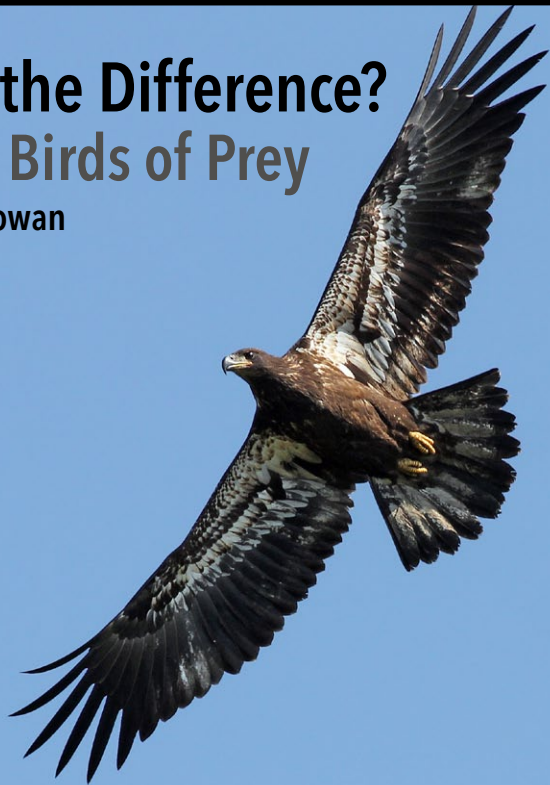


What's the Difference? Soaring Birds of Prey

Kevin J. McGowan



A huge bird soaring in the sky overhead isn't necessarily an eagle, but it might be! Bald Eagle populations in the United States crashed in the middle 20th century. Luckily, they have recovered so well that the species was removed from the Endangered Species List in 2007 and they continue to increase.

An adult Bald Eagle is unmistakable with its white head and tail and deep chocolate brown body. But, young eagles are mostly dark. With dark heads and dark tails, they can easily be confused with other large birds, like vultures and hawks, which also can be seen soaring high in the sky.

This identification packet will help you distinguish a Bald Eagle from other, more common, large, soaring birds by using shape, flight style, and calls.

Track list:

Turkey Vulture
Cathartes aura

1. Calls (ML 41360)
2. Juvenile Hiss (ML 41361)

Osprey
Pandion haliaetus

3. Calls (ML 105731)
4. Alarm Calls (ML 106651)

Bald Eagle
Haliaeetus leucocephalus

5. Calls (ML 137879)

Red-tailed Hawk
Buteo jamaicensis

6. Calls (ML 47538)

TURKEY VULTURE



Cathartes aura

- Long, broad wings
- Held up in slight V
- Slight bend along front edge
- Long, slightly pointed tail
- Small head
- Moderate bill
- Usually silent, occasional hisses



OSPREY



Pandion haliaetus

- Long, bent wings
- Held with kink at wrist
- Bent front edge
- Long, rounded tail
- Moderately small head
- Moderate bill
- Calls short, chirping whistles



BALD EAGLE



Haliaeetus leucocephalus

- Long, broad wings
- Held very flat
- Straight front edge
- Long, moderately pointed tail
- Moderately large head
- Large bill
- Call high-pitched whistling or piping



RED-TAILED HAWK



Buteo jamaicensis

- Broad, rounded wings
- Held flat
- Rounded edges
- Short, rounded or square tail
- Large head
- Small bill
- Call a raspy, scraping, screamed *kree-eee-ar*



ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Macaulay Library: The Macaulay Library at the Cornell Lab of Ornithology is the world's largest natural sound and video archive of animal behavior. Its mission is to collect and preserve recordings of each species' behavior and natural history and to make them available for research, education, conservation, zoos and aquaria, wildlife managers, publishers, the arts, and both public and commercial media. Since 1930, recordists of all backgrounds have contributed their recordings, which now number several hundred thousand in total. A large percentage of the recordings can be searched and played online. To hear more recordings of bird sounds or see videos, visit www.macaulaylibrary.org.

eBird: Visit eBird at www.ebird.org—an online database of bird observations that provides scientists, researchers, and amateur naturalists with real-time data about bird distribution and abundance across the world. From the eBird home page, click on the 'View and Explore' data tab. Then click on 'Bar Charts' and select the state or county where you live or want to go birding. Finally, click on the link for the species you are interested in finding.

All About Birds: Check out this free online bird guide to help you identify birds of your backyard and beyond. Learn about the life history of nearly 600 North American birds, listen to their sounds, and watch videos of their behavior. www.allaboutbirds.org.

Membership: The Cornell Lab of Ornithology is supported by 45,000 members. Your support furthers the Lab's mission to protect the earth's wildlife through research, education, and citizen science focused on birds. Visit www.birds.cornell.edu/membership to find out how you can join and help conserve the birds that touch our lives and enrich our planet.

Sound Recording Workshop: Each year the Macaulay Library teaches state-of-the-art techniques for recording the sounds of wildlife with skilled staff from the Cornell Lab of Ornithology. Participants learn through daily field recording sessions, coupled with lectures and demonstrations. If you would like to learn more about recording wildlife, visit www.macaulaylibrary.org/field-recording.

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