was charred black in the unsuccessful attempt.

## Middle East

To Egyptians, ravens represented destruction and malevolence. However, Arabs call raven *Abu Aajir* - the Father of Omens.

## Hebrew/Christian

In the Hebrew/Christian tradition ravens were considered unclean, representing impurity, mortification, destruction, deceit, and desolation. Ravens were cursed by Noah for not returning to the ark with news of the receding the flood.

Yet, conversely, the Bible also says that ravens were the protectors of the prophets; they fed Elijah and Paul the Hermit in the wilderness. Also, ravens helped St. Cuthbert and St. Bernard.

In contradictory Christian traditions, ravens represent the solitude of the holy hermits, yet also the souls of wicked priests and witches.

## European

Since ravens can be taught to speak, and have such a complex vocabulary of their own, they are connected symbolically to both wisdom and prophecy. But in Europe, at least from Christian times, ravens have several strikes against them: black is considered a negative color; ravens are carrion eaters; and they have a symbiotic relationship with man's oldest enemy, the wolf. In many western traditions raven represents darkness, destructiveness and evil. They are sometimes associated with deities of evil and of death. Both witches and the Devil were said to be able to take the shape of a raven.

## Greece

Raven is the messenger of the Sun Gods, both Helios and Apollo. She is also associated with Athene, Hera, Cronos and Aesculapius.

## Northern Europe

The pagan Danes and Vikings used the raven banner on their ships, in Odin's honor. These flags, usually sewn by the daughters of great warriors and kings, were tokens of luck on their voyages. Houses where ravens nested were also thought to be lucky.

Odin had two ravens - *Huginn* (thought) and *Muninn* (memory) who flew about the world, delivering messages, gathering knowledge and reporting back to him. One of Odin's many titles is *Hrafna-Gud*, the God of the Ravens. Odin's daughters, the warlike Valkyres, were sometimes said to take the shape of ravens.

In the *Elder Edda's* cryptic poem, the *Grimnismal*, a verse refers to Odin's ravens:

Huginn and Muninn, every day  
They fly over earthground.  
I fear for Huginn,  
that he may not return.  
But even more, I fear  
for the loss of Muninn.

In the Norse shamanic tradition, Odin's ravens represent the powers of necromancy, clairvoyance and telepathy, and they were guides for the dead. This poem expresses a shaman's fear of his loss of magical powers. (Source: *The Well of Remembrance* by Ralph Metzner, Shambala, Boston, 1994)

## Central Europe

On Walpurgisnacht, April 30<sup>th</sup>, German witches fly to Brocken Mountain in the Harz Mountains for the great witches' Sabbath in the shape of their familiars - ravens and crows.

## Western Europe

In Beowulf, an Anglo Saxon poem, is written ". . . craving for carrion, the dark raven shall have its say, and tell the eagle how it fared at the feast, when, competing with the wolf, it laid bare the bones of corpses."

In Shakespeare's Macbeth, Lady Macbeth sees the raven as a herald of misfortune as it "croaks the fatal entrance of Duncan."

In England, tombstones are sometimes called "ravenstones".

Among the Irish Celts, Raven was associated with the Triple Goddess, the Morrigan, who took the shape of Raven over battlefields as Chooser of the Slain. She was a protector of warriors, such as Chuhulian and Fionn MacCual.

Raven is also the totem of the pan-Celtic Sorceress/Goddess Morgan le Fay, who was also called the Queen of Faeries. In some tales, she is Queen of the *Dubh Sidhe*, or Dark Faeries, who were a race of tricksters who often took the form of ravens.

Irish and Scots *Bean Sidhes* (Banshees) could take the shape of ravens as they cried above a roof, an omen of death in the household below.

*Tha gliocas an ceann an fhithich* or *Fice ceann na fhithich* are Scots Gaelic proverbs meaning "There is wisdom in a raven's head."

"To have a raven's knowledge" is an Irish proverb meaning to have a seer's supernatural powers. Raven is considered one of the oldest and wisest of animals.

Also a bird of wisdom and prophecy, Raven was the totem of the Welsh God, Bran the Blessed, the giant protector of the Britain, the Isle of the Mighty. After the battle with Ireland, Bran was decapitated, and his head became an oracle. Eventually Bran asked to have his head buried in what is now Tower Hill in London to protect Britain from invasion. Bran's Ravens are kept there to this day, as protection against invasion. During World War II, Tower Hill was bombed, and the ravens were lost. Winston Churchill, knowing full well the ancient legends, ordered the immediate replacement of ravens, and they were brought to Tower Hill from Celtic lands - the Welsh hills and Scottish Highlands.

Raven was the favorite bird of the solar deity, Lugh (Irish/Scots), or Lludd (Welsh) the Celtic God of Arts and Crafts. Lugh was said to have two ravens to attend on all the His needs (similar to Odin and his ravens).

Many Celtic tribes and clans descend from animals. An ancient clan called the *Brannovices*, the Raven Folk, once existed in Britain. To this day, the Glengarry MacDonalds of Scotland have a raven on their heraldic arms, and their war cry is *Creagan-an Fhithich* - Raven's Rock, a landmark on their ancestral lands.

The Scottish Goddess of winter, The Cailleach, sometimes appears as a raven. A touch from her brings death.

Giving a child his first drink from the skull of a raven will give the child powers of prophecy and wisdom in the Hebrides.

Scottish Highlanders associate ravens with the second sight. An excellent book on the subject is *Ravens and Black Rain: The Story of Highland Second Sight* by Elizabeth Sutherland (Corgi Books, Great Britain, 1985)

In Cornwall, as in England, King Arthur is said to live on in the form of a raven, and it is unlucky to shoot one.

“Have not your worships read the annals and histories of England, in which are recorded the famous deeds of King Arthur, whom we in our popular Castilian invariably call King Artus, with regard to whom it is an ancient tradition, and commonly received all over that kingdom of Great Britain, that this king did not die, but was changed by magic art into a raven, and that in process of time he is to return to reign and recover his kingdom and scepter; for which reason it cannot be proved that from that time to this any Englishman ever killed a raven?”

- *Don Quixote by Cervantes*

The Welsh Owein had a magical army of ravens.

In Welsh folklore, the raven is also an omen of death. If the raven makes a choking sound, it is a portent of the death rattle. A crying raven on a church steeple will “overlook” the next house where death will occur. A raven could smell death and would hover over the area where the next victim dwelt, including animals. Ravens were heard to “laugh” when someone was about to die. Welsh witches, and the Devil, would transform themselves into ravens.

## Part Three

### RAVEN MAGIC

*Swift, swift, you dragons of the night, that dawning  
May bear the raven's eye*

Cyberline, by William Shakespeare

#### Symbolism

Raven is a contrary spirit. On the negative side, Raven represents the profane, the devil, evil spirits, the trickster and thief, war and destruction, death and doom, the void.

Yet in many cultures Raven also represents deep magic, the mystery of the unknown, death and transformation, creation, healing, wisdom, protection, and prophecy.

Raven is both the symbol of the sun, and the symbol of a moonless night. She is the birth giving light in the center of our galaxy, and the black hole in the center of the universe, to which we are all traveling to our eventual extinction.

Raven is the fatal touch of the Calleach in winter, the wisdom of Odin, the vessel of prophecy given to a seer, the mighty protector of the Western Isles, and the healing message of an Indian shaman.

Raven is a complex bird, both in nature and in mythology.

#### Naming

You might want to choose a Ravenish magical name. There are many names associated with Raven from the differing traditions. Below is a list of European names:

| Name                                     | Meaning               | Language    |
|--|-----------------------|-------------|
| Corvin, Corwin, Corwun, Korwin and Korun | Raven's Friend        | Anglo Saxon |
| Corvinna, Corwinna                       | Raven's Friend (fem.) | Anglo Saxon |
| Jay                                      | a Corvid name         | Anglo Saxon |
| Raaf                                     | Raven                 | Dutch       |
| Fiach Dubh                               | Raven                 | Irish       |
| Hrabin                                   | Raven                 | German      |
| Korakas, Korax                           | Raven                 | Greek       |
| Corvus, Corvi and Corvinus               | Raven                 | Latin       |
| Hraefn                                   | Raven                 | Old English |
| Hrafn                                    | Raven                 | Old Norse   |
| Ravn                                     | Raven                 | Norwegian   |
| Corbie                                   | Raven                 | Broad Scots |

|                         |               |              |
|-------------------------|---------------|--------------|
| Fhithich                | Raven         | Scots Gaelic |
| Bertrand                | Bright Raven  | Teutonic     |
| Brainard                | Fierce Raven  | Teutonic     |
| Ingram                  | Ing's Raven   | Teutonic     |
| Bran                    | Raven         | Welsh        |
| Brandon                 | Raven         | Welsh        |
| Branwen, Branda, Brenda | Bran's sister | Welsh        |
| Cigfran                 | Raven         | Welsh        |

### Tokens and Artwork:

When choosing a totem, find a symbol to represent that totem and keep it on you, or in a sacred place in your home. (For instance, I always wear a silver raven ring). This token will help you to communicate with your totem, and it will protect and guide you both in magical and mundane affairs.

It is illegal to hunt and kill ravens and crows in the United States, under the Endangered Species Act. Keeping ravens and crows as pets are also illegal.

Raven artwork is all around us. In the northwest Indian and Alaskan cultures, Raven is the Creator Deity. Native American artists have created artifacts, T-shirts, emblems, and all sorts of sacred raven art.

Raven and Crow are favorite subjects in traditional Chinese and Japanese art. I have found raven paintings by local Japanese and Chinese artists in San Francisco.

Raven art is catching on in Western Culture, especially among Celtic and Norse style artists. I now find ravens in jewelry, decals, T-shirts, and altar cloths, available from vendors in local craft fairs, Scottish and Celtic Games, Scandanavian festivals, Renaissance fairs and other historical re-enactment fairs. You'd be surprised where you can find ravens. I have found wooden and metal ravens in antique stores. Halloween is an especially good season to find raven designs sold as decorations. Many artists and craftspeople are open to suggestion, and available for commissions. The more people that ask for raven designs, the more they will show up in the marketplace! If you have a favorite local artist - commission him/her to do a raven design!

Raven art can also be found in several tarot card decks - including *The Medicine Cards* and *The Druid Animal Oracle*. Pull these cards out and use them in meditation, trance work, spirit guide work.

### Sacred Times

Raven represents winter, because of their ability to endure the cold. My husband, who was stationed in Greenland with the Army in the 1960's, saw only two animals the year he was there - arctic foxes and ravens!

Raven also represents night, their ebony plumage reminding us of the Dark Moon. Raven magic is very potent at this time of month when the majesty of the starry universe unfolds above us. Raven is an ideal guide on the path of the deepest mysteries.

And in Eastern traditions, Raven represents the sun - rising, noon and setting.

The intelligence and adaptability of Raven really makes Her an appropriate totem for any time or season.

### Astral Travel

There are many chants and songs that can be used to invoke Raven.

A traditional Scottish chant to shapeshift into a crow (for astral traveling), while holding a crow or raven's feather: (From the witch trial of Isobel Gowdie)

*I shall go into a crow  
with sorrow and such and a black thraw  
And I shall to in the Devil's name  
Until I come home again!*

To change back:

*Crow, crow, crow God,  
Send Thee a black thraw  
I was a crow just now  
But I shall be  
in a woman's likeness even now  
Crow, crow, crow God,  
Send Thee a black thraw!*

### Prophecy and Divination

*I have fled in the shape of a raven of prophetic speech.*

- Taliesin

To invoke Raven as bird of prophecy, you can use the old English rhyme used to interpret omens by the number of ravens, crows, or rooks seen in a flock:

*One for bad news,  
Two for mirth.  
Three is a wedding,  
Four is a birth.  
Five is for riches,  
Six is a thief.*

*Seven, a journey,  
Eight is for grief.  
Nine is a secret,  
Ten is for sorrow.  
Eleven is for love,  
Twelve - joy for tomorrow.*

Keep a raven feather or artifact with your divination tools. Ravens especially preside over dark tools such as dark mirrors and onyx scrying balls, but can be used with any tool.

### Dreamwork

Raven is an excellent dream guide. Most Native American craft stores will sell dream wheels (or you can make your own). Attach a raven feather or artifact to the wheel and hang it over your bed. Powerful and prophetic dreams will come your way.

### Magic Circles

When drawing a circle using Raven imagery, clothe yourself in dark flowing robes. In the Morganian tradition of Wicca, the Raven priestess circles the perimeter nine times in honor of the nine priestesses of Avalon.

Adding raven feathers to your tools (for instance attaching the black feathers to your wand, staff, athame, shield, drum, pentacle) or crafting your tools in the shape of ravens is a powerful way to use Raven Magic. I have also worn a raven mask when drawing down the Raven Goddess, Morgan.

### Trance:

Use Raven to guide you into trance. There are many poems and songs dedicated to Raven that you can use to guide you.

## ***Invocation of Raven***

*by Susa Morgan Black*

*Morgana of the Dark Moon Night  
Onyx bird, bold in flight  
Raven, come to us now!*

*Keeper of the sacred well  
Where the faerie spirits dwell  
Raven, come to us now!*

*Guardian of the Blackthorn Tree*

*Home of the feared Banshee  
Raven, come to us now!*

*Teacher of warriors, and of sex,  
spells that heal and spells that hex  
Raven, come to us now!*

*Bean Sidhe by the river bed  
Washing shrouds of the newly dead  
Raven, come to us now!*

*Twin birds of memory and thought  
Who brought the knowledge Odin sought  
Raven, come to us now!*

*Raven with his bag of tricks  
Always getting in a fix  
Raven, come to us now!*

*Stalwart guardian of the Land  
The sacred bird of mighty Bran  
Raven, come to us now!*

*Wise One of the Second Sight  
Who foretells our human plight  
Raven, come to us now!*

*Raven, Oldest of us All  
Watch over us and hear our call  
Raven, come to us now!*

## Healing

*Bird whose magic is revealing  
The hallowed mystery of healing*  
-smb

Both Celtic Druid *Slànaighear* (Healer) and Native American shamans use Raven's spirit for healing, especially long distance healing. When doing a healing circle for an absent friend, the energy can be sent in the form of a raven.

If you are working directly with someone who is ill, you can use raven feathers to stroke their body, collecting and drawing out the negative energy, to be shaken out and cleansed later. Raven is powerful medicine.

## Protection

*The dead are lying in the field,  
Oh, hear Her Kraaak and cry!  
The gaping wounds, a raven's yield,  
She comes hungry from the sky.*

- *The Morrigan* by S. Black

In nature, Ravens will mob their enemies if they come too near their nest. Ward your home or business against malefactors with the spirits of warrior ravens, like Owein's Raven Army, the Morrigan, or the Valkyres. When you invoke their fearless spirits, nothing can prevail against you.

## Part Four

*Bird of Smoke, Bird of Fire*  
*Who reveals to us our Deep Desire*  
- smb

### ANOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY

I have an ever growing Corvid library. Here are some of my favorites!

*American Crow and Common Raven* by Lawrence Kilham, Texas A and M University Press, 1989

A very good book, going into great detail about every aspect of crows and ravens in the wild. Very thorough.

*Bird Brains: The Intelligence of Crows, Ravens, Magpies and Jays*, by Candace Savage, Sierra Club Books, San Francisco, 1995

An excellent, informative, coffee-table book with some of the best photos of the Corvidae family I've seen in print. An absolute MUST for raven lovers.

*Crows and Jays: A Guide to the Crows, Jays and Magpies of the World*, by Steve Madge and Hilary Burn, Houghton Mifflin Company, Boston, 1994

An encyclopedia of Corvidae with over one hundred entries, color drawings, details of their identification, habitats, voice, breeding, diet, distinctive habits, etc. This book is for the serious corvidologist.

*Crows: An Old Rhyme*, by Heidi Holder, Farrar-Straus-Giroux, New York, 1987

A well illustrated version of a traditional English folk rhyme. A wonderful gift for a child.

*Jackdaw and the Witch, A True Fable*, by Sybil Leek, Prentice Hall, Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey, 1966

A wonderful tale by a famous British Witch about their family's pet jackdaw.

*Mind of the Raven, Investigations and Adventures with Wolf-Birds*, by Bernd Heinrich, Cliff Street Books, New York, 1999

Incredible book by world's foremost authority on ravens. The sequel to *Ravens in Winter*.

*Rainbow Crow*, by Nancy Van Laan, Dragonfly Books, New York, 1989

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| <p>A nicely illustrated and colorful children's story about a young crow who wanted to be different.</p>   |
| <p><i>Raven and Snipe</i>, by Anne Cameron, Harbor Publishing Co., B.C., Canada, 1991</p> <p>Part of a series of traditional Native American folk tales about Raven.</p>   |
| <p><i>Raven Goes Berry-picking</i>, by Anne Cameron, Harbor Publishing Co., B.C., Canada, 1991</p> <p>Part of a series of traditional Native American folk tales about Raven.</p>  |
| <p><i>Raven Returns the Water</i>, by Anne Cameron, Harbor Publishing Co., B.C., Canada, 1987</p> <p>Part of a series of traditional Native American folk tales about Raven.</p>   |
| <p><i>Ravens in Winter</i> by Bernd Heinrich, Summit Books, New York, 1989</p> <p>Ornithologist Heinrich spent four winters in the Northeastern woodlands in an intense study of raven behavior. Very thorough and readable.</p> |
| <p><i>Raven Tales, Traditional Stories of Native Peoples</i>, edited by Peter Goodchild, Chicago Review Press, 1991</p> <p>A very good collection of Native American tales.</p>  |
| <p><i>Ravensong, A Natural and Fabulous History of Ravens and Crows</i>, by Catherine Feher, Northland Publishing, Arizona, 1991</p> <p>An excellent collection of raven myths from around the world.</p>                        |

I also recommend the following books that have useful sections about ravens:

*The Druid Animal Oracle, Working with the Sacred Animals of the Druid Tradition*, by Philip and Stephanie Carr-Gomm, Fireside Books, Simon and Schuster, Inc., New York, 1994

An interesting books on the Celtic/Druid traditions regarding sacred animal totems.

*Symbolic and Mythological Animals*, by J. C. Cooper, Aquarian/Thorsons, Harper Collins Publishing, London, 1992

A sourcebook of animal mythologies from around the world.

*Animal Speak, The Spiritual and Magical Powers of Creatures Great and Small*, by Ted Andrews, Llewellyn Publications, St. Paul, Minnesota, 1994

A manual on how to work with animal totems and spirits.

*Medicine Cards, The Discovery of Power through the Ways of Animals*, by Jamie Sams and David Carson, Bear & Company, Santa Fe, New Mexico, 1988

An excellent deck and accompanying book on the Native American tradition.

*Folklore of the Scottish Highland*, by Anne Ross, Batsford Ltd., London, 1976

Wonderful book of Highland traditional folklore with many references to ravens and crows.

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| <p><i>Raven Tales: Traditional Stories of Native Peoples</i>, by Peter Goodchild, Chicago Review Press, 1991</p> <p>Traditional raven tales from around the world, including Native American, Siberian, Norse, Irish, Greek, Japanese, Australian Aborigine and Southeast Asian.</p> |
| <p><i>Raven</i>, by Susa Morgan Black, Amateur Corvidologist, self published, 1994</p> <p>A small collection of raven lore from around the world.</p>  |
| <p><i>Ravens in Winter</i> by Bernd Heinrich, Summit Books, New York, 1989</p> <p>Biologist Heinrich spent four winters in Maine studying ravens. An exciting, intimate and comprehensive read!</p>  |
| <p><i>Ravensong: A Natural and Fabulous History of Ravens and Crows</i>, by Catherine Feher Elston, Northland Publishing, Arizona, 1991</p> <p>Author explores the shamanic role of Raven in North American Indian culture.</p>  |
| <p><i>The American Crow and the Common Raven</i>, by Lawrence Kilham, Texas AM University Press, College Station, 1989</p>   |
| <p><i>The Jackdaw and the Witch: A True Fable</i>, by Sybil Leek, Prentice-Hall, New Jersey, 1966</p> <p>A wonderful British children's story about Raven's Corvid cousin, Jackdaw.</p>  |