

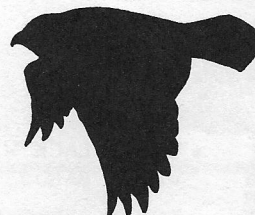
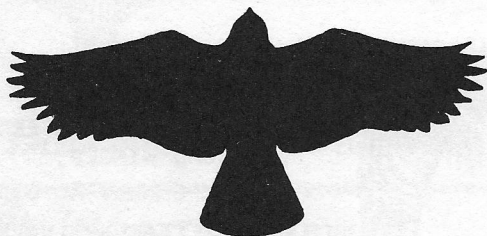
A GUIDE FOR HAWKS SEEN IN THE NORTH EAST

BECAUSE MANY HAWKS DIFFER IN APPEARANCE DUE TO VARIOUS DARK AND LIGHT PHASES, ONLY THE ADULT, NORMAL, MOST COMMONLY ENCOUNTERED VARIETY ARE ILLUSTRATED.

KNOW YOUR SILHOUETTES

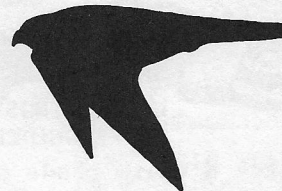
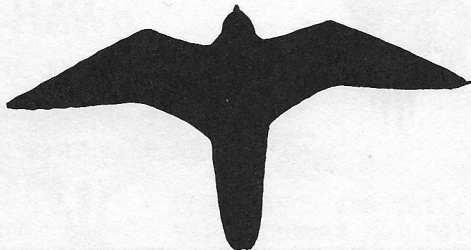
BUTEOS

BROAD WINGS AND BROAD ROUNDED TAILS; OFTEN SEEN SOARING IN WIDE CIRCLES HIGH IN THE AIR.



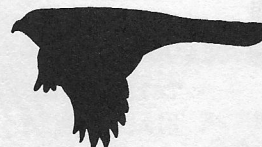
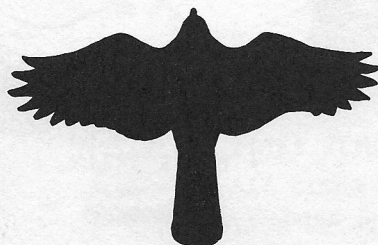
FALCONS

STREAMLINED-LONG POINTED WINGS; LONGISH COMPRESSED TAPERED TAILS; STRONG ROWING WING BEATS; LOSE SOME OF THEIR POINTED WING & TAPERED TAIL LOOK WHEN NOT IN DIRECT FLIGHT.



ACCIPITERS

SHORT, WIDE, ROUNDED WINGS; LONG TAILS: FLAP, FLAP, FLAP-SAIL FLIGHT.

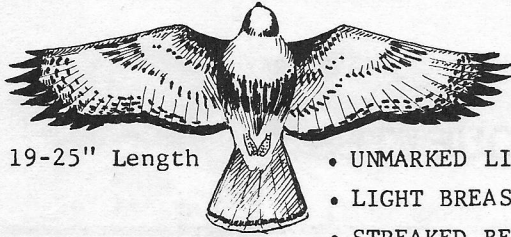


BUTEOS

BELOW

EYE LEVEL

RED-TAILED HAWK



19-25" Length

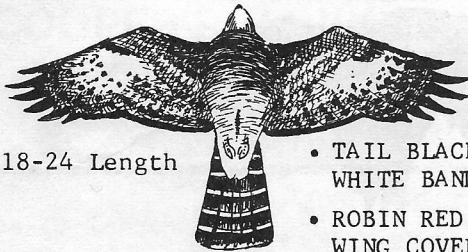
- UNMARKED LIGHT TAIL.
- LIGHT BREAST.
- STREAKED BELLY BAND.



- BEST MARK IS CONSPICUOUS RED TAIL.

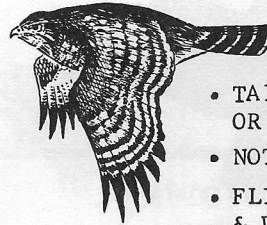
Only Buteo with red tail and white chest.

RED-SHOULDERED HAWK



18-24 Length

- TAIL BLACK WITH NARROW WHITE BANDS.
- ROBIN RED BREAST AND UNDER WING COVERTS.
- WINDOWS TOWARD TIP OF WING (Not a Good Mark Alone.)



- TAIL LONGER THAN RED-TAILED OR BROAD-WINGED.
- NOT AS CHUNKY AS OTHER BUTEOS.
- FLIGHT FEATHERS HAVE BLACK & WHITE STRIPED PATTERN.
- HAS A REDDISH BROWN LOOK, ESPECIALLY ON SHOULDERS.

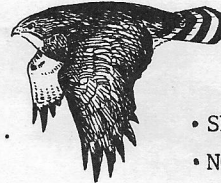
Only Buteo with combination black banded tail, and reddish brown under wing coverts.

BROAD-WINGED HAWK



14-18" Length

- SMALLEST BUTEO, CROW SIZE.
- WHITE & BLACK BANDS ON TAIL.
- SHAPED LIKE SMALL RED-TAIL.
- UNDER WINGS LIGHTER THAN RED-SHOULDERED.

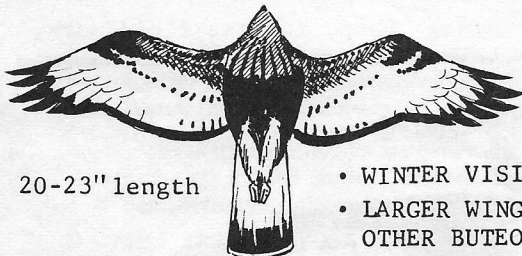


- SHAPED LIKE SMALL RED-TAILED.
- NOT LARGER THAN CROW.
- LOOK FOR BOLD TAIL PATTERN.

Only Buteo with black & white bands on tail.

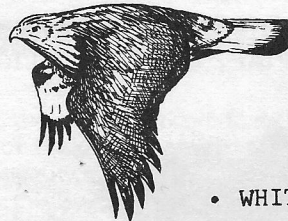
ROUGH-LEGGED HAWK

A DARK PHASE ALSO OCCURS.



20-23" length

- WINTER VISITOR.
- LARGER WINGS & TAIL THAN OTHER BUTEOS.
- TAIL WHITE WITH BLACK BAND.
- BLACK BELLY, BLACK WRIST MARKS.



- WHITE UPPER TAIL.
- BUFFY HEAD, NECK AND BACK.
- BLACK BELLY.

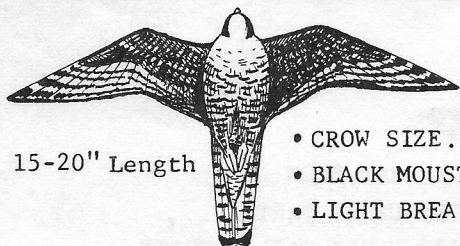
Only Buteo with black belly and white tail with broad black band.

FALCONS (TOP 3)

BELOW

EYE LEVEL

PEREGRINE FALCON (Duck Hawk)



15-20" Length

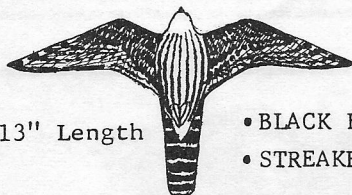
- CROW SIZE.
- BLACK MOUSTACHE.
- LIGHT BREAST & THROAT.



- BACK SLATE GRAY.
- LIGHT BREAST.
- BLACK CAP & MOUSTACHE.

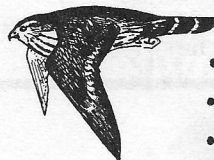
Only crow-sized Falcon with head pattern. (See Gyrfalcon.)

MERLIN (Pigeon Hawk)



10-13" Length

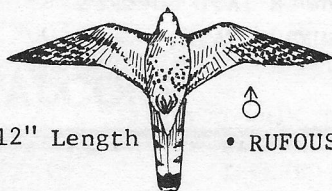
- BLACK BANDED GRAY TAIL.
- STREAKED BREAST.



- BANDED TAIL (Not Red.)
- NO HEAD PATTERN.
- MALE: BLUE GRAY BACK.
- FEMALE: CHOCOLATE BROWN BACK.

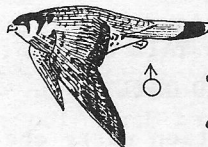
Only small Falcon with no red in tail and no outstanding head pattern.

KESTREL (Sparrow Hawk)



9-12" Length

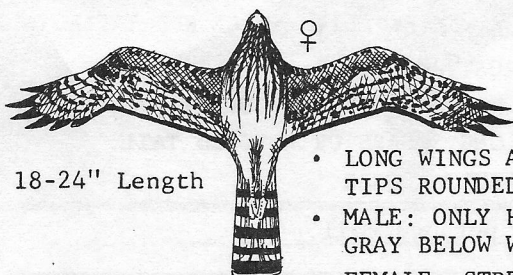
- RUFIOUS OR LIGHT BROWN TAIL.



- FEMALE: LIGHT BROWN BACK & TAIL.
- BOLD BLACK & WHITE FACE PATTERN ON BOTH SEXES.
- RUFIOUS TAIL, MALE.

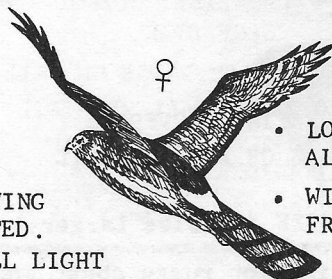
Only Falcon with rufous or light brown tail.

MARSH HAWK



18-24" Length

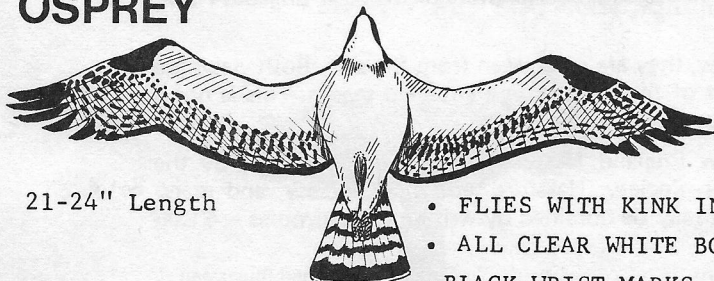
- LONG WINGS AND TAIL, WING TIPS ROUNDED NOT POINTED.
- MALE: ONLY HAWK OVERALL LIGHT GRAY BELOW WITH BLACK WING TIPS.
- FEMALE: STREAKED BROWN BELOW.



- LOOK FOR WHITE RUMP IN ALL PLUMAGES.
- WINGS HELD SLANTED UPWARD FROM SHOULDER WHEN SAILING.

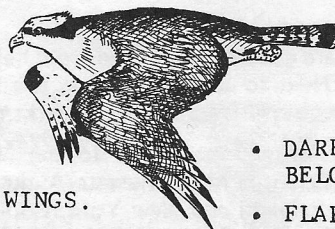
Only Hawk with Flicker-like white rump. (Not tail as Rough-legged.) Shape is best field mark.

OSPREY



21-24" Length

- FLIES WITH KINK IN WINGS.
- ALL CLEAR WHITE BODY.
- BLACK WRIST MARKS.
- VERY LONG WINGS, NEAREST EAGLE SIZE OF ALL HAWKS.



- DARK ABOVE, CLEAR WHITE BELOW.
- FLAPS RATHER SLOWLY.
- BLACK STRIP THROUGH EYE.

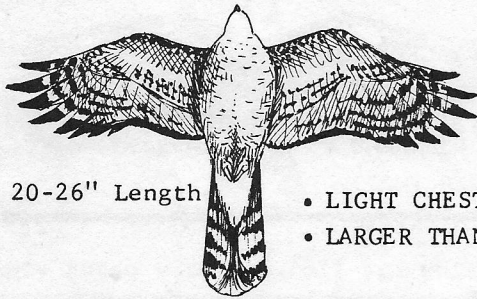
Only Hawk with black wrist marks, and all white body.

ACCIPITERS

BELOW

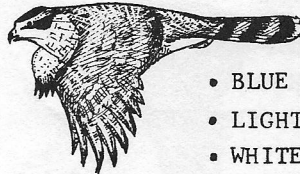
EYE LEVEL

GOSHAWK



20-26" Length

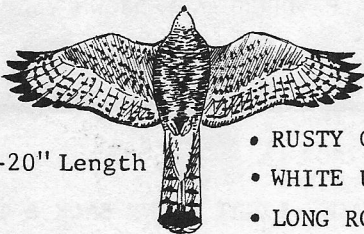
- LIGHT CHEST.
- LARGER THAN CROW.



- BLUE GRAY BACK.
- LIGHT UNDER PARTS.
- WHITE UNDER TAIL COVERTS.
- LARGER THAN CROW.
- WHITE EYE LINE.

No other Accipiter has a light chest.

COOPER'S HAWK



14-20" Length

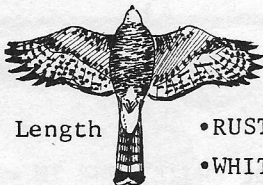
- RUSTY CHEST.
- WHITE UNDER TAIL COVERTS.
- LONG ROUNDED TAIL.



- DARK BLUE GRAY BACK.
- RUSTY CHEST.
- WHITE UNDER TAIL COVERTS
- LONG ROUNDED TAIL.

No other Accipiter had a combination rusty chest and rounded tail.

SHARP-SHINNED HAWK



10-14" Length

- RUSTY CHEST.
- WHITE UNDER TAIL COVERTS.
- LONG SQUARE OR NOTCHED TAIL (Closed.)
- BLUEJAY SIZE (Females Larger.)



- DARK BLUE GRAY BACK.
- RUSTY CHEST.
- WHITE UNDER TAIL COVERTS.
- LONG SQUARE OR NOTCHED TAIL.
- BLUEJAY SIZE.

No other Accipiter has a combination rusty chest and square or notched tail.

This guide was composed to aid in the field identification of hawks. ~~The guide was illustrated by Paul Carrier in conjunction with Donald Hopkins and Gerald Mersereau, coordinators of the New England Hawk Watch Study, and others.~~

Although hawks are generally observed from below, they are often seen from the side. Both views are included in this guide. Next to each illustration is a list of the most prominent field marks. This is not a complete description, but a collection of those marks most easily observed.

The guide was published as an aid to the New England Hawk Watch Study sponsored by the Connecticut Audubon Council, Massachusetts Audubon Society, Hartford Audubon Society, and many Audubon clubs in New England and New York. Copies may be obtained by writing (single copies - \$1.00 donation) Hawks, P.O. Box 212, Portland, Conn. 06480

Guide designed and illustrated
by Paul Carrier