



How to identify birds

(18 features)

- ◆ become familiar with visual categories:
 - ducks and ducklike birds
 - gulls and terns
 - long-legged waders such as herons
 - shorebirds and smaller waders
 - fowl-like birds such as grouse
 - birds of prey
 - flycatchers
 - warblers
- ◆ acquire the habit of comparing the bird to a 'yardstick' (size)
 - sparrow, robin, crow
- ◆ what is the shape? (plump or slender)
- ◆ what shape are the wings? (rounded or sharply pointed)
- ◆ what shape is the bill? (small & fine, stout & short, digger-shaped, hook-tipped)
- ◆ what shape is the tail? (deeply forked, square-tipped, notched, rounded, pointed)
- ◆ how does it behave? (how does it hold its tail, sit erect, dart after insects)
- ◆ does it climb trees? (in spirals, jerks, down headfirst)
- ◆ how does it fly? (undulate, straight, hover, glide or soar)
- ◆ does it swim? (dive, dabble, sit low or high)
- ◆ does it wade? (long or short-legged, teeter or bob, probe or pick-up)
- ◆ what are the field marks or 'trademarks of nature'? (spotted, streaked, eye line, color)
- ◆ tail patterns? (patches, sides, 'flash pattern') rump patches? (light or dark or colored)
- ◆ eye-stripes and eye-rings? (above or below eye, ring, mustache stripe)
- ◆ wing bars? (present or absent, single or double, bold or obscure)
- ◆ wing patterns? (patches, stripes, solid, contrasting)

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