

**BUTEOS** *Stocky builds; usually circle and soar at intervals while migrating; glide at prey*



M 48" F 52"

*brown above, light breast  
tail russet above, light below*

**RED-TAILED HAWK**  
*common resident*



M 35" F 36"

*brown above  
patterned russet breast  
wide outer tailbands*

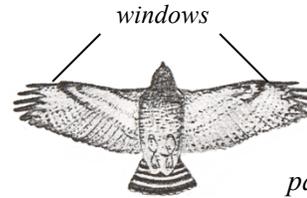
**BROAD-WINGED HAWK**



M 50" F 54"

*hovers  
variable brown to black  
usually has white base to tail*

**ROUGH-LEGGED HAWK**



*windows*

M 38" F 45"

*brown above  
patterned russet breast*

**RED-SHOULDERED HAWK**  
*occasionally flap-and-glide*

**ACCIPITERS**

*Blue-gray above, patterned russet breasts;  
flap-and-glide flight, overtake prey*



M 22" F 25"

**SHARP-SHINNED HAWK**  
*square tail*



M 28" F 33"

**COOPER'S HAWK**  
*round tail*

**HARRIER**

**NORTHERN HARRIER**  
*only U.S. harrier; formerly known as 'Marsh Hawk'*



M 42" F 49"

*hovers, soars  
with wingtips up;  
white rump*  
*male shown is two-tone  
gray with black wingtips;  
others brown above;  
female has streaked breast;  
immature has rosy breast*

**FALCONS**

*Pointed wings, long tails, deep wing strokes, very fast*



M 21" F 22"

*Hovers; rufous tails;  
male has facial marks,  
male back bluish;  
female brownish*

**AMERICAN KESTREL**



M 24" F 25"

**MERLIN**  
*light streaked breast;  
male bluish above; female brownish*



M 40" F 45"

**PEREGRINE**  
*blue-gray above,  
buffy breast*

## NOTES FOR CHARLOTTESVILLE-AREA HAWKWATCHERS

Each fall, thousands of hawks and other birds of prey migrate southward along the Blue Ridge en route from their nesting sites in the northern U.S. and Canada to winter food sources on the Gulf Coast or in Central America, sometimes traveling 300 miles a day. They usually include eight species of hawks (eagles are in the hawk family), harriers, ospreys, and three species of falcons. The largest numbers have historically been seen in mid-September near Rockfish Gap, the narrowest part of the Blue Ridge where I-64 intersects the Skyline Drive and Blue Ridge Parkway. They include broadwinged-hawks (by far the most numerous), sharp-shinned hawks, northern harriers, American kestrels, ospreys, and bald eagles. The greatest variety of migrants usually pass through in the first week of October, when broadwing numbers rapidly decline but Cooper's hawks, red-shouldered hawks, merlins and peregrines (two falcons), rough-legged hawks and golden eagles are also seen. Large non-migrating residents also in the air are turkey vultures, black vultures, ravens, crows, and red-tailed hawks; some non-resident vultures and many red-tails from farther north migrate southward over the area in the late fall. On several mid-September days in the 1980s and 90s more than 10,000 southbound raptors were counted by volunteer watchers stationed at the Inn at Afton, which overlooks Rockfish Gap. Some birds flew directly overhead; others soared in spiral kettles of dozens to hundreds of birds climbing or drifting in thermal updrafts. (From the tops of kettles such migrants glide southward.)

Weather greatly affects an observer's chances of seeing these exciting birds perform. They tend to fly closer in the mornings and late afternoons of north-to-west winds, flying peak-to-peak or on the windward side of a ridge, where they glide on the lift made by wind pressing against the slope. Many experienced observers begin an expedition by checking conditions from the parking lot of the Inn at Afton. The height of the southbound birds and where they pass helps the observer determine whether to join the hospitable volunteer migrant-counters on the patio below the dining room or to move to one of the recommended lookout points (as described on the back panel.) Hawkwatchers should bring water, snacks, hat and extra jacket for cold wind, folding chair or ground-cloth, binoculars, and patience. Binoculars (6-to-12 power) are a must. They enable observers to see colors and details otherwise lost, and beyond 2,000 feet even the silhouette of a medium-sized hawk is not recognizable to the naked eye.

### ***Ivy Creek Foundation Membership information***

The Ivy Creek Foundation is a volunteer-based non-profit organization founded to help create, maintain, and preserve the Ivy Creek Natural Area and the Ragged Mountain Natural Area and to provide scientifically sound environmental education free to the community. The Foundation is supported entirely by community donations. Members receive a quarterly newsletter and program of events.

To receive information about Ivy Creek Foundation activities, send your tax-deductible contribution to:  
**Ivy Creek Foundation / P.O. Box 956 / Charlottesville, VA 22902**

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