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ONLINE REFERENCES

- ▶ https://theiwrc.org/raptorID/comparisons/sshaha_co_ha.html
- ▶ <https://feederwatch.org/learn/tricky-bird-ids/coopers-hawk-and-sharp-shinned-hawk/>
- ▶ <https://www.hmana.org/hawk-id-materials/>
- ▶ <http://hbmo.ca/eastern-hawk-id-program/>
- ▶ I will add some Raptor references to dropbox

JERRY LIGUORI HAWK EXPERT

► <https://www.aba.org/american-birding-podcast-a-life-in-raptors-with-jerry-liguori/>



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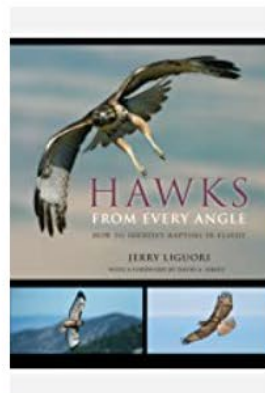
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Jerry Liguori

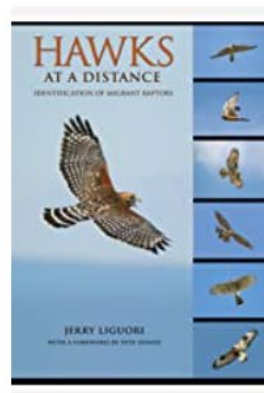
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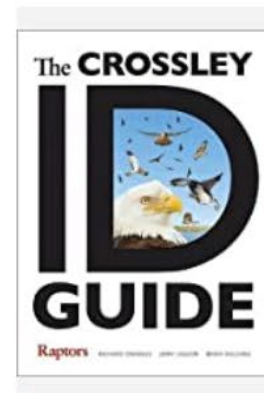
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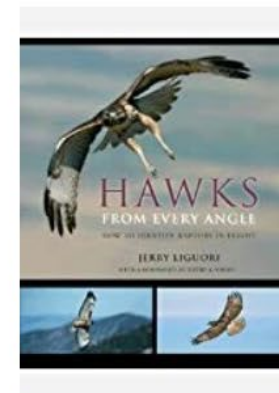
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THE ACCIPITERS

SHARP-SHINNED VS COOPER'S HAWK

- ▶ “Accipiter” is just fine.
- ▶ Tail shape and white tip are not always reliable.
- ▶ Head size can be difficult to judge.
- ▶ Flight profiles change during flight.
- ▶ Best field mark is GISS of flying birds.
 - ▶ Count wingbeats.

ONLY ADULT
NORTHERN GOSHAWK
IS EASILY DISTINGUISHED
BY PLUMAGE

ALL OTHERS REQUIRE
COMPARATIVE EVALUATION

MALES



Sharp-shinned

Illustrations by David A. Sibley



Cooper's

FEMALES



Sharp-shinned

Illustrations by David A. Sibley



Cooper's

JUVENILES



Sharp-shinned



Cooper's

Illustrations by David A. Sibley

PERCHED

PERCHED			
#	Field Mark	Sharp-shinned Hawk	Cooper's Hawk
1	SIZE	Similar to a jay or dove (~ 10-14" long). Female is larger and can be as large as a male Cooper's Hawk.	Similar to a crow (avg.14-20" long). Male is smaller and can be as small as a female Sharp-shinned Hawk.
2	HEAD SIZE	Head appears small compared to body.	Head appears large compared to body. The feathers on the back of the head are often raised, giving the bird a crested look.
3	BODY SHAPE	Broad chest and narrow hips. Center of gravity is often high.	Thick, tubular body with a lower center of gravity.
4	EYES	Eyes appear to be close to half way between front and back of head.	Eyes appear to be close to the front of the head.
5	LEGS	Thinner, pencil-like legs that can look long when compared to Cooper's.	Thicker, shorter looking legs compared to Sharp-shinned.
6	"HOODED" OR "CAPPED"	The feathers on the crown and the back of the neck are dark, giving the bird a "hooded" appearance.	The feathers on the crown are darker than the feathers on the back of neck, giving the bird a "capped" appearance. (The "Cooper Cap").

This material from Cornell Lab of Ornithology, Feeder Watch.
<https://feederwatch.org/learn/tricky-bird-ids/coopers-hawk-and-sharp-shinned-hawk/>

FLYING

#	Field Mark	Sharp-shinned Hawk	Cooper's Hawk
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3	BODY SHAPE	Broad chest and narrow hips. Center of gravity is often high.	Thick, tubular body with a lower center of gravity.
7	SHAPE IN FLIGHT	When the bird is soaring, short rounded wings are pushed forward at the wrists so that the small head barely extends past the wings.	The large, angular head projects far beyond the wings when soaring, giving the bird a cross-like appearance.
8	FLIGHT PATTERN	Typically flies with several quick wingbeats followed by a short glide. The wing beats can be erratic and more difficult to count than for a Cooper's.	Often flies with slower wing beats followed by a short glide. The slower, regular wing beats are easily counted when the bird flies overhead.
9	TAIL TIP SHAPE	Tail typically has square tip, showing prominent corners. The outer tail feathers are usually the longest (or nearly so). Note: tail tip of soaring bird appears rounded.	Tail is usually rounded at the tip. The middle tail feathers are usually the longest. Note: When the bird is perched, the shorter feathers are often tucked inside of the longer feathers making them only visible from the front.
10	TAIL TIP COLORING	Tail has narrow white tip.	Tail typically has clear white tip, although the white can wear off over time.

This material from Cornell Lab of Ornithology, Feeder Watch.
<https://feederwatch.org/learn/tricky-bird-ids/coopers-hawk-and-sharp-shinned-hawk/>

SIZE

SIZE

It's a continuum.



INCREASING BODY SIZE



Sharp-shinned

LENGTH 11.1"
WINGSPAN 22.8"
WEIGHT 5oz

Cooper's

LENGTH 16.9"
WINGSPAN 31"
WEIGHT 1lb

No overlap in size.
But difficult to judge.

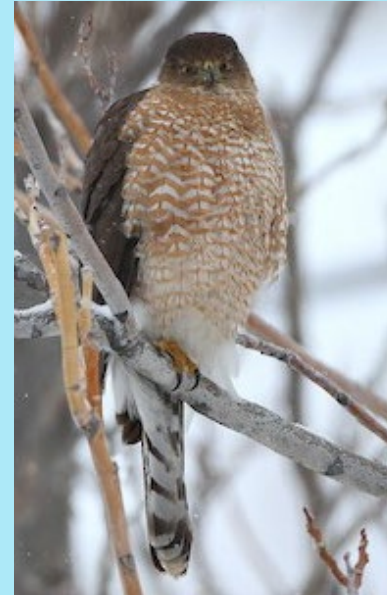
PERCHED

#	Field Mark	Sharp-shinned Hawk	Cooper's Hawk
1	SIZE	Similar to a jay or dove (~ 10-14" long). Female is larger and can be as large as a male Cooper's Hawk.	Similar to a crow (avg.14-20" long). Male is smaller and can be as small as a female Sharp-shinned Hawk.

Photo by Jerry Liguori



Photo by Jerry Liguori



Sharp-shinned Hawk

Accipiter striatus

LENGTH 11.1"

WINGSPAN 22.8"

WEIGHT 5oz

Photo by Jerry Liguori

Cooper's Hawk

Accipiter cooperii

LENGTH 16.9"

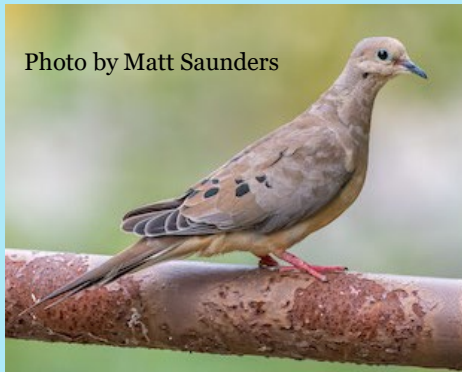
WINGSPAN 31"

WEIGHT 1lb

Sharp-shinned

Cooper's

Photo by Matt Saunders



Mourning Dove

Zenaida macroura

LENGTH 11.8"

WINGSPAN 18.1"

WEIGHT 4.3oz

Photo by Mason Maron



American Crow

Corvus brachyrhynchos

LENGTH 17.3"

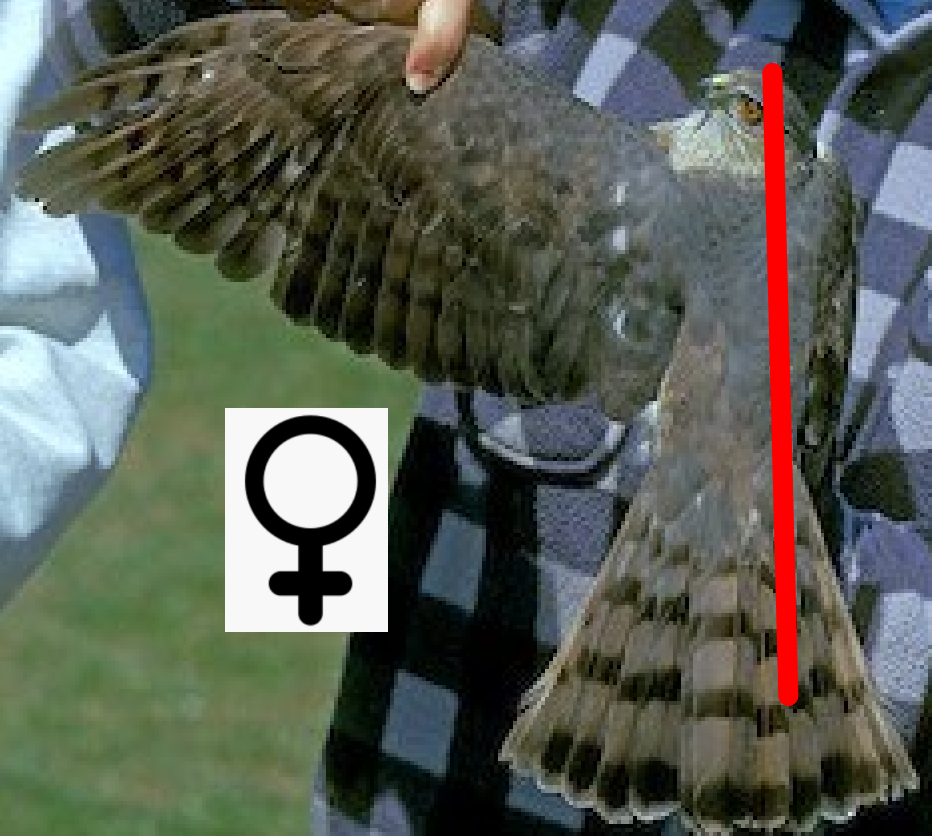
WINGSPAN 39"

WEIGHT 1lb

SIZE



Sharp-shinned



Sharp-shinned

HEAD SIZE

PERCHED

#	Field Mark	Sharp-shinned Hawk	Cooper's Hawk
2	HEAD SIZE	Head appears small compared to body.	Head appears large compared to body. The feathers on the back of the head are often raised, giving the bird a crested look.



Photos by Jerry Liguori

Sharp-shinned

Cooper's



BODY SHAPE

PERCHED

#	Field Mark	Sharp-shinned Hawk	Cooper's Hawk
3	BODY SHAPE	Broad chest and narrow hips. Center of gravity is often high.	Thick, tubular body with a lower center of gravity.



Photo by David McQuade

Sharp-shinned

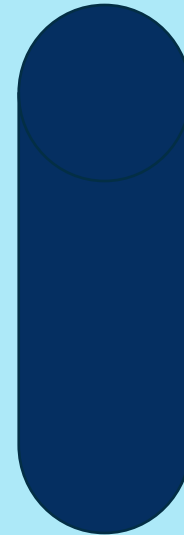
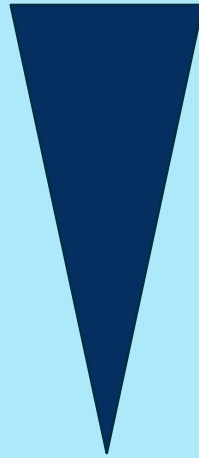
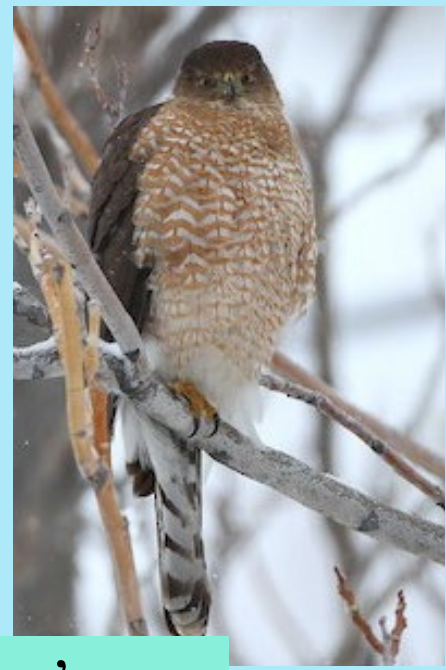
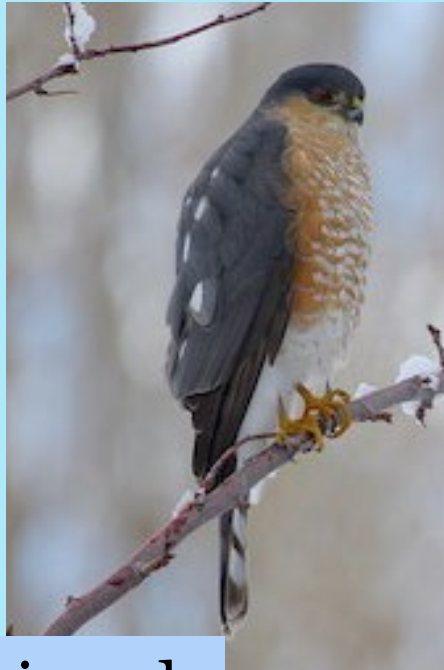


Photo by George Chapman

Cooper's



Sharp-shinned

Photos by Jerry Liguori

Cooper's



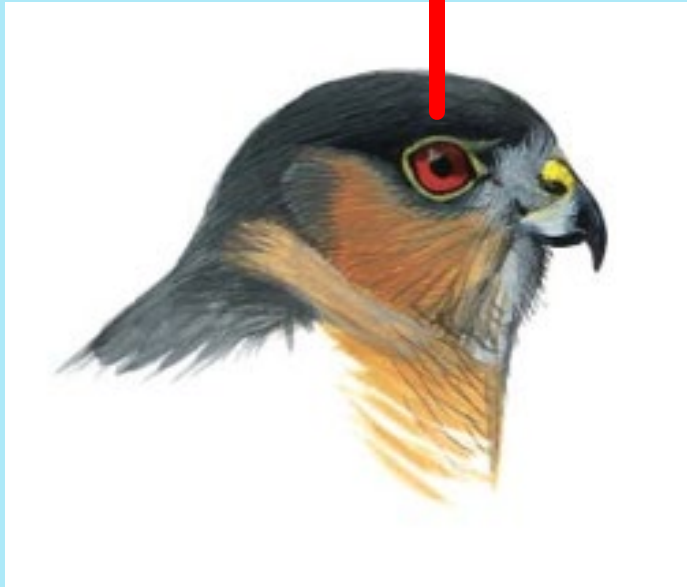
POSITION OF EYE

POSITION OF EYE

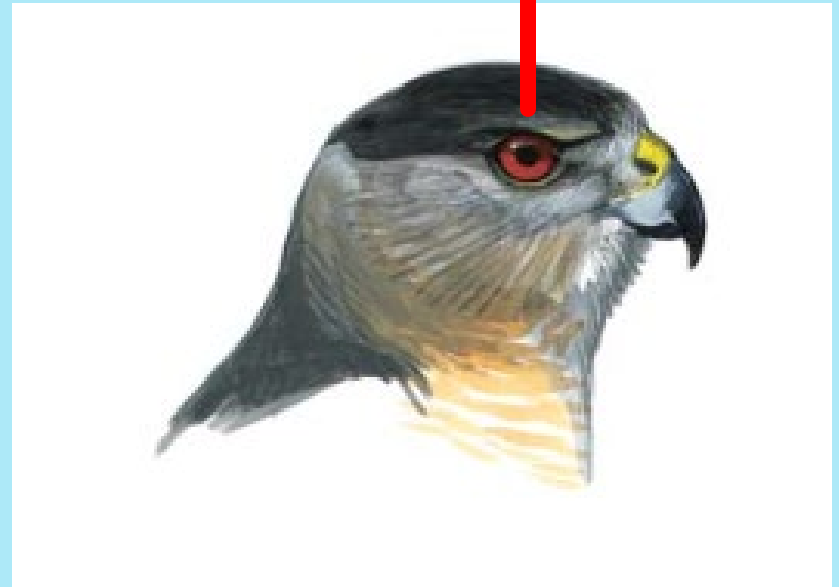
PERCHED

#	Field Mark	Sharp-shinned Hawk	Cooper's Hawk
4	EYES	Eyes appear to be close to half way between front and back of head.	Eyes appear to be close to the front of the head.

Eye close to middle of head.



Eye more to front of head.



Sharp-shinned

Illustrations by David A. Sibley

Cooper's

POSITION OF EYE

Eye close to middle of head.

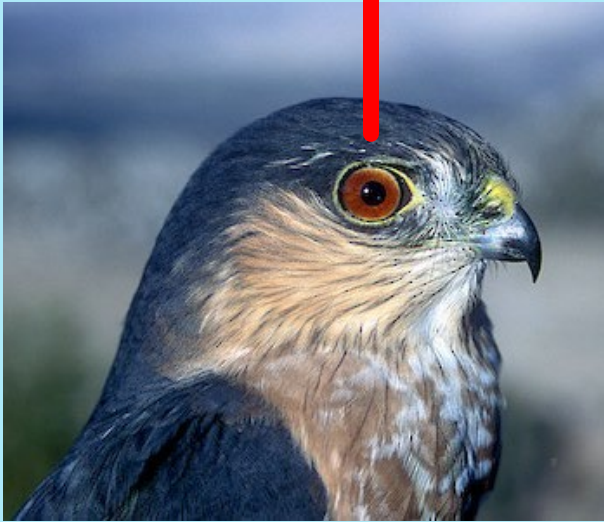


Photo by Jerry Liguori

Eye more to front of head.

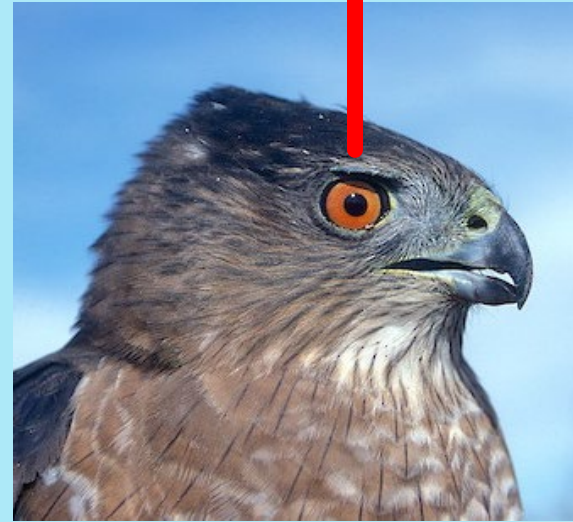


Photo by Jerry Liguori

Sharp-shinned

Cooper's

LEGS

PERCHED

#	Field Mark	Sharp-shinned Hawk	Cooper's Hawk
5	LEGS	Thinner, pencil-like legs that can look long when compared to Cooper's.	Thicker, shorter looking legs compared to Sharp-shinned.



Photo by Jerry Liguori

Sharp-shinned



Photo by Ed Wransky

Cooper's

THE “COOPER CAP”

THE “COOPER CAP”

PERCHED

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Illustrations by David A. Sibley

Sharp-shinned

Cooper's

THE “COOPER CAP”

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Photo by Jerry Liguori



Photo by Jerry Liguori

Sharp-shinned

Cooper's

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SHAPE IN FLIGHT

BUTEOS

Red-tailed



Photo by Scot Olmstead

Red-shouldered



Photo by Beth Price

Accipiter



Photo by Scot Olmstead

SHAPE IN FLIGHT

#	Field Mark	Sharp-shinned Hawk	Cooper's Hawk
7	SHAPE IN FLIGHT	When the bird is soaring, short rounded wings are pushed forward at the wrists so that the small head barely extends past the wings.	The large, angular head projects far beyond the wings when soaring, giving the bird a cross-like appearance.



Illustrations by David A. Sibley

Sharp-shinned

Cooper's

SHAPE IN FLIGHT

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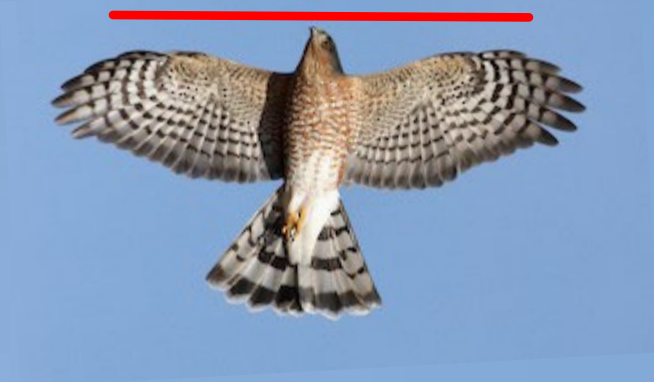


Photo by Alex Lamoreuax

Sharp-shinned



Photo by Garrett Lau

Cooper's

FLIGHT STYLE

--	--	--

**BEST
FIELD MARK
!!!!**

FLIGHT STYLE

#	Field Mark	Sharp-shinned Hawk	Cooper's Hawk
8	FLIGHT PATTERN	Typically flies with several quick wingbeats followed by a short glide. The wing beats can be erratic and more difficult to count than for a Cooper's.	Often flies with slower wing beats followed by a short glide. The slower, regular wing beats are easily counted when the bird flies overhead.



Illustrations by David A. Sibley

Buoyant flight with much flapping.
Not countable.

Sharp-shinned

More powerful, with fewer strokes and greater speed.
Countable.

Cooper's

Show Hawkwatch International video

TAIL SHAPE

#	Field Mark	Sharp-shinned Hawk	Cooper's Hawk
9	TAIL TIP SHAPE	Tail typically has square tip, showing prominent corners. The outer tail feathers are usually the longest (or nearly so). Note: tail tip of soaring bird appears rounded.	Tail is usually rounded at the tip. The middle tail feathers are usually the longest. Note: When the bird is perched, the shorter feathers are often tucked inside of the longer feathers making them only visible from the front.



Square ended

Photo by Jerry Liguori



Lacks sharp corners

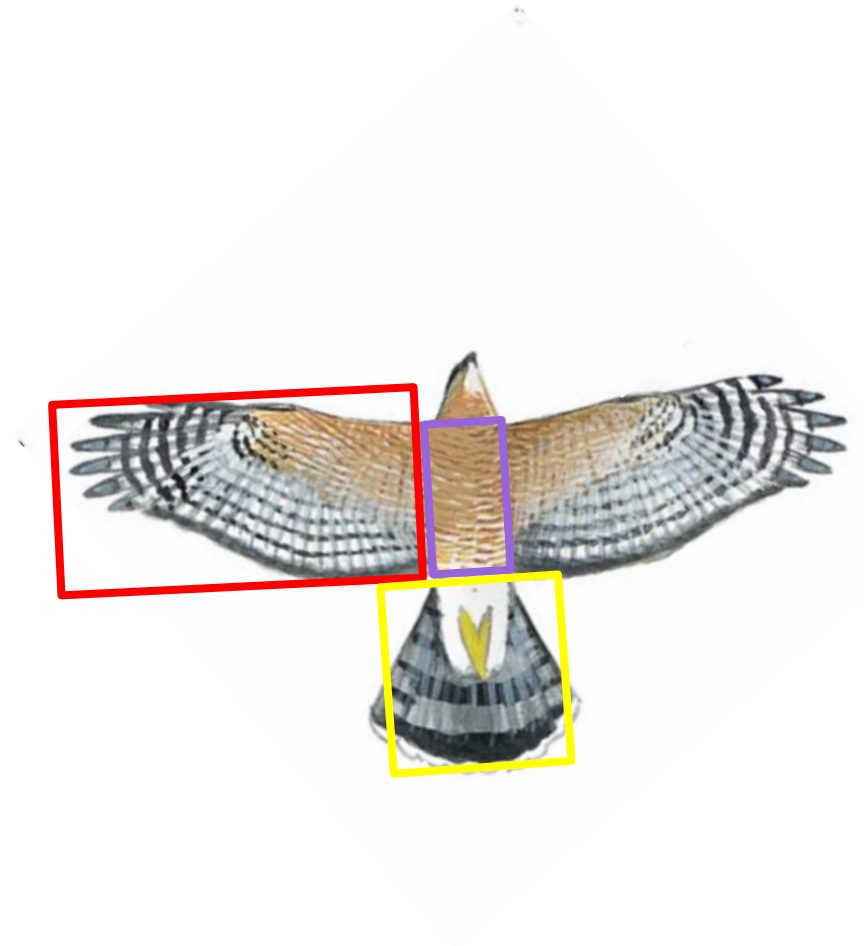
Photo by Jerry Liguori

“Tail shape is unreliable; a distinctly squared tail will probably allow elimination of Cooper’s, but a rounded tail does not safely eliminate Sharp-shinned”.

Kevin J. Zimmer

PROPORTIONS

PROPORTIONS

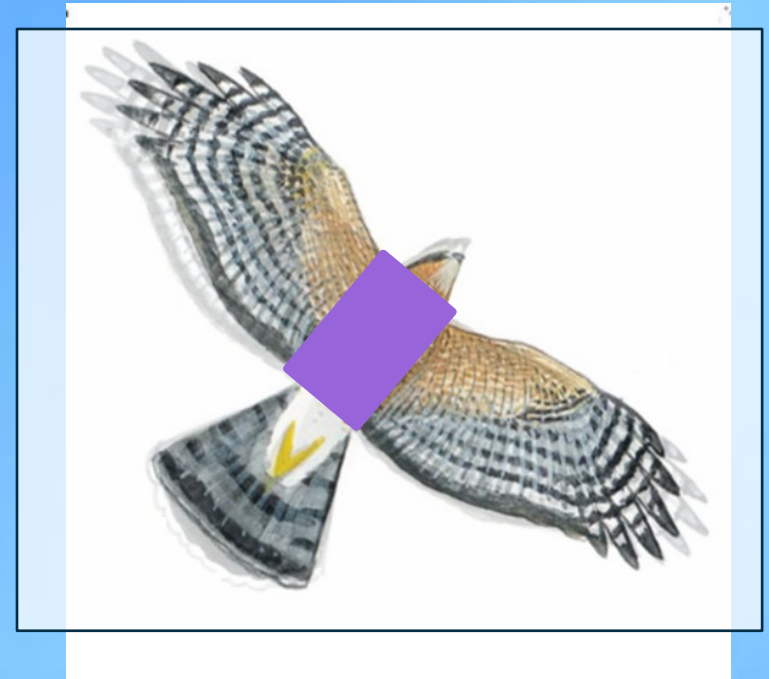


Illustrations by David A. Sibley

Sharp-shinned

Cooper's

PROPORTIONS



Illustrations by David A. Sibley

Sharp-shinned

Cooper's

Sharp-shinned



1



2



3



4



5

A



B

Photos by Jerry Liguori



C



D

Cooper's



E



F

TAIL BAND

TAIL BAND

#	Field Mark	Sharp-shinned Hawk	Cooper's Hawk
9	TAIL TIP SHAPE	Tail typically has square tip, showing prominent corners. The outer tail feathers are usually the longest (or nearly so). Note: tail tip of soaring bird appears rounded.	Tail is usually rounded at the tip. The middle tail feathers are usually the longest. Note: When the bird is perched, the shorter feathers are often tucked inside of the longer feathers making them only visible from the front.
10	TAIL TIP COLORING	Tail has narrow white tip.	Tail typically has clear white tip, although the white can wear off over time.



Photo by Jay McGowan



More apparent in fall. May wear off by spring.

Photo by Alex Lamoreaux

JUVENILES

JUVENILES



Photo by Steven Mlodinow

Red-tailed



Photo by Ed Wransky

Red-shouldered



Photo by Jerry Liguori

Sharp-shinned

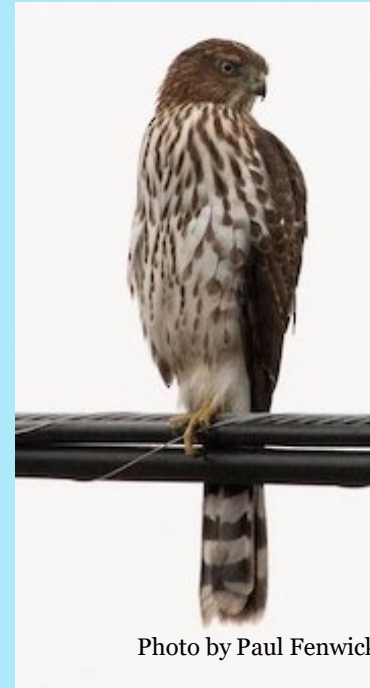


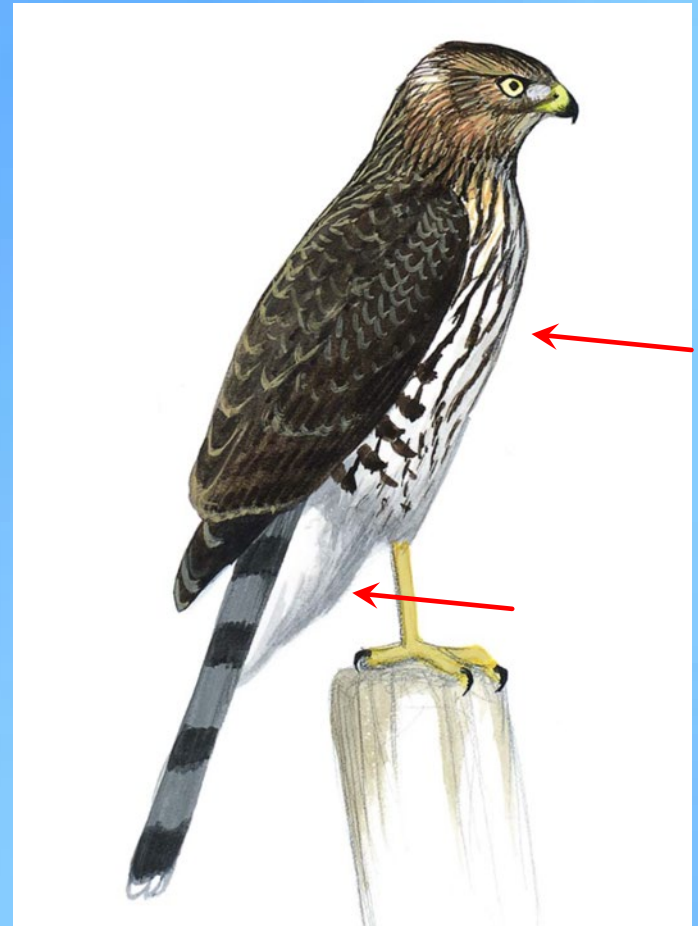
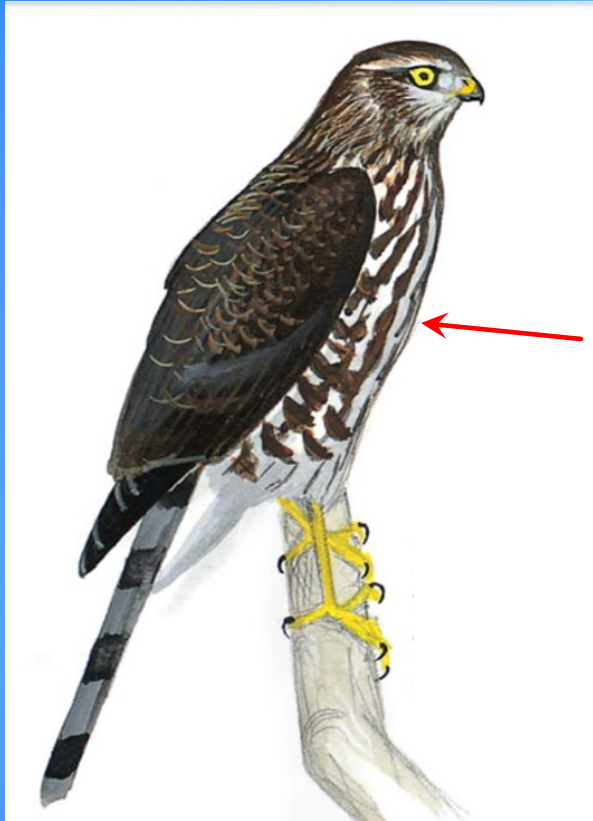
Photo by Paul Fenwick

Cooper's

JUVENILES

JUVENILE

#	Field Mark	Sharp-shinned Hawk	Cooper's Hawk
11	JUVENILE STREAK PATTERN	Heavy, bold, reddish streaks on chest and belly.	Thin, dark streaks mostly on upper breast; lower belly mostly white.



Illustrations by David A. Sibley

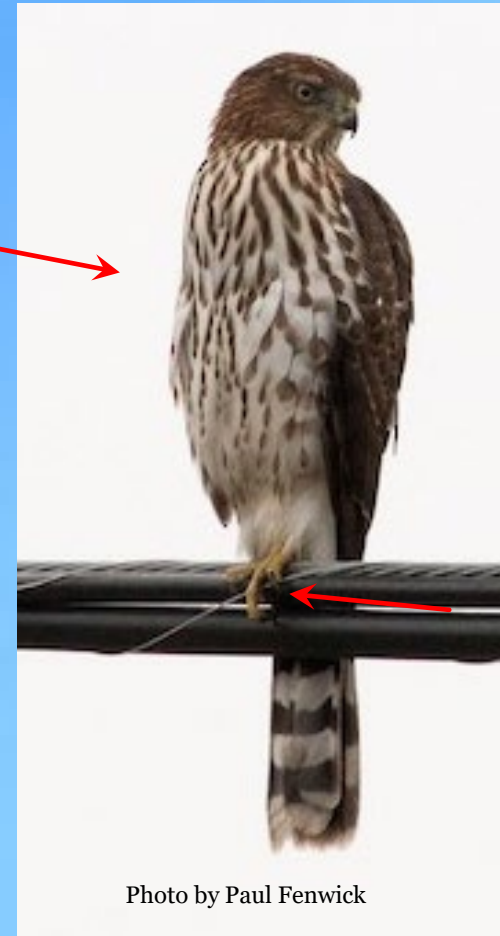
Sharp-shinned

Cooper's

JUVENILES

JUVENILE

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Sharp-shinned

Cooper's

ADDITIONAL OBSERVATIONS

Scapular "V"



all perched accipters can show bright white spots on back when feathers are fluffed



Photo by Mark Greene



Photo by Janine Schutt

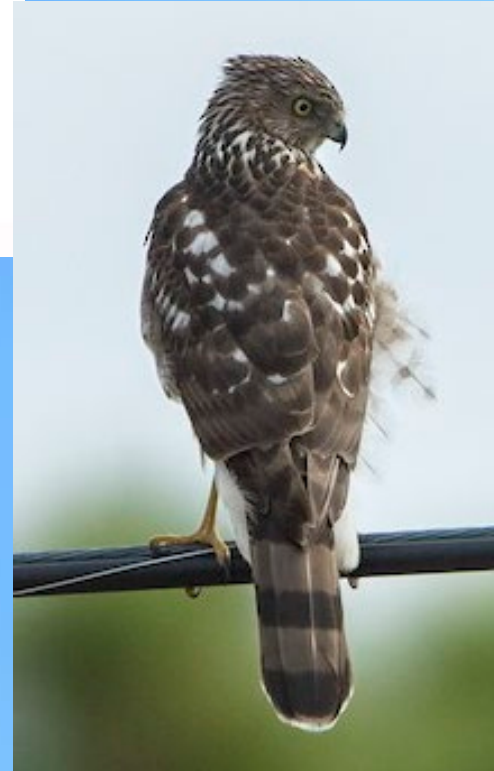


Photo by Peter Hawrylyshyn



Photo by Liam Ragen



adult Cooper's Hawk and Northern Goshawk in breeding season often fly with white undertail coverts conspicuously flared



Illustration by David A, Sibley



Photo by Steven Hunter

Cooper's

