Bird Watching Bingo

Bird Descriptions

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American Robin

American Robins are gray-brown birds with warm orange underparts and dark heads. In flight, a white patch on the lower belly and under the tail can be conspicuous. Compared with males, females have paler heads that contrast less with the gray back.

White Throated Sparrow

The White-throated Sparrow comes in two color forms: white-crowned and tan-crowned. The two forms are genetically determined, and they persist because individuals almost always mate with a bird of the opposite morph. Males of both color types prefer females with white stripes, but both kinds of females prefer tan-striped males. White-striped birds are more aggressive than tan-striped ones, and white-striped females may be able to outcompete their tan-striped sisters for tan-striped males.

Gray Catbird

Catbirds give the impression of being entirely slaty gray. With a closer look you'll see a small black cap, blackish tail, and a rich rufous-brown patch under the tail.

American Goldfinch

American Goldfinch

Adult males in spring and early summer are bright yellow with black forehead, black wings with white markings, and white patches both above and beneath the tail. Adult females are duller yellow beneath, olive above. Winter birds are drab, unstreaked brown, with blackish wings and two pale wingbars.

Red-Tailed Hawk

Red-Tailed Hawk

Most Red-tailed Hawks are rich brown above and pale below, with a streaked belly and, on the wing underside, a dark bar between shoulder and wrist. The tail is usually pale below and cinnamon-red above, though in young birds it's brown and banded. "Dark-morph" birds are all chocolate-brown with a warm red tail. "Rufous-morph" birds are reddish-brown on the chest with a dark belly.

Mallard

Mallard

Male Mallards have a dark, iridescent-green head and bright yellow bill. The gray body is sandwiched between a brown breast and black rear. Females and juveniles are mottled brown with orange-and-brown bills. Both sexes have a white-bordered, blue "speculum" patch in the wing.

Ruby Throated Hummingbird

Ruby Throated Hummingbird

Ruby-throated Hummingbirds are bright emerald or golden-green on the back and crown, with gray-white underparts. Males have a brilliant iridescent red throat that looks dark when it's not in good light.

Grackle

Grackle

Common Grackles appear black from a distance, but up close their glossy purple heads contrast with bronzy-iridescent bodies. A bright golden eye gives grackles an intent expression. Females are slightly less glossy than males. Young birds are dark brown with a dark eye.

White Breasted Nuthatch

White Breasted Nuthatch

White-breasted Nuthatches are gray-blue on the back, with a frosty white face and underparts. The black or gray cap and neck frame the face and make it look like this bird is wearing a hood. The lower belly and under the tail are often chestnut.

Downy Woodpecker

Downy Woodpecker

Downy Woodpeckers give a checkered black-and-white impression. The black upperparts are checked with white on the wings, the head is boldly striped, and the back has a broad white stripe down the center. Males have a small red patch on the back of the head. The outer tail feathers are typically white with a few black spots.

Bald Eagle

Bald Eagle

Adult Bald Eagles have white heads and tails with dark brown bodies and wings. Their legs and bills are bright yellow. Immature birds have mostly dark heads and tails; their brown wings and bodies are mottled with white in varying amounts. Young birds attain adult plumage in about five years.

Blue Jay

Blue Jay

White or light gray underneath, various shades of blue, black, and white above.

American Crow

American Crow

American Crows are all black, even the legs and bill. When crows molt, the old feathers can appear brownish or scaly compared to the glossy new feathers.

House Wren

House Wren

Subdued brown overall with darker barring on the wings and tail. The pale eyebrow that is characteristic of so many wren species is much fainter in House Wrens.

Black Capped Chickadee

Black Capped Chickadee

The cap and bib are black, the cheeks white, the back soft gray, the wing feathers gray edged with white, and the underparts soft buffy on the sides grading to white beneath. The cap extends down just beyond the black eyes, making the small eyes tricky to see.

Cedar Waxwing

Cedar Waxwing

Cedar Waxwings are pale brown on the head and chest fading to soft gray on the wings. The belly is pale yellow, and the tail is gray with a bright yellow tip. The face has a narrow black mask neatly outlined in white. The red waxy tips to the wing feathers are not always easy to see.

Mourning Dove

Mourning Dove

Mourning Doves often match their open-country surroundings. They're delicate brown to buffy-tan overall, with black spots on the wings and black-bordered white tips to the tail feathers.

Cooper's Hawk

Cooper’s Hawk

Adults are steely blue-gray above with warm reddish bars on the underparts and thick dark bands on the tail. Juveniles are brown above and crisply streaked with brown on the upper breast, giving them a somewhat hooded look compared with young Sharp-shinned Hawks' more diffuse streaking.

Song Sparrow

Song Sparrow

Song Sparrows are streaky and brown with thick streaks on a white chest and flanks. On a closer look, the head is an attractive mix of warm red-brown and slaty gray, though these shades, as well as the amount of streaking, vary extensively across North America.

Northern Cardinal

Northern Cardinal

Male cardinals are brilliant red all over, with a reddish bill and black face immediately around the bill. Females are pale brown overall with warm reddish tinges in the wings, tail, and crest. They have the same black face and red-orange bill.

Red-Winged Blackbird

Red-winged Blackbird

Male Red-winged Blackbirds are hard to mistake. They're an even glossy black with red-and-yellow shoulder badges. Females are crisply streaked and dark brownish overall, paler on the breast and often show a whitish eyebrow.

Ring-Billed Gull

Ring-billed Gull

Adults are clean gray above, with a white head, body and tail; their black wingtips are spotted with white. They have yellow legs and a yellow bill with a black band around it. Nonbreeding adults have brown-streaked heads. During their first two years, Ring-billed Gulls are a motley brown and gray with a pink bill and legs.

House Finch

House Finch

Adult males are rosy red around the face and upper breast, with streaky brown back, belly and tail. In flight, the red rump is conspicuous. Adult females aren't red; they are plain grayish-brown with thick, blurry streaks and an indistinctly marked face.

Canadian Goose

Canadain Goose

Canada Geese have a black head with white cheeks and chinstrap, black neck, tan breast, and brown back.