

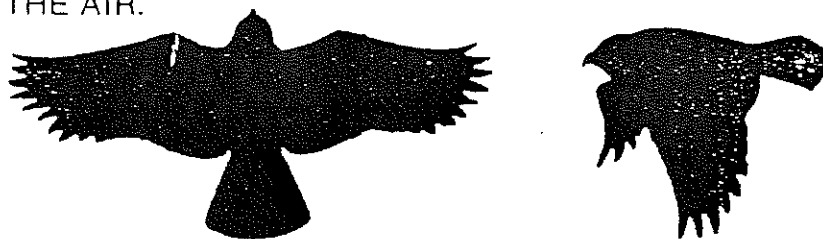
# A Field Guide for Hawks seen in the North East

BECAUSE MANY HAWKS DIFFER IN APPEARANCE DUE TO VARIOUS DARK AND LIGHT PHASES, ONLY THE ADULTS 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.

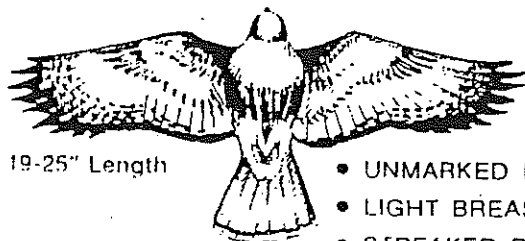


# BUTEOS

BELOW

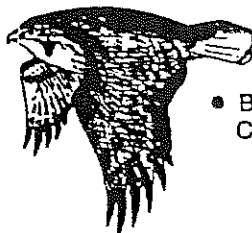
EYE LEVEL

## RED-TAILED HAWK



19-25" Length

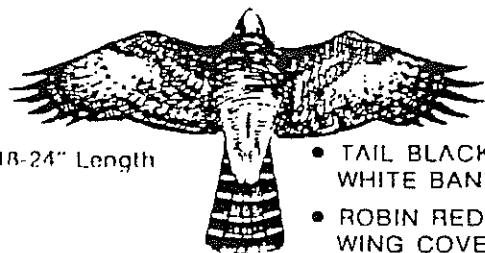
- UNMARKED LIGHT TAIL.
- LIGHT BREAST.
- STREAKED BELLY BAND.



- BEST MARK IS CONSPICUOUS RED TAIL.

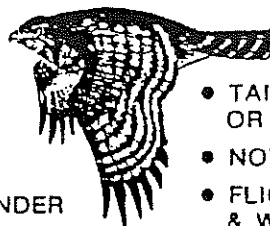
Only Buteo with red tail and white chest.

## RED-SHOULDERED HAWK



18-24" Length

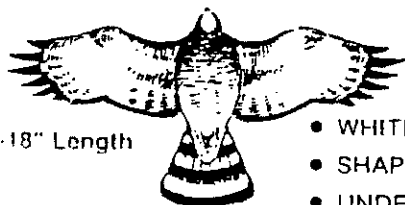
- TAIL BLACK WITH NARROW WHITE BANDS.
- ROBIN RED BREAST AND UNDER WING COVERTS.
- WINDOWS TOWARD TIP OF WING (Not a Good Mark Alone.)



- TAIL LONGER THAN RED-TAILED OR BROAD-WINGED.
- NOT AS CHUNKY AS OTHER BUTEO'S
- 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.

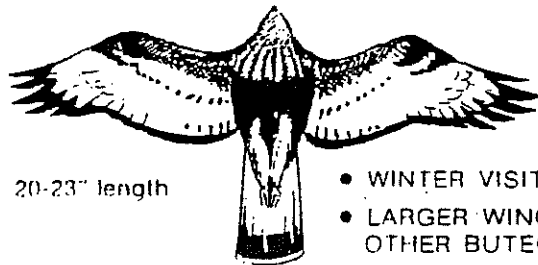


- SHAPED LIKE SMALL RED-TAILED
- NOT LARGER THAN CROW.
- LOOK FOR BOLD TAIL PATTERN.

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 BUTEO'S.
- TAIL WHITE WITH BLACK BAND.
- BLACK BELLY, BLACK WRIST MARKS.



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

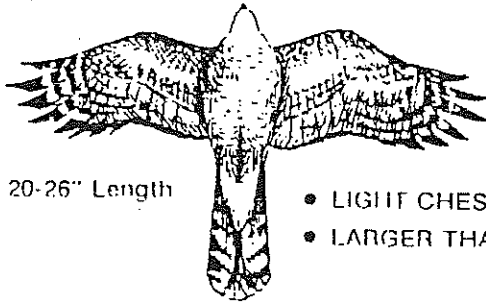
Only Buteo with black belly and white tail with broad black band.

# ACCIPITERS

BELOW

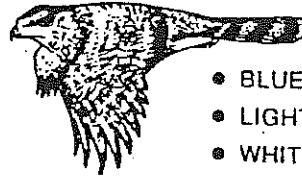
EYE LEVEL

## GOSHAWK



20-26" Length

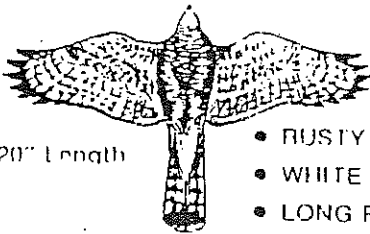
- LIGHT CHEST.
- LARGER THAN CROW.



- 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

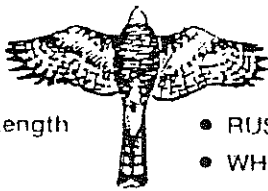
- RUSTY CHEST.
- WHITE UNDER TAIL COVERTS.
- LONG ROUNDED TAIL.



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

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

## SHARP-SHINNED HAWK



10-14" Length

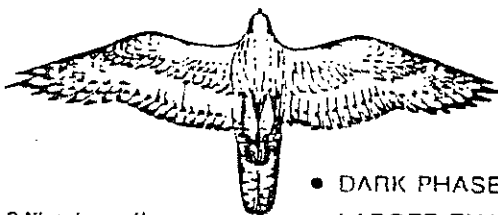
- RUSTY CHEST.
- WHITE UNDER TAIL COVERTS.
- LONG SQUARE OR NOTCHED TAIL (Closed.)
- BLUEJAY SIZE (Females Larger.)



- 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.

## GYRFALCON



24" + Length

- DARK PHASE ALSO OCCURS.
- LARGER THAN PEREGRINE.
- RARE MIGRANT.

## TURKEY VULTURE



27-32" Length

- HEAD AND NECK BARE — RED.
- EAGLE SIZE — SMALL HEAD
- UPPER WINGS AND BODY DARK BROWN TO BLACK — UNDERWING GREY.



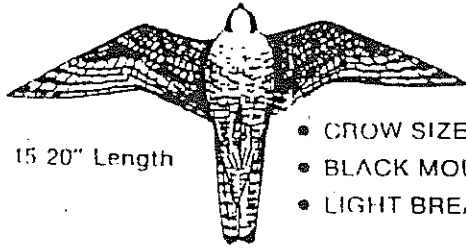
- SHARP DIHEDRAL SET TO WINGS
- ROCKING FLIGHT.

# FALCONS (TOP 3)

BELOW

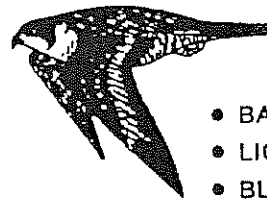
EYE LEVEL

## PEREGRINE FALCON (Duck Hawk)



15-20" Length

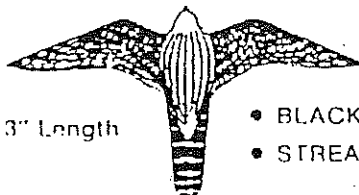
- CROW SIZE.
- BLACK MOUSTACHE.
- LIGHT BREAST & THROAT.



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

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

## MERLIN (Pigeon Hawk)



10-13" Length

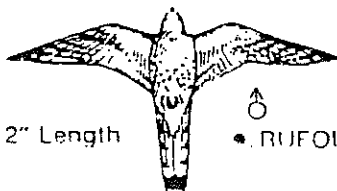
- BLACK BANDED GRAY TAIL.
- STREAKED BREAST.



- 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

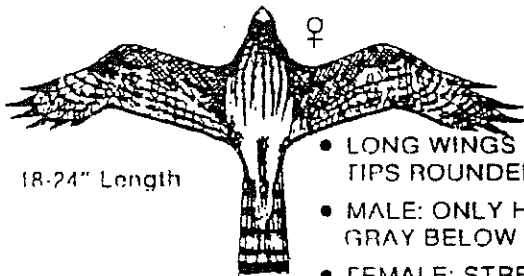
- RUFIOUS OR LIGHT BROWN TAIL.



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

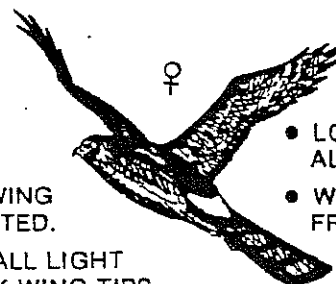
Only Falcon with rufous or light brown tail.

## MARSH HAWK



18-24" Length

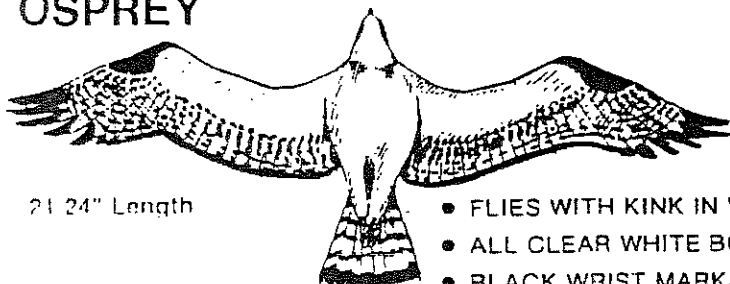
- LONG WINGS AND TAIL, WING TIPS ROUNDED NOT POINTED.
- MALE: ONLY HAWK OVERALL LIGHT GRAY BELOW WITH BLACK WING TIPS.
- FEMALE: STREAKED BROWN BELOW.



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

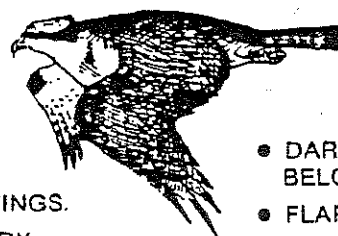
Only Hawk with Flicker-like white rump. (Not tail as Rough-legged.) Shape is best field mark.

## OSPREY



21-24" Length

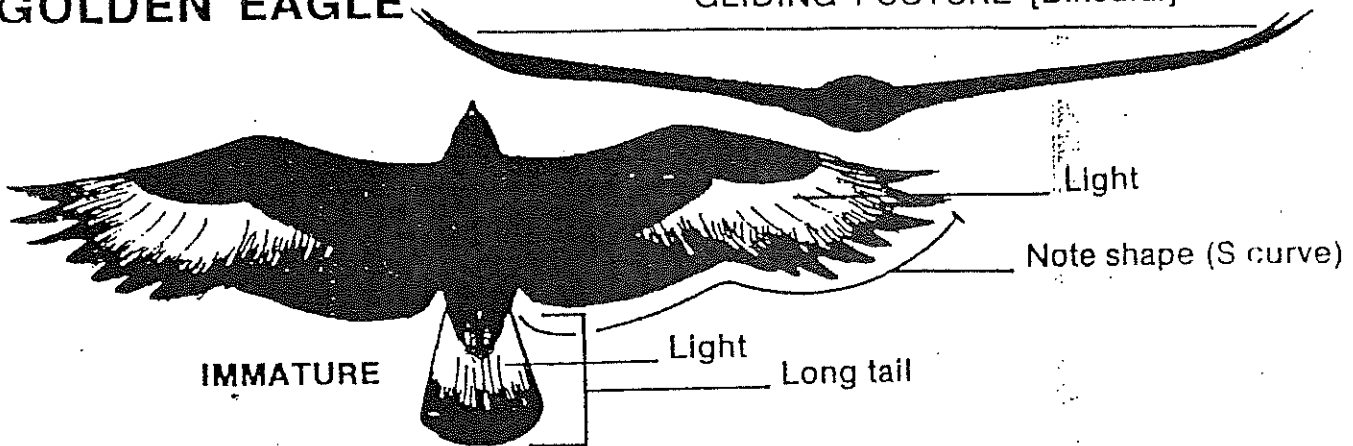
- FLIES WITH KINK IN WINGS.
- ALL CLEAR WHITE BODY.
- BLACK WRIST MARKS.
- VERY LONG WINGS, NEAREST EAGLE SIZE OF ALL HAWKS.



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

# GOLDEN EAGLE

GLIDING POSTURE [Dihedral]



All dark wing linings  
(not so Im. Bald)

Short head & neck  
(much shorter than tail)

# BALD EAGLE

Feathered Tarsus  
ADULT

Some light in wing linings

IMMATURE

Short tail

Long head & neck  
(almost long as tail)

GLIDING POSTURE [Flat]

ADULT

Note shape  
(almost flat)

Bare Tarsus (Yellow)

This guide is published as an educational 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. Quantity discounts to clubs, nature centers, and schools. Copies may be obtained by writing (single copies — \$1.00 donation) Hawks, P.O. Box 212, Portland, Conn. 06480.

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