

Northern Goshawk

Resident Species

Autour des palombes
Accipiter gentilis

Wingspan: 48 cm to 69 cm



The Northern Goshawk is the largest member of the sparrowhawk family. With its long striped tail and red eyes, it is similar in appearance to Cooper's Hawk. Nonetheless, its dark blueish grey back and finely striped light gray chest distinguishes it clearly from the other sparrowhawks of Quebec. A white stripe is observed at the eyebrow.



The female is larger than the male.



The Northern Goshawk frequents wooded areas. We can also sight it hunting at the edge of forests.



The Northern Goshawk feeds primarily on hares, squirrels, partridges, crows, and ducks. In Nordic regions, it will also prey upon grouse (*Lagopus* and *Tetrao*) and lemmings (small rodents similar to mice).



The Northern Goshawk can live 13 to 19 years.



The nest, built high up in a tree, consists of branches and twigs of various sizes. The bottom is lined with bark. The female lays 2 to 4 eggs.



The young make their first flight attempt 35 to 42 days after hatching. They depend upon their parents until they are 70 to 90 days old.



The Northern Goshawk is considered a rare species in Quebec. Destruction of its habitat by deforesting is considered the main reason for its disappearance. Moreover, since it hunts close to the ground, it is occasionally caught in snares set to trap hares.



The Northern Goshawk is one of the few species which will display aggression towards an intruder coming too close to its nest. The female is large and powerful enough to seriously injure the anyone careless enough to get near her young! It is best not to disturb the birds when they are nesting.