

Red-shouldered Hawk

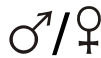
Migratory Species

Buse à epaulettes
Buteo lineatus

Wingspan: 90 cm to 127 cm



Despite the name «Red-shouldered Hawk», the red mark on this bird's shoulder is rarely visible to the observer and so does not serve as an identifying characteristic. It is easier to recognize this bird by its piercing cry, sometimes imitated by the blue jay. Its chest is cinnamon-coloured and its back dark brown. The tail is marked with large black bands separated by 3 or 4 white stripes.



The male and female are similar in appearance.



The Red-shouldered Hawk frequents mostly forests located near a waterbody, a clearing, or a swamp.



The Red-shouldered Hawk prefers reptiles, but she will also prey upon amphibians, rodents, birds, and the occasional carrion.



The Red-shouldered Hawk record for longevity is 20 years.



The nest is built in a large tree located near running water, and is often reused from year to year. It is built using the branches for a base, then layered with finer materials such as bark, duvet, moss or lichen. The female typically lays 3 to 4 eggs.



The young remain in the nest for 35 to 45 days. They remain close to their parents even 8 to 10 weeks after their first flight attempt.



During the 1950s, the Red-shouldered Hawk population declined drastically. The species has been classified as vulnerable in Canada since 1988. The destruction of its habitat, mostly by clear-cutting and pesticides use, is probably the main culprit.



The male defends fervently his territory against other encroaching males and competitors. During conflict, the males fight in flight by gripping each other with their talons.