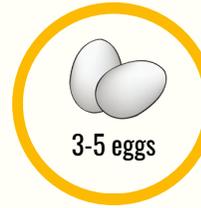
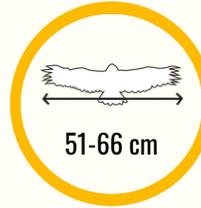




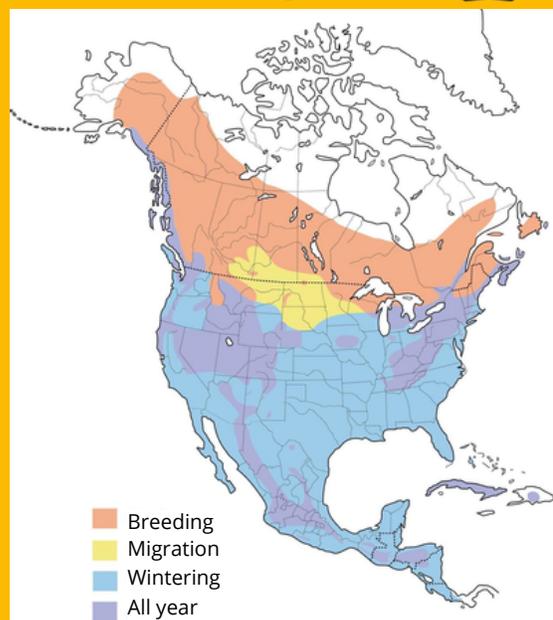
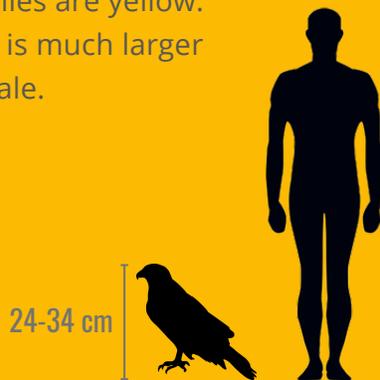
Sharp-shinned Hawk

Épervier brun, *Accipiter striatus*



IDENTIFICATION

About the size of a pigeon, the Sharp-shinned Hawk has a long, square tail. Its wings are short and rounded, allowing it to slip easily between the trees. It has a rufous chest with white stripes and a blue-gray back. It has a small head which, in flight, does not always extend beyond the "wrists" of the wings. Adults have red eyes, while juveniles are yellow. The female is much larger than the male.



ECOLOGY

Nutrition

Considering that around 90% of the Sharp-shinned Hawk's prey are songbirds, it's not surprising that it is frequently seen near bird feeders. It plays a very important role, feeding on weaker or sicker birds, keeping populations healthy by preventing the spread of diseases. It also feeds on small rodents, reptiles, amphibians and insects.

Breeding

Made of branches and bark, the nest is usually built on a conifer, close to the trunk. The female incubates her eggs for 5 weeks. The young remain in the nest for 3 to 4 weeks. Males take their first flight 3 to 4 weeks after hatching, and females 3 days later.

DISTRIBUTION

It frequents forests, groves and woodland edges. It nests from Atlantic Canada to the west coast, and from southern Ontario to the northern limit of the Yukon Territory. In winter, it migrates south, following the migration of small birds. Individuals from southern Quebec tend to stay in winter to take advantage of the abundance of prey around bird feeders.

STATUS AND POPULATION

Populations plummeted between the 1940s and 1970s due to the use of the pesticide DDT. Since its use was banned, populations have been increasing in Canada¹. The species is now considered secure².

¹Canadian breeding bird survey, 2016

²Wild species of Canada report, 2015