### Eastern Migrant Raptor Flight Guide

The material contained in this document has been gathered from personal observations, conversations with fellow hawk watchers, and the published sources listed on page two. This document may be copied for hawk identification usage. I hope this is a useful tool for identification.

#### Body
- **Cooper’s Hawk**
  - Type: Accipiter
  - Tail: Large version of Sharpie. Body appears shorter than tail.
  - Wing: The wing is rather long and straight-edged with little or no bend at the wrist.
  - Head: Appears to be pulled back since wings are pushed forward.
  - Underparts: Immature: Only the chest has thick noodle-like streaking. Looks white or clean at distance.
  - Flight: Countable flapping gliding with flaps are stiff. Most like flapping. In a glide tends to hold head up above land.
  - Behavior: Solitary birds usually not traveling in pairs or groups. Soars high with other raptors with fully extended wings.

- **Northern Goshawk**
  - Type: Buteo-like, Tubular.
  - Eye-line visible.
  - Tail: Long and narrow.
  - Wing: Crossing Cooper’s Crip Crip’s.
  - Head: Fint-shaped, large, broad Eye-line visible.
  - Underparts: Immature: Heavy noodle-like streaking on breast to base of tail.
  - Flight: Wings beat is heavy, deep, labored like a buteo. A flying tube.
  - Behavior: In accipiter that looks like a buteo.

- **American Kestrel**
  - Type: Falco
  - Eye-line visible.
  - Tail: Broad and wedge-shaped. Appearing like an extension of the body.
  - Wing: Leading edge almost straight.
  - Head: Black eye pusses.
  - Underparts: Adult: Pale gray parging.
  - Flight: Wing beat is heavy, deep, labored like a buteo. A flying tube.
  - Behavior: In accipiter that looks like a buteo.

- **Peregrine Falcon**
  - Type: Falco
  - Eye-line visible.
  - Tail: Broad and wedge-shaped. Appearing like an extension of the body.
  - Wing: Leading edge almost straight.
  - Head: Black eye pusses.
  - Underparts: Adult: Pale gray parging.
  - Flight: Wing beat is heavy, deep, labored like a buteo. A flying tube.
  - Behavior: In accipiter that looks like a buteo.

### Tail
- **Sharp-shinned Hawk**
  - Description:
  - Tail: Tip usually squared. Terminal band is narrow, sooted, not white and hard to see.
  - Wing: Appears to be pulled back since wings are pushed forward.
  - Head: Immature: Chest and belly have thick noodle-like streaking. Looks dirty at distance.
  - Underparts: Adult: Rusty barring on chest and belly.
  - Flight: Flapping and gliding is hurried and snappy. Too rapid to count. In a glide tends to hold tail up above head.
  - Behavior: Feisty, agitator, intimidator.

- **Cooper’s Hawk**
  - Description:
  - Tail: Large version of Sharpie. Body appears shorter than tail.
  - Wing: The wing is rather long and straight-edged with little or no bend at the wrist.
  - Head: Immature: Only the chest has thick noodle-like streaking. Looks white or clean at distance.
  - Underparts: Adult: Rusty barring on chest.
  - Flight: Countable flapping gliding with flaps are stiff. Most like flapping. In a glide tends to hold head up above land.
  - Behavior: Solitary birds usually not traveling in pairs or groups. Soars high with other raptors with fully extended wings.

- **Northern Goshawk**
  - Description:
  - Tail: Broad and wedge-shaped. Appearing like an extension of the body.
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### Wing
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### Underparts
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  - Underparts: Adult: Rusty barring on chest.
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### Behavior
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  - Behavior: In accipiter that looks like a buteo.

### Social Sharpie
- **Cooper’s Hawk**
  - Description:
  - Tail: Large version of Sharpie. Body appears shorter than tail.
  - Wing: The wing is rather long and straight-edged with little or no bend at the wrist.
  - Head: Immature: Only the chest has thick noodle-like streaking. Looks white or clean at distance.
  - Underparts: Adult: Rusty barring on chest.
  - Flight: Countable flapping gliding with flaps are stiff. Most like flapping. In a glide tends to hold head up above land.
  - Behavior: Solitary birds usually not traveling in pairs or groups. Soars high with other raptors with fully extended wings.

- **Northern Goshawk**
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  - Tail: Broad and wedge-shaped. Appearing like an extension of the body.
  - Wing: Leading edge almost straight.
  - Head: Black eye pusses.
  - Underparts: Adult: Pale gray parging.
  - Flight: Wing beat is heavy, deep, labored like a buteo. A flying tube.
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Eagles</th>
<th>Body</th>
<th>Tail</th>
<th>Wing</th>
<th>Head</th>
<th>Underparts</th>
<th>Flight</th>
<th>Behavior</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bald Eagle</td>
<td>Immense size in all age classes.</td>
<td>Large head, Wings flat.</td>
<td>Immature: Dark.</td>
<td>Immature: White without or with some white.</td>
<td>Head and bill are massive.</td>
<td>Great variation.</td>
<td>Flap continuously.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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<tr>
<th>Buteos (broad-winged)</th>
<th>Body</th>
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<tr>
<td>Red-tailed Hawk</td>
<td>Adult and Immature: Same plumage – brown to gray-brown above and light below, with varying amounts of speckling and streaking. They do differ in tail color.</td>
<td>Patagium, Muscular.</td>
<td>Immature: Patagium on leading edge is near the body.</td>
<td>Adult: Has a red tail that is gotten during the second year.</td>
<td>Brown to gray-brown.</td>
<td>Very white below.</td>
<td>The Red-tailed Hawk will be a reference for identifying other buteos.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Red-shouldered Hawk</td>
<td>Compared to Red-tailed in flight, it appears slimmer, sleeker, and cylindrical.</td>
<td>Immature: Body not chestnut &amp; brown above, white below.</td>
<td>Adult: Broad black and white tail bands.</td>
<td>Boldly striped with black and white broad bands. Tail sub terminal band isn’t noticeably different from the other bands. Long in Lmm; short for Immature.</td>
<td>Underwings of both Immatures and (especially) Adults are very clean and white.</td>
<td>Nothing special to note.</td>
<td>It is likely the Red-shouldered Hawk.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Broad-winged Hawk</td>
<td>Small, chunky, stubby, and Crow-sized.</td>
<td>Immature: Large, lanky, slender buteo. Boldly patterned with two color forms.</td>
<td>Adult: Broad black and white tail bands. Sub-terminal band on the tail is darker and wider than the other bands on the tail.</td>
<td>Underwings of both Immatures and (especially) Adults are very clean and white.</td>
<td>Nothing special to note.</td>
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<td>It is likely the Broad-winged Hawk.</td>
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<td>Rough-legged Hawk</td>
<td>Large, lanky, slender buteo. Boldly patterned, setting the bird apart from most buteos. Several different plumages occur relating to age and sex, but these are conspicuous. Light morph dark morph birds occur.</td>
<td>Immature: Dark morph var.</td>
<td>Immature: Dark.</td>
<td>Light morph: Upper surface is white except for a broad, dark band at the tip. Dark morph: Show almost no white on the tail, and some have none. Some show an obvious broad dark sub-terminal band.</td>
<td>Light morph: Creamy or tawny crown and nape (usually over-streaked with brown). Dark morph: Black.</td>
<td>Wing beat is steady, un hurried, methodical, and deeply arched. Flapping doesn’t frequently happen in a series, but if the bird does fly in a series of pumps and glides, there are more pumps than glides.</td>
<td>Readily use own power for flight. They are the least hesitant buteo in crossing open water. Flight seems effortless; done with a sense of purpose and grace</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>